Minutes of the virtual meeting of Combe Martin Parish Council held on Monday 9 November 2020 using the Zoom platform to provide video and audio conferencing.

**Present:** Cllrs D Woodbury (Chairman), C Wyer (Vice Chairman), H Mallinder, C Withers, K Wyer, P Walker, M Richards, A Cossey, C Davidson, and S Daukes

**In attendance:** County Cllr A Davis, District Cllr Y Gubb, five members of the public, Finance Officer and Clerk (minute taker)

The meeting was opened with prayers.

**PART A:**

214/20 Apologies

(None.

215/20 Formal ratification of newly co-opted Councillor appointments

Alan Cossey, Simon Daukes, Claire Davidson, Maureen Richards, and Pamela Walker were successful in the co-option ballot at the October 2020 Parish Council meeting and prior to this meeting had accepted their formal invitation to join Combe Martin Parish Council as co-opted Councillors. Existing Council Members formally ratified these appointments.

216/20 Declarations of interest

Cllr Daukes declared a personal interest in agenda item 8. Planning Decisions, reference planning application 71634.

217/20 To consider any requests for dispensations

None, as planning application 71634 was to note only.

218/20 Public Participation Period

**Hole in sea wall at Newberry Beach** – Work to carry out the repair to the sea wall has been arranged and is due to start shortly. Unfortunately, COVID-19 has had an impact on the availability of the contractor to carry out the repair.

**Update on the Parade toilets and Parade building** – The Parish Council is waiting for a reply from its solicitor about the Parade toilets and has previously withdrawn the toilet block from sale. Planning permission for a change of use of the Parade building (formally Wabasso, old Museum) to a wedding venue together with associated works was recently approved by North Devon Council’s planning department (planning application 71330).

219/20 County and District Councillors’ Reports

Devon County Council

Cllr Davis provided the following report.

**Coronavirus updates from Devon County Council**

Devon County Council has set up a Coronavirus information page (below web link) on its website which provides data on confirmed coronavirus cases in Devon, and information about testing, and track and trace.

[www.devon.gov.uk/coronavirus-advice-in-devon/coronavirus-data/](http://www.devon.gov.uk/coronavirus-advice-in-devon/coronavirus-data/)

**COVID-19 Prompt Action Fund**

Devon County Council has temporarily re-opened the COVID-19 Fund to provide flexible resources to organisations working with communities who are disproportionately impacted by coronavirus and the social and economic consequences of the second national lockdown.

Applications opened on 9 November 2020 and will close on 2 December 2020.

Further details can be found on Devon County Council’s website at: [www.devon.gov.uk/coronavirus-advice-in-devon/document/covid-19-fund/](http://www.devon.gov.uk/coronavirus-advice-in-devon/document/covid-19-fund/).

**New Street lighting Contract**

All of Devon County Council’s 79,000 streetlights will be converted to LED lights within the next two years – reducing carbon emissions by 75%. It comes as SSE Contracting (SSEC) has been awarded the contracts to maintain the streetlights in Devon and Torbay for the next 10 years – with the aim of the contract being carbon neutral by 2030.

**New Funds available for Carers breaks**

Recent research suggests that nearly two-thirds of unpaid carers have not been able to take any breaks at all in the last six months because they’re too busy caring for someone else.

 Having a break from their caring role is vital, and yet the idea of asking for it is sometimes mired with guilt. It shouldn’t be. Accepting help where it’s available is really important. Carers can’t continue to provide the care their loved ones or friends require if they’re run down, physically and mentally.

Devon County Council and NHS Devon CCG are making grants of between £1,000 and £15,000 available to care providers, personal assistants, and carers themselves who can develop and provide innovative opportunities that will give other carers a break, during COVID-19 and beyond.

Details about the Replacement Care Innovation Fund, including eligibility for it are available on Devon County Council’s website http://devon.cc/rcif. To register your interest in applying for funding, email carefund@devon.gov.uk.

North Devon Council

Cllr Gubb provided the following report.

**Help and support through lockdown**

With a national lockdown now in place, North Devon Council (NDC) wants to make sure that its most vulnerable customers know where to come for help.

The government and county council are writing to extremely clinically vulnerable residents giving guidance on what to do during lockdown and asking them to register on the government website so they can request support from their local council.

Working alongside local community support organisation One Northern Devon and town and parish councils, NDC is helping to co-ordinate a range of services for those most in need. This includes:

* helping people to register on the government website
* help with grocery orders and deliveries
* collection and delivery of medication
* transport to medical and hospital appointments using local taxi from Driving Miss Daisy
* financial support for those in serious hardship
* friendly ear phone calls to ease social isolation

Unlike last time, the government will not be sending out food parcels to the clinically vulnerable as the emphasis this time is on self-sufficiency.

To help people access these services, there is a dedicated phone line and web form and the council is urging people to ensure that their vulnerable and elderly friends and relatives are aware how to contact the team. The number to call is 01271 388280 and the online form is on the council's website.

Even if the council can't help directly, it will do all it can to point people to the right agency or organisation. Before accessing this support though, residents are urged to turn to families and friends for this support in the first instance as the support relies heavily on a very over-stretched pool of volunteers.

The council is also urging people to ensure they don’t leave requests until the last minute and give them at least two working days’ notice because the service relies on volunteers and so cannot react any more quickly than that.

The support service is available Monday-Friday during normal working hours.

A government grant scheme to help local businesses that are affected by the restrictions will also soon be available.

More information on the help and support available is at [www.northdevon.gov.uk/coronavirus/communities-and-voluntary-sector-support](http://www.northdevon.gov.uk/coronavirus/communities-and-voluntary-sector-support)

**North Devon Council offers free parking to help local businesses during lockdown**

North Devon Council (NDC) has announced that it will be offering two hours of free parking in selected car parks during lockdown to help enable local independent businesses to offer click and collect services.

From Thursday 5 November the following NDC car parks will be free to use between 4pm and 6pm daily whilst the country remains under lockdown restrictions:

* Cattle Market, Barnstaple
* Tuly Street, Barnstaple
* Queen Street, Barnstaple
* Bear Street, Barnstaple
* Wilder Road, Ilfracombe
* South Molton Central

**North Devon Council provides financial help to children and families most in need**

North Devon Council has provided a Local Hardship Fund in direct response to the COVID-19 pandemic, with financial support from Devon County Council.

The purpose of the fund is to provide support to families who are suffering immediate financial hardship directly as a result of COVID-19. It can be used to provide support with basic essential needs, such as food, personal or household items, travel for essential hospital and doctor appointments, repairs and even gas and electricity costs. It is an emergency fund which has been accessed by many people over the past six months.

During the summer, this fund was used to provide financial assistance to schools in the area who then identified and provided direct help to families and pupils most at need. The council is hoping to set up a similar arrangement for the Christmas school holidays. The fund has also been used to provide direct support to North Devon Food Bank and to fund other groups working with and supporting our local communities.

To make an application, please contact North Devon Council on 01271 388280 or email customerservices@northdevon.gov.uk. North Devon Council is presently operating with a reduced number of staff in its Customer Contact Centre due to COVID related absences and so if you are not able to get through immediately, please be patient and try again.

Chairman Woodbury thanked the County Councillor and District Councillor for their personal and active involvement in the local community and their hard work.

220/20 Co-option of New Councillors

Following a lengthy discussion, co-option was deferred to the December 2020 Parish Council meeting to allow for consideration of the two applications that had been received for the one remaining co-option vacancy. One of the applicant’s did not qualify to be co-opted at this meeting.

An election will take place on 6 May 2021 for Cllr Andy Forgan’s vacancy following his resignation in October 2020.

221/20 Planning Decisions

**72174** – Higher Meadwells, Knapp Down, Combe Martin, Devon EX34 0PG. Approval of details in respect of condition 7 (submission of restoration plan) attached to planning permission 65242 (siting of temporary rural workers timber cabin together with erection of one storage shed & erection of one hay barn). Approved. Noted.

**71922** – Land off Park Lane, Combe Martin, Devon EX34 0LL. Conversion of redundant rural building to form one dwelling. Approved. Noted.

**70816** – Sea Vista, Rosea Bridge Lane, Combe Martin, Devon EX34 0DP. Approved. Noted.

**71634** - West Moory, Moory Meadow, Combe Martin EX34 0DG. Change of use & extension to building. Refused. Noted.

The following planning decision came in after the preparation of the agenda.

**71330** - Parade Building (former Cafe / Art Gallery / Museum), Newberry Road / Seaside Hill, Combe Martin, Devon EX34 0AW. Change of use of building to wedding venue together with associated works. Approved. Noted.

Full details of these planning decisions can be found on North Devon Council’s find and track a planning application web page at: [www.planning.northdevon.gov.uk/Search/Advanced](http://www.planning.northdevon.gov.uk/Search/Advanced)

The following planning application was received after the preparation of the agenda.

**72320** - Glen Lyn Garage Borough Road Combe Martin Ilfracombe Devon EX34 0AN. **Proposal**: First floor extension over existing garage/storage building to provide additional storage and staff/briefing/training room. An extension to the consultation period has been requested.

Cllr Davis left the meeting at 8.17pm.

222/20 Finance:

1. **RESOLVED**: The following financial reports were approved:
2. The list of payments made between 1 and 31 October 2020, total: £13,110.14
3. The list of cash received between 1 and 31 October 2020, total: £10,582.20
4. The list of payments for November, total: £11,718.62.

The monthly summary balances and bank reconciliation (cash balance £219,664.64) and the car park receipts (nett taking £82,134.00) were noted.

1. To receive and approve the initial budget proposal for 2021/22 including a recommendation to increase the Precept.

Two councillors expressed their concerns about increasing the precept. It was agreed to consider the budget proposal for 2021/22 at the Strategy meeting scheduled for Monday 23 November 2020.

1. To receive a statement from the Finance Officer on Village Hall expenditure. Noted.

223/20 To consider and respond to Government announcements on coronavirus lockdown measures.

The new telephone number (01271 883030) for the FHCM Helpline is now live. The helpline hours (Monday to Friday from 10am until 1pm) will not change in light of the new lockdown restrictions, but will be reviewed regularly during this period.

224/20 Police

The monthly Ilfracombe Neighbourhood Police Newsletter for November was received and circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting.

Number of crimes reported in October 2020

**Combe Martin**

Violence with injury 1

Violence without injury 1

Other offences 1

Non-notifiable offences 1

**Berrynarbor**

Criminal damage 1

Other theft 1

Non-notifiable offences 2

**East Down**

None.

225/20 Minutes

**RESOLVED**: The Minutes of the virtual Combe Martin Parish Council meeting held on Monday 12 October 2020 were approved as a correct record of that meeting.

226/20 To confirm proposed dates for future meetings

**RESOLVED**: To hold a virtual Parish Council Meeting on Monday 14 December 2020 at 7pm and a virtual Strategy Meeting on Monday 23 November 2020 at 7pm.

227/20 Devon County Council (Various Streets, Devon) (Waiting Restrictions and Parking Places) Amendment Order

**RESOLVED:** To object to Devon County Council’s proposal to impose limited waiting 10am – 7pm between 15 March and 31 October 30 minutes no return within 30 minutes on the road from High Street to Bowling Green Lane as it is detrimental and unworkable for local residents.

228/20 Correspondence

1. Village Hall Community Group (VHCG) – To consider the group’s request for an annual grant to cover rent and building insurance for the Village Hall. Clerk to write to VHCG.

The Chairman clarified the background to the issues raised and this item was discussed at length by Council Members. Such a grant would have to be funded by the Precept resulting in an additional financial burden on the community. Some Council Members had already expressed their concerns about the Precept in an earlier discussion regarding the Parish Council’s finances. Due to lack of support no motion was tabled regarding the request for an annual grant.

1. RSPB – To consider the RSPB’s Membership Venue Officer’s request to set up a fundraising gazebo in Combe Martin one Saturday over the winter.

This item was discussed in the Public Session to give the RSPB Membership Officer an opportunity to speak on it, which they did. A suggestion was made to the RSPB representative to contact the Shammick Market organisers so that they could discuss setting up a stall when the market re-opens. The RSPB representative agreed to this. **ACTION**: Clerk’s office to make the necessary introductions.

1. Road Traffic Order – Temporary speed restriction past South Burland Farm, Bittadon on Tuesday 12 January 2021 for a maximum of 5 days.

Noted.

1. Road Traffic Order – Temporary prohibition of through traffic and parking on the road from the Old Rectory to Blackpool Bridge, Shirwell.

Noted.

Two members of the public left the meeting at 8.54pm.

229/20 Parks and Open Spaces

1. Update on the North Devon Council district wide Dog Control Public Space Protection Order consultation proposals affecting Combe Martin – Chairman to report.

This item was discussed in the Public Session as a member of the public was interested and requested an update.

District Cllr Gubb had attended a briefing meeting on the Dog Control PSPO earlier in the day and confirmed that the Parish Council’s proposals would be included in the report to be submitted to the Strategy and Resources Committee meeting on Friday 13 November 2020.

Chairman Woodbury had requested an invitation to that the meeting.

1. Update on the festoon lighting and street lighting at Seaside Hill
2. *Festoon Lighting*

New technical advice has questioned the specification and suitability of the Parish Council’s festoon lighting. It was agreed that the Clerk should investigate selling the set of new replacement lights and the cost of obtaining a higher standard replacement set. Cllr Daukes offered his expertise on this.

1. *Seaside Highway street lighting delays*

**RESOLVED**: The Parish Council to request Devon County Council to install temporary street lighting as a matter of urgency, given the delay in the installation of the new lighting columns.

This issue was touched upon earlier in the meeting and County Cllr Davis agreed to investigate.

230/20 Footpaths

The Parish Council no longer has a P3 Co-ordinator to carry out the annual survey of the footpaths that is required as part of the Parish Paths Partnership Scheme. **ACTION**: The Clerk’s office to make enquiries with Devon County Council about the status of the scheme this year and implications of potentially not being able to meet the scheme’s criteria for the footpath grant. Cllr Davidson and a member of the public expressed an interest in carrying out the footpaths survey.

Cllr Mallinder reported that the chicane at the bottom of Adderstable Woods has been removed and Cllr Richards reported that the gate at the top was in a poor condition and needs repairing. **ACTION**: The Clerk’s office to investigate.

231/20 Health and Safety

Cllr Davidson expressed her concern about the wall at Adams Hay and will speak to the Clerk outside of this meeting.

232/20 Exclusion of Press and Public

**RESOLVED**: a. That, under section1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items as they involve the disclosure of sensitive and confidential information, and the items contain exempt information as defined by the Local Government Act 1972 Schedule 12a Part 1. b. That all reports and documents relating to the items be confirmed as “Not for publication”

Part A of the meeting closed at 9.08pm. District Cllr Gubb and the remaining members of the public left the meeting.

**PART B:**

233/20 Mill Weir Lane

**RESOLVED:** To seek legal advice on the Parish Council’s decision made at its meeting on Monday 11 July 2016 to accept responsibility for Mill Weir Lane.

The meeting closed at 9.17pm.

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Chairman of Combe Martin Parish Council