

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

held on

Wednesday 10th January 2024

at 7.30pm at the Village Hall

Present: Cllr A Birmingham, Cllr S Luxton, Cllr R Tillett, Cllr E Hollingsworth, Cllr W Honan, Cllr B Hillson and Cllr N Vickers.

In Attendance: Tracy Watkins (Clerk), Stewart Wass (Chair of the BSUPC Community Land Trust) and eighteen members of the public.

No		Action
1/24	Apologies: Cllr J Kemp (EDDC) and Cllr H Gent (DCC) and Cllr S Randall Johnson (DCC)	
2/24	Declarations of interest Cllr Luxton in item 5– Affordable and Open Market Housing. The Chair reminded all Cllr’s to ensure that they have checked the Code of Conduct and all appropriate DOI’s have been made	
3/24	Minutes The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 8th November 2023 were agreed as a true record and SIGNED by the Chair.	
4/24	Public Question Time No questions were raised.	
5/24	Affordable Homes and Community Land project The Chair reiterated that the purpose of this agenda point is an update from Stewart Wass (Chair of the BSUPC Community Land Trust) and not a consultation and therefore Cllr Birmingham and Cllr Luxton will stay in the meeting. Mr Wass’s update as follows: The CLT’s brief was to achieve affordable housing in Cowley, Brampford Speke or Upton Pyne.	

	<p>The site at Longview was deemed as not suitable due to concerns with road access and other objections from villagers</p> <p>BSUPC CLT have been in discussions with Cllr Luxton about a possible site at Stonilands. They have also been in discussions with EDDC, Teign Housing and another Housing Association.</p> <p>There is currently an agreement in principle with the landowner and have commissioned an access survey. Devon Highways were invited to have a look at the access and they concluded, from a “drive by” that they could not see any potential problems. National Grid have quoted to put the power lines underground.</p> <p>A traffic count, not a survey, was completed some weeks ago in Brampford Speke.</p> <p>The plans are open to discussion and have not been finalised.</p> <p>The CLT have offered to meet and consult with directly affected residents. A member of the public commented that the CLT were advised that the dates that were offered for a meeting in the pre-Christmas period did not work for those residents affected and the CLT had not offered any further dates at this time.</p> <p>Unfortunately, the consultation meeting on 29th November had to be cancelled but this will be rescheduled. Waiting for an agreed date with residents. It is proposed to be held on Wednesday 21st February 2024 in the Village Hall. Doors open from about 3pm until early evening. After this meeting the BSUPC CLT will report back the Parish Council.. The Chair reminded the meeting that the PC will want to hear feedback and comments directly from villagers and this would be arranged and conducted by the PC after the CLT’s session in February.</p> <p>A member of the public asked if this was the same item as the community space down by the river, which was discussed at the meeting in November. The Chair explained that the opportunity available near the river is a separate village lead project and not connected to the CLT’s proposal. An action group has been set up with the landowners and will meet shortly to discuss how to move this forward.</p>	
6/24	<p>Lead Councillor Updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance – Cllr Birmingham – We are currently running slightly below projected expenditure levels as some of the projects did not require as much funding as was originally anticipated when setting this year’s budget. The Council had problems transferring funds from one account to another with Santander and a complaint 	Clerk

	<p>about the poor service has been made It is felt the Council should investigate changing banks. Clerk to speak to local clerks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verges – Cllr Luxton – Have been cut very recently. To ensure South End is also done. School hedge has been cut. Not very tidy. Cllr Hillson volunteered to speak to contractor and ask them to come back to tidy up. • Trees & Natural Environment – Cllr Hollingsworth – Nothing to report • Highways and Traffic Management – Cllr Tillett – a traffic accident occurred on 7th January on Burrige Hill. This happened during a period when no gritting had been done. A car skidded into the ditch, thankfully nobody was injured. DCC Highways will only grit when the temperature falls below zero for 2 days concurrently. A member of the public raised a concern about the speed of cars around the 20 mile an hour zones. There is no legal enforcement of and the police will not attend. Clerk to email DCC and EDDC Cllrs to see what can be done and can they report to Highways. The Chair has had a written request from the school to be informed more pro-actively when gritting is due to take place. Cllr Tillett advised that we don't know in advance and normally will be advised they are coming when they have already been. • Planning and Development– Cllr Honan – no new applications to report • Communications – Cllr Vickers – Lots of new residents to add to our distribution list. Welcome packs are on-going and being printed and then can be distributed. Clerk confirmed the electoral roll changes are sent to Cllrs as soon as they come in. • Footpaths – Update from the Footpath Warden/Cllr Hillson – Wynn Stait has sorted FP7. The landowner has now agreed to help with the Maintenance. There are no updates regarding the church path. Cllr Hillson will check current status with WS. A member of the public offered some slabs if this would help. 	<p>SL & BH</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>BH</p>
<p>7/24</p>	<p>Village Hall</p> <p>Nothing new from the last Trustees meeting. Quotes are being sought for the work to the porch. These will then be brought to the Parish Council.</p>	
<p>8/24</p>	<p>Financial Items</p> <p>The account summary to December 31st 2023 (previously approved by Cllr A Birmingham) was AGREED and APPROVED.</p> <p>To NOTE the following payments were approved remotely in accordance with Financial Regulations</p> <p>2 x Payments to Tracy Watkins (November and December)</p> <p>2 x Payments to HMRC (November and December)</p>	<p>Clerk to circulate publish on website</p>

	<p>1 x Payment to Ed Rogers of £340.80 for siting of Coronation bench (03.11.2023)</p> <p>1 x Payment of £12.19 to BT for Village Hall WiFi (paid by DD on 28.11.2023)</p> <p>1 x Payment to Cllr Vickers of £72.08 as reimbursement for Coronation bench plaque (19.12.2023)</p> <p>Since the account was reconciled on 31st December 2023 the VAT claim had been submitted and the funds received.</p> <p>Note: Payments approved by Councillors S Luxton, A Birmingham and R Tillett in accordance with the Financial Regulations</p>	
9/24	<p>EDDC Update</p> <p>Cllr Kemp was not at the meeting and did not provide an update. Clerk to email and request one.</p>	Clerk
10/24	<p>DCC Update</p> <p>Neither Cllr Randall-Johnson nor Cllr Gent were present at the meeting. Cllr Randall-Johnson provided the update below:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>January 2024 – DCC Monthly Report</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Cllr Sara RandallJohnson</u></p> <p>Happy New Year as DCC ramps back up to full speed after the Christmas Holiday break, which I hope, will be a prosperous and healthy one for all of you, your families and friends. This month’s Division members report focuses on the finances of Devon County Council ahead of target setting for the various service areas of the Council ahead of next month’s Budget setting for 2024/24 in what is going to be an interesting year for everyone in Local and National Government.</p> <p><u>Budget 2024/2025</u></p> <p>Setting the DCC Budget for 2025/25 is like any year, a huge task for a large scale organisation. Over 79% of the nett revenue budget of £743.4million proposed for 2025/25 is spent on children’s and adult service areas i.e. £588.5m with £154.8m for the others</p> <p>Demand in these two areas in particular continues to surge, where DCC must legally provide them, often at very high costs, over and above ahead of what is termed called discretionary services such as routine roads maintenance (other than safety issues) of a 12,000 mile road network, bus service subsidies, climate change initiatives and much more.</p>	

	2023/24 Adjusted Base Budget £000	Inflation and National Living Wage £000	Other Growth and Pressures £000	Savings, Alternative Funding and Additional Income £000	2023/24 Total Budget £000
Integrated Adult Social Care	340,245	29,887	20,025	(29,411)	360,746
Children and Young People's Futures	206,278	9,795	20,862	(9,150)	227,885
Public Health, Communities & Prosperity	21,678	533	289	(1,577)	21,923
Corporate Services	49,755	2,160	1,361	(4,831)	48,445
Climate Change, Environment & Transport	81,619	6,144	2,348	(4,629)	85,482
Totals	699,575	48,519	44,886	(49,598)	743,382

The 2023/24 Base Budget has been adjusted for permanent virements (budget transfers from other budgets)

The funding for this comes from a wide range of Core funding income from the Government and Other Grants totalling around £236.4m, but the majority of the income is derived from Council tax and a share of Business rates.

This is set against set against a background inflationary cost of living pressures and huge challenges to Local Government in general. Social care provision is particularly impacted by increases to the national living wage, which at first glance a 30p per hour increase announced by the Government does not seem vast. However, it will add an extra £25.7m to the DCC wage bill, which will need to come from further savings and efficiencies.

There is an above inflation proposed 10.4 per cent increase in the revenue budget for children's services with a 6 per cent rise in adult services and 4.7 per cent extra for climate change, environment and transport.

Reductions in other departmental spending means an overall rise of 6.3 per cent in the council's budget for next year within the total spend of over £743 million where Officers of the Council have worked closely with the DCC Cabinet to secure best value across Devon's operations and ensure continuing financial sustainability.

To set a balanced budget, savings, alternative funding and additional income of £49.6 million have been identified. Overall, there is additional funding of £43.8 million or 6.3% for services next year. It is not planned to support the proposed budget targets by using general reserve balances. This reflects a strategy of DCC 'living within its and to set service budgets that are affordable within anticipated income and funding totals for next year.

11/24

Other information/correspondence received for possible action/discussion/attendance and review of Action Points

	<p>Parish Council Budget 2024-25</p> <p>2024-25 Budget. The Chair reminded Councillors that it is the intention to maintain a balanced budget for 24-25. here is a potential underspend showing in the anticipated out-turn for this year. However, non-discretionary costs continue to rise and projects still need to be funded. The proposal is to increase the Precept from £8000 to £8500 and ensure regular work programmes continue</p> <p>A questions was raised as to if the PC should continue to subsidise the village hall, and if so, to what level?</p> <p>It was proposed that we agree the budget for now and then look more closely at the suggestion to reduce the VH grant from 2025 onwards. The Chair will discuss with the VH Trustees.</p> <p>The reserves were agreed with the understanding the figures are net of the donations and VAT adjustments that the Council received this year. The new budget and precept claim were PROPOSED by Cllr Luxton and SECONDED by Cllr Tillett.</p> <p>Clerk to send completed Precept forms to EDDC.</p> <p>Coronation Bench</p> <p>Plaque has been received and will be fitted once we have had a couple of days of dry weather and the bench has been oiled</p> <p>Speke Up – Cllr Tillett will send around a draft once completed.</p> <p>Stolen cars – There have been reports of cars being stolen locally. A resident has some images on their personal CCTV. A member of the public asked if the Council could organise an ANPR camera for the village. The legality and cost of this was questioned by the Council. Cllr Luxton offered to contact his supplier to get further information. Cllr Tillett will add this to his email that he is sending to Highways.</p>	<p>AB</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>NV</p> <p>RT</p> <p>SL</p> <p>RT</p>
<p>12/24</p>	<p>Date of the next meeting(s)</p> <p>The meeting closed at 8.45pm. The date of the next Meeting is Wednesday 6th March 2024 – Village Hall at 7.30 pm</p>	

Signed:.....

Date:.....