MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF NORTH MOLTON PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 10TH October 2012

IN THE VICTORY HALL

Present: Councillor Dunn, Councillor Gammon, Councillor Procter, Councillor White, Councillor Stanley, Councillor Bulled, Councillor Mather, Councillor Henderson, and the Clerk

430/10/12 1. Apologies. Councillor Janes (Business) motion proposed to sanction the above absence proposed Councillor White, seconded Councillor Procter, all agreed.

430/10/12 2. Declaration of Interests. Councillor White planning NDDC 54658, Councillor Bulled planning NDDC 54596.

431/10/12 3. Devon and Cornwall Constabulary. A total of 10 calls in the past month including a civil dispute, a dispute between neighbours and one domestic dispute. There was also a theft of diesel oil, a report of a dog attacking sheep and criminal damage to a hedge.

432/10/12 4. Representations from the public. A member of the public reported that the pavement outside the Victory Hall needed repairing. In its present state it represented a trip hazard and had already caused two slight falls. As the Victory Hall was used regularly by elderly people, it would be only a matter of time before injury was caused. The problem had been raised in a letter to the Parish Council some weeks ago but no reply or acknowledgement had been received. This was in itself a matter of concern.

(Clerk’s note: The letter in question had been found in the Victory Hall, where it had been posted, shortly before the start of the Council Meeting).

After thanking the member of the public for drawing the matter to the council’s attention, the chairman pointed out that council members attended the Hall only when the council was sitting and that all correspondence for the council should be sent to the Parish Clerk (Nigel Penfold, 21 Broad Close, North Molton, EX36 3JD). As it was not known whether the Victory Hall committee or Devon County Council was responsible for the upkeep of the pavement in question, the clerk was instructed to write to the Victory Hall committee asking them if they knew, with a copy to DCC for information.

Councillor Gammon reported that he had received a representation regarding the NDDC and Torridge Strategic Housing Land Assessment. This had identified a large area of land to the west of the school in North Molton which had been nominated by the land owner as available for possible future development. The Assessment had been published and identified the land, however the Parish Council had not been informed.

Agreed: That the clerk should write to NDDC asking why the Parish Council had not been informed, as a matter of courtesy.

433/10/12 5. Approval of the minutes of the Meeting of North Molton Parish Council held on Wednesday 12th September 2012. Motion proposed to approve the minutes, as amended, proposed Councillor Bulled seconded Councillor Stanley, all agreed.
434/10/12 6.Clerks Report Clerk reported:

No reply from Penfolds regarding the request to treat weeds in the Laurels playground with glyphosate to avoid their reappearance.

The insurance company had confirmed that they would charge the policy excess if a claim about the stolen benches were made, even if the council bore the costs of materials for their replacements. Agreed: A site visit to establish where a replacement bench should be sited. No further action to be taken at the moment.

Street light times had been confirmed by DCC as: Off at about 01.30 and back on at about 06.30 for “a short time”. When the clocks change, these times will be an hour earlier.

Agreed: that the street lights were not functioning at their proper times, and that the clerk report this to DCC.

435/10/12 7.Matters arising from these minutes not on Agenda Chairman read the letter, written in response to the CPRE Best Kept Village competition, which was to be sent to every household in North Molton. This was approved and passed to Councillor Henderson for printing.

436/10/12 8.Items for Discussion

A list of households that had not responded to the most recent electoral canvass had been received from the Electoral Registration Officer with a request for information on whether or not they were still occupied, and if so, by whom. (Clerk’s note; Due to the requested “reply by” date, this had already been forwarded to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman. As a result, the record had been updated for most households). Outstanding addresses were updated by councillors.

437/10/12 9.Chairmans Report/Urgent matters brought forward by the Chairman

1. A New Clerk’s Course was being run by DALC on 11th October. Agreed: That the fee of £30 be paid for the new Clerk to attend.

2. Chairman reported that the Parish Grant was under threat from the DCC. The latest meeting of the NDC confirmed that they would not take it. The argument about depriving the Parishes of the grant in order to make economies of scale was not borne out. However, it may be time to ask South Molton Council about “piggybacking” on weed-control and improving open spaces under the TAP fund.

Agreed: Clerk to draft a letter to South Molton Council re this.

3. A letter of appreciation and some flowers should be given to Mrs Gillian Lee in recognition of her six years as Parish Clerk. Additionally, the laptop computer and printer purchased by the Parish for her use, which was not required by the new clerk, could also be given to her.

Agreed: Clerk to arrange this.

4. It was decided some time ago to give a landscape photo to ex-councillor Geen in recognition of his many years service to the council, this needed to be progressed. Councillor Bulled undertook to canvass opinion on size/material etc and deal with the matter.

Agreed: Councillor Bulled to arrange this.

5. The chairman announced that due to pressure of work, he would have to stand down as chairman at the next Annual General Meeting of the council in May 2013.
438/10/12 10.Planning

Planning approved: None.
Planning declined: None.

Applications received for consideration:

NDC 54596. Retrospective application for erection of an agricultural building for fodder store at Lower Poole Farm, Fore Street, North Molton. Cllr Bulled declared an interest and left the meeting at 8.20pm. A representation from a member of the public was made with regard to this application. The application was declined on the grounds that:

The affected area was of great landscape value and the proposed application would detract significantly from it.

There was no functional need for the proposed building as the land in question was an equine holding rather than an agricultural one.

The proposed building was disproportionately large.

Cllr Bulled rejoined the meeting after the discussion.

NDDC 54552. Erection of ground mounted solar array with associated infrastructure at land known as 6ADG (South-east of Combeshead Cross), North Molton. A representation from a member of the public was made with regard to this application. The clerk was instructed to write to DCC planners expressing the Council’s concern about the possible impact of heavy vehicles gaining access to the site and to ask that a hedge and gate, removed during building work, were replaced so as to minimise the visual impact. A joint site visit with DCC planners and NMPC was also to be suggested.

NDDC5658 Extension to dwelling at Swallow Cottage, The Square, North Molton. Cllr. White declared an interest and left the meeting while this was discussed. The application was approved. Cllr. White rejoined the meeting.

NDDC 54645 Erection of agricultural workers dwelling and associated works at OS2129 Little Combeshead, North Molton. Approved, with two abstentions.

Applications received after preparation of agenda.

ENP 62/14/12/002. Application to widen a footpath in an adjoining parish Brayford (High Bray). Approved.

438/10/12 11.Finance

Balance of Community account stood at £1074.21. There had been no outgoings in the past month.

Balance of Bonus account stood at £4466.94.

i)Receipts – Notification of payment of the Parish Precept of £1,680.50 and Parish Grant of £880.50 (total £2560.50 was received on 2nd October.

ii)Payments – Clerks salary £178.38 plus contribution to telephone costs £10 total £188.38 motion proposed to pay this amount, all agreed.
438/10/12 12. Correspondence

a) Devon Home Choice
b) WWD Community Driven Housing Projects
c) Tarka Trial – A rally of about 25 vintage cars, due to pass through North Molton on

Additional correspondence received after preparation of agenda:

RSN - A commercial company offering a free two-hour consultation to assist councils and other public bodies applying for Open Space Community funds. The clerk was instructed to contact them for details of what could be offered.

The clerk drew the council’s attention to a briefing note from Kate Little, Joint Head of Strategic Development and Planning for NDC, which outlined the Government’s intended changes to planning decisions.

All newsletters to be placed in green bag.

438/10/12 13. Reports

none.

438/10/12 14. Matters brought forward by District or County Councillor

Councillor Edgell gave a report on the ongoing discussion about precepts/parish grants and the future of the Town and Parish (TAP) fund. This fund is on trial for this financial year and all applications to access it need to be in by January.

The Old School will be used as a polling station in the forthcoming elections for Police Commissioners on 15th November as the Victory Hall will be in use for this year’s NOMAD’s production.

Cllr. Edgell urged the Parish Council to work with Twitchen council in order to access joint funding. He stressed that central funding for all councils was being cut and that parish councils should consider doing more jobs locally as support from elsewhere diminished.

At 9:10 pm Cllr. Yabsley joined the meeting: at the same time, Cllrs. Gammon and Procter left.

Cllr. Yabsley said that he was aware of rumours to the effect that significant amendments had been made to the work taking place in the Lower Pool Development. The council instructed the clerk to contact DCC Planning for clarification about this.

Cllr. Yabsley gave a report on the DCC efforts to reduce its debt. Significant progress had been made with a reduction in the debt from 613 million to 527 million pounds. Money was still available for repairing potholes, and he urged that all potholes were reported to DCC promptly. South Molton’s Community College had achieved the best results in North Devon during the recent round of appraisals.

Date and Time of Next meeting: 14th November 2012 North Molton Victory Hall 7.30pm

(Clerk’s note: Later postponed until 21st November 2012. Same venue and time).

Meeting closed 9.20 pm.