

**APPROVED Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Blackawton Parish Council held on
Tuesday 7 November 2023 at 7:30 p.m. in St Michael's Church, Blackawton**

Open Forum

No members of the public present.

Present: Parish & South Hams District Cllr Rake (Chair), Parish Cllrs Oughton (Vice-Chair), Coe, Hadow, Luckens, and Thomas were present, as was Devon County Cllr Brazil (for his report), and A Thom (Clerk). There were no members of the public.

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mardon.

2. Vacancy for a Parish Councillor .

It was resolved to co-opt Robert Luckens to fill the vacant position.

3. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Coe declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in the Agenda item about the registration of The George Inn as an Asset of Community Value.

4. Minutes of Previous Meetings

It was resolved to approve the minutes of the Meeting held on 3 October 2023.

5. Report from South Hams District Council Councillor

Cllr Rake reported that all residents are receiving letters about the changes to waste collections commencing in the week starting Monday 20 November. So far the project is on schedule. The feedback from those already on the new waste system is that it is liked on the whole. Please let Cllr Rake know if you encounter a problem so that he can help.

6. Report from Devon County Council Councillor

DCC Cllr Brazil discussed the road closure at East Charleton and the upcoming closure at Stoke Fleming from January to March next year where a wall which fell down is repaired. There is a Slapton Line discussion meeting in December. Cllr Brazil hopes that DCC will propose a planning application for a hard defence of the Line. The work would need central funding. The proposed stopping of the mobile library service is being considered by the DCC Cabinet tomorrow and is likely to be approved.

7. Planning Applications

7.1. SHDC Planning Decisions

The following decisions were noted:

- 2729/23/FUL Blackawton Village Hall Vicarage Road Blackawton TQ9 7AY. Replacement roof. Conditional Approval.
- 2778/23/TPO Wadstray House Blackawton TQ9 7DE. T1: Ash - fell due to evidence of dieback - due to proximity to house. Tree Works Allowed.
- 2052/23/ARC Proposed Development At Sx 8074 5071 Land at Greenslade Road, Blackawton TQ9 7BP. Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 10 (Facing Materials), 11 (Slates), 12 (Stonework Panel) and 16 (Boundary Treatment) of planning consent 1972/17/FUL. Discharge of condition Approved.

7.2. Review of New Applications

- 3382/23/PDM Land At Sx 801 505 Blackawton. Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed change of use of agricultural buildings/barns to 2No dwellinghouses (class C3) & for associated development (Class Q (a+b))
For information only.

8. Consultations

- SHDC Public Space Protection Orders for dog control in the District. Closes 14/11/23
- SHDC Council Tax Reduction Scheme Review, Closes 28/11/23
- Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service, Level of Council Tax contribution, Closes 30/11/23

- DCC, Call for sites: EV charging Parish & Community car parks in Devon, Closes 17/11/23

Cllrs may comment individually. No Parish Council comment made. The Clerk will resend the call for EV sites to Cllr Coe for the Hall.

9. Registering The George Inn as an Asset of Community Value

Cllr Coe left the room.

The text survey responses have been redacted, mainly to remove personal data (to comply with GDPR). Cllrs supported the public circulation of the redacted responses. It was agreed that it is now appropriate to implement the decision to submit an application to SHDC. Cllr Thomas discussed the questionnaire process as a learning process. 95 were received in total, 37 online and 58 on paper forms. Most paper returns came from the shop - 41 of the 58 paper forms returned. We printed 180 forms, 77 were taken and not returned. Mandatory online questions created a problem when inputting paper forms into the online system.

Cllr Coe returned to the room.

10. Phone Box Restoration

It might be possible to use chemical paint stripper on the phone box. Hammerite paint is available in red. It appears feasible for the project to be done by local volunteers. A proposal will be prepared by Cllrs.

11. Cemetery Grounds Maintenance and Planting Proposal

The proposal was considered. It was agreed to continue to face the inside of hedges annually. Excess soil will be added to the surface of graves by the maintenance contractor in any season and in small enough amounts that the grass is not checked. It is difficult to replant in the location of the dead ash tree because of poor soil quality. Hedgerow plants will be planted in the hedging gap by April 2024 at latest, approximately nine hedging plants, and Cllrs Coe and Hadow can progress this. Devon Rural Skills Trust might be interested in doing the repair work to the wall. Cllr Luckens will have a look at the wall. The roadside of the hedge will be faced annually but only topped every two to three years as described in the proposal. Hedgerow trees will be marked before topping. Two areas will be added to the biodiversity zones which are cut less often – in front of the bench and below the cremation plots. Biodiversity zones will be cut in March and August, and all cuttings removed and placed around new trees and hedging plants. There is a small project to repair small holes in the parking surface. The Clerk will write up revised specifications for approval in the December meeting.

12. Parish Basic Allowances

It was unanimously resolved to approve the payment of allowances of £120 to those Councillors who choose to claim them.

13. Subscription Emails

It was agreed that Councillors will subscribe individually to subscriptions of interest to them in place of the current system of the Clerk forwarding subscription emails. The Clerk was asked to add the list to the parish community website. Some subscriptions might be of interest to residents, particularly those about grant funding opportunities.

14. Remembrance Service Sunday 12 November at 10:50 am

The arrangements for Parish Council representation at the Service, preparatory maintenance of the War Memorial area, and a donation to the Royal British Legion of £50 were agreed.

15. Finance

15.1. Update on Current Financial Position

The Financial Reports showed total funds of £60,819.35 and an unearmarked general fund of £17,229.93.

15.2. Payments & Receipts

It was resolved to authorise the following payments:

- Parish Online subscription, £58.80

- Blackawton Parish Church, Hire of Narthex 2/11/23, £20.00
- Clerk, October expenses reimbursement, £96.97
- CHT, Defibrillator Annual Support, £198.00
- ARCCAS Churchyard frequent cuts, 05/9 & 21/9, £96.00 each
- ARCCAS Churchyard frequent cuts, 03/10 & 17/10, £96.00 each
- ARCCAS Cemetery frequent cuts, 03/10 & 17/10, £108.00 each
- Maintenance Contractor, bus shelter cleans, vegetation from wall, repair to cemetery bench, £758.00

The following payment made since the October meeting was noted:

- ARCCAS, Cemetery frequent cuts, 05/9 & 21/9, £108.00 each

The following receipts were noted:

- Interment and EROB, Lawn cemetery, £500
- Allwood of Totnes, Additional inscription, £40.00
- Interment and EROB, Lawn cemetery, £250

15.3. Fireworks Grant Application

No application was received

16. Correspondence

The following correspondence was noted:

- West Dart Bus, Grant application From, For incorporation in budgeting process
- Energy Wise Show Totnes Civic Hall, 11th November, 12-5pm
- SHDC, Invitation advertise Christmas events in its website, social media and print campaigns
- SHDC, 26/10/23, Notice of canvassing to confirm Electoral Registration details
- SHDC Monitoring Officer, 31/10/23, Reminder to Cllrs to keep Registers of Interests current
- DALC, 'Connect' event 25/10/23, Devon Housing Commission's work on Devon housing crisis
- DCC, 2/11/23, Request for information about flooding incidents
- DCC, Invitation to Towns & Parishes budget meetings in November & December

17. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 5 December 2023 at 7:30 p.m.

18. Closure of the Meeting

It was resolved, in accordance with the 1960 Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act, to exclude the public and press during consideration of the following item(s) because of the employment or commercial-in-confidence nature of the business.

19. Dead Cemetery Ash Tree Removal Quotes

It was resolved to choose Pittman as the contractor to remove the tree.

20. Grounds Maintenance Contract

It was resolved to accept the proposed prices from ARCCAS to do the Cemetery grounds maintenance in 2024, but also to request a reduction in the frequent cuts price as a result of the new biodiversity zones. BPC will request the removal of the cuttings from the biodiversity area and their placement elsewhere on site at an additional cost. ARCCAS has provided acceptable prices for the Churchyard frequent cuts and would be able to do that work in 2024 if BPC took on responsibility for the maintenance of the Churchyard and made that request. ARCCAS are not offering to do the biodiversity cuts in the Churchyard. It has been suggested that this work might be more suitable for a local resident who is able to be responsive to weather conditions and able to do the work in stages.

21. Internal Auditor 2023/24

It was resolved to contract Microshade for the 2023/24 Internal Audit.

22. Annual Leave Request

It was resolved to authorise the annual leave requested.