

## **SOUTH MILTON PARISH COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 22<sup>nd</sup> JUNE 2020 via Zoom**

**1. Present/Apologies:** Cllrs M. Brice, A. Berryman, P Booker, G. Collyer and T. Lewis (SMPC) attended. Cllr M. Long (SHDC) and Cllr R. Gilbert (DCC) attended. Mr D. Ford (National Trust) attended for part of the meeting. Apologies were received from Cllr. J. Pearce (SHDC). Mr N. Townsend also attended. Mr. R. Keen, Hertford Investors, attended as an observer.

**2. Declarations of Pecuniary or Other Interests on agenda items.** MB declared an interest in items 9 and 10 relating to Wakeham Farm and took no part in the discussions.

**3. Proposal to approve Amendment to Standing Orders:** the proposal to amend Standing Orders to allow Virtual Meetings and also the Protocol on Filming and Recording Meetings were approved by all Councillors.

#### **4. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising**

The minutes of the meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020 had previously been circulated and were taken as read. They were approved by the Council and will be signed by the Chairman as soon as practical after the meeting. It was noted that the Annual Parish Meeting had been cancelled due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

#### **5. Matters Arising not raised in agenda items below**

Tree Warden: Mrs Rixon had made some suggestions about the tree but unfortunately did not attend the meeting. The Clerk will contact her.

#### **6. Vacancy for Parish Councillors and Resignation of Clerk**

- Cllr. R. Luscombe had resigned but Mr. N. Townsend had agreed to be co-opted onto the Council. A letter of thanks had been sent to RL and SMPC is very pleased that NT will be joining.
- Cllr. D. Clift had also resigned. A letter of thanks has been sent and a replacement is being sought.
- Mrs L Anderton had resigned as Clerk. She will stay in post until a replacement is appointed. Copies of the Job Description, Contract of Employment and Salary Scales had been circulated in advance of the meeting and Councillors resolved to agree these documents; the Clerk will advertise the vacancy.

#### **7. Proposal to approve new and updated policies and protocol documents**

- Statement/System of Internal Controls
- Transparency Code
- Complaints Policy
- Freedom of Information Act
- Transparency Code
- Village Emergency Plan
- Community Flood Plan

Councillors resolved unanimously to approve all of the above documents.

**8. Review of Public Space Protection Orders (dogs on beaches)** – At MB's suggestion, this item was held over pending the arrival of Mr D Ford of the National Trust at the meeting. See Item 11.

#### **9. Planning**

- 0953/20/HHO Conservatory at Derowennek. Councillors resolved unanimously to support the application. Their decision was sent to SHDC on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2020.
- At this point, PB as Vice Chairman took over the Chair.
- 1154/20/FUL Wakeham Farm domestic ground source arrays. Councillors had resolved unanimously to object to the application. Their decision was sent to SHDC on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2020 and the full details of the objection are attached at Appendix 1 of these minutes.

**10. Development at Wakeham Farm** – TL reiterated SMPC’s view that the applications should be taken in context of the whole planned development as outlined to them by Hertford Investors and should not be submitted piecemeal. Neither this application nor the previous one (0386/20/FUL relating to existing dwellings) had been determined by Development Management caused by problems with the pandemic and it was agreed that we should await the outcome of these applications before deciding on our next course of action.

#### **11. South Milton Sands/National Trust**

- MB resumed the duties of Chair and welcomed Mr D Ford to the meeting. There are three points to be discussed with him.
- Car Parking: because of the changing guidelines, the idea of not opening the overflow field this year was not to be progressed. The Trust is opening SMS (and Wembury) but with a very reduced staff who will be around to control traffic flow without handling any cash (parking fees, membership etc). NT commented that the one way system which directed traffic away via South Huish had worked really well last year and it is hoped that this system will be used again. DF suggested that the overflow field could be used proportionately depending on demand but NT recommended consistency in order to avoid confusion. DF undertook to ensure that the Trust’s website and social media pages should be updated regularly. The latest round of relaxation in Government guidelines meant that we could be facing a high number of visitors by early July.
- Beach Safety: as reported, the RNLI will not be providing lifeguard cover and so the Trust had produced its own risk assessment and were providing appropriate educational signage and a throwing line.
- PSPO (Dogs on Beaches): MB explained about the consultation currently under way and said that SMPC had carried out its own survey last year. Of the 27 responses at the time, 18 were in favour of some kind of ban. DF stated that the Trust would not support any change in the status quo at the southern end of the beach which is in their ownership. Due to geographical problems and the difficulty in policing the beach which has several different private owners, SMPC does not believe any change will be practical or possible. A formal response has not yet been made to SHDC and discussions will continue. DF asked to be kept informed.
- DF was thanked for joining the meeting.

#### **12. County Councillor’s Report**

- RG’s report was circulated in advance to Councillors; it mostly dealt with plans for recovery and renewal.
- MB mentioned the recent cutting back of vegetation at Lane End, not enough was removed from the far side of the road. RG kindly undertook to deal with the problem.
- TL asked about the markings around the damaged road from Lane End towards the village; RG undertook to find out when the work might be carried out.

#### **13. District Councillors’ Reports**

- Our new Chief Executive, Andy Bates, officially started with us last Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> June.
- Whilst we are all still working remotely and the Council offices remain closed, business is on a much more normal timetable and basis now. A phone set up outside main reception at Follaton House for anyone calling in person to ring for immediate assistance from our call centre has been used only a few times (single figures) since lock down started. The new online request system is much more responsive, and whilst users may not have noticed huge differences on the website, requests are now being handled much more efficiently and quickly, most automatically going immediately to the required source of work for attention. Consequently there is a notable shift to online contact with the Council, with better and faster resolution of requests for users.
- Much of the recent effort has been to help high streets open up. The money sent to us by government for this was in fact European money, which carries with it heavy auditing procedures. We have therefore chosen to make grants to town councils with our own money so that town councils can spend it as they think best to help their shops open up successfully without the accounting burden. We can spend the European money on qualifying projects and do our own accounting for it.
- The Council has reviewed all land it owns in the towns to see if any can be let to help hospitality businesses with outdoor seating. Licenses for the land use will be granted for nominal sums from July to

the end of October, initially for this year only. Premises licensing by minor variation is being used to fast track the regulatory side of this too.

- The council's finances have been heavily affected by the emergency, with serious loss of income for parking, business rates, council tax, the Dartmouth lower ferry and Salcombe Harbour, trade waste collection etc. This amounts to just under £3m so far out of a total annual budget of just under £10m, but it is hoped this will start to stabilise as things get back to nearer normal. Whilst not good, our position is far less serious than many councils in England. Money received from the government so far has gone some way to pay for extra expenses incurred e.g. getting all rough sleepers off the streets and increased homelessness, but has done little to back fill loss of income.
- We are moving forward with a Recovery and Renewal programme. Over the summer there will be a series of member discussion meetings on various themes to put together the programme which will cover all aspects of the council's activity and how we support the wider community to build back the local economy. The programme will be agreed at the full Council meeting set for September.

#### 14. Finance

- 2019-20 Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet was approved.
- 2019-20 AGAR Accounting Statements were agreed and will be signed by the Chairman.
- Annual Audit Report was noted.
- Annual Governance Statement was approved.
- Certificate of Exemption – AGAR 2019-20 Part 2 was approved.
- Commencement date for the exercise of public rights was set at Monday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

- Income since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 – all noted

170420	SHDC Precept	£2,283.50
220420	VAT repayment	£ 208.72
040520	Kingsbridge Funerals (Blight)	£ 250.00

- Cheques approved under Delegated Powers since last meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020 – all ratified

303020	Parish Magazine Printing	£ 43.50	101027
310320	SHDC (Payroll fee)	£ 120.00	Bank Tx
310320	Jerry's Gardening (cemetery)	£ 70.00	101028
140420	South West Ambulance (defib)	£1,200.00	101029
140420	DALC (sub)	£ 88.18	101030
270420	LA April salary	£ 210.00	101031
110520	TJ Electrical (defib cabinet)	£ 60.00	101032
260520	Jerry's Gardening	£ 78.00	101033
260520	Michael Dennis (audit)	£ 50.00	101034
260520	LA May salary	£ 210.00	101035
260520	Community First (insurance)	£ 186.57	101036
220620	LA June salary + Zoom fee	£ 224.39	101037

- Bank Account Status Balances at 310520 Current £ 7,642.65 Reserve £ 9,478.04

£17,120.69  
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15. Date of next meeting – Monday 27<sup>th</sup> July 2020 at 7.30 pm. hopefully in the Village Hall (to be confirmed)

OPS None

Approved..... Date.....  
(Chairman)

## APPENDIX 1

### **Comments from South Milton Parish Council on Application 1154/20/FUL – Wakeham Farm, South Milton, TQ7 3JQ**

The Parish wishes to work constructively with the developers on the redevelopment of the Wakeham Farm site. A good start was made when the developers invited Councillors to attend a site meeting to outline their plans for a holiday complex on the site. The developers were informed that a holiday complex was totally at odds with the vision and policies set out in the South Milton Neighbourhood Plan (SMNP). The subsequent failure of the developers to submit an application with an outline plan for the site but a series of incremental minor applications is generating suspicions and hostility within the community. The scale and nature of the development outlined to the councillors at the site meeting is very significant within the context of the village and indeed the parish. As a result, parishioners view the proposed development to be akin to the proposed K5 development in Kingsbridge; they question what the planning authority's response would be if the K5 developer had made a similar incremental approach to that development. The developer and the planning authority would regain credibility if the developer was required to submit an application with an outline plan for the whole site.

The Parish Council is supportive of domestic renewable energy installations as set out in the Neighbourhood Plan. The Parish Council however objects to this planning application for the following reasons:

1. The application is for non-domestic use and is of commercial scale. The definition of domestic is "of or involving the home or family". The developers have told councillors that the site is being developed as a holiday complex and in the absence of an express written statement to the contrary, the Parish Council will consider this and all planning applications for the site accordingly.
2. The field that will be dug up to install the ground source array is an historic meadow that is an important part of the "... distinctive historic landscape character including its patchwork of fields...shaped by...farming traditions" (paragraph 6.4 of the SMNP). This meadow is of particular significance because of its proximity to the village Conservation Areas and it forms part of the backdrop to the Grade 1 Listed church when viewed from the coastline. Councillors and parishioners, some of whom are farming in the parish, have grave doubts that the meadow can ever be restored to its current state.
3. The developer has failed to take due consideration of the impacts of the proposed work on flooding and erosion both during construction and on completion. The material considerations are set out in paragraphs 6.44 and 6.45 of the SMNP. The area subject to flooding by the Wakeham site is shown on Figure 6.5 of the SMNP. Councillors are also concerned that sediment arising from erosion will be deposited further downstream, particularly where the gradient of the local stream reduces in the South Milton Ley SSSI. Based on prior bad experiences with flooding and erosion with downslope ploughing, trenching downslope is unacceptable to Councillors. To satisfy Councillors, the developer must confirm in writing the mitigation measures that will be completed to eliminate unacceptable impacts and provide a warranty that they will be implemented. There are inconsistencies between the engineering report and the drawings on the width of the trenches which could mislead readers on the scale of the works.

Both the Design and Access Statement and the Engineers Report make great play of the benefits of a ground source array compared with the current heating arrangements. These benefits however are trivial compared with the adverse impacts on traffic, noise, air and light pollution of the holiday complex the array will serve.

Submitted by South Milton Parish Clerk on 4th June 2020