

Draft minutes of the Combe Martin Parish Council meeting,
held on 11th September 2023 at 7pm at Combe Martin Community Centre.

Present: Cllrs. Cass, Corner, Lethaby, Masters, Optix, Richards, Seldon, Smallridge, Watkins, and Worth.

Also in attendance: County Cllr. Davis, Andrew Wyer (Clerk), 6 members of the public and a representative of the DRIP project.

The DRIP project update was repositioned in the meeting until after Public Participation.

076/23 Apologies – Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs. Everett, and Galloway.

077/23 Declarations of Interest – Cllr Lethaby declared that as a District Councillor, the views he gives (and how he votes) at this meeting will not necessarily be the same as he does at a District Council meeting.

078/23 Public Participation – There were questions raised about the takeover of the Kiln Car Park toilets from North Devon Council – Could we be sure that they will close if we don't take them over, not wanting to take them over and see other toilets in North Devon continue to stay open and be maintained by NDC, would there be an associated reduction in the NDC part of the Council Tax. (Unlikely to see any reduction in NDC's Council Tax, very likely that they would be closed and sold off if we didn't take them over and believe that Ilfracombe and Lynton/Lynmouth are all having to take over their toilets too.)

The meeting was suspended to receive the DRIP project update following their drop-in session in August:

The session was very successful and ties in well with the other projects currently underway within the River Umber catchment area. There will be a newsletter produced soon. A question was asked about DCC's response to flood risk properties in Bowling Green Lane (C.Cllr Davis said she would follow up on the complaints made.)

079/23 Minutes – The draft minutes of the meeting held on 10th July 2023 were approved and signed by Cllr Seldon as an accurate record.

The draft minutes of the Finance and Policies Committee on 10th July were NOTED.

The following recommendations were considered and agreed:

a. The Council should adopt the Risk Schedule as proof it recognises the risks facing the Council.

b. The Council should adopt the example Risk Assessment template.

080/23 Clerk's Report –The report had been shared with the agenda. The Clerk also updated Council that the DCC grant for the speed signs had been received and covered all but a couple of pounds of the actual cost and it was then NOTED.

081/23 County & District Cllr reports – County Cllr Davis had distributed her report ahead of the meeting. She highlighted that to advertise that buses have been timetabled to meet trains, the back of many buses will be advertising Combe Martin as a destination. Alongside this there is a video, featuring C.Cllr Davis on Combe Martin beach, attempting to eat an ice cream before it melted and ruined the shot. The speed activated signs had been ordered and would be installed as soon as possible.

082/23 Member of Parliament – It was NOTED that Selaine Saxby had held a surgery in the village, and it was RESOLVED to invite her to the October meeting.

083/23 Police Newsletter – This had been circulated ahead of the meeting and reported 2 crimes in Combe Martin, 1 in Berrynarbor, and 57 in Ilfracombe. The newsletter was NOTED.

084/23 Planning (NDC Applications) – The Council RESOLVED to decline to comment to the first applications (which is the Council's own application) and to support the others: 77294 – Construction of a multi-sport, artificial turf practice pitch, replacing and extending the existing grass basketball court at Combe Martin Football Club, Hollands Park, Chapel Lane, Combe Martin, EX34 0HJ 77545 – Application for a non-material amendment to planning permission 76126 (alterations and extension to existing dwelling) in respect of replacement of existing dwelling) in respect of replacement of existing up and over garage door with double glazed French doors.

085/23 Planning (Exmoor NP Applications) – There were no applications to consider.

086/23 Planning (NDC Decisions) – The following decisions were NOTED: 76656– Approved – Pack of Cards, High Street, Combe Martin, EX34 0ET. Conversion of outbuilding to residential unit. 77105 – Approved – Pack of Cards high Street, Combe Martin, EX34 0ET. Listing building consent of conversion of outbuilding to residential unit. 77165 – Approved – 7 Hillside View, Combe Martin. EX34 0BD

Erection of double garage on existing driveway. 77244 – Approved – “Sidmar”, Corner Lane, Combe Martin, EX34 0HU.

Extension to dwelling to incorporate rear utility and WC area into main house,
including alterations to the roof and insertion of new windows.

087/23 Planning (Exmoor NP Decisions) – There were no decisions to note.

088/23 Planning Correspondence : None

089/23 Finance – It was RESOLVED to approve the lists of payments to be made, together with a late invoice (value £21.32), totalling £17913.83.

090/23 Finance - It was RESOLVED to note the lists of payments made, receipts received and the August Dashboard report.

091/23 Finance - Missing monies. The Clerk reported that a deposit from the car parks of £1600 (not £1400 as stated on the Agenda) had not arrived in the bank account. It appears that Loomis had mistakenly deposited the money in another Council's account. It may take a few weeks for the money to be returned but he was confident it would be forthcoming.

092/23 Kiln Car Park Toilets - The draft Heads of Terms were reviewed with several issues being identified. The Clerk agreed to search the deeds to confirm if the site had originally been gifted to NDC. Councillors were keen to better understand the costs and breakage rates of the equipment. There was a query why the NDC street cleaning team needed storage space when we never see anyone cleaning the streets. The Council wanted assurance that NDC were disposing of all of their public conveniences and that Combe Martin wouldn't be alone if they did end up taking them over.

093/23 Hollands Park – The grass verge was doing a good job at holding the bank together and that as surface water did not run down that side of Chapel Lane it was felt that a kerb may not be needed, but this could be reviewed in the future if required. Several comments had been made to Councillors about not needing the hedge. As there would be no significant difference if the hedge was planted in this autumn or next spring it was decided to consult the local residents in late winter, when they would have been able to try it with just the fence for a few months.

Cllr Seldon left the room for the following two items, which were discussed together.

094/23 Parade Car Park seating – see next item

095/23 Storm boards – The Council had quotes from a local metalworker for extending the metal fencing in Parade Car Park (as part of a plan for opening up some additional seating) and for replacing the storm boards on the slipway. The Clerk wasn't sure if he could find funds for either, let alone both projects. As there were safety implications the Council agreed to prioritise the Parade car park seating and fencing.

Cllr Seldon returned to the room.

096/23 Museum – The Council were sympathetic to the issue of lost income but could not give anything without some sort of justification for the figure.

097/23 Football Club – The Council agreed to pay this invoice but decided to contact the Football Club stressing that this would be the last one and that it was a bit of a cheek for an organisation who haven't paid any rent for many years to expect the Council to maintain their building.

098/23 Council vehicles – The Council heard that a trial of a new grass cutting tractor had been very successful and would be more capable than the Carrero. The Massey Fergusson tractor is effectively a collector's piece and Cliff advised that now would probably be a good time to replace it. The Council also discussed how and when the pick-up truck could be replaced, with Kawasaki Mule style vehicles being suggested.

099/23 Workman's Shed – The Council were updated on the failed application to add a new vehicle entrance to the Community Centre. It was agreed to try to resurrect the lean-to part of the original plan, with a garage for the grass cutting tractor and a workshop unit for refurbishing benches etc to be built out of sight behind the Community Centre.

100/23 Planning Applications – The Clerk explained that there was a build-up of planning applications that the Council wanted to submit. This is partially due to the numerous issues and reapplications for the Community Centre entrance and partially due to the planning agent's capacity. The Council NOTED this.

101/23 Anti-Social behaviour – This item was withdrawn and not discussed.

102/23 Land Disposal – There were no updates to report.

103/23 DCC schemes – The Clerk reported that the new Council workman would probably be enrolled in at least one of these schemes as part of their training.

104/23 Leys Charity – Cllr Cass believed that he had already confirmed that he would like to be the Council representative. As there were no other volunteers, the Clerk offered to be the 2nd representative as he had benefitted from the work of this fund in the past. This was APPROVED.

105/23 Correspondence – The correspondence was NOTED.

Next Meeting –

Assets & Land Management Committee will meet on 25th September at 6pm

Full Council will meet on 9th October at 7pm.