

Rackenford & Creacombe Parish Council

There was a remote meeting of Rackenford & Creacombe Parish Council on Tuesday 15th September 2020 at 7.00pm held on ZOOM

Members Present: Parish Councillors Graham Lamb; Jenny Cox; Fred Phillips; Tamsin Hyland; Sarah Child; Robert Mathews

Also Present: County/District Councillor Jeremy Yabsley

In attendance: Rob Martin, Clerk

Two members of the general public:

MINUTES

2021-19 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Stuart Warne.

2021-20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY)

No declarations of interest were made.

2020-21 CO-OPTION OF COUNCILLOR

On a proposal by Cllr. Tamsin Hyland, seconded by Cllr. Fred Phillips it was unanimously **Resolved** to co-opt Peter Jones as a councillor to fill the current vacancy.

2020-22 MINUTES

On a proposal by Cllr. Rob Mathews, seconded by Cllr. Jenny Cox, the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 7th July 2020 were **Approved**.

2020-23 COUNCIL REPORTS

- a) **Clerk's Report** – the Clerk outlined his background and experience and explained that he would do his best to ensure Parish Council business would continue until a permanent Clerk was appointed.
- b) **Chairman's Report** – the Chairman asked what Council thought about running the Annual Bonfire Night event. It was **Agreed** that, in the current circumstances the event should be cancelled. Other than this the Chairman had nothing further to report that was not already on the agenda.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed

2020-24 PUBLIC AND OTHER BODIES' SESSION

Simon Burnett had sent an email on the subject of the Parish Council's letter to Meadow View residents, which the Locum Clerk had circulated to all councillors. He explained that there was disquiet from the recipients of the letter about the tone of its content.

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Cllr. Tamsin Hyland answered the point by saying that there was no intention to cause concern, as the intention was always to hold a meeting with the residents to discuss the issues being experienced. It was agreed that the likelihood of being able to hold such a meeting in the current circumstances was low and that solutions would be sought when everyone could safely get together.

2020-25 REPORT FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS (IF PRESENT)

County/District Councillor Jeremy Yabsley reported that he had just moved house and was awaiting connection to services. For the time-being he would only be available on his mobile number 07885 282001.

It was definitely an extraordinary time with COVID-19 and there were 3 families self-isolating in his South Molton ward. The County Council was only getting about 60% of normal activities done because of the restrictions. He believed that winter was going to be a problem because of the likely continuation of the problem. He encouraged parish councillors to keep an eye on the potential Local Government restructure and new Planning system consultations.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed

2020-26 PROPOSAL TO SET ASIDE FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

On a proposal by Cllr. Sarah Child, seconded by Cllr. Tamsin Hyland, it was **Resolved** to set aside under Financial Regulation 19.2, Financial Regulations relating to need to go to tender, rather than accept three quotations, for the Play Area works which has an order of cost of around £26,000. Financial Regulation 11.1(b) and 11.1(h) of the Parish Council requires a tender to be prepared if it expected that a contract will be greater than £25,000, but this is considered to be too low a value to warrant an expensive and time-consuming process which will be of no benefit. This is borne out by the fact that there is a contradictory Financial Regulation 11.1(l) indicating that such quotations be allowed under a £60,000 threshold, rather than £25,000.

2020-27 THE COMMON

a) Children's Play Area

- The Chairman had received quotations to clear the old play area and it was **Agreed** that, because there Health and Safety concerns requiring immediate attention, the Clerk would be delegated in conjunction with the Chairman to get the work done at a cost of up to £500. This would be funded from reserves, not grant funding.
- A proposed revised design had been received from Earthwrights just prior to the meeting. The costs had not yet arrived, and it was **Agreed** that a complete project plan would be devised with the result being the subject of a possible Extraordinary Meeting as the hope was that work would be started before the end of 2020.
- The Chairman and Clerk would meet to put the ideas together for presentation to councillors.

b) Events Building

- It was **Agreed** to put this on hold for the time being.

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- c) Meadow View Residents Letter & Meeting
 - A discussion took place on the representation made by Simon Hallett, with the conclusions that a meeting is currently out of the question, the letter sent was not offensive and councillors were agreed that the matter could be sorted out amicably when a meeting was possible.
- d) Other Common Responsibilities
 - The Chairman had been quoted £450 for the removal of the dangerous Sycamore tree and £250 for the removal of the Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam. On a proposal by Cllr. Jenny Cox, seconded by Cllr. Fred Phillips, it was **Resolved** to delegate the removal of these items to the Clerk, in conjunction with the Chairman.
 - The Clerk explained that he would draw up a maintenance schedule for the Common, which would ensure that work was undertaken in a timely fashion without constantly having to be considered by full Council first. It was **Agreed** that this idea had merit.

2020-28 REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS

On a proposal by Cllr. Tamsin Hyland, seconded by Cllr. Sarah Child, it was **Resolved** to rationalise the threshold below which quotations may be considered rather than having to undertake a full tendering process to £70,000. The Locum Clerk would alter the documents and present them for adoption at the next meeting.

2020-29 WEBSITE ACCESSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

A draft Website Accessibility Statement had been circulated to councillors, and, on a proposal by Cllr. Tamsin Hyland, seconded by the Chairman it was **Resolved** to adopt this and post it on the website. The statement would be reviewed in twelve months to consider whether a more compliant website could be economically achieved at that time.

2020-30 CLERK'S VACANCY

- a) On a proposal by Cllr. Sarah Child, seconded by Cllr. Tamsin Hyland the appointment of Rob Martin as Locum Clerk was **Confirmed** until such time as a new permanent Clerk is appointed, at an hourly rate of £25 per hour.
- b) The Locum Clerk would use his experience of the job and produce a suggested job description and specification, alongside a suggestion of salary and hours of work.

2020-31 BANK RECONCILIATION

The Locum Clerk did not have the current bank statements, so no bank reconciliation was presented.

2020-32 RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS TO DATE COMPARED TO BUDGET

The attached statement of Receipts and Payments compared to Budgets for the period from 1st April to 31th August 2020 was **noted**.

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2020-33 PAYMENT SCHEDULE

To approve the payment of the invoices on the schedule below for the period since the last meeting, as below:

Payee	Services	Amount £	Payment No.
2020/2021			
Earthwrights Ltd	Zipwire Retention	1,500.00	621
Wendy Sweet	Pay & Expenses	406.03	622
GeoXphere	Parish Online Subscription	36.00	623
RJ Martin	Locum Clerk Services	592.50	624
Michael Lane	Well Maintenance	44.13	625
A. Francis	Website & Domain Hosting	185.00	626

2020-34 ON-LINE BANKING & PAYMENTS

It was **Agreed** that online payments would be a good thing, provided there were sufficient internal checks. The Clerk would investigate the subject with Lloyds Bank and arrange the necessary paperwork.

2020-35 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

To consider the following Planning Application and to agree comments:

Reference	Location	Proposal
None		

2020-36 CORRESPONDENCE

- a) An email had been received from someone wanting to run a 'boot camp' on the Common, with possible use of the MUGA in inclement weather. It was **Agreed** that this was a good thing to allow with the MUGA use supported by making a donation. The Locum Clerk indicated that he would write back, making sure that there was appropriate Public Liability Insurance in place, and that the organiser had undertaken a full Risk Assessment.
- b) CPRE had written highlighting the need to look out for the consultation on the proposed government changes to the planning system, which has an October deadline.

2020-37 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled remote meeting of Rackenford & Creacombe Parish Council is on Tuesday 3rd November 2020, at 7.30pm.

2020-38 MEETING CLOSURE

The meeting was closed at 9.30pm