

Membury Parish Council

Present Cllr D Burrough (Chairman), Cllr R Barrell (Vice Chair),
Cllr M Bell, Cllr M Burrough, Cllr B
Foster, Cllr R Foster, Cllr S Foster, Cllr P
Pearse and Cllr L Warren.

In attendance: Parish Clerk

Membury Parish Council meeting

Press and public are welcome to attend.

There was an Ordinary Council meeting of Membury Parish Council held on:
Monday 11th January 2016 at 19:30hrs in the Committee Room, Membury Village Hall, Membury where the following business was transacted:

MINUTES

Contents

16/001 Apologies for Absence.....	1
16/002 Declarations of Interest under the Code of Conduct.....	1
16/003 To sign the Minutes of meeting held on 26th November 2015... 	2
16/004 Matters Arising that are not an agenda item.....	2
16/005 County and District Report.....	3
16/006 Police Report.....	3
16/007 Correspondence.....	4
16/008 Budget 2016/17.....	4
16/009 Finance.....	4
16/010 Grass Cutting Contract.....	5
16/011 Highways and Chapter 8 Training.....	5
16/012 Neighbourhood Plan.....	6
16/013 Planning.....	6
16/014 Transparency Code.....	7
16/015 Items for next agenda.....	7
16/016 Dates of the next meetings.....	7

16/001 To receive apologies for absence

Cllr Andrew Moulding (DCC), Cllr Paul Diviani (EDDC). PCSO's A Trott & H Widger.

16/002 To receive declarations of interest

No Declarations were made at this stage of the meeting.

16/003 To sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 26th November 2015

The minutes of the meeting held on 26th November, 2015 were adopted as a true record and were signed by the Chairman. Cllr R Foster stated that under Item 5 **Neighbourhood Plan** the last sentence should read that 'Cllr Mike Bell reported to the meeting on behalf of Alex Tasker' and also under Item 6 **East Devon District Council Consultations: 'Local Plan consultation on changes since the July hearing sessions'** the last word of the first sentence should read 'destiny' and not 'destination'. These alterations were recorded in longhand and were signed and dated by the Chairman.

16/004 Matters Arising that are not an agenda item

The Clerk had asked the Council to reconsider the decision made at the last meeting not to renew its subscription to the Society of Local Council Clerks. It was agreed not to renew this subscription.

A resident had complained that a gate had been padlocked on one of the footpaths. The gate was now split and needed repairing. A temporary measure of a Dog Hatch would be put in place so that the residents dog would be able to negotiate the gate. Devon County Council needs to be informed that the gate near Briscoe Lodge is falling apart. Sandra Little has said she does not wish to do work for the Council now. This would mean that the Council needs to look for a Snow Warden and residents willing to complete training for the Road Warden Scheme. Cllr R Foster said that Councillors need to be conscious of what they say at meetings and approach the residents concerned if their name has been suggested for a role before they hear the news elsewhere.

Footpaths

Footpath 8 – Lewsley Lane to Tolcis Lane. Where the path meets the bye lane to Haslands a new metal sign is needed to replace a wooden pointer. All of the stiles are awkward and potentially dangerous; they should be replaced by self-closing gates. Some way markers are needed near the former chicken farm.

Footpath 17 – A complaint has been received about a 'padlocked' field main gate. This gate has had to be padlocked because of sheep mixing following frequent careless closure.

From Lewsley Farm, heading north towards Rock Mill, the wooden gate on Mr N Yool's land is padlocked, broken and needs repair. Adjacent to the field gate is a stile which is difficult to climb. A dog owner struggled to lift his animal over the fence and has asked for a dog hatch or pedestrian gate. Mr Yool would prefer to have a wooden pedestrian gate if the stile is replaced. As a temporary measure Cllr Foster will make a simple wooden Dog Hatch and with Mr Yool's help, repair the main gate.

Apart from a couple of stiles there are no other major problems. Some way markers need attention.

Bridleway 81 – Cllr B Foster has reminded Devon County Council, again, of the badly damaged wooden gate near Brinscombe Lodge which is in urgent need of replacement. Cllr Foster was thanked for his report.

Councillor P Pearse entered the room at 19.54 hrs

16/005 County and District Report

Cllr Andrew Moulding sent in the report below:

TAP Fund – I have sent you a separate report on the recent meeting at Axminster Guildhall. It would appear that Membury will be supporting an application for Ditches and Drainage work

Further discussions at that meeting revolved around Neighbourhood Planning, which prompted me to write to Tim Spurway, suggesting that it might be a good idea for those parishes in the Axminster division, who have embarked on a Neighbourhood Plan, to have a “get-together” to discuss common issues and to consider Neighbourhood Plan matters which affect adjacent parishes.

I chaired a meeting of Place Scrutiny at County Hall recently, which included a number of interesting topics:

- Future of Library Services – the Board of Trustees for the new mutual are very nearly in place.
- Update on Superfast Broadband – EDDC has applied separately to BDUK for funds to support the delivery of Superfast Broadband to the “final 10%”
- Pavement Surfaces – recommendation for more flexibility in determining which areas of footway should be upgraded.
- Inconsiderate “straddle” parking on pavements – disappointment that the Bill before Government has been withdrawn. We will continue to press and provide additional evidence.
- Highways and Traffic Orders (double white lines, etc.) – parishes to provide a list of requests (in consultation with our Neighbourhood Highways Officer) for consideration by the HATOC in March and then on to Cabinet. It is likely that only the most urgent cases will be selected for the programme.

Cllr Diviani sent a detailed report in December giving updates on the following:

- Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Devon and Cornwall
- Devolution of powers and budgets away from Westminster
- The District Councils’ Network

16/006 Police Report

Membury had no reported crimes for November or December 2015 and none so far for January 2015.

Cllr B Foster reported that a white Citroen van has been left parked in the village car park. The owner of the vehicle was not known and the Clerk was asked to contact the police and arrange through them to contact the owner asking them to remove the vehicle from the car park as every square metre of space is needed, particularly when the village pantomime is being staged. Cllr Barrell asked that an item was put on the next agenda to discuss and look into the possibility of having car parking permits for the village car park.

16/007 Correspondence

All correspondence had been circulated to Councillors. The Clerk informed Councillors that Tony Hogg, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Devon & Cornwall, would be holding a 'Meet your PCC' event on Tuesday 19th January, 2016 at Tesco, Honiton between 12 noon – 2.00pm. There is no need to pre-book for this event.

16/008 Budget 2016/17

At the last Parish Council meeting in November it was agreed to bring the draft budget for 2016/17 back to the January meeting for any final amendments. The draft budget had been circulated to Councillors before the meeting. The main increase to expenditure had been necessary to enable the delivery of services which had fallen victim to Devon County Council cuts and restructuring. The Parish Council also had to make provision for the implementing of measures to comply with the Transparency Code which were necessary as the Council, being a smaller authority with an annual turnover not exceeding £25,000, must legally adhere to the code later this year. It was agreed that an article should be written for the next edition of the Membury Mercury detailing why the budget/precept needed to be increased.

Acceptance and approval of the draft budget for 2016/2017 was proposed by Cllr Bell, seconded by Cllr Pearse and was unanimously agreed.

2016/17 Precept

Resolved: It was proposed by Cllr Bell and seconded by Cllr Pearse to resolve to set the precept for 2016/17 at £6,995.00. Council members were unanimous in their agreement.

16/009 Finance

MEMBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Bank Reconciliation as at 8th January 2016		
26 th November 2015	Opening Balance	17,489.31
	Plus, Income	
7/12/2015	Interest	0.27
	TOTAL	17,489.58

LESS EXPENDITURE		
26/11/15	CHQ 841 – A Hawkes – Work on Footpath 31	30.00
	TOTAL	30.00
	CLOSING BALANCE	17,459.58
<hr/>		
8th January 2016	Bank Balances – Treasurers Account	9,519.58
	Business Bank Instant	8,000.00
		17,519.58
	Less Not Cleared Cheque – 840	60.00
		17,459.58

16/010 Grass Cutting Contract

The Council placed an advert in the ‘View From’ publications inviting interested applicants to tender for the Grass Cutting Contract with the Council which would run from 1st April, 2016 for three years. One sealed bid was received from Mr J Wallace by the closing date of 8th January, 2016 which was opened at the meeting by the Clerk. It was proposed by Cllr Warren and seconded by Cllr S Foster that the tender submitted by Mr Wallace for the Grass Cutting Contract for Membury Parish Council for three years commencing on 1st April, 2016 was accepted by the Parish Council. It was resolved to award the contract to Mr J Wallace.

16/011 Highways and Chapter 8 Training

Cllr Bell reported that there were drainage issues in the area where he lives. Devon County Council had been out to clear the drains, but there were still problems even though Devon County Council had done a good job. Cllr Bell had tried to clear the drain himself but could not reach the blockage from his land. It was suggested that Cllr Bell contacted the owner of the land who would be able to reach the drain and clear the blockage. There were currently highways drainage works taking place in the village from Membury Cross to Clarence Cross to replace a drain from the spring down to the bottom of the road. A link was being put in from the spring and then the works would start again from Springfield and further down. A few residents had commented on this, but the Parish Council have to reply on Devon County Highways who are qualified to do the work. The works would not include the entrance to New House Farm.

Cllr B Foster reported that two way signs at Simons Cross were broken and need repairing. Devon County Council could be asked to attend to this, but it would probably take them sometime to repair.

Potholes were reported in Belham Lane, Money Pit Lane and from Selah to Chard with several being in the same area. Anyone wishing to report a pothole can do so by visiting <https://new.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/>

The Clerk confirmed that the Council had £180 left to spend from the Parishes Together Fund which must be spent by 31st March, 2016. The clerk also confirmed that the Parish Council could apply for funding of £441.10p which was available to them from the Parishes Together Fund for 2015/16, but the application had to be with East Devon District Council by 12th February 2016. In the past parish councils had had to work together to secure funding for a project, but Devon County Council had recently announced that if the money was to be spent on drains and ditches parish councils would not have to work together and could apply for funding solely for their own parish. If the Parish Council was successful in securing this funding the monies had to be spent by March 2017. It was proposed that any monies left from the 2014/15 funding would be spent on the purchasing of two sets of drain rods and a visor with the rest of the funding put towards the purchase of a strimmer that was needed to clear the drains and ditches.

The Parish Council are looking for volunteers who would be willing to undertake some training to help maintain and repair the roads around the parish. Cllr Barrell said he would contact a couple of people who might be prepared to do the training. If people are willing to do the work, but want to receive payment for doing so they MUST complete a Chapter 8 Training Course which is organised by Devon County Council and MUST have been asked to do the work by a council representative. People cannot do work on the highways and be paid for it if they have not completed a Chapter 8 Training Course. The Clerk was asked to contact the Council's insurance company to check whether the Council's policy covers people who do voluntary work on the highways.

16/012 Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Bell reported that Alex Tasker and the steering group had completed a major piece of work for the Neighbourhood Plan. The Housing and Population draft paper which Alex had produced was an excellent piece of work and all that was left to complete now was the section on Flooding. The Plan is now at the pre-referendum stage. It was announced at a meeting of the Cabinet at East Devon District Council held on 6th January that the Council had received a 'tentative final report' in relation to the submitted Local Plan. The report was not for publication, but concluded that both the Local Plan and the CIL charging schedule were sound and could move to adoption subject to main modifications. It is very much hoped that the Neighbourhood Plan would be able to go to referendum in the Spring.

16/013 Planning

Planning applications validated by East Devon District Council for December 2015: None.

Planning applications validated by East Devon District Council from 1st to 8th January 2016: None.

Planning applications decided by East Devon District Council for November 2015:
Construction of an agricultural workers dwelling (outline application with all matters reserved) – New House Farm, Membury, Axminster. APPROVED.

T1, Hornbeam: Reduce or remove selected branches to lift and clean the crown – Little Haddons, Membury, Axminster. SPLIT DECISION (part of the application has been refused and part approved). Remove six small identified branches and reduce the dominant branch on the North East aspect of the tree – APPROVED. Remove limb on North East aspect of the tree – REFUSED.

Planning applications decided by East Devon District Council for December 2015: Construction of porches, reconstruction of two storey extension, replacement roof coverings and internal and external alterations – Bridge Meadow, Yarcombe, Honiton. APPROVED.

Planning applications decided by East Devon District Council from 1st to 8th January 2016: None.

Cllr D Burrough reminded Councillors that as from 1st May, 2016 East Devon District Council would no longer send out paper copies of planning applications. The Council would still be notified of any planning applications received, but Councillors would have to view all the documents associated with the application on-line.

16/014 Transparency Code

The Transparency Code for smaller authorities with an annual turnover not exceeding £25,000 came into effect last year. This means that as from the start of the new financial year the Parish Council will have to publish information on-line. A discussion took place as to whether the Parish Council could use the existing village website to publish this information or whether the Council should look to have its own web site. Funding is available to help towards the cost of complying with the Transparency Code. The Clerk had contacted David Dodd who administers the village website and David was sure that with some help the website could accommodate the Councils requirements to comply with the Transparency Code. An issue which was raised is that to be compliant with the code the website MUST be under the control of the Clerk. It was suggested that the Clerk meets up with David Dodd with possibly another Councillor to discuss this further.

Cllr D Burrough told the meeting that the Internal Auditor, Jeanette Tuck, had resigned from the post. The Clerk had contacted the Devon Association of Local Councils (DALC) asking for advise as to the best way to seek a replacement. The DALC advised that an internal auditor needs to be familiar not only with how a council does their accounts, but also with how local government operates. The suggestion was made of approaching a Parish/Town Clerk, but most are too busy to take this role on. Cllr Barrell said he knew of someone who may be interested and he would contact them. The DALC offers clerks and their councils a Health Check Scheme where an experienced former Town Clerk will come and spend two hours going through the Councils paperwork. The health check will result in a report to the council ensuring all paperwork is on a sound footing. This is not a replacement for an internal audit. The charge to the Parish Council would be £50 + VAT plus mileage at 45p per mile.

16/015 Items for next agenda

The following Agenda items were put forward for 1st March 2016.

Highways & Chapter 8 training, Footpaths, Neighbourhood Plan, Village car park, Transparency Code & Website and any other items as deemed necessary.

16/016 Dates of the next meetings

Tuesday 1st March 2016, Tuesday 12th April 2016 (Annual Parish Meeting), Tuesday 24th May 2016 (AGM), Tuesday 5th July 2016, Tuesday 16th August 2016, Tuesday 11th October 2016 and Tuesday 29th November 2016 all at 7.30pm.

Public Forum

No members of the public were present at the meeting.

The meeting closed at 21:36hrs.

Signed.....

Date.....