

## **BERRYNARBOR PARISH COUNCIL**

PARISH CLERK: MRS VICTORIA WOODHOUSE, FIRSTONE, YARNSCOMBE,  
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### **Public Consultation - The Berrynarbor Parish Council wants your input.....**

The Berrynarbor Parish Council (BPC) is considering an outline proposal offered by the North Devon Council (NDC) to take on the Freehold of the Public Toilets and a 25 Year Lease of the Car Park located by the Village Shop.

In short - if the BPC accepts the NDC proposal, the BPC will be able to ensure the continuity of the provision of these services/assets to the village, however it will come at financial cost to individual Berrynarbor parishioners by way of an increased Council Tax bill. If the BPC does not accept the NDC proposal the village may lose the use of these assets.

The Berrynarbor Public Toilets and Village Shop Car Park are currently North Devon Council assets. The NDC currently manages and maintains the Car Park, the BPC maintains the Public Toilets via a grant it receives each year from the NDC. These assets are considered “non statutory services” by the NDC, as such the NDC’s financial obligations for supporting these assets are coming under continued pressure in an effort to redirect NDC funds towards other “statutory services”.

The concern the BPC faces is primarily one around securing the continued provision of the Toilets and Car Park for the benefit of the village. There is a precedence set by the NDC to close, sell or outsource these types of assets, where Public Toilets in other local parishes have been closed and some Car Parks sold to property developers or outsourced to commercial parking companies to manage, which has resulted in increased tariffs and enforcement.

The Toilets and Car Park are obviously important village assets, utilised frequently by the parishioners and the visiting public, encouraging trade to the Village Shop, Cafe and Public House. As well as providing useful parking spaces for visitors utilising the parish amenities, including the; school, church, manor hall, etc.

Within the NDC’s lease offer to the BPC, the BPC would incur a financial obligation to maintain and manage the Car Park during the period of the lease (25 Years). With the transfer of Freehold relating to the Toilets the BPC would incur the financial obligations of managing and maintaining the Toilets, without the benefit of the annual NDC grant.

The NDC is offering the BPC a one off payment of £12,000 (£7,500 for the Toilets and £4,500 for the Car Park) by way of financial contribution to the BPC’s future financial obligations that the BPC would incur managing and maintaining the assets. This contribution falls short of meeting the BPC’s

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forecast costs related to maintaining and managing these assets. Should the BPC decide to move forwards with the Lease of the Car Park and Freehold of the Toilets the BPC would be required to increase the parishioners precept (Council Tax Bill).

The Clerk of the BPC has produced two budgets, one detailing the BPC's financial position without taking on the Toilet Freehold and Car Park Lease, and a second showing the BPC's financial position with an estimation of the likely costs incurred in taking on the Toilet Freehold and Car Park Lease. The increased cost per Berrynarbor household for the BPC taking on the Toilets and Car Park is

£10.20 per year (£0.20 per week), which would come into effect for the Council Tax Year 2020/2021 onwards. The clerks forecast budgets are available for viewing on the BPC Website located at [www.berrynarborparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.berrynarborparishcouncil.org.uk)

The BPC will be voting on whether to accept the NDC's proposal at the 12th February 2019 BPC meeting in the Manor Hall commencing at 7pm.

The BPC would appreciate hearing feedback from the Berrynarbor parishioners on whether they would like the BPC to reject or accept the NDC's proposal.

The BPC Councillors will also be holding a public meeting at the Manor Hall commencing at 7pm on the 18th January 2019, to discuss the NDC's proposal with any interested parishioners. There will be a sheet of paper with two columns marked Accept or Reject where parishioners will be able to indicate their preference by simply putting their name and address in the relevant column.

Parishioners are encouraged to provide their preference (and any feedback they may have) on whether they would like the BPC to accept or reject the NDC offer via either;

- 1) Email to [clerk@berrynarborparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:clerk@berrynarborparishcouncil.org.uk)
- 2) During the Public Participation Period of the aforementioned BPC meeting to be held on the 12<sup>th</sup> February 2019.
- 3) Signing the Accept/Reject paperwork available at the Manor Hall on the 18th of January 2019.