

DRAFT MINUTES

At a future meeting the council will consider the accuracy of these minutes so they may be subject to change. Please check the minutes of the next meeting to confirm whether or not they have been amended

Minutes of a Meeting of Tywardreath and Par Parish Council held on 1st December 2011 at the Par Running Track Pavilion at 7pm

Present Cllrs Wildish, Allen, Brasier, Hughes, Johnstone, Netherton, Penny and Phillips

In attendance The Parish Clerk, Sally Vincent
Martin Eddy – Cornwall Council (part)
Rob Andrews – Cornwall Council (part)
6 members of the public (3 part)

11/104 Apologies

Cllr Foster, Cllr Fowler, PCSO Rebecca Harris, PC Rob Toms.

11/105 Declarations of interest

1. In items on the agenda – Cllr Hughes declared a personal interest in any item connected to allotments
2. In gifts to a value in excess of £25 – None

11/106 Public Questions/Police Report/ Rob Andrews/Martin Eddy

Rob Andrews explained that a Devolution Team had been set up at Cornwall Council in May and there was a strong desire to work with town and parish councils. The Team was working towards packages to deliver services locally, either by providing funding or offering opportunities to work in partnership.

Martin Eddy reminded the meeting that the country was in deep recession but that Cornwall Council was trying to maintain public services in spite of the difficulties.

In respect of Par Beach he made the following points.

- Cornwall Council was actively working with the parish council in order to protect the footpaths on the site
- The car park was cost neutral apart from maintenance and repairs
- Cornwall Council considers the toilets on Par Beach to be strategic and will protect them although it might be possible to work with Park Leisure and allow them to take them over on a leasehold basis.
- The lease on the caravan site was being renegotiated at present
- The beach itself was leased in from the Duchy; the lease had expired but was being held over at present. There was some disagreement at County with regard to the cleaning of a beach not belonging to Cornwall Council.
- Café. There had been a competitive process for the leasehold with 2 expressions of interest being received and the decision of the panel considering them had awarded the lease to Park Leisure. Martin that everybody was unhappy with this decision but was keen to work in partnership and to this end had arranged for Ray Tovey and Julian

German to meet with himself, Cllr Hughes, Cllr Wildish and the parish clerk to investigate how much funding could be retained for the beach.

- Cllr Hughes stated that he was absolutely incensed at the outcome of the tender process but recorded that he was deeply grateful to Martin Eddy who had worked tirelessly to help the parish council
- Cllr Penny maintained that the public must have full access to the café and it must not be solely for the use of holiday park residents
- Cllr Netherton clarified that the Duchy part of the beach was only the area from high water to low water
- Cllr Johnstone stated that Par Beach was the parish's greatest asset and he understood that a new extended lease was now being negotiated with Park Leisure without the parish council being involved, which he considered unacceptable. He was also astonished that the Chairman of the Friends of Par Beach had been informed about the outcome of the tender process for the café by Cornwall Council but that no attempt had been made to inform the parish council; he did not consider that this was an example of Cornwall Council working in partnership with town and parish councils as had been promised.
- Cllr Wildish reported that the number of caravans on the beach was increasing without the benefit of planning permission, which was a prime example of where local knowledge was far superior to that of Cornwall Council.
- Cllr Netherton queried if the term of the lease was going to be extended. This was confirmed.
- It was generally felt that it was extremely frustrating for the parish council to try to work with Cornwall Council as nothing was being achieved despite many promises and Cllrs reporting many breaches of planning on the site. A member of the public endorsed all the concerns of the Cllrs and considered that Cornwall Council's attitude to the planning breaches was shocking. She confirmed that she regularly walked on the beach footpaths only to find paths blocked by Park Leisure.
- Adrian Wildish queried if the mine adit on Par Beach would be made safe following a tragic accident in another part of the county.
- Cllr Penny asked Martin and Rob to provide the full details Park Leisure including the full company address and number.

In response to a query from a member of the public, Cllr Hughes reported that the tree in Trevance Park had been felled by Serco following a complaint from a member of the public that it was obstructing the footpath. Cllr Hughes suggested that the Environment Committee should investigate the position with regard to TPO's in the parish.

It was reported that the Par and St Blazey Flood Group had established a Committee, which included representatives from the community.

Police Report. Cllr Wildish reported that there had been 11 crimes in the parish during November.

11/107 Minutes of the Meeting held on 3rd November 2011

Changes. Page 1. Mr Richardson to Mr Richards. Page 4. Add 'meeting' between 'last' and 'Sally.' With these amendments it was proposed by Cllr

Hughes, seconded Cllr Johnstone and RESOLVED that the minutes be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

11/108 Matters Arising not on the Agenda (for report only)

Neither the Clerk nor Cllr Hughes had managed to make contact with Hamish Gordon despite repeated attempts to do so.

Cllr Hughes reported that Teresa Frost was investigating Keith Pearce's concerns

Cllr Hughes advised that he had attended a briefing on the future of the Penwinnick Road council offices site; half of the site would be sold to provide a new supermarket and a new council office would be built on the remaining part. The developer had already undertaken to preserve or transplant the Mayor's trees on the site.

11/109 To receive the report from the Cornwall Councillor

Cllr Hughes reported that he was absolutely furious about the outcome of the tender process for the Par beach café and made a full report on the process – *attached at appendix 1*. It was agreed that the Clerk should send this report to Mr Pickles with the parish council's endorsement.

11/110 To receive the report from the parish council representative on the Community Network Panel

No report

11/111 To receive and note the minutes (if any) of Parish Council Committees

Environment – no report

Planning – minutes noted.

Finance – minutes noted

11/112 Correspondence List

The correspondence list had been circulated and the file was available for Cllrs attention.

11/113 Finance

Cllr Phillips proposed, Cllr Hughes seconded and it was RESOLVED that accounts to the value of £1210.60 be approved.

11/114 Budget 2012/2013

Cllr Phillips explained the reasoning behind the Finance Committee's recommended budget and proposed its adoption by the parish council. This was seconded by Cllr Netherton and it was RESOLVED that a precept of £16,789.00 should be requested from Cornwall Council.

11/115 Resolutions from Councillors

None

11/116 Election of additional member to the Planning Committee

Cllr Brasier proposed, Cllr Phillips seconded and it was RESOLVED that Cllr Allen should be elected to the planning committee

11/117 Par Beach Complex

No further report.

11/118 Par Beach Footpaths

No further report

11/119 Seaside Towns

The Chairman confirmed that the Clerk had signed the Seaside Towns documentation and Cllr Hughes undertook to deliver it the following day in order to meet the deadline.

11/120 Queen Elizabeth 11 Playing Fields

No longer relevant so this would be removed from future agendas.

11/121 Parish Plan

No report

11/122 HM The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Celebrations

Costings were being sought for commemorative items for distribution. Cllr Penny raised the subject of street parties but members were of the opinion that it was not the parish council's place to take the lead for these events.

11/123 Ground at Vine Place

Cllr Hughes was checking to see if he could use his CC Highways budget for the work at Vine Place to provide public parking spaces there.

Cllr Netherton reported that it had been suggested at the Finance Committee meeting that the land at Vine Place could be put out to tender for the provision of parking spaces

11/124 Public Convenience Review

It was noted that Cornwall Council had deferred decisions on possible closures for another 12 months.

11/125 Cornwall Council (off street parking places) Order 2012

It was agreed that the future arrangements suggested were acceptable to the parish council.

11/126 Youth Club

Cllr Netherton had yet to speak to Mr Elliot but confirmed that the Youth Club at Par would be continuing. Cllr Wildish confirmed that there appeared to be little interest in setting up a Youth Club in Tywardreath. Cllr Phillips stated that Mr Elliot should do more research into need and availability of adult support and come back to the parish council. Cllr Wildish confirmed that there would be questions about Youth Clubs in the review of the Parish Plan.

11/127 Parish Councillors Reports

Cllr Netherton thanked the Clerk for arranging for the hearing loop to be in place for the evening.

Cllr Netherton noted that Cornwall Council did not appear to know what area constituted the beach at Par, it was high water line to the railway line

Date of Next Meeting 5th January 2012
Meeting Closed 9.26pm

Appendix 1

Tywardreath & Par Parish Council – Cornwall Councillor’s Report - December 2011

I am sure that there are many items, which I should be addressing in my report to you this evening. However, my thoughts and efforts, in my waking and non-sleeping hours over the past couple of weeks have been concentrated on one topic and I propose to restrict my remarks to this, namely Par Beach Café.

As many of you will be aware, although I do not believe that any public statement has yet been made, following the recent tendering procedure, Cornwall Council has decided to award the tender to Park Leisure, the operator of Par Beach Caravan Site. I consider this to be a shameful betrayal of and insult to this Council and all the groups and individuals who have worked so hard to realise the dream of a “community café” which would serve as a focus and beacon for the wider plans which we are trying to develop to enhance the community use of the beach.

Led by the Parish Council, with active support from various local organisations, a project was developed to build a new “community café” on the site, offering a year-round café along with a “community space” to be used for education and interpretational activities, as part of a wider project to enhance Par Beach and its associated wildlife reserve as a **non-commercial** leisure and recreational facility, essentially for the local community and that of the wider “clay-country” area. This was the original objective when the land was purchased by the Parish, by public subscription in 1913! As part of this exercise we involved the students of the University of Plymouth Architecture School in design of a “sustainable” building”.

In the course of developing the project, we became aware that the success of the project would require a level of “professional” management in both project development and on-going operation, which the Parish, with only a part-time Clerk did not possess. We were therefore delighted when Rezolve offered to link the scheme to their imaginative cycle “recycling” project, which fitted perfectly with the wider aims for the beach, which is located at the end of the Sustrans cycle route linking to Eden and the Clay Trails. This overcame the “management” problem and offered the possibility of a sustainable, imaginative scheme offering skills training to young people, in an area with high youth unemployment, as well as the possibility of being a “Beacon Project” which could redound to the glory not only of Par but to Cornwall as a whole.

Officers of Cornwall Council have been involved in the project from the outset. However, when we reached the stage when the project could be presented to funders, with a fully developed business plan, we were told that, under Council rules, the development of the café site **had** to be open to public tender. I queried this, pointing out that the proposed scheme was a not-for-profit community scheme, but was informed that no exception could be made. However, it was agreed that, in assessing tenders, a 30% weighting would be given to “community value”.

At this stage, the Rezolve scheme was submitted under the Seaside Towns Initiative, with massive local community support, and we were delighted that the project was accepted.

When the tendering process closed, two tenders were presented, Rezolve and Park Leisure. I was excluded (properly, as I had written a letter of support for the Rezolve scheme) from the evaluation

According to the report produced by Jonny Alford, Estates Services Manager, “both bids were well developed and well presented.” In summary, he stated: “Park Leisure offer a low risk, high value tender with community benefit - but lacks community support; Rezolve offer a higher risk, lower value option, with a greater community benefit supported by the local community.” Scoring was said to be close, but in favour of Park Leisure.

Whilst I accept that the financial contribution from Park Leisure would be marginally higher than that offered by Rezolve, attractive in these straitened times, this in itself should not be sufficient to outweigh the massive disparity in community contribution, particularly in the light of the history of the project. It makes a mockery of the whole concept of “localism” and encouraging community involvement.

The capital cost of the Rezolve scheme is understood to be higher than that of Park Leisure because it sets out to address the objectives of the original project, rather than being a purely commercial adjunct to the caravan site with a couple of token adjuncts. It also gives greater weight to sustainability in construction and operation.

It is ironic that the other factor weighed against the Rezolve bid was the “high risk” attached to its dependence on grant funding, given that the proposed source of that funding was to be the very DEFRA Rural Economic Growth Review Funding which has been so actively promoted in a recent e-mail from the Cabinet to Cornwall Councillors. I understand that there was a very high probability that an application for full funding of the community project from this source would have been successful.

I have always supported the principle of a unitary authority and recognise the importance of it having a strategic responsibility for Cornwall, with local communities taking a leading role in dealing with local issues and projects. The Par Beach Project in general and the Café in particular, could have been an exemplar of the success of such a policy. Instead, the rigid adherence to inappropriate procedures, requiring the “commercial” tendering of the site, rather than a simple leasing of the site to a Community Group, under strict controls, followed by an evaluation process which patently ignored the true community value of the project, has effectively scuppered what could have been a Beacon Project. I am fully expecting a big outcry when the local community discover how they have been betrayed.

In my opinion, the Council has brought itself into public disrepute by its actions and will face a massive task in seeking to restore its credibility. Given the strength of local feeling, and especially since this was one of the schemes granted Seaside Towns funding and was brought down by the Council’s actions, I suspect that the issue will get a high level of publicity.