

FULL COUNCIL

TWYFORD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Held on Thursday 28th March 2024 at 7.30pm

In the Gilbert Room, Twyford Parish Hall

Present:

Cllr. Mitchell (in the Chair), Cllr. Forder-Stent, Cllr. Corcoran, Cllr. Hill, Cllr. Hoad, Cllr. Lawton, Cllr. Sellars, Cllr. Pullen, Cllr. Pain

In attendance:

Clerk
1 member of the public

Minute

Business Transacted

197/23

Chairman's Comments

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

198/23

Apologies for Absence

There were apologies from Cllr. Cook and Cllr. Percival

199/23

Requests for Dispensation under Section 33 Localism Act

No requests were received.

200/23

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations made.

201/23

Approval of Minutes

It was **Resolved** that the minutes of the Meeting of Twyford Parish Council held on 22nd February 2024 be approved.

202/23

Public Representation

A member of the public expressed interest in being a co-opted member and gave a brief outline to members of their background and what they could bring to the council as a co-opted member.

203/23

County Councillor's report

Cllr. Humby had submitted a report for March which was **received and noted** and is attached in the appendices.

204/23

District Councillors' report

No report was available, Cllr. Cook had sent her apologies.

205/23

Clerk's report

The report was **received and noted** and is attached in the appendices.

The Clerk also drew attention to a break in at the Hunter Park pavilion the previous weekend. The police had attended. The keysafe was broken off the wall, however no significant internal damage had been done, but small value items had been stolen along with items from the maintenance sheds in the park. The external door locks have been changed and options to avoid the use of a keysafe were being looked into.

206/23 Co-option

One application had been received, which would be considered at the April meeting of Council.

207/23 Recreation Committee

The draft minutes of the meeting of the Recreation Committee held on 15th February 2024 **were received.**

There were no recommendations from the committee, but Cllr. Pullen drew attention to three items in the minutes; arrangements were being made for a working party to meet and consider a proposal by the cricket club, approval had been given to the provision of a coffee 'pod' facility and a gifted silver birch tree had, finally, been planted in the Hunter Park.

208/23 Schedule of Payments

It was **Resolved to receive and approve** the Schedule of Payments for March 2024.

The schedule is attached in the appendices.

209/23 Balance of the bank accounts

The bank balances as of 29th February 2024 were **noted.**

Ordinary Accounts		Interest rate
Unity Trust C/A	£3,104.39	0.0%
Nationwide	£1,478.02	0.00%
Redwood (35 day notice)	£84,976.94	3.20%
Unity Trust (Instant Access)	£3,851.33	2.75%
Short Term Investment Accounts		Interest rate
Cambridge & Counties Bank	£50,000.00	4.2%
Total	£143,410.68	

210/23 Asset Register

The Asset Register, dated March 2024, was **received and approved.**

211/23 Annual Parish Assembly

Members received an update on potential speakers for the APA meeting, one had already been confirmed.

It was Resolved that:

- The Chairman would invite a representative from Wintershill Estate
- The Clerk would invite PCSO Reeves
- Cllr. Corcoran would provide an update on the Hazeley Road development.
- Cllr. Hoad would provide an update on the pedestrian crossing project, including funding options.

212/23 Defibrillator Awareness Training

A report from the Assistant Clerk was **received.**

It was Resolved:

- that Cllr. Pain would be the Councillor contact for the evening of the session.
- a donation of £150 be made to South Central Ambulance Charity.

Berry Lane and Parish Farm Update

213/23 Councillor Corcoran updated members on the issue of Berry Lane and its condition, which had previously been considered by Council.

The Council had recently received an award of £15,000 towards improving the lane however much more would be required to make enhancements to the wider setting of the lane and its gateway to the river.

However, there was that is a potential issue with the use of public money on land which has no registered owner. The Clerk explained the legal process involved with registering land or taking adverse possession and although straightforward it would be very involved. An additional complication was that a caution against first registration of the land had been made 20 years ago.

It was Resolved to discuss with interested parties whether the cautions against first registration could now be withdrawn and reach agreement on access rights in order that the Parish Council can register the land.

Councillor Corcoran also gave an update from the recent Parish Farm meeting which reviewed work that had taken place and work that was planned for the year ahead. There is a significant issue because of the amount of standing water in the meadows which has led to puddling and well grazed grass. The Navigation has also been overtopping leading to some of the flooding and this is a complicated problem.

Councillor Mitchell explained that he had been exploring options with representatives of the Environment Agency to reopen the Navigation for small scale fishing and would bring further details back once a proposal had been worked up.

214/23 White Lane Public Right of Way Claim

Members **received and noted** correspondence on the subject, which is attached in the appendices. It was **resolved** to review progress of the claim in June 2024.

215/23 CIL Projects

Cllr. Corcoran explained that two bids, which had been unsuccessful last year should be updated and resubmitted in time for the SDNPA call of expressions of interest.

It was Resolved to submit expressions of interest for CIL funding to the South Downs National Park Authority for the Flood Mitigation Scheme and Itchen Navigation access improvement projects.

216/23 Communications and Social Media Policy

The draft policy was received and is attached in the appendices.

With minor typographical amendments, **It was Resolved** to approve the Communications and Social Media Policy and review the policy in April 2026.

217/23 Newsletter

The second edition of the newsletter is currently being distributed throughout the parish. Members were supportive of continuing to produce and distribute printed copies as well as online versions. The Clerk confirmed sufficient budget was available. Cllr. Pullen is willing to continue editing the newsletter.

It was Resolved to approve, on an ongoing basis, the production and distribution of a quarterly Twyford News newsletter.

218/23 Hazeley Road Development Area Advisory Committee

Cllr. Corcoran advised there was little in the way of progress to report, the housing application is currently with planners at the SDNPA who have yet to determine a date for their committee to consider the application.

219/23 Traffic Solutions Advisory Committee

Cllr. Hoad advised the recent crossing improvement on Finches Lane appeared to have been well received and was being well used. He had concerns about cars parking on the corner of Churchfields which may block sightlines. He also highlighted that Finches Lane has recently been closed several times this was due to Openreach having to fix underground cables and the Twyford School wall, adjacent to the road at Searles Hill, had recently had a protective covering fixed to it prevent flints dropping onto the road; a full repair is going to have to take place in the future.

220/23 Climate Advisory Committee

Cllr. Forder-Stent advised that a meeting of the group had taken place and they had been joined by a Colden Common representative who explained a scheme called Garbage to Greenery. The group agreed to carry out a pilot of the scheme, with Cllr. Pullen exploring how it could work in Queen Street and the Drove.

The cyclebus initiative will restart on Wednesdays after the Easter break.

The group was exploring whether to link with other similar groups in Colden Common and Owslebury.

221/23 Hunter Park 60th Anniversary Fun Day

Due to Councillor absences, there was no update available.

Meeting closed at 9.26pm

Agenda Item 197/23

COUNTY COUNCILLOR ROB HUMBY'S REPORT

FEBRUARY 2024

COUNTY COUNCILLOR ROB HUMBY'S REPORT

MARCH 2024

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New County Council Cabinet Portfolios

Adult's Health and Care:

- Executive Lead Member, Cllr Liz Fairhurst; and
- Executive Member, Cllr Jan Warwick

Children's Services:

- Executive Lead Member, Cllr Edward Heron; and
- Executive Member, Cllr Steve Forster

Universal Services:

- Executive Lead Member, Cllr Nick Adams-King; and
- Executive Member, Cllr Russell Oppenheimer

Hampshire 2050 and Corporate Services

- Leader, Cllr Rob Humby; and
- Deputy Leader, Cllr Roz Chadd

HR, Performance, Communications and Inclusion and Diversity

- Executive Member, Cllr Kirsty North

STILL TIME TO HAVE YOUR SAY ON FUTURE SERVICES IN HAMPSHIRE

The clock is ticking for people to have their say on key proposals to change and reduce some local services in future to help Hampshire County Council address a £132 million budget shortfall faced by April 2025

[Still time to have your say on future services in Hampshire | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk)

GREEN LIGHT FOR MULTI-MILLION POUND INVESTMENT IN COUNTY COUNCIL CARE HOMES

Plans to invest more than £173 million in Hampshire County Council's in-house care homes for older people have been given the green light, paving the way towards a focus on delivering specialist nursing and complex dementia care, as well as short term pre- and post-hospital support, to better meet the needs of the county's ageing population

[Green light for multi-million pound investment in County Council care homes | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk)

MORE TRANSPORT CHOICE AND AN IMPROVED BUILT ENVIRONMENT IS AT HEART OF NEW 10-YEAR PLAN

A new local transport plan (LTP4) that aims to boost economic prosperity, reduce carbon pollution, help promote healthy lifestyles and build stronger communities is to be considered by Hampshire County Council

[More transport choice and an improved built environment is at heart of new 10-year plan | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk)

HAMPSHIRE'S DEFENCE AND SECURITY CLUSTER HEARS SME'S VOICE

Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Hampshire have taken the first steps to exploring how they can grow their business by becoming a supplier for the defence and security industry locally and nationally – by sharing what their business or service has to offer with sector industry leaders and the county's universities

[Hampshire's Defence and Security Cluster hears SME's voice | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk)

GARNIER ROAD IN WINCHESTER REOPENS TO ALL VEHICLES FOLLOWING REPLACEMENT OF TUNBRIDGE CROSSING

Garnier Road in Winchester has reopened to all traffic following a £1.4 million scheme by Hampshire County Council to replace Tunbridge – a bridge that spans the Itchen Navigation. The road has remained open to pedestrians and cyclists whilst construction of the new bridge was underway with other vehicles diverted

[Garnier Road in Winchester reopens to all vehicles following replacement of Tunbridge crossing | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk)

HAMPSHIRE'S YOUNG PEOPLE ENCOURAGED TO MAKE THEIR MARK THROUGH CONSULTATION ON CAMPAIGNING ISSUES

Hampshire's young people are being asked by new Members of the Youth Parliament (MYPs) to let them know what issues matter most to them

[Hampshire's young people encouraged to make their mark through consultation on campaigning issues | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk)

GOOD NEWS FOR WORKING PARENTS AS FUNDING APPROVED TO EXPAND CHILDCARE BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL

Hampshire County Council has approved funding of £5.9 million to help more parents access childcare before and after school. The funding has been granted by the Department for Education to

support schools and Local Authorities to set up or expand the provision of childcare which ‘wraps around’ the school day, enabling parents and carers of primary school-aged children to access and pay for term time childcare from 8am-6pm

[Good news for working parents as funding approved to expand childcare before and after school | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](#)

A BUDGET TO SERVE THE PEOPLE OF HAMPSHIRE – COUNTY COUNCIL APPROVES £2.6BN SPENDING ON LOCAL SERVICES FOR RESIDENTS IN 2024/25

£2.6 billion of public spending on the ongoing delivery of important local services to Hampshire’s 1.4 million residents in 2024/25 was approved by Hampshire County Council on 22 February

[A budget to serve the people of Hampshire - County Council approves £2.6bn spending on local services for residents in 2024/25 | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](#)

COUNTY COUNCIL TRADING STANDARDS WELCOMES SUCCESSFUL PROSECUTION OF FRAUDULENT ROOFING TRADER

Hampshire County Council has welcomed the successful prosecution of a rogue trader who has been sentenced for roofing fraud to the value of £642,850.320 involving 29 properties across Hampshire, West Sussex and the Isle of Wight

[County Council Trading Standards welcomes successful prosecution of fraudulent roofing trader | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](#)

HAMPSHIRE CALLS FOR NATIONAL ACTION TO ENSURE NO RESIDENTS LEFT DIGITALLY ISOLATED

An ambition to ensure all Hampshire residents can connect to high-speed internet services has led Hampshire County Council to call on Government to press the case for making sure no-one is left behind in being able to access online services and support

[Hampshire calls for national action to ensure no residents left digitally isolated | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](#)

PLANS FOR NEW SPECIAL SCHOOL IN EASTLEIGH MOVE FORWARD AS ACADEMY TRUST CONFIRMED

The Department of Education has appointed Solent Academies Trust to manage a new special school in Boorley Green, Eastleigh to be funded through Hampshire County Council’s Children’s Services capital programme and designed and delivered by its Property Services team. The new £17.9 million school is intended to provide accommodation for up to 125 children aged eight to 16 with social, emotional and mental health needs and, subject to planning consent, is due to open in summer 2026

[Plans for new special school in Eastleigh move forward as academy trust confirmed | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](#)

COUNCIL LEADERS RECEIVE ASSURANCES FROM SOUTHERN WATER

Council leaders in Hampshire have collectively invited Southern Water to meet with them to explain how they are working to improve their services and to ensure reliable water supplies for the county’s residents

[Council Leaders receive assurances from Southern Water | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](#)

Services provided by Hampshire County Council include:

- [Education and Learning](#) including supporting Hampshire schools. (excluding privately run Academy Schools)
- [Services for children and families](#) including adoption and fostering, safeguarding, and support for young people.
- [Maintenance of Hampshire's roads](#) (except motorways and trunk roads which are the responsibility of National Highways), [licensing](#) for providers who need to work on the highway, and support for operators of [public transport](#).
- [Planning](#) applications for mineral extraction, waste management and public buildings.
- Provision of [social care and health](#) in Hampshire.
- The [Hampshire Library Service](#).
- The [Countryside Service](#), looking after [rights of way](#), and many of the county's [important green spaces](#)
- [Household Waste Recycling Centres](#) where residents can dispose of unwanted items. (District, borough or city councils manage kerbside household waste collections)
- [Trading Standards](#), ensuring fair trading in Hampshire, by supporting the county's businesses and protecting Hampshire consumers.

District, borough and city councils

District, borough and city councils provide services such as:

- Household waste collection
- Domestic planning applications
- Council Tax collection
- Housing

[Find your local district or borough council](#)

Parish, community and town councils

These councils operate at a level below district and borough councils and in some cases, unitary authorities.

They are elected and can help on a number of local issues, like providing:

- allotments
- public clocks
- bus shelters
- community centres
- play areas and play equipment
- grants to help local organisations
- consultation on neighbourhood planning



Twyford Parish Council

Clerk's Report

Councillors are reminded that the items within this report are provided for information only and not available for debate. If it is considered that an item listed within the report should be debated fully by members, then it will be placed on the next appropriate committee or council agenda. Any member wanting clarification or further information on any aspect of items within the report please contact me in advance of the meeting.

General reading and information.

The following publications have been received and available for members to read:

- Rural Service Network – Rural Bulletin 19th March
- WCC Parish Connect - March
- HCC – Your Hampshire newsletter - March
- South Downs News – March
- The Clerk magazine – March

Other information

- 1) All members need to be aware of the disclosable pecuniary interest forms and consider whether there have been any changes since it was last written. If there was a need for any change to be made, please contact me and I will supply fresh document for completion.
- 2) Externiture Ltd were due to start bus shelter cleaning this month, but the work does not yet appear to have taken place.
- 3) I am seeking clarification on CIL funding for pedestrian crossing projects from WCC/HCC as there appears to be conflicting information being provided on whether the WCC bid made by HCC was successful.
- 4) A Thank You letter has been received from Winchester Citizens advice following grant awarded to them by the Parish Council.
- 5) I attended the HALC Annual Conference on 20th March, held at Whitely, the theme was partnership working.
- 6) HCC Future Services Consultation closes on 31st March 2024.

Jamie Matthews
Parish Clerk
21st March 2024

Agenda Item 208/23

Schedule of Payments – March 2024

Recommendation:

Council to **approve** the schedule of payments for March 2024

Tx No.	Gross	Vat	Net	Details
310	422.14	70.36	351.78	Barriers Direct -
311	8.44	1.41	7.03	1&1 IONOS - Web hosting support 04.02.2024 - 04.03.2024
312	85.00	0.00	85.00	Wyatt Electrical - February caretaking
326	3.00	0.00	3.00	Lloyds Bank (Card) - Monthly charges
313	93.60	15.60	78.00	Elite Playground Inspections - Quarterly Operational Inspections
321	2,073.44	345.58	1,727.86	Green Smile Ltd - Monthly grounds maintenance OJS Plumb & Heat Ltd - Replace 3 bottle traps in urinals, replace cisterniser.
314	415.00	0.00	415.00	
317	86.41	14.40	72.01	Viking - Stationery
324	16.80	2.80	14.00	Viking - Stationery
316	111.79	5.32	106.47	Octopus Energy - Electricity - Pavilion
322	36.54	6.09	30.45	Plus Net - Phone & Broadband
323	90.00	15.00	75.00	HALC - Annual Conference attendance
315	36.00	6.00	30.00	Vodafone - Mobile Telephones - March
318	57.60	9.60	48.00	HALC - Councillor Training
319	2,640.00	440.00	2,200.00	Hampshire Heartwood - Tree works - Hunter Park and adjacent field RS Fencing and Agriculture Ltd - Kissing gates (3) for Berry Meadow and installation
320	3,277.20	546.20	2,731.00	
328	593.77	0.00	593.77	HMRC - PAYE and NI
329	713.75	0.00	713.75	HCC Pensions - March Pension Contributions
330	2,357.15	0.00	2,357.15	Employee Salaries - March Salaries & Expenses
325	2.75	0.00	2.75	Post Office - Postage
327	138.91	23.15	115.76	Christopher Corcoran - Berry Meadow Expenses - Padlock, wire, tree ties, rootgrow
332	78.00	13.0	65.00	Green Smile Ltd - Additional bin emptying Oct to Dec
331	152.90	25.48	127.42	Shoreland Network Solutions - Jan & Feb cricket ground maintenance
	£13,490.19	£1,539.99	£11,950.20	

Agenda Item 210/23

Asset Register – 31st March 2024

Description	Location	Date Acquired	Method of Valuation	Valuation	Disposal
Pavilion Building	Hunter Park		PP	£310,000	
3 folding tables and 32 stacking chairs	Hunter Park		PP	£650	
2 Folding tables for Pottinger Pavilion	Hunter Park		PP	£178	
3 Storage Units	Hunter Park		EST	£4,500	
Laptop 2020	Clerk	01-Dec-20	PP	£560	
PC LCD Monitor	Clerk	01-Nov-20	PP	£117	
Laptop & MS Office software	Clerk	14-Oct-16	PP		-£485.00
Hewlett Packard laser printer M280nw	Clerk	25-Apr-18	PP		-£214.00
Hewlett Packard laser printer 4302dw	Clerk	04-Jan-24	PP	£325	
Projector	Clerk	20-Jan-17	EST	£250	
Lockable cupboard	Clerk	14-Nov-18	PP	£169	
Bus Shelters	Various in Parish		EST	£36,850	
Pedestrian Gates (Northfields)	Northfields	Mar-21		£2,210	
Northfields sports and play equipment	Northfields			£34,666	
Hunter Park play equipment	Hunter Park			£102,121	
Outdoor Gym	Hunter Park	23-May-16	PP	£4,080	
Outdoor Gym signage	Hunter Park	08-Aug-16	PP	£100	
Wooden Bench (Peter Weston)	Hunter Park	23-May-16	PP	£302	
Knee high fence - HP car park	Hunter Park	01-Dec-22	PP	£3,700	
4 recycled plastic benches	Hunter Park	01-Jan-22	PP	£2,295	
1 recycled plastic bench	Northfields	01-Aug-21	PP	£525	
3 litter bins	Hunter Park	21-Jun-23	PP	£1,300	

Description	Location	Date Acquired	Method of Valuation	Valuation	Disposal
Cricket Sight Screens	Hunter Park	21-Jun-15	PP	£1,500	
Cricket Covers	Hunter Park	21-Jun-15	PP	£1,000	
Cricket Training Nets	Hunter Park	26-Jun-05	EST	£5,000	
Table Tennis table	Hunter Park		IV	£2,420	
Tennis Court	Hunter Park	01-Aug-18	PP	£20,165	
Tennis Court fence	Hunter Park		EST	£10,650	
3 Kissing Gates (Berry Meadow)	Various in Parish	01/03/2024	PP	£2,700.00	
Defibrillator at Parish Hall	Various in Parish		EST	£800	
Defibrillator at Hunter Park	Hunter Park		PP	£1,250	
Defibrillator at Northfields Telephone kiosk	Various in Parish	01-May-22	PP	£1,600	
SLRI & 2	Various in Parish		PP	£6,782	
CCTV Equipment	Hunter Park		PP	£700	
Asst. Clerk laptop	Asst. Clerk		PP	£380	
Asst. Clerk LCD Monitor	Asst. Clerk	01/04/2022	PP	£265	
Projector screen	Hunter Park		PP	£100	
2 x Telephone Kiosks	Various in Parish		EST	£6,000	
Asst. Clerk printer	Asst. Clerk		EST	£150	
Street Lighting x 61 units	Various in Parish		EST	£36,600	
Civic Regalia	Chairman		EST	£100	
Land					
Twyford Meads			CA	£1.00	
Northfields		13/12/1988	CA	£1.00	
Hunter Park		01/05/1964	CA	£1.00	
Berry Meadow		01/06/2013	CA	£1.00	
Total Value:				£603,064.30	

CA = Community Asset

NA

IV = Insurance Value

EST= Estimated

PP = Purchase Price



Twyford Parish Council

Full Council – 28th March 2024

Defibrillator Awareness Training Session

Recommendation:

That Council **approve:**

1. A nominated councillor to attend Twyford Community Centre at 6.45pm on Thursday 18th April to greet the volunteers of the South Central Ambulance Centre and to welcome attendees. Nominated councillor to stay for the duration of the training session.
2. A donation of between £100 - £300 to South Central Ambulance Charity for the provision of a defibrillator awareness training session for residents of Twyford on 18th April.

Background:

Following a successful training session in February 2023, council thought it useful to provide annual training sessions for residents.

The date of the next awareness training session has been arranged for Thursday 18th April at Twyford Community Centre from 7.00pm to 9.00pm. The session will be advertised on the next Parish Newsletter, followed by TIS distribution. Residents will need to contact the Assistant Clerk to secure their place; places will be allocated on a first come first served basis and priority given to those who haven't previously attended.

The workshop is provided by South Central Ambulance Charity for a maximum of 20 participants. It is suggested that a donation of between £100 - £300 is made; last year the council donated £150.

What the workshop will cover:

The training session will last around 90 minutes and will cover:

- Finding the patient
- Calling 999
- The Recovery Position
- CPR
- Using the defibrillator

The trainers will bring along with them a training defibrillator for participants to see in action.

The training session will require a councillor to attend to act as a 'point of contact' to the volunteers of South Central Ambulance Charity and welcome attendees.

Sue Nias

Assistant Clerk

15th March 2024

Item 214/23



Twyford Parish Council

Full Council – 28th March 2024

Public Right of Way Claim

15th February 2024

Dear Cllr Pullen,

Thank you very much for your email, please accept my apologies for the delay in the consideration of this application. Further to our emails in November, I can confirm that a decision regarding this application has not yet been made.

I continue to work on this case and following the conclusion of my investigations, will write a report detailing all of the user evidence and documentary evidence that has been reviewed and assessed. Investigating this type of application is a comprehensive process, and it will likely be a number of months before I am able to conclude my investigation. I can confirm that I have also contacted the landowner's agent to provide an update on the status of this case.

I will provide a further update regarding the application in due course.

Many thanks

Bev

Bev Harding-Rennie

Definitive Map Officer

Countryside Service – Hampshire County Council

11th April 2023

Dear Twyford Parish Council,

Section 53, Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981

Application for a Definitive Map Modification Order to record a bridleway from B3335 towards New Barn Farm

DMMO 1179 - Twyford

Following the direction from the Planning Inspectorate, I am writing to inform you that I am the officer who will be investigating this application.

I am currently at an early stage in the consideration of this application, one of the first steps of which is to write to affected landowners, the City Council, National Park Authority, user groups and the Hampshire County Council Elected Member for this area, to seek to obtain further information about the route that is the subject of this right of way claim.

This a comprehensive process, please therefore be advised that it will be a number of weeks or months before I am able to conclude my investigation and write a report to determine this matter. In the meantime, it would be helpful if you could please provide any further evidence that you wish to be taken into consideration.

During my investigation, I will review the documentation that you supplied with your application, in addition to undertaking research to identify other evidence relevant to the case. Following review and analysis of all evidence, I will write a report which will set out whether the recommendation should be to record a Public Right of Way along the route that you have applied for.

We have a duty to determine applications on the basis of the evidence, and whether it demonstrates that a route has existed historically or has been brought into existence by virtue of long use. As a result of this, my investigation may conclude that a route exists which differs from that which you have applied for; the route may follow a different alignment or length, or it may be of a different status (footpath, bridleway, restricted byway, or byway open to all traffic).

Following completion of the report, it will be considered by either the Countryside Access Group Manager, or by the Regulatory Committee of the County Council. If the decision is to be made by the Regulatory Committee, I will write and let you know; you will be given the opportunity to make a deputation (verbal representation) to the Committee. If the decision is to be made by the Countryside Access Group Manager, I will send you a formal notification of the outcome.

If you have any queries about any aspect of this process, please do not hesitate to contact me. **m**

Item 216/23

Media and Communications Policy March 2024

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to define the roles and responsibilities within the Parish Council for achieving an effective working relationship with the media, and to provide guidance on how to handle media interest.

1.2 Without proper co-ordination, it would be difficult to ensure that the messages put out by the Parish Council are consistent and accurate. However, if communication is managed effectively, the Council will be able to create and seize opportunities to communicate with partners and the public and build an accurate and positive reputation.

1.3 This policy is advised by the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity, as issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). The code is statutory guidance and therefore Councils must have regard to it and follow its provisions.

1.4 Failure to follow the Council's Media and Communications Policy could lead to a breach of the statutory code and risk adverse publicity, which in turn could damage the Council's and relevant Councillor's reputation. It is important that all Councillors and Officers understand the implications of this code which this policy explains within a local context.

1.5 In short, the Council must ensure that publicity is

- Lawful
- Cost effective
- Objective
- Even-handed
- Appropriate
- Regard to equality and diversity
- Careful during periods of heightened sensitivity

1.6 This policy should be read in conjunction with the Code of Conduct for Members

2 Approach to Publicity

2.1 The Council welcomes enquiries from the press and media and recognises that a good relationship with the press helps us to communicate effectively with residents.

2.2 Equally, the Council recognises that taking a proactive approach to communication ensures information is made available to residents in a timely manner and is accessible via as many media sources as possible including social media.

2.3 In all cases, the Council's approach to the media should be:

- Open and honest
- Proactive
- Responsive and timely
- In line with the Code of Conduct for Members

2.4 The Council is accountable to the local community for its actions, and this can only be achieved through effective two-way communication. The media plays a large role in informing residents about what the Council does and how it spends their money. It is therefore vital that the Council communicates effectively with the media and wherever possible takes a positive and constructive approach to meeting media requests for information and interviews to increase public awareness of the Council's priorities, services, and facilities.

2.5 The use of media is also vital in terms of holding the Council to account for its policies and actions. It is important that they have access to officers and Councillors and to background information to assist them in this role. To balance this, the Council will defend itself from any unfounded criticism and will ensure that the public are properly informed of all the relevant facts using other channels of communication if necessary.

2.6 The main media pertaining to Twyford is the local and regional press, in addition to local radio and television station. It is unlikely that Twyford Parish Council would be involved in media communications at a national or international level, but this policy would also apply in these cases. A separate social media policy exists for communication via digital and social media.

3 The Legal Framework

3.1 The law governing communications in local authorities can be found in the Local Government Acts 1986 and 1988. The Council must also have regard to the government's Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity. Some aspects of the Code are relevant to this policy:

- "Any publicity describing the Council's policies and aims [and the provision of services] should be as objective as possible, concentrating on facts or explanation or both."
- "Publicity touching on issues that are controversial, or on which there are arguments for and against the views or policies of the Council should be handled with particular care. Issues must be presented clearly, fairly and as simply as possible, although councils should not oversimplify facts, issues or arguments."
- "Publicity should not attack, nor appear to undermine, generally accepted moral standards."
- "... local authorities... should not use public funds to mount publicity campaigns whose primary purpose is to persuade the public to hold a particular view on a question of policy."

Furthermore, the Local Government Transparency Code (2014) requires Councils to operate a culture of transparency making information widely available to all that want to access and use it. This includes media organisations and those wishing to reuse the information for that purpose.

3.2 In particular, officers and Councillors should always have due regard for the long-term reputation of the Council in all their dealings with the media.

3.3 Confidential documents, exempt minutes, reports, papers, and private correspondence should not be leaked to the media. If such leaks do occur, an investigation will take place to establish who was responsible and the appropriate action taken.

3.4 When the media wishes to discuss an issue that is, or is likely to be, subject to legal proceedings then advice should be taken from the Council's solicitor before any response is made.

3.5 There are a number of personal privacy issues for officers and Councillors that must be handled carefully and sensitively. These include the release of personal information, such as home addresses and telephone numbers (although member contact details are in the public domain), disciplinary procedures, and long-term sickness absences that are affecting service provision. In all these and similar situations, advice must be taken from the Clerk before any response is made to the media.

4 Handling Media Enquiries

4.1 All media approaches should be directed to the Parish Clerk and the Chairman of the Council.

4.2 If other Councillors are contacted directly by the media for comment, they should liaise with the Clerk before responding to the request.

4.3 All statements made by the Clerk or the Chairman should reflect the Council's decisions and stated policies.

4.4 The Council should not pass comments on leaks, anonymous allegations or allegations about individual staff and Councillors. The phrase "no comment" should not be used as a response to a media enquiry. The Council is open and accountable and should always explain if there is a reason why it cannot answer a specific enquiry.

4.5 Letters representing the views of the Council should only be submitted by the Chairman or the Clerk. Councillors are strongly encouraged not to use the letters page within the Local Press as a means of expressing their personal views.

4.6 At all times, Councillors, Officers, and staff should consider the potential risk to the Council, its reputation, and the reputation of other Councillors, when dealing with the media.

5 Requests for Interview

5.1 Any request for an interview with a Councillor or Officer should be referred to the Clerk in the first instance. The Clerk, in liaison with the Chairman, will determine the most appropriate Councillor or Officer to put forward for interview.

5.2 Where a Councillor is authorised to speak on behalf of the Council, it is their responsibility to ensure they are clear on the corporate position of the Council, and that their responses to questions accurately reflect this.

5.3 Where an officer is authorised to speak on behalf of the Council, they must never give their opinion on specific Council policy and must remember their role is to provide expertise and factual knowledge in support of the Council's agreed policies.

5.4 If a Councillor has not been specifically authorised by the Council to speak to the media on a particular issue, a Councillor who is asked for a comment should make it clear that it is a personal view and ask that it be clearly reported as such.

6 Official Council Press Releases

6.1 The purpose of a press release is to make the media aware of a potential story, to provide important public information, or to explain the Council's position on a particular issue. It is the responsibility of all officers and Councillors to look for opportunities where the issuing of a press release may be beneficial.

6.2 All press releases are to be factual, non-political, not written to cause offence, and must be in accordance with Council policy.

6.3 All press releases are to be drafted and issued by the Clerk to ensure that the principles outlined in Section 3 (Legal Framework) are adhered to, that there is consistency of style across the Council, and that the use of the press release can be monitored, having consulted with the Chairman of the relevant committee on the proposed wording.

6.4 Press releases will be issued to local newspapers and copies will be made available on the Council's website. An edited version will be shared on the Council's social media platforms, with a link to the full story.

7 Attendance of Media at Council or Committee Meetings

7.1 The Local Government Act 1972 requires that all agendas, reports, and minutes are sent to the media on request, five working days prior to the meeting.

7.2 Provision is made for Councillors of the media to attend Council and committee meetings. During meetings Councillors should be mindful that any comments and messages are put across in a manner which gives the journalist an accurate picture rather than relying on the journalist's interpretation of what may be a complex issue.

8 Publicity During Elections

8.1 There are specific rules governing publicity when an election has been announced. In the period between the notice of an election and the election itself (purdah), all proactive publicity about candidates is halted.

8.2 During the purdah period, all council publicity shall be managed by the Clerk and any quotes provided in support of press releases will be given by authorised officers.

8.3 The Council will not quote any Councillor in a press release or involve them in proactive publicity events during the election period, regardless of whether or not they are standing for election. The only exception to this (as laid down in the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity) is during an emergency or where there is a genuine need for a member level response to an important event outside the control of the Council. In this situation, Councillors holding key civic positions should be able to comment.

9 Non-Council Related Media

9.1 Officers and Councillors of the Council who have contact with the media in a personal capacity or as Councillors of non-Council related organisations must not refer to their Council posts and must make it clear to the journalist concerned that they are speaking in a personal capacity or on behalf of the non-Council related organisation.

10 Managing Negative Issues

10.1 From time to time the Council has to respond to negative issues. It is important that these situations are managed carefully so as to limit the potential for negative publicity.

10.2 Councillors must alert the Clerk and Chairman as soon as a potentially negative issue which may attract media interest is known. They should not wait until contact is made by the media.

11 Correcting Inaccurate Reporting

11.1 Should the media publish or broadcast something inaccurate about the Council, a quick decision needs to be taken on any action necessary to correct it. The issue should be discussed with the Clerk to decide what action is appropriate. This could be a letter or news release, a conversation with the journalist concerned, a personal letter to the editor, or legal advice. It will also be necessary to decide who is the most appropriate person to take the agreed action.

11.2 It should be noted that in the case of minor inaccuracies which have little or no impact on the message being conveyed, it can sometimes be counterproductive to complain; each case should be judged individually.

11.3 Occasionally the Council will get something wrong. In these cases, damage limitation is the key – this can usually be achieved by admitting the mistake, apologising, and stating how the Council will learn from the error or put it right.

12 Freedom of Information and Data Protection

12.1 Should the Council receive a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 on a topic on which there is correspondence (written or email), that correspondence will normally have to be disclosed unless it is exempt. The fact that the disclosure may prove embarrassing would not, in itself, prevent disclosure.

12.2 In addition, care should be taken when processing personal data. The Data Protection Act 1998 prevents the use of personal information other than for the purposes for which it was supplied. Councillors should bear this in mind when using any personal data which may be supplied to them by residents.

13 **General Guidance for Councillors and Officers**

13.1 Councillors and officers must ensure they do not disclose information that is of a confidential nature. This includes any discussion with the press or other media on any matter which has been discussed under confidential items on council or committee agendas or at any other private briefing.

13.2 Councillors and officers should act with integrity at all times when representing or acting on behalf of the council.

13.3 Councillors should not use the prefix 'Councillor' when writing to the press as an individual. This implies you are stating Council policy, which is not necessarily consistent with your personal opinion.

13.4 Any Councillor failing to follow the guidelines set out in this policy may find themselves in breach of the Code of Conduct for Members and subject to a complaint to the Monitoring Officer.

13.5 Any officer failing to follow the guidance set out in this policy could face disciplinary action.

Social Media Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

The use of digital and social media now has a clear and compelling impact on all areas of local government, enabling better and more direct contact between the Parish Council and the people and organizations that it serves and works with.

This Social Media Policy aims to describe how the Parish Council will use social media to improve and expand the ways in which it communicates with its local residents, local businesses and the various government (local and central) agencies that it deals with. It sets out what is and is not acceptable usage of social media and complements the general rules in the Code of Conduct for Councillors.

SCOPE

Social media describes a range of websites and online tools which allow people to interact. This includes blogs and postings on a wide range of platforms including, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Linked-In, Instagram and Snapchat.

Social media is all about sharing information and people use social media platforms to give opinions, create interest groups and to build online communities and network which encourage participation and engagement.

This policy relates to any social media communication published by or on behalf of the council or any individual in their capacity as a councillor.

KEY PRINCIPLES

Any communication is capable of being misinterpreted. The immediacy of social media and the lack of face to face contact can magnify any problem.

Information and comments made can be broadcast to a large number of people more quickly than other media.

The same rules apply to social media that govern other behaviour as a councillor – but extra care needs to be taken given the immediacy and ease of dissemination

Although social media is conversational in tone, it is recorded, and it is permanent, so content and comment must be accurate, informative and thought through.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

The Parish Clerk is responsible for all formal communication between the council and members of the public and will be responsible for maintaining the Council website, Facebook pages and any other Council social media.

However, it is understood that there will be times when individual councillors may be communicating on social media.

PROCEDURE

Social media Use

Social media communications from the Parish Council will meet the following criteria:

- be civil, tasteful and relevant
- not contain content that is unlawful, libelous, harassing, defamatory, abusive, threatening, harmful, obscene, profane, sexually oriented or racially offensive
- not contain content copied from elsewhere, for which we do not own the copyright
- not contain any personal information, other than required basic contact details

It is not a requirement for councillors to have a personal Facebook or Twitter account or to use other forms of social media to engage with parishioners or otherwise fulfill their role, but this will often be the case.

Councillors should always spell out clearly whether they are communicating on social media in their capacity as a councillor or as a private individual.

Councillors should ensure that they comply with the Code of Conduct for Councillors whenever they act or appear to act in an official capacity on social media in the same way as with any other form of communication.

Whilst independent communications with parishioners are important in order to engage and be approachable, the overarching rules are that councillors should not make commitments on behalf of the Council, not bring the Council into disrepute and always respect confidentiality.

Social media guidelines

Treat others with respect – do not use social media to make personal attacks or indulge in rude, disrespectful or offensive comments.

Comply with equality laws – do not publish anything that might be seen as racist, sexist, ageist, homophobic or anti-faith.

Never bully or harass anyone – do not say anything, that might be construed as bullying or intimidation.

Do not bring the council into disrepute – do not publish anything that could reasonably be perceived as reflecting badly upon or lowering the reputation of you or the Council.

Do not disclose confidential information – do not disclose information given to you in confidence by anyone, or information acquired by you which you believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature.

Consider keeping your personal and councillor profile on social networking sites

separate.

Check you have the appropriate privacy settings for any private blog or networking site

Be aware that you will be seen as acting in your official capacity if you publish information that you could only have accessed by being a councillor.

Potential legal issues

Libel – If an untrue statement about a person which is damaging to their reputation is published, they may consider it as defamatory and consider legal action.

Copyright – Using images or text on social media from a copyrighted source (for example extracts from publications or photos), without obtaining permission, is likely to breach copyright laws.

Data Protection – Personal data of individuals must not be published unless you have their express permission. Personal information in an email or personal exchange should not be presumed to imply any consent to pass it on to others.

Bias and Predetermination – Councillors should not say anything on social media (or indeed anywhere) that suggests they have made up their mind on an issue that is due to be formally decided. While your likely view on a particular application may be well known, you need to be able to show that you attended the committee or hearing prepared to take on board and weigh all the evidence, and were genuinely persuadable to a different view, or the decision may be later challenged as invalid.