

SOUTH HUISH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of 2018 Annual Parish Meeting *under the Chairmanship of Cllr Jo Hocking.* The Parish Meeting may, by law, discuss all Parish affairs and pass resolutions about them

Date: 9 th May 2018		Venue & Time: Galmpton Village Hall, 19.00hrs
<u>Present:</u> Cllr Simon Coleman Cllr Paul Green Cllr Jo Hocking (in the chair) Cllr Ann Rossiter	<u>In Attendance:</u> Kathy Harrod (Clerk & Minute taker) Cllr Rufus Gilbert Sgt Dave Green 3 Parishioners	

REF 2018/19 MINUTES

108/18 **THE MINUTES** of the meeting held on 10th May April 2017 had already been agreed and signed as a true record.

Cllr Jo Hocking, in the Chair and Chairman of South Huish Parish Council, welcomed everyone to the Annual meeting of the Parish, highlighting the fact that it was an opportunity for everyone to hear reports and comment on how the Officers of the village are doing and highlight any areas of concern or aspiration.

109/18 **DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT**

District Councilors Judy Pearce and Simon Wright were not in attendance, however the following report was read out on their behalf by the Clerk:

Where we are at the end of the financial year, going in to 2018-19

The end of the 2017-18 financial year officially marks the end of the four-year T18 transformation process. It was also the last year that the Council received any government formula grant. The T18 process has bedded down well with innovative IT changes which mean that residents can carry out many more processes online now than they could even this time last year. This means these services are available 24/7 to residents and the pressure on staff to answer queries is far less. By sharing officers with West Devon and working together on certain processes, we are saving £3.9m a year from the South Hams Budget before the process started.

On the financial side the Council's budget has increased from £8.35m in 2017-18 to £8.98m in 2018-19. The increase is mainly accounted for by the anticipated gain from the business rates pilot, which should be about £0.475m. One of the conditions for joining the pilot is that monies earned should be earmarked for economic regeneration projects. The council is expecting to face a budget gap of over £800k in the financial year 2018-19 which it plans to cover by insuring maximum effective use of its assets and further reductions in costs. The Council Tax has again increased by £5 this year, meaning the cost of our services will be £160.42 for a Band D property.

The council's Medium Term Financial Strategy looks at financial planning and management for a 5-year period. It covers the changes in government funding from all sources, our spending plans and the level of savings required to achieve a balanced budget. The asset management plan sets the strategic direction for the Council as a land owner and in respect to its asset portfolio. Over the past year the council has constructed 7 business units in Dartmouth and 5 in Totnes. Those planned for Salcombe have been deferred in favour of a wider ranging project in the Batson and Shadycombe area which aims to improve the commercial quay facilities, boat storage and car parking as well as employment units and some affordable housing.

Last year's budget of £8.35m will show a small underspend, yet to be confirmed, but expected to be in the region of £100k, which will be added to the un-earmarked reserves, which will stand at around £1.7m. This is considered a prudent margin to cover any unexpected expenditure and to regulate cash flow.

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With West Devon Borough Council, South Hams employs 274.5 full time equivalents and South Hams employs a further 155 staff to deliver front line services. Currently the councils employ 5 apprentices. Audit assurance, risk management and the Council's Governance Framework all help to secure economy, efficiency and effective use of resources. Members can raise concerns about any risk mitigation actions taken by officers and to suggest new risks for consideration.

Some headlines:

- 2.3m bins were emptied during the last financial year.
- 18,000 tons of household recycling were collected
- 2,520 planning applications were processed
- 590 planning enforcement actions were carried out
- 850 fly tips were collected
- 80 abandoned vehicles were investigated
- 145,500 calls were handled, and 45,000 transactions were carried out online
- 134 affordable homes were delivered, with a further 366 under construction on 13 sites
- 334 households were prevented from becoming homeless
- Dartmouth Lower Ferry carried 350,000 passengers and vehicles
- 630 food inspections were carried out
- 93 disabled facility grants were awarded
- 68,250 people were registered to vote.

Joint Local Plan

Prepared in conjunction with Plymouth City council and West Devon borough Council, the new Joint Local Plan sets out a strategy and detailed policies that establish a framework to steer housing and employment development to the most sustainable locations and to guide decisions on planning applications.

Neighbourhood Planning has also advanced, and whilst only one plan, for Ivybridge, has so far been passed at referendum, many more are expected to be made in 2018-19, including Malborough, Salcombe, South Milton and Thurlestone this Ward. The plans will give the parishes far more say over how development should come forward.

The corporate strategy

During 2017-18 the council has reviewed its corporate strategy and has set six themes for the next five years, which are:

- The Council: to deliver efficient and effective services
- Communities: Council and residents working together to create strong and empowered communities
- Homes: enabling homes which meet the needs of all
- Environment: Protecting, conserving and enhancing our built and natural environment
- Enterprise: creating places for enterprise to thrive and businesses to grow
- Wellbeing: supporting positive safe and healthy lifestyles and helping those most in need

Under the Council, customer services and Locality officers will be ever more proactive on social media, and roadshows. Agile IT systems mean that officers can work from home, enabling a full service apart from waste collection to be maintained in the recent bad weather. We have saved £100k by procuring our insurance with other Devon district authorities. We are actively seeking opportunities to enhance economic growth in the district and considering investment in affordable housing and the private rented sector.

Under Communities, councillors awarded over £46k to local projects, £74.5k was awarded through TAP funding and £154k through the Community Reinvestment fund. The Seamoore local Lottery will commence during the summer and several asset transfers have taken place to town and parish councils including amenity land, parks, playing fields and areas of woodland.

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Under Homes, as well as projects already mentioned, a £1.88m Community Housing Fund has been awarded by Central Government targeting new homes for those with a local connection where the cost of market housing is beyond their reach. During the past year the first residents moved in to new houses in Sherford.

Under the Environment, 16 community engagement events and a formal consultation on the Joint Local Plan were carried out. In-cab technology now up and running in the collection vehicles means that routes have been improved and missed bin reports can be responded to instantly. We are also looking at ways to align our services to the Devon Waste and Resource Management Strategy. £800k has been spent on the Coastal Repairs Programme, with a further £500k being added from the Environment Agency.

Many of the Enterprise actions have already been mentioned.

Wellbeing actions comprise those from the Community Safety Partnership, involving schools, and 139 taxi drivers have received training on safeguarding and child exploitation issues. It has been a successful year for our partner Fusion Lifestyle running the Leisure Centres. Improvements have been completed at Dartmouth, are underway in Ivybridge and will commence shortly in Kingsbridge and Totnes.

Conclusion: It has then been an intensely busy year. The join up between West Devon and South Hams did not go ahead, but as you have just heard, a lot of other initiatives have been carried out successfully. It is not easy to maintain front line services under the intense financial pressures with which we find ourselves, but so far, we have found a way, so overall, we remain optimistic for the future.

REPORT ENDS.

110/18 POLICE REPORT

It has been a very busy year for the neighbourhood team, and we will try to maintain our patrols in the area as much we can.

Total crime South Huish Parish:

01/04/17-31/3/18	17 (6 of these came from one single incident)
2016-17	9
2015-16	8

Total crime this year for Kingsbridge policing area:	805
Total recorded crime in Devon this year:	+23%

South Huish offences:

1 x nuisance calls
1 x assault with no injury
4 x assault minor injury
1 x burglary non-dwelling
0 x burglary dwelling
1 x Criminal Damage
1 x Affray
2 x drink drivers
2x theft
1 x threatening behaviour
1 x possession of an offensive weapon
1 x fraud
1 x obstructing a constable in the execution of his duty

Crime only accounts for approximately 20-25% police activity. Other police work includes:

- Problem solving in neighbourhoods
- Road collisions
- Extreme weather events
- Safeguarding vulnerable people

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- Education/prevention
- Missing persons
- Mental health crisis
- Unexpected deaths
- Mutual aid commitments

And much more!

We rely on yourselves to pass information and any suspicious behaviour or report any anti-social behaviour problems that may arise now the lighter evenings are approaching us.

Sergeant Dave Green was thanked by the Councillors for the work undertaken by his unit to keep our parish safe.

111/18 COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

It has been an interesting and challenging year for the county, both budget and weather wise.

1. Highways has been a Budget increase of £6.5m for improvements to a variety of issues:
 - Pothole backlog is currently being held up due to lack of capacity rather than finance
 - 80,000 street lights
 - 3,215 bridges
 2. Budget Stresses have not been so bad this year
 3. Adult Social Care:
 - Improved funding is required from the Government.
 - Bed Blocking Costs £36m per year
 - 60/70 suicides per year in Devon
 4. Waste – 95%, the equivalent of 2.25m tonnes of waste go to Energy for Waste in Devonport.
 5. There are 700 children in care in Devon
 6. 91% of Devon schools are currently Ofsted rated as good or outstanding.
 7. The Slapton Line is being repaired.
 8. There is a road pot holes/gullies report facility available on line.
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112/18 Parish Council Report – Cllr Jo Hocking

The last year has been an interesting one for the PC. We said goodbye to a second clerk in less than 12 months but were fortunate to welcome Kathy Harrod as our new clerk. Kathy is also the clerk to Malborough PC which is already proving to be beneficial to both councils.

We received 52 planning applications in the year. The long running saga of the wall behind the Coastguard cottages has been decided by planners despite our evidence and objections. To say that we feel let down is an understatement.

We continue to battle over Kiln Field but as there is a history of planners failing to take action we are not hopeful.

The Neighbourhood plan has made slow progress due a lack of support and funding. The housing needs and business surveys were both completed but there is much still to do. We are exceptionally grateful to Tom, who has made a tremendous contribution to the plan but it needs a new team leader and more help. There will be an update at the parish meeting.

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The state of our roads has deteriorated even more since last year's report with very little having been done to address the potholes, drains, buddle holes and flooding incidents which continue to escalate. The long-awaited repairs to a section of Burleigh Lane resulted in the only half decent part of the lane- which happens to be in West Alvington parish - being resurfaced. We have written to councillor Hart from DCC to enquire how it is possible to make such a mistake and complain about the wasting of precious public resources by both this and another incident in early June but still despite a letter being received today, we still await a satisfactory response. We are currently trying to have a dangerous hole in the road beside Beachcomber repaired which was reported 6 months ago.

The snow warden scheme and gritting of the roads in conjunction with Malborough PC has been a huge success and our thanks go to the volunteers who have kept our roads open in this winter's appalling conditions. The gritter will, however need to be replaced in the near future and to this end and also for the neighbourhood plan funding, asset protection and any unforeseen expenses a new contingency bank account has been opened.

In order to keep expenses to a minimum we have adopted a policy for the renewal and repair of benches in the parish, currently standing at 27. We will not provide donations during the years 17/18 and 18/19 and it is hoped that in the future the parish magazine will be funded by sponsorship.

Nothing has really changed concerning the broadband situation except an admission that the cabinet was sited in the wrong place and that Openreach have lost the contract for phase 2 to Gigaclear. There will be an update in due course.

Once again BBQs on Mouthwell beach were a problem during the summer and we continue to investigate ways to address this. There were a couple of sewerage spills on Harbour beach in mid-August due to a build-up of fat. SWW cleared the pipes fairly promptly and have agreed to carry out more regular cleaning.

Following our objection, together with objections from the vast majority of parish and town councils in the South Hams to the one council merger, we sent a letter to councillor John Tucker asking him to explain why SHDC voted in favour contrary to any democratic process. We also questioned the substandard consultation and the use of public money to the tune of several hundreds of thousands of pounds to employ consultants over this and other issues. We have invited him to attend a PC meeting and await a response.

Finally, I would like to thank the clerk, my fellow councillors and parishioners for all their support and hard work.

Cllr Hocking was thanked by the Parish Councillors for her work over the past year as Chairman of the Parish Council.

113/18 Footpath Officer Report – Richard Pollard

1. Throughout last year, the volunteer footpath team continued to clear vegetation and to keep the footpaths in good condition. Without their work many areas would quickly become overgrown and their efforts are much appreciated by residents and visitors.
2. The Public Rights of Way team from the County Council has done some very good work to improve the steps leading up from Burleigh Lane, near Burleigh Farm, on the footpath leading to Malborough. They have also opened up an old right of way leading from the track near South Huish Farm to the road between Galampton Cross and Court Barton. This provides a new route for walkers but, as it is classified as a so-called County Road or unmetalled road (or more commonly a 'green lane'), it is also accessible to horse riders and, more controversially, to motor bikes. Nevertheless, it was the Devon Trail Riders Fellowship (i.e. cross-country

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motorcycle group) that instigated its reinstatement and did much of the clearance work required. The maintenance of this path is the responsibility of the County Council rather than the Parish footpath team.

3. Bridge on Footpath 4. The bridge over the stream below Ben's Field in Galmpton is showing signs of wear and in this year's footpath grant we are going to be provided with some extra funds in order to get this repaired and to extend the gravelled path across the very muddy area to the south of the bridge.

4. Verges. Although the roadside verges are not strictly the responsibility of the footpath team, some areas need regular attention now that the County Council is not doing any cutting except where visibility at road junctions becomes an issue. If nothing is done, these areas can become overgrown and unsightly, so we will do one or two cuts during the season on verges that seem to need attention. Councillor Rufus Gilbert has made some funds available from his budget to purchase an additional larger strimmer to tackle the rough areas.

There is no intention to keep areas neatly manicured but just to keep them tidy and to encourage the wildflowers that would otherwise be swamped by brambles and bushes. The only exception is the area on New Road above West View. This will have more regular cuts, as has happened in the last two years, so that the bank and the area around the seats, which provide such an important view point, are kept in good order.

Cllr Rossiter requested another gate be added – full details will be provided.

114/18 Village Hall Report

In the absence of an attendee from the village hall, the following report was read out by the Clerk:
We have had another fairly successful year although a few more regular bookings are always welcome. We have a band that practices quite often in addition to our other bookings. Line dancing continues to take place on a Tuesday evening and Bowls is held on Thursday evenings at 7.30pm. More attendees would be most welcome, they're good fun evenings, come along and give it a try.
The Hall is going to have a Deep Clean inside and out by Fine Shine in the near future.

115/18 Open Forum and general discussion of Parish affairs

There being no other business, at 19.50hrs the Chair, Cllr Jo Hocking, closed the meeting with thanks to all who attended.

Signed as a true record: _____

Print Name & Date: _____