



A meeting of the Parish Council was held in Bratton Fleming Village Hall on Wednesday 19 February 2020 at 7:00pm.

Present: Cllrs F Benbow (Chairman), Mrs N Catmore, M Huxtable, Mrs L Bulled, Mrs L McLean, and T Shapland.

In attendance: 9 parishioners, Parish Clerk

116. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr M Prowse and Cllr Mrs Davis (DCC).

117. Public Participation

1. It was reported that a resident had painted white hatched lines on the road outside a neighbours property in Fairfield. Highways had been notified, who had blocked out the lines. Subsequently the resident had repainted the lines. It was agreed that the residents actions should be reported to Highways.
2. Highways had confirmed that it would be a full 24 hour road closure at Riversmead at the end of the month. It was agreed to contact Filers for details of their revised timetable.
3. It was confirmed that the council had not received any advice regarding Coronavirus. It was noted that Public Health England had made arrangements for a ward to be put aside at NDDH.
4. It was reported that potentially toxic waste was being burnt at the bottom of Haxton Lane. North Devon Council to be notified.
5. Concern was expressed whether the Planning Department would be taking the view from Footpath 13 into account when considering the application for North Thorne. Concern to be taken into account when considering the application.

118. Declaration of Interests

Cllr Mrs Catmore declared an interest in item 123.

119. Approval of Minutes of the meeting held 15 January 2020

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed and signed as a true record.

120. Matters Arising from Minutes of meeting held 15 January 2020

None.

121. Planning

1. Applications:

70877 Notice of an application to modify a planning obligation under regulation 3 of the T & C P (modification & discharge of planning obligations) Regulations 1992 in respect of application 64115 to allow for sale of existing property once owner has built and moved into new property White Hart Garage Bratton Fleming

It was resolved to recommend approval.

71110 Conversion of 4 agricultural barns to 3 holiday lets & a campsite facilities barn together with provision of 10 glamping pitches and new site entrance and parking area North Thorne Bratton Fleming

It was resolved to recommend approval, but to request that the long view of the site from Footpath 13 be taken into account.

2. Decisions - Approval:

70828 Retrospective application for change of use of agricultural land to a dog walking field, together with formation of associated parking area & creation of associated field access Land North East of Kipscombe Bratton Fleming

70962 Prior notification for erection of one forestry building Tawny Meadow Button Lane Bratton Fleming

122. Correspondence

1. Notification of a Road Closure had been received from DCC, affecting the road between Collard Bridge and Goodleigh Cross, 24 Feb – 13 March. DCC had confirmed that it would be a full 24 hour closure to allow drainage work to be carried out at Riversmead, and that the local bus company had been advised. Clerk to obtain details of the temporary bus service.
2. Details of Drainage Maintenance Responsibilities had been received from DCC, which indicated that most roadside drainage was the responsibility of the neighbouring landowner. It was agreed to ask DCC to define the statute that puts the responsibility for drainage on the landowner, and not the highway authority.
3. An invitation to all councillors had been received from South West Heritage Trust to attend an Open Day on 24 March. Noted.
4. DALC Newsletter. Noted.
5. A letter of resignation from the Parish Council had been received from Cllr Mrs Bulled, due to work commitments. Cllr Mrs Bulled was thanked for her work during her term as parish councillor.

123. Energy Usage for Shop

Cllr Mrs Catmore declared an interest, and took no part in the discussion.

The Chairman reported that some work had been carried out at the shop, but that the electricity usage was still approximately double that which was used in the old building. This was despite the same fridges etc being used. An energy company had been contacted to carry out a survey of electricity usage at the shop

124. Highways Traffic Calming

It was understood that Cllr Mrs Davis had raised the issue at DCC, but was still awaiting responses.

125. Reports

1. District Councillor's Report

No report received.

2. County Councillor's Report

A report had been received from Cllr Mrs Davis, and is attached to these minutes.

Councillors disagreed that there were no low overhanging trees on the road between Bratton Fleming and Barnstaple. It was known that buses and lorries were sometimes having to drive in the middle of the road to avoid hitting the branches.

3. Composting Group

Cllr Shapland reported that North Devon Council had finally paid the credits owed since June 2019. These had been £555.90 for 16.35 tonnes in June; £534.82 for 15.73t in July; £432.89 for 12.73t in August; £232.90 for 6.85t in December; and £33.48 for 9.72 tonnes in January.

Payments had been: £612.10 to Royal & Fortescue; £43.73 (Mrs Watts); £43.73 (Mrs Bethune) and £80 to Webbers Travel.

The balance currently stood at £14596.62.

4. Woodland Group

Cllr Shapland reported that some of the trees identified with Ash Dieback had been taken out. Work was being carried out around the pond.

The replacement of the gate post in Haxton Lane was in hand, and the water problem for the allotments had been rectified.

The woodland was again entered in the Devon County Show woodland competition.

5. Chairman's Report

Cllr Benbow reported that the Climate Change Emergency had been discussed at the Rural Alliance meeting. A Climate Change Action Week was being planned for the end of March.

Details of energy use had been received from the Baptist Church.

The Chairman confirmed that some of the trees on the hedge adjoining the Station Road Allotments were subject to a Tree Preservation Order.

126. Finance

1. Payments:

1. Clerk's Salary & Expenses £115.08 Cheque No. 1193

The account was agreed for payment.

127. Items for consideration for the next Agenda.

Neighbourhood Plan.

128. Date of next meeting: Wednesday 18 March 2020

There being no further business, Chairman declared the meeting closed.

Signed
Chairman

Date

Bratton Fleming Parish Council

County Councillors Report

February 2020

Reminder of how to report a highway problem.

With the excessively wet weather we are experiencing a emergence of potholes, please help by reporting them either on the website or via the telephone.

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/report-a-pothole/>

or telephone: 0345 155 1004

(Road maintenance, traffic management and parking, streetlights and signs, and public rights of way.)

Please keep a note of the reference number.

Ciara and Dennis

The last two weekends have been particularly busy for highways. For both weekends we have double manned the HOCC and a Skanska Agent has been in attendance for liasing with their agents and crews.

Ciara brought us very strong winds and took down just under 70 trees on the highway.

Dennis brought us an awful lot of rain and wind, and the effects produced

- Numerous flooding incidents as drainage and river systems became overwhelmed.
- Large number of landslides
- Trees down

It is expected that the clear up from these two storms will be in the order of £200-£300k. However the long term capital costs may be considerably more once we have assessed the landslips, and worked out what is required. We have already identified that Austins Bridge, Buckfastleigh has structural damage to one of its piers and is now currently closed. We are not near the Bellwin threshold yet.

In the knowledge that Dennis was coming Skanska deployed resources to clear known problem areas in advance of the storm. It is anticipated that these resources will remain off programmed work for the next couple of days. This will inevitably result in some disruption to the programme eg the scheduled closure at Friendship Cross has been postponed.

Potholes

The increase in potholes has been significant. Highways had been not just filling safety defects but adjacent potholes but this had to be suspended whilst we concentrated on filling the actual safety defects. This has prompted an increase of annoyed customers, however it is the correct decision to prioritise the work in this way, and the teams are clear that they want to return to the Doing What Matters work, once the safety defect levels have dropped.

The Report IT website has been updated so that some defects have a due date put against them (they appear with a roadworks symbol). Its not perfect, there are some glitches in the system and there is some data cleansing required.

Works Programme Information

This has now gone live on the webpages at

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/live-roadworks-information/>

Again the team are aware that it is not perfect, and that there is still some development to do, which is planned for the next month, but it does start to produce future information which is currently lacking.

Dragon patchers

Having considered the work that Dragon patchers have carried out in the County, and particularly the impact of the work on the minor road network, the service has decided to increase the number of machines to 4. These now have to be built for Skanska, so they won't appear on the network immediately, however Skanska are looking at trying to hire in older machines until these new ones arrive in several months time.

Budget proposals

I am pleased that the overall Highways and Traffic management budget is showing an overall increase of £2.585m, including the addition of £1m to assist in dealing with some of the drainage issues that have been highlighted by this exceptionally wet winter. The budget gets to Cabinet on 14th February, I will of course update you on the progress.

Appledore.

DCC and the LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership) are working closely with the Government and proposed new owners to agree possible terms for any Government funding. Hopefully they will be concluded this week.

North Devon Enterprise Centre - Roundswell

On Friday 17th January a turf cutting took place to celebrate the building of a gateway building in North Devon to be called 'The Enterprise Centre'. It is hoped to be open by end 2020. It will provide help and support for entrepreneurial and small/medium sized businesses. There will be about 35 tenants. We are now seeking an operator to run the centre. The centre is funded by ERDF funds, HoSW funds and DCC. This is an important and long held ambition of DCC.

Devon-wide review of waste management carbon emissions commissioned

Devon County Council has commissioned a full analysis of the carbon impacts of its waste management services from international environmental consultancy Eunomia Research & Consulting Ltd.

Last year Devon County Council endorsed the Devon Climate Declaration by declaring a climate emergency.

The new project, which commenced in December 2019, forms part of the authority's subsequent commitment to become a net-zero authority by 2030. Eunomia's emissions modelling team will establish the carbon footprint of DCC's current waste management services, including the emissions from reuse, recycling, composting, anaerobic digestion, residual energy recovery, landfill and transport.

Carbon contributions from each of Devon's eight district waste collection as well as its recycling centres will be included in the analysis.

The results of this analysis will be used to produce a range of options for strategies for achieving carbon neutrality for the service. The research will also factor in the need to meet a 65% recycling target by 2035 at the latest.

This important project that will enable us to better understand the carbon impact of how we manage waste in Devon and the potential for reducing this in line with local and national targets. The report will be used to inform the development of our new Resources and Waste Strategy this year which will be produced in partnership with district and neighbouring Unitary Councils.

Any declaration of a climate emergency is followed up with action, Devon County Council is engaging with one of our key areas where we have some direct influence over carbon emissions. We will be looking at the full scope of the emissions from the waste management services to help understand the areas where we can make the largest carbon savings in the least time and in the most cost-effective manner.

Devon Registration Service - applicants to the Government's EU Settlement Scheme

Devon Registration Service can help EU citizens and their families, who want to stay in the UK after it leaves the EU, with the verification they will need to apply to the Government's EU Settlement Scheme.

The Government is inviting EU citizens with valid EU passports to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme. It also extends to their non-EU citizen family members who have a biometric residence card issued by the UK.

The deadline for applications to the EU Settlement Scheme is either the end of December 2020, if the Government and the EU fail to agree a leave deal; or the end of June 2021, if negotiators agree a deal for the UK to leave the EU.

The application process can be completed online, but the identity verification part of the application, which is necessary, requires the person to have access to either an Android or some Apple mobile devices.

Anyone in Devon who does not have access to such devices can make an appointment with the Devon Registration Service to have their identity officially verified for their application.

Identity verification is a requirement of the application to the EU Settlement Scheme.

To book an appointment to have your biometric passport or biometric residence card scanned, please telephone the Devon Registration Service on 0345 155 1002. An appointment will be made for you to see a member of the Devon Registration Service team.

You will need to bring to your appointment your current valid EU passport or valid biometric residence card; and a mobile telephone that can receive text messages or a device that can receive email.

The cost of the identity document scanning service is £14 (including VAT).

Permit will help care and health workers 'to do their jobs'

A new Care and Health Worker Parking Permit has been launched, and it allows professionals visiting people at home to park on double yellow lines in certain circumstances.

Currently care and health professionals who hold the existing permit can park in on-street, limited waiting and residents' parking bays for no charge when delivering essential services to residents in their homes.

Holders of the improved permit will additionally be allowed to park on yellow lines for up to an hour – but only if there is no other parking available, if they are making a home visit, the permit is clearly displayed and the vehicle is not causing an obstruction.

The parked vehicle must not block access or pose a danger to road users by, for instance, parking on a corner.

The improved scheme is being launched initially as a year-long pilot and the changes are in recognition that in some communities parking can be difficult to find and can add to the stress of an already demanding job. The new permits will be in the form of a time clock, like those issued to Blue Badge holders, which must be displayed. For those working for care and health companies, agencies or organisations, including the NHS, the permits will be managed and distributed by their line manager who will allocate each permit to eligible staff. Devon County Council's Traffic Management Team has been contacting care and health companies, agencies and organisations with staff who could be eligible for the permit directly. A separate process to allow eligible sole practitioners to apply will be phased in next year. Sole practitioners providing care and support to Devon clients in their homes can register their interest here by emailing careandhealthpermits@devon.gov.uk. The new scheme follows a consultation in which 89 per cent of respondents agreed that including yellow lines in the scheme would make their jobs easier and 80 per cent said it would help them care for their clients. Almost 65 per cent said it would help them manage stress and most said that parking near their clients' homes would help them feel safer if they were working alone.

Highway Matters Bratton Fleming

I was hoping to be with you tonight to feed back personally, however due to the earlier start of your meeting it is unlikely that I will be back in time, but I will drive round in case you are still there. For ease I have copied the questions I was asked below in italics:

General dis-satisfaction was expressed over the poor level of service received from DCC. It was agreed that reporting issues through the website is a total waste of time, as these are usually ignored. Please can you advise of someone who can be contacted who has some authority in getting defects repaired.

The highways website is undergoing work, some changes have already happened, others are in testing phase. At the top of this report I have given you the telephone number should you wish to report via the telephone. Please always make a note of the reference number, I can then follow up any enquiries. Just email me the reference number, I will get back to you.

Several people have reported the raised kerbstone outside the village hall, but nothing has been done. This kerbstone is now two inches higher than the surrounding surfaces, and poses a serious trip hazard.

This was reported on my site visit.

A loose manhole cover in Station Road has also been reported by several local residents, again no action has been forthcoming from DCC. As well as being a noise nuisance to local residents, the whole area around the cover is sinking.

This is a utility cover and has been reported to SWW on 27th January. We had no record of it being reported before. Maybe you could let me have the reference number please? I need to investigate this.

I think you are already aware that the school is now unable to hire a double-decker coach, as the operator refuses to send it on the Bratton Fleming road due to low overhanging branches. This is costing them additional expense by having to hire two single deck coaches. Has Highways contacted the landowners to get these branches cut?

This is a heavily tree lined route and the nature of the road, officers checked all the way through and no defects found regarding trees that would justify a notice on the landowner, also discussed with school transport at the time as the tight bends were also causing issue for the larger bus forcing it to cross the white line regardless of trees.

Although the patching work has been carried out on the Knightacott road, at the time of the meeting the drains had not been cleared. Water was still pouring down the road, which will soon wash out the new repairs if not actioned soon. Surely anyone with any sense would have cleared the drains before repairing the road surface.

Really helpful to meet with local residents as this one had been a bit of a mystery. The pipe was not where any of us expected it, thanks to a chance meeting with a resident who was driving past who knew where it was. We will need the small jetter to come and tray and clear it, if that isn't successful then it will be a bid in for drainage funds. Please be aware all the jitters are employed on emergency works following the recent very wet weather, I therefore do not have a date. Please see highway report above.

Despite many assurances, the road surface at the entrance to Furze Park Road has still not yet been repaired.

This one is really ongoing, and frustrating. Following several recent visits to residents in Furze Park I've now asked for substantially more money to do rather more than was first envisaged. I will let BFPC know the outcome. Last week the contractor was at the site inspecting with my highway officer the work requested.

One of the recently repaired potholes at the top of Barn Hill has already reappeared, obviously due to poor standard of work by the contractor.

We are currently asking the contractor to do safety repairs on very wet road surfaces, it is far from ideal, one of the consequences of this is that the repairs do not last long. However there is a duty to repair safety defects and therefore we do have to continue with this practice.

Fortunately we have not yet had any cold weather, but the amount of water on the road, due to drains not being cleared on a regular basis, would become a serious safety hazard. Over the past years DCC has spent a lot of money on the Barnstaple road installing new drains. Unfortunately because these do not receive regular attention, it has been a waste of money. We have been repeatably told that they are cleared on an annual cycle, which is laughable. Where these drains are under trees, these should be cleared on a much more regular basis.

Please see report above, we are intending to invest more money in next years budget to drainage clearance. This is yet to go through Full Council (Thursday). Personal opinion is that I agree, spending on drainage is very cost effective and would reduce the ongoing problems we have. (Note-I'm not a highway engineer)

On a positive note, it was reassuring to see that DCC had recognised the speed problem and safety issues through the village, by erecting additional warning signs when this road was used as the official diversion when the A399 was closed. As a matter of interest, why was a C road used as the diversion route when an A class road was closed?

It was deemed suitable for the diversion as the road width etc was not as bad as the alternative A road (A39, Zig Zag springs to mind)

As you can see there are several issues that need resolving. Reporting problems via the website just isn't working, so it would be helpful if you could advise who we can speak to. If this doesn't work, the council will have to take the matter to a higher level.

Please see above; phone number is 0345 155 1004

Formal complaints are overseen by our Customer Relations Team, they can be contacted by any of the following methods:

Customer Relations Team
Room 120, County Hall
Topsham Road
Exeter
EX2 4QD
Email: customer.relations@devon.gov.uk
Tel: 0800 212 783

Finally; I was asked about speed reducing measures for the site visit, my highway officer isn't the one who could advise on this. I have however contacted the Traffic team and the road safety team in County Hall to advise the Parish Council.

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