

Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting 17th March 2011:

The Council met in the Village Hall at 7.30pm. There was an attendance of 7 Parish Councillors, District Councillor Mrs D. O'Callaghan, Head Teacher Rachel Perkins, Community Beat Officer Steve Mullen and 4 Parishoners.

Apologies for absence: Mr A. Palmer and Mr D. Horton.

Annual Reports:

Parish Council: The Chairman read the Parish Councils report, he reported that the car park light in Town Park Car Park was up and running and the residents in the area seemed happy with it and the added safety and security it provided in such a dark area. During this year we also sadly had the resignations of two long standing members of the Parish Council Mrs Gwen Doyle and Mr David Dainty. Dr Sarah Woolaston came along to their last meeting and presented them with their retirement gifts. We then subsequently co-opted two new members to the Parish Council, we had 5 candidates for two positions, the two successful members were Mr Paul Adams and Ms Annie Quinton. The grass cutting for the burial site and various locations around the Parish went out to tender. The successful applicate was Mr Craig Brock a young local lad who was setting up his own business. We are very pleased with the work that he has undertaken and have asked him to continue with us again this year. We have had several reports from members of the public as to how nice the burial site looks, we would like to thank him for this. We also received a bench as a gift that has been placed in the burial site. It is a very unusual seat and was hand made and we thank the Fletcher family for their generosity. We had a new noticeboard made and placed at Tacket Wood, it is proving quite popular and is regularly used. In this year we had 15 planning applications, 1 pre application and 27 complaints re: refuse collections, drains, potholes etc. we currently have two outstanding with the Planning Dept. At long last after many years the Church Wall has been repaired, it came with its own problems, regarding traffic congestion even though there were traffic lights in situ. There was some issues with verbal abuse to the contractors. These issues were rectified and the work continued, the wall looks very good and is much safer. Lower Street was resurfaced and this has improved greatly. Overall as a Parish we are working more closely as a community, involving the public as much as possible. We even had for the first time ever a waiting list to join the Parish Council! This year we will be up for re-election and all those wanting to join the Parish Council so far have taken their nomination papers, these have been taken to Follaton House by the Chairman and all so far have been accepted and there were no spoiled papers. The future sees a lot more work for town and parish councils due to the localism bill. There are extreme pressures on finances and they are very tight this year especially, unfortunately this means that we had to increase the precept slightly this year. Affordable housing is going to move ahead more positively as the need has proved to be great. The Parish Councils aim is to have more community involvement, we need to all pull together to move positively

forward.

Community Beat Manager: Steve Mullen reported that during the year March 2010 to March 2011 there were 9 crimes in the Parish there were a total of 895 in the whole Kingsbridge area. This equated to 1% of the areas crime. The crimes were 2 burglaries, 4 criminal damage, 1 theft 1 assault and 1 section 4 public order offence. From January to March this year there have been 160 crimes in the whole area of Kingsbridge etc; West Alvington has had 3. 1 of theft, 1 crime to a vehicle, and 1 common assault. He reported that either himself or PCSO Dave Gibson try to attend as many of our meetings as possible including the coffee mornings. He reported that Dave has been a great asset to the team. They have visited the school twice and talked to the children on internet safety, the importance of being safe in chat rooms etc. The younger years had a lesson in road safety with PC Paul O'Dwyer this included speed monitoring. He invited anyone interested to a Road Safety Day at the Kingsbridge Community College combined with the Devon Fire and Rescue Service. There will be various attractions and plenty of advice on road safety etc. There will also be some speed monitoring on West Alvington Hill during the day. There is also an annual presentation coming up called Learn to Live, it is especially aimed at young drivers, it contains experiences from parents of youngsters injured or killed in motoring accidents, reports from Police and Fire Officers. All are welcome to attend. The Chairman thanked PC Mullen and PCSO Dave Gibson for all their continued support. In return PC Mullen thanked the Parish Council and the community for the support shown to the officers.

District Councillor – Mrs D. O'Callaghan: reported that it had been a busy year. The proposal for 50 homes in West Alvington on the LDP plan was vehemently rejected and was subsequently removed from the plan. This year the DCC are proposing to reduce the cutting of the verges from 6 cuts a year to 2. SHDC have protested about the short notice about these proposed changes, so DCC are looking at it again. We will be kept informed. The council tax for the year has been frozen and there will be no increase. The proposal for the bin lid closure policy which meant that if they were not closed they may not be emptied, this idea has now been shelved. It is possible that notes may now be issued in a more “softer approach”. The Communal Arts Budget is not to be cut after all. The planning issue at Woolston Court which is under review, as yet there has been no feedback from Malcolm Elliott at the planning dept. The decision over whether SHDC will continue with maintaining the play areas is still a grey area and nothing has been decided for definite yet. Councillor O'Callaghan has some money remaining in her locality budget and she is hoping that she will be able to give some to the Parish Council for a map board of the parish to be made featuring key features of the village and surrounding area. She is hopeful that this request for the money will go through successfully.

Finally Councillor O'Callaghan stated that she would not be standing again at the election on the 5th May. So this would be her last meeting. The Chairman thanked her for all her support to the Parish Council over the last 4 years and she was

presented with a basket of flowers as a token of our appreciation.

Primary School: Head Teacher Mrs Rachel Perkins reported that the school roll has increased from 42 compared to 32, eighteen months ago. Year 2 is now full and there is a waiting list. The school nurse visits regularly to assess how healthy the children are. There are currently 11 children with Special Educational Needs and there is a good support team for them. The pupil progress is good and some are now working towards SATs and the results are looking good. There is a good focus on literacy and maths and targets are set to challenge the children with one to one assessments. The maths in the school is very good with 61% of the children achieving either good or very good. The finances are looking good and the budget for the year has been balanced, despite all the cuts that are being faced. First Aid training has been given to all the staff across the federation. There have been numerous visitors to the school, including the Fire Service, the Police, the Rotary Club, Penny Burnside from the Diocese, and Clive Pig, actor and storyteller. PCSO Dave Gibson has introduced a tag rugby team and Wendy Ohlson from KCC will be conducting the Year 6 integration visits. Tomorrow is Comic Relief and the children will be coming to school in a variety of outfits. On the 7th April the school will be having an Easter Service to which everyone would be welcome.

There is a possibility that a walking bus may be introduced to enable children to walk to school from Kingsbridge with adult supervision.

The school currently has a toddler group which is held on a Friday for ages 0 – 4 years, this is free of charge. There are plans to introduce a pre-school in the school this will take place in the a class alongside the foundation year children. It is proposed to hold this 1 afternoon a week. It will be able to facilitate 8 pre-school children along with a leader. The school also has a weekly newsletter which is circulated to the Parish Councillors. If anyone else would like to read a copy they should contact the school for further information. The Chairman thanked Mrs Perkins for her report and wished her continued success with the school. He then gave her 2 cheques, one to pay for the grass cutting that the school gets invoiced for the other from Mr A. Clarke on behalf of the Fun Day for the sum of £100 to be put towards some play equipment for the children.

Ms A. Quinton asked Mrs Perkins about the SATs situation and their continuation despite what has been reported in the press. Mrs Perkins said that each head had their own opinion on the SATs situation and that it would take a strong headteacher to say no to doing SATs.

Village Hall Committee: Ms A. Quinton spoke on behalf of the Village Hall. Her opening comment being “Hands off our Car Park”. This was followed by a request for an outstanding invoice for the Carol Singing Evening hire of the hall, the Clerk was unaware of any outstanding invoice but will contact Mr K Steer to find out how much we owe and then arrange payment. There are plans to undertake re-roofing and repair works during the 25th - 29th April, this will be over the Easter period and also the Royal Wedding. We do not have any events planned for any period over this time.

The Chairman thanked Ms Quinton for her report.

All Saints Church: There was no one from the Church to give a report.

West Alvington Horticultural Society: There was no one from the Society to give a report.

W.I: Mrs J. Odams from the W.I reported that the group meet on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, except August. They are a very social group and they have 3 occasions throughout the year when they have unofficial meetings and go out for a meal. Guest speakers are invited to meetings, these have included this year photographer Martyn Norsworthy, the first responders, a pilates instructor, a talk on Bonsai, they had a visit to the Chilli Farm. They were down to 13 members at one stage but they now boast a membership of 26. The Chairman thanked Mrs Odams for her report.

Coffee Mornings: Mrs M. Kitt gave the report on behalf of the coffee morning committee. They meet on the first Wednesday of every month. Apparently the coffee maker is very good!! (this is the Chairman) It is an informal morning and is held between 10 and 11am. A good opportunity to sit and natter. PC Steve Mullen and PCSO Dave Gibson often attend and answer any questions raised. The coffee morning has even entertained DCC members when they came to inspect the road works that were undertaken. A little library has been started and any donations of books would be appreciated. The best part of the coffee mornings is that it is FREE!!!

Parish Fun Day: Mr A. Clarke reported on the plans for the next Fun Day. Over the last 2 years we have learnt what works and how we may need to change some things. We need to try and focus more on the children and things for them that can be free of charge, whilst still bearing in mind that we do need to make some profit. On the 3rd February he met with Rachel Perkins and John Stevenson to discuss areas that with which the children could be more involved. The next step is to move forward with these ideas. A list will be drawn up and all parties can work on it together. The date for the Fun Day has been set as Saturday 24th September, this will not clash with any other events being held in the immediate area. Mr Clarke thanked Mr Stevenson for all his help involved with the preparations. The next meeting is to be held on Tuesday 22nd March at 7.30pm at Mr Stevensons home, Midships, West Alvington.

Best Kept Garden Competition: Last year the entries were not very forthcoming, so the Chairman and the Clerk walked around the Village looking at residents front gardens and awarding £10 to the best 10 gardens. Whether we follow the same format or try something different this year can be discussed.

West Alvington Short Mat Bowls: There was no one present to give a report.

Parish Work Party: Mr A. Palmer was unable to attend the meeting but sent his report that the Chairman read out. He reported that the work party was held in October. It consisted of a high proportion of Councillors and willingly parishoners with enough tools to start a hardware shop, some even had motors attached.! The volunteers were dispatched to various locations in the village with bags of bulbs, shovels, brushes and high vis. Jackets. Cars were moved, worked around or in one case covered inadvertently by our contract hedge trimmer in vegetation. A welcome refreshment break was provided by Mrs Kitt. Three large bags of vegetable waste was removed and numerous black bags of plastic cans etc. The clean up concluded with a garage party and the tidying up of some bottles of beer!! The only problems encountered were not having an empty car park which made the cleaning up job much harder and incomplete, if any one has any ideas they would be welcome. He concluded his report by thanking everyone involved for their hard work, good humour and enthusiasm. See you next year!!!

Open Forum: Mr M. Adams, Parishoner present asked the Council why such a large sign had to be erected at the entrance to the Town Park Car Park stating that the car park was for residents only, he felt disappointed at the size of the sign. The Chairman responded that Devon County Council had placed the sign there in response to our request. It is a legal technicality to cover the terms of our lease agreement. It was left at this.

Mrs S. Howells wanted to inform the Council that the Beating of the Bounds Event had been arranged for Saturday 21st May 2011.. There will be two walks, one short and one slightly longer followed by lunch in the Village Hall. Tickets will be on sale at a cost of £2.50 per head, these will be available from herself, the Chairman and other members of the Parish Council.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.47pm. To be followed by the Parish Council Meeting.

Signed..... Dated.....