

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 19th May 2011:

A.G.M.:

The Council met in the Village Hall @ 7.30pm. There was an attendance of 8 Parish Councillors,

Apologies for absence: There were no apologies for absence all Parish Councillors present.

Election of Chairman: It was resolved on the proposal of Mrs. M. Kitt and seconded by Mr A. Palmer that Mr S. Wright should be re-elected as Chairman. All in favour. Mr S. Wright was duly elected as Chairman for the ensuing year.

Mr S. Wright in the Chair.

Election of the Vice Chairman: It was proposed by Mr J. Stevenson and seconded by Ms. A. Quinton that Mr A. Clarke should be re-elected as Vice Chairman. All in favour. Mr A. Clarke was duly elected as Vice Chairman for the ensuing year.

Appointment of Parish Representatives: The following Councillors were elected to carry out the following roles:

- a. Village Hall - Councillor A. Quinton will represent the Parish Council at Village Hall Committee meetings.
- b. Work Parties – Councillor A. Palmer
- c. Footpaths – Councillor A. Palmer
- d. Best Kept Garden Competition – Councillor A. Quinton
- e. Entertainment – Councillor S. Howells
- f. Parish Fun Day – Councillor A. Clarke
- g. Coffee Club – Councillor M. Kitt
- h. Parish Web-Site – Councillor S. Wright
- i. Police Liaison – Councillor A. Clarke
- j. Parish Information Line – Councillor A. Clarke
- k. Affordable Homes Committee – Councillors S. Wright, A. Quinton, A. Clarke and S. Howells.
- l. Salcombe & Kingsbridge Estuary Forum – Councillor J. Stevenson.

The Chairman welcomed our guests for the evening Susan Hitchcock- Devon Rural Housing Enabler and Debbie Holloway – South Hams District Council Affordable Homes Officer. The ladies gave a brief outline as to their roles as they did at the previous meeting that they attended. They are here to provide a service to the Community and to discuss the needs of individual Parishes. This is done via a survey, a copy of a draft survey was shown to the Councillors present. Part 1. looks at whether the residents would support affordable housing, and whether they would have a need themselves or for their immediate family in the ensuing five years. Part 2. Seeks to gather information on the needs of older people in the Parish and gauge

the future aspirations of parishoners and whether they would like to remain in the Community etc.

Part 3. is for everyone requiring accommodation, those forming new households, mature children unable to move out of the parental home or older people seeking more appropriate accommodation. It asks about local connections, can they overcome their own housing needs financially etc. Parishoners will be encouraged to fill in the survey as fully as possible. The survey will then be returned to Exeter, it will bypass the Parish Council so remaining the confidentiality of the Parishoners. Once complete the survey response will come back as a percentage and no names will be mentioned. This will all remain private and after a certain period of time all paperwork will be destroyed. We will all help with the delivering of the surveys to ensure that it gets out to all those who need it. It may be of interest to people who have links to the Parish but who have moved away but may need to return to give support to older members of their families etc. If it means connection through employment then there is a separate section on the survey for this.

Mr J. Stevenson said he liked the idea but has concerns about it going outside the Parish and how this would take into account the needs and the size of the Village itself. Susan Hitchcock stated that this would only concern those with immediate family connections and the the general public. Local connections will always be looked at and the floodgates will not be opened. Mr Stevenson wanted to know if checks were undertaken. Debbie Holloway confirmed that through the Devon Home Choice scheme any interested parties would have to give proof of any local connections, such as addresses and family history. Most people like to remain within 5 miles to maintain family network connections. This survey is on Parish level only....

With any affordable home there is a restriction that only 80% can ever be purchased and it will remain affordable in perpetuity. There is currently a shortfall of over 600 houses in the South Hams area and every safeguard is taken to prevent properties from being sold on, there is also a Devon restriction that applies.

Mr D. Horton felt that there was a need for housing in the village and that sites had been looked at previously but didnt quite work out as planned. There had been talk of an exception site. It was pointed out by Susan Hitchcock that an exception site usually sits outside of a development boundary. 8-10 houses are usually sited, all of which would be affordable for perpetuity, and there would be no open market sales, and there would need to be local connections. Unfortunately most of these sites have dried up and are hard to come buy and with agricultural land prices rising they are not so accessible. There is now a Village Housing Initiative scheme which was not greeted at first with pleasure from the Government Office. This is however, a good scheme with provision for 10-15 affordable homes, the land owner can either have 1 open market value house or have a plot with planning and some cash, or the total cash equivalent, there would also be another open market house which would the Housing Association would be able to sell so helping to fund the scheme. One such scheme has successfully already taken place, which ever of these schemes are undertaken all the homes must remain affordable.

Mr Stevenson wished to know if this would be Tor Homes. Debbie Holloway stated

that it could be any housing association and that they would be the landlord for affordable housing. Mr Stevenson asked whether affordable housing would be best sited in an area where market value is lower. Debbie Holloway stated that affordable housing is usually built on a site by a housing association and not on high value land. The maximum paid is £10,000 a plot. Unlike developers who can afford to pay high land prices. A valuer values the site on area and whether it is a 2 or 3 bed semi etc. and it must remain at least 20% in the housing association possession. ie. Only 80% of the property can ever be purchased.

Only our survey can determine if we have a need. It was proposed by Ms. A.Quinton and seconded by Mr A. Palmer to go ahead with the survey. All in favour.

District Councillor – Mr S. Wright: Councillor Wright reported that although he had only been in his current position for 2 weeks, it has been apparent that the communication between the District Council and the Parish Council has been appalling in the past. It is his wish that the line of communication is vastly improved. This will be obtained a lot easier now, especially with his new “swipe card” that enables him to access every office in Follaton House so that when we need answers to questions the appropriate officer can be seen by Councillor Wright and answers will be given! He has been requested to stand on the following committees at SHDC. Development & Management Committee, Economy & Environment Panel, Licensing Committee, Salcombe Harbour Board. He has also as a District Councillor has a sum of money to be shared between West Kingsbridge and West Alvington, so if we have any ideas that may need funding we should let him know.

Open Forum: There were no topics for discussion. The Chairman did however thank Mrs F. Newsham for returning to the meeting as a member of the public and for her work in the past as a member of the Parish Council. He also acknowledged Mr B. Toms's efforts as a Parish Councillor over the years and he felt that we needed to recognise this. We will arrange this and invite him along to formally thank him.

Street Lighting – Part night lighting: The Chairman reported that on his campaign to be elected as District Councillor he had spoken to many householders about their thoughts on this subject. From the feedback he received it was felt that the lights are there for a reason, especially in areas like Lower Street. His impression gained was that if it has to happen then it should only be half of the lights, if not leave well alone. Mr Stevenson said he had received the opposited reaction and as a “green” member of the Council he felt that we should do our bit. Mr Horton felt that areas such as the footpath should be kept lit as a safety issue. The Chairman pointed out that it was not our intention to challenge Devon County Council about this matter but to advise them of what we would like to do in our Village. Should we suggest that we turn off half.? Or undertake a survey of the lamps and ask the Parishoners what they think? We will revisit this issue again.

Parish Map: At a previous meeting it was suggested that we have a Parish Map showing points of interest in the Village etc; we have been given £450 from our

previous District Councillors grant fund to get it up and running. We will need to have a frame made to site the perspex map. Mr A. Clarke is to liaise with the school and other organisations as it was originally suggested in the Parish Plan. If anyone would like to help please see Mr A. Clarke.

Tor Homes & Parking: Ms. A. Quinton took on the Village Hall Committee and got a special meeting organised. Mr S. Wright was invited and a plan put into action. 2 disabled spaces were issued, 1 for the general public and 1 for Village Hall users. The other 3 spaces to remain, the dodgy footpath leading to the school to be cleared and marked by Tor Homes making it safer for the children to use and to prevent a fourth car from parking there, the car park spaces will also be marked out.

Chairmans Report:

The Chairman reported attending a special Village Hall committee meeting to discuss the concerns regarding the Village Car Park and the remarks made by the Hall committee. It quickly became clear a shortfall of information had resulted in the wrong statement being passed to the Parish Council. Discussions followed that resulted in a marking scheme approved by all. The two disabled spaces to be in the main Car Park and a pedestrian route to be marked out in the Hall section.

Grass cutting of the Parish grass areas had begun which also enabled the burial site to look its best for the burial of Bill Adam.

The Chairman reported sending a letter of condolences to Joy Adams on behalf of the Parish which was read out during the service.

The Chairman attended the Kingsbridge Mayors Civic Dinner

Finally reported attended the Development Management Users Group during which the results of the previous three years consultation was given. West Alvington had been involved from the start of this consultation during which improved working of the Planning Department was scrutinised by “outside bodies such as town/Parish Councils agents etc.

Parish Reports:

Fun Day: Mr J. Stevenson gave a report on behalf of the Fun Day Committee. He said that the feedback from the school about a Junior Talent Show was not well received. The winning suggestion was Hook a Duck, followed by a Treasure Hunt, Beat the Goalie, Tug of War and a Bouncy Castle. The latter is proving to be a bit of a contentious issue mainly due to the insurance implications. Our insurance policy as it stands will not cover us for a bouncy castle, we would have to incur a further charge of approx. £40 to £50. The company would have their own insurance but this

would not cover any accidents that may happen. We would need to obtain Health and Safety Certificates, public liability insurance and public indemnity insurance. It would appear that it would be just too risky and therefore a complete non starter. Mr Stevenson felt yes, it is a risk, but it would also be fun! Mrs M. Kitt said she would be in favour of it and she had in fact suggested it. Mrs S. Howells asked how much the hire of the bouncy castle would be. Mr Stevenson said it would be in the region of £30 to £40 excluding the operator. He added that he felt disappointed especially if the kids want to do it. He added that he would be happy to investigate it further. Ms. A. Quinton asked if there were any size restrictions? Mr A. Clarke said if it were to be done properly would we need to have CRB checks.? Mr Stevenson agreed that all the criteria would have to be met. Mr A. Palmer felt that we couldn't really make any decisions until we know costings, insurance details etc. Ms. A. Quinton proposed that we should push on with other ideas and defer it until next years event. Mrs S. Howells seconded this proposal. There were 2 in favour of this and 3 abstentions.

Beating of the Bounds Event: Mrs S. Howells reported that the event planned for Saturday 21st May would now be postponed, mainly due to the lack of response. It was suggested that this now be held later in the year, possible in the Autumn. It was at this point that the Chairman congratulated Mrs. S. Howells on her own “forthcoming arrival” . Her baby is due in October.

Planning Application and Decisions:

Mr & Mrs G C Johns - Householder application for proposed alterations and extension including erection of private garage, workshop and lean to extension at The Old Coach House, Gerston, Kingsbridge. - In favour of support.

Mr & Mrs Hackley: Conversion of existing garage and store into ancillary accommodation together with proposed swimming pool adjacent to the main house at Linham Barn, West Alvington. 4 in favour 5 against supporting the application.

It was also at this point in the meeting that Mrs P Baker wished to discuss her outstanding Planning Application and the problems she was experiencing regarding this. At this stage Mr A. Horton and Ms. A Quinton left the room each declaring an interest, Ms. Quinton is Mrs Bakers neighbour. Mrs Baker pointed out that she would like the Parish Council to support her application to have the visitors parking space removed from her property. She stated that highways were in support of this as they do not wish to see or condone vehicles reversing out on the main road through the village as this would be extremely dangerous, although this has not been confirmed as yet. The Parish Councillors discussed the situation and their decision was given to Mrs Baker.

Mrs P. Baker: Variation of condition d (car parking provision) of planning approval no. 59/0323/98/3 at 2 Myrtle Court, West Alvington. Not in favour of supporting this application.

Financial Report and Annual Accounts. The Clerk had prepared the Annual Accounts and a copy was given to each Parish Councillor present for their approval. These will now be sent to Nicola Fox the internal auditor as agreed by the Councillors and then onto the Audit Commission for their approval.

Correspondence: There were two items for consideration which may or may not give cause for concern in the future. The first being the emails received from Mr T. Butt, the Councillors were given copies of these to acquaint themselves with. A reply is to be given to Mr Butt which will hopefully draw to a close the issues he has. Once this has been drafted a copy will be given to each Parish Councillor. The second item were two letters that had been given to the Parish Council regarding a conflict of interests between two Parish Councillors. It was asked that these letters be kept on file by the Parish Council, should there be a cause for concern in the future. Mr Stevenson one of the Councillors concerned (Mr Horton being the other) was perplexed as to why there should be any cause for concern and how it could be seen as being prejudicial in any way. The Chairman explained that it could be seen that way should there be any planning applications submitted that could affect both Councillors. He explained also that when two Councillors are in conflict that this needs to be brought to the Parish Councils attention. Anything else will be dealt with as and when it arises.

Annual Church Fete: The Chairman felt that as the Horticultural Society has always supported us in our events that if anyone felt that they would like to return the favour it would be appreciated. The fete is being held on Saturday 26th June.

Village Hall Lease: Apparently the Village Hall lease expires in one year. As the hall sits on Parish Council land we are entitled to the princely sum of £1 per year... It was suggested that we give Ms. A. Quinton a copy of the lease for the Village Hall Committee for their approval and they can then come back to us if they are happy.

A.O.B by direction of the Chairman:

Mr Stevenson asked if the hedge on the footpath leading into town could be attended to as it looks a mess. The Chairman stated that this has already been looked into. Mr A. Clarke reported that the Ring O'Bells is to reopen on Friday 27th May and the new landlords are John and Vicky, they have two young children, 1 of which is attending the Village school. We wish them well and it will be nice to have the pub up and running again. It was also pointed out that the lines in Town Park Car Park need marking out again. There is also a car parked in the corner with grass growing up around it. It is currently still taxed so it is legal, this runs out at the end of the month. Two cars blocked the road through the Village both refusing to move so the the Police were called to sort it out. Mrs Kitt reported that one resident was allowing their dog to run free and do its "business" wherever it feels like it. The Chairman said he would speak to the dog warden. Mr Horton reported that the Elmfield road hedges were pushing out and outside the Butts barn conversion, they need some

attention. Mrs Kitt also asked if the bus stop at the Butts was still in service if so would it be possible to request a sign stating so.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.20pm.

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 20th July @ 7.30pm.

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