

# Northleigh Parish Council

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## Minutes of the 5th General Parish Meeting of 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2023

1. **Present:** Cllrs. A Lear, A Driver, W Rich, I Todd, B Workman; Cllr. H Parr. Plus 11 members of the public.
2. **Apologies:** PC Clerk Jenny Greenway
3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting:** These were amended, agreed and signed.
4. **Matters Arising:**
  - Fibre: Andrea reported that most of the 40 properties that were ready to be connected are now connected. The remaining 51 are waiting for the National Grid to replace 20+ poles, partly in the village and partly to connect the Smallicombe area to Wilmington. Openreach have now paid NG for these poles. However, there are no dates for when the connections will be completed. Laura is in contact with R Foord, MP. Andrea will speak to Matthew Lloyd after feedback from Laura, and will keep Cllr. Lear informed of progress.
  - SWW: Cllr. Rich cleared out some of the drainage near the church, However, he discovered that the drain under the road was blocked, DCC have looked at the problem and committed to trying to clear the blockage (Ref ENQ231674784). If that is not possible they will put it on their list of works to be replaced. Cllr. Rich could not find the ditch on Suddons Farm property, and further work will be required to find and open it.
  - Cllr. Workman reported that Kier have been contracted by SWW to resurface the track between Bucknole Hill Road and the church as far as the corner of Old School House's garden, to include laying a land drain down the right hand side to feed the water into the ditch running along the boundary of St Giles Cottage. A letter from the owners of the Old School House and St Giles Cottage was read out requesting that SWW/Kier improve the drainage along the track to prevent it silting up so easily. This request will be passed on to both parties. Kier have proposed to do the work between the 22 Jan and 23 Feb. The Council would prefer to see the work completed earlier, but in view of the weather and the proximity to Christmas, it was felt that we should with regret accept a delay until the proposed dates.
  - Cllr. Workman also reported that SWW have applied to DCC for Northleigh Hill to be closed for five weeks between 22 Jan and 23 Feb 2024 to enable Kier to replace the old water main up the hill. He is in contact with Kier and will continue to liaise with them concerning these works and keep the PC apprised of progress
5. **DCC Report:** No Report was available to the meeting.
6. **EDDC Report:** Cllr. Parr reported that the lack of 5 year land supply in EDDC could make the district vulnerable to unwanted housing development being approved by the Government's inspector. She also reported that the £2 all day parking fees for the Winter had already been implemented across the district (1<sup>st</sup> Nov to 31<sup>st</sup> Mar). Cllr. Todd asked about the pay-off to the old EDDC chief exec, Cllr. Parr stated that the pay-off was

confidential so she was unable to disclose the amount, however, it would be visible in the financial report published by EDDC in 2024.

7. **Clerk's Report:** Bank balances stood as follows as at 31 October: £4,800. The meeting decided to accept the quote for £812.37 (plus VAT) received from Gordon Ellis & Co. The plaque commemorating the coronation earlier in the year has been received and paid for (£38.60). Cllr. Workman will fit the plaque in the near future.
8. **Planning:** No changes in Acceptances or refusals.  
Two new applications were submitted:
  1. 23/2270/FUL Conversion of redundant agricultural building to form one unit of holiday accommodation. Bucknole Farm Northleigh Devon EX24 6BP. The council have no objections to this proposal.
  2. 23/2373/PIP Planning in Principal application for the development of 4 houses on the field west of Backwell Mead and opposite the village hall. Cllrs. Driver and Rich declared an interest and took no part in the discussion. Several members of the public spoke to express their opposition to the proposed development, which was similar to a full application made for the same site in 2014, that was dismissed on appeal because it was considered as unsustainable development for the small rural village of Northleigh. The concerns raised included; noise pollution, losing agricultural land, exacerbated water drainage, reduction in the amenity of the tranquil village setting, damage to AONB and it not being sustainable for the village, given the services available. It was decided that Cllr. Lear should draft the response from the PC, objecting to the development in principal, get it reviewed by the PC members and sent to EDDC by the deadline of 22 November 2023.
9. **Correspondence:** None discussed at the meeting.
11. **Chilcombe Field:** The PC has been asked to complete an easement for the land affected by the drainage from the development. Cllr. Todd is waiting for a guarantee that the PC will be reimbursed for the costs involved. This will then be completed. There is no update on when the development might be started or the sale of land completed
12. **AOB:** A member of the public reported that the fence next to the bridge near Collins farm needs to be replaced as it is now possible for people to walk into the stream. There is also a problem with drainage as the road tends to flood, which, will be reported to DCC for remedial action if that is possible.

**Date of Next Meeting: 12<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

Meeting ended 9:15pm.