

**BELSTONE PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2019**  
**at 7.30pm in the Village Hall Meeting Room**

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**Present:** Michael Ash (Chairman), Ann Norman (Vice Chairman), Paul Boyce, Peter Cooper, Susan Norrish, Jon Pike and Kate Little (Parish Clerk).

**In attendance:** Jane Herbert, Sean Lehni, Tony Dale, Edward Currie and Ian Brooker (DNPA Ranger).

**28. Apologies:** Theresa Weaver

**29. Minutes of the meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2019:** These were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record of the meeting.

**30. Matters Arising:**

- The Chairman has drafted a letter of thanks from the PC to former cllr Elisabeth Emerson for her years of service both to the Parish Council and the Skaigh Wood Trust.
- The seat on Skaigh Hill has now been fully repaired.
- The village lamp which was knocked by a lorry is now awaiting repair by DC Highways.
- The Fire Service consultation has been responded to.
- The County lengthsman has undertaken work in the village near Moor Plot which should help with the water run off problem in that area.

**31. Declarations of Interest:** There were none.

**32. Urgent Items Raised by the Chairman:** Tree work will be taking place shortly at Lower Holby after branches came down unexpectedly. The DNPA Tree Officer has agreed that the case is an emergency.

**33. DALC Training:**

- It was resolved to pay £96 to DALC for the recent planning training course undertaken by Cllrs Ann Norman and Jon Pike. The latter's notes on the course would be a useful aide mémoire when dealing with future planning application consultations. It was noted that PCs may engage in pre application advice, but without any commitment to their future consideration of a submitted planning application. In addition a 'no objection/neutral view' response to an application consultation would have no influence on whether the application went to Planning Committee for a decision, or not.
- It was resolved to pay for the clerk to attend a DALC short course on budgets and precepts on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019.

- 34. WDBC Training for Parish Clerks:** It was agreed the clerk and cllr Susan Norrish would attend.
- 35. Dog Bins:** It was noted that this subject had been discussed a number of times previously, most recently in May 2018, when it was noted that the cost of a dog bin was approx. £104 and each bin would cost £1.15 per week to empty.

Ian Brooker advised that it was the policy of the Dartmoor National Park Authority to allow no rubbish/dog bins in the Park at all, although some parishes had decided to install their own bins, but had not solved the problem, sometimes making the situation worse. The DNPA had observed that the removal of the bins had resulted in a massive reduction in the amount of general litter. The Chairman was concerned should it not prove possible to have the bins emptied by the Borough Council as it cut back on services.

The debate between the cllrs and members of the public present, the following points were made:

- Signs encouraging people to take their dog bags home would be preferable to bins, which may overflow if not emptied regularly enough.
- The rule does not apply to farm dogs.
- This is a visitor area and the bags are the issue.
- Experiment by using the existing pipe bin in the village as a dog bin and get a contractor to empty it.
- There was a great deal of feeling in the village both about the un-bagged and the bagged dog poo which was often left in residents' gateways. Need to raise the profile and pilot options.
- It should not be incumbent on Belstone residents to carry the cost of disposing of dog owners' waste.
- The village is on the moor where animal muck is everywhere. It is the bags that are the problem rather than the poo. Enforcement of any rules/policy could be a problem.
- The commons around the village are private land and dogs should be kept on leads at all times.
- The pipe bin should be removed.
- The pipe bin is valuable for disposing of other rubbish left around the village.

At the end of the debate it was resolved that:

1. That notices asking everyone to take their dog bags home be erected around the village in the usual places, notices put in the Beacon and delivered to every house in the village. (Moved by cllr Ann Norman and seconded by the Chairman); and
2. That the clerk write to the Borough Council to have the pipe bin removed. (Moved by Cllr Peter Cooper and seconded by cllr Ann Norman).

- 36. Potential Threat by Livestock to Safety and Property:** The moorland cattle had recently become very protective of their calves and had both threatened and on occasion hurt local people. It was noted that Commoners have the right to graze the livestock but they also had a duty of care. It was resolved to write to the Belstone Commoners' Association raising the issue as it had the oversight of the management of livestock on Belstone Common.
- 37. Annual Review of Standing Orders:** No amendments were proposed and it was resolved to continue with the existing Standing Orders for the next 12 months.
- 38. Car Park:** The revised quoted had been received from three companies ranging from £4,300 + VAT and plus an undefined sum for making up behind the kerbing, through £5,513 + VAT, to £10,898 + £38.10 per sq m for re-aligning the highway. It was decided that the cllrs would meet on site to discuss the options and the clerk would explore the VAT recovery aspect with WDBC. Cllr Peter Cooper would attend the Village Hall Cttee to provide advice as requested.

Requests for funding had been sent to DNPA, the Village Hall Cttee, the Parochial Church Council and the Belstone Commoners' Association. None had yet had their next meeting to discuss the matter.

- 39. Planning:** It was noted that the planning application for works at Steeperton, Skaigh Lane had been approved by the DNPA.

**40. Finance:**

- It was resolved to pay the clerk £61.38 for expenses incurred (£41.38 admin costs and £20 gift token for internal auditor)
- It was resolved to pay the Village Hall Cttee £40 annual rent and £20 web site contribution
- It was noted that WDBC had consulted on removing the Rate Support Grant (currently £34). It was not felt necessary to respond.
- Pension re-registration – it will be necessary to do this in November but the clerk will be balloting out from having a pension.

**41. AOB:**

- Eastern Links Meeting 12<sup>th</sup> September – cllr Jon Pike to attend.
- Proposed fencing on Skaigh Hill – there was concern that this might involve removing the granite posts. Clerk to find out what will be happening. [It has been ascertained that the works will involve the timber fencing only. The granite posts will not be touched.]

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9pm.

**Signed:** ..... **Date:** .....  
**Chairman**

