

Sydenham Damerel Parish Council

Minute No 111

Thursday 1st December 2022 held at Milton Abbot Village Hall, Milton Abbot

These Minutes are provisional until they are signed by the Chair at the next Parish Council Meeting

Meeting opened at 7.00pm

Present: Cllrs N. Furse (Chair), N. Pratten, R. Windemer

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting
2. Apologies for absence: None
3. Members of the public forum: two members of the public were present.

Cllr Pratten informed everyone that she would be taking the minutes of the meeting in a voluntary capacity and would not be paid for this service. She reminded everyone of the correct protocol for the public forum

- A parishioner commented that people had been attending Sydenham Damerel Church for over 600 years and it was a shame that the PC had moved venues. Cllr Windemer agreed but explained in detail the reasons behind the move, including the latest advice from Devon Association of Local Councils (DALC) and their legal team.
- The same parishioner referred to point 8 from the last minutes regarding a litter picking initiative from the PC and expressed disappointment as there was already a system in place with a good group of litter-pickers. Cllr Pratten replied that she had responded to a request raised at Meeting 109 by a parishioner asking if the PC could come up with an initiative to encourage parishioners to help with litter-picking. She assured everyone that the PC only wanted to support the current hard work that goes on in the Parish and not replace the current system. The Chair apologised for any misunderstanding from the minutes.

Cllr Jory from WDBC joined the meeting at 7.08pm

4. New Councillor-Member co-option: Cllr Pratten introduced Mr Simon Miller to those present and explained that he had shown an interest to be co-opted onto the PC. Cllr Pratten proposed that we co-opt Mr Miller, seconded by Cllr Windemer. It was voted unanimously to co-opt Mr Miller who then completed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and Register of Interest forms. He joined the meeting formally as a Councillor at 7.16pm.
5. Declaration of Interest: none
6. Minutes of the previous Meeting 110 were agreed as accurate. Proposed by Cllr Windemer, seconded by Cllr Furse. They were signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record.
7. Planning: 3481/22/FUL Amendments to the dwelling, built slightly differently from the approved plans of planning consent 0817/20/FUL & the erection of a garage (retrospective). Cllr Windemer had looked back at the site history since 2011 and explained in detail the numerous planning applications and refusals over the years. After a discussion about the retrospective planning permission, the PC agreed that it could not condone approving the application. Cllr Furse proposed that the PC submit an objection, Cllr Windemer seconded. Voted unanimously to object.
8. Finance:
 - 8.1 Authorisation to pay outstanding invoices: Community Heartbeat Trust Ltd for defibrillator parts £301.20 (VAT will be claimed back), Mr P van Delft, Locum Clerk, period 12/10 - 24/11/2022 £163.35 (includes stationery, postage etc) and Membership of the Information Commissioners' Office £35.00. Cllr Pratten had sought advice from DALC about subscribing to this service and it was strongly recommended that we pay this annual charge. Cllr Windemer proposed that we authorise these payments, Cllr Pratten seconded, passed unanimously.
 - 8.2 RFO Report: The PC accepted the RFO's Report. Proposed by Cllr Windemer, seconded by Cllr Furse, passed unanimously.

- 8.3 Budget and Precept for 2023- 2024: The PC looked at the proposed budget which included the precept for the next financial year. The PC had looked at funding allocations before this meeting. The PC had decided to make a grounds maintenance grant available to St Mary's Church. The PC were pleased that there would be a reduction to next year's precept which would be £2244.00. After a discussion, Cllr Windemer proposed that the Budget and Precept be accepted, seconded by Cllr Furse, passed unanimously.
9. Councillors' Reports: Cllr Pratten said that she had had a conversation with a representative from Community Heartbeat Trust regarding their Village Emergency Telephone Scheme (VETS). The first year would be free with a one-off £45 set up charge. After the first year, the PC could either cancel or continue with a payment of £100. Training would be offered, about £175. The scheme can be for any emergency that requires help from the emergency services. We would need 10 volunteers. Cllr Pratten will ask for volunteers through the next PC newsletter and the SD Distribution group. If there is enough interest and support, the PC will make a decision about joining the scheme. Cllr Pratten is happy to co-ordinate the next newsletter.
- Cllr Pratten had spoken to Anna Gribble, Senior Case Manager of the Democratic Services at WDBC regarding the Governance Review as some parishioners were worried about who would be funding it. Ms Gribble confirmed that WDBC will have to cover the costs. There is a Full Council Meeting on the 21st of February 2023 where the terms and conditions will be drawn up and the Review process must be completed by February 2024.
- Cllr Pratten had attended the Armistice Service at St Mary's and laid a wreath on behalf of the PC. It was a very moving service and she thanked everyone who organised it. She had also met the new Curate at the last coffee morning and explained the reasons why the PC had moved venues. Cllr Pratten informed him that the PC is very keen to support the Church with a bid for toilet facilities and he has since contacted her to say that he has had a few discussions and he is "on the case". Cllr Jory added that there is a West Devon Community Project Grant available, it would be match funded and he will send further information.
- Cllr Windemer raised the subject of the drainage issue at Derriton Cross. Devon Highways had attended the junction and the blockages appeared to be clear at first but several drains are blocked again and water is pouring into Derriton Farm. He explained that the culvert just up from Derriton Cross has collapsed and he has reported both problems to Devon Highways.
10. Cllr Jory, WDBC report: Cllr Jory confirmed the update regarding the Governance Review. WDBC is putting their budget together and a financial settlement from the Government will be before Christmas. He explained their budget process. Cllr Jory informed the PC that there was a housing emergency in West Devon, especially with social and rented housing and WDBC is looking at ways to increase this provision. He also added that WDBC are concerned about anyone living in rented properties with severe damp conditions and wanted to encourage them to contact him as help may be available. There are currently 180 Ukranian families living with host families in West Devon and he talked about a recent positive event, supported by WDBC. The Council has employed a Ukranian to liaise with families but WDBC is concerned that some of the host families are coming to the end of their 6-month period and it is looking at ways to solve any problems that arise from this. Cllr Jory informed the PC that there was a page on the WDBC website that sets out help that is available with the cost-of-living crisis. WDBC is looking at ways to involve Town and Parish Councils in supporting households. He will keep the PC posted.
11. New Councillors: We now have a PC of four councillors, but we would welcome more people.
12. Replacement Clerk: Cllr Pratten explained that the prospective Clerk had been offered the position but had to turn it down due to unexpected health issues and they did not want to commit to taking up the post and let us down. Cllr Pratten had assured them that health must come first. In the meantime, the Locum Clerk would continue until we appoint a replacement. The post will be advertised through DALC.
13. New/ replacement benches: Cllr Windemer said that he is currently storing the donated bench but it does need some attention before it is sited. Cllr Furse informed the PC that she will be donating some wood and Cllr Windemer offered to make a bench using this wood.

14. Defibrillator Update: Cllr Windemer informed the PC that the new defibrillator is installed on the wall of The Royal Inn and it is operational. Mr Forster has registered it with the Circuit. The code will be released by the Ambulance Service to the caller when they dial 999. A discussion was held about providing a defibrillator for Townlake. It was felt that it would be a good idea to consult with the Townlake residents about whether they see the need for one now that there are two in the Parish and whether they would support any fundraising towards the cost of purchasing a new one. Feedback will be collated by Cllr Pratten and discussed at the next meeting.
15. The Coronation of King Charles III, May 2023: A discussion was held about whether the PC will mark this occasion. It was agreed that anyone living in the Parish could apply in writing to the PC for a grant to enable them to organise a community event. The event must benefit the community in some way. This information will be included in the next newsletter. Funding will be allocated from the reserves.
16. Correspondence: A couple of emails had been received from a parishioner regarding the moving of venues. Another email queried when the draft Minutes were going to be posted (there had been a technical issue with the website) and a third email had been received pointing out a typing error with the PC website address.

Items for inclusion at the next meeting:

Defibrillator at Townlake, Celebrations for King Charles III's Coronation

Meeting closed at 8.35pm

Date of next meeting: 9th March 2023