

**STOKENHAM PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING
HELD ON 18TH FEBRUARY 2016 IN THE
STOKENHAM PARISH HALL**

PRESENT:**COUNCILLORS:****P. SPENCE (Chairman)****A. GOODMAN****T. HOEKSMAN****C. ROGERS****MRS C. PACK****MS. S. BLADON****MRS C. PEARCE****J. BRAZIL (District and County Councillor)****T. LYNN****L. COWLEY****MRS P. DOUST****J. GARDNER****MRS S. O'DWYER****J. ANSELL****Also in attendance:****Clerk – Mrs G. Claydon****APOLOGIES:****COUNCILLORS - None****1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors were invited to declare any disclosable interests, including the nature and extent of such interests they had in any items to be considered at this meeting. They were also reminded to consider whether in the light of recent activities any items within their Register of Interests should be updated. It was advised that any unforeseen request for a Dispensation would be considered by the Clerk at this point only if there was no way a councillor would have been aware of such before the meeting. None received.

2. OPEN FORUM

There were eight members of the public present all but one from Torcross. Bill Fletcher-Neal explained that he was a resident on the front at Torcross and he along with others present wanted to let parish council know that they were in touch with the Environment Agency, Contractors and County/District engineers. They current had a good line of communication open and were trying to get a local committee together with a first meeting scheduled for the following Tuesday in the Start Bay Inn pub at 7.30p.m. The Chairman thanked them for this information and advised he would like to attend the meeting. The Chairman noted that he too had attended the meeting called by Dr Sarah Woolaston MP last week and wished to see the comments made by all agencies come to fruition. Bill noted that the Slapton Line website stated that the rock armour had been placed but it had not as the various engineers were considering actions. The wall was a complicated structure as the cracks that had appeared had now got narrower so they had no idea what going on under the concrete slabs and therefore they had carried out a survey and were considering the results. The engineers had considered boring and hoped to do this week but maybe next week now. A walfare facility had arrived in the car park and the temporary road had not happened as yet but was expected by this weekend.

Robin Rose-Price noted that back in 2001 when the road was closed for a month the residents formed a Save the Slapton Road Group and collected 15000 signatures which they presented to English Nature. This group at the time had a website with photos and information which he still retained to include pictures of the 1951/52 storm and all repairs between then and now which he offered to parish council for the website. He also enquired whether there was any planned meeting

of the Slapton Line Forum. The clerk advised that a meeting was due to take place and that she had requested that parish council now be allowed a representative at this meeting. It was believed that the intention was also for a further community meeting to be held thereafter.

Robin wished feedback with regard to the residents request to cut back the willow trees in front of the row of houses near the chapel as they had done three years ago. Since that time the Field Centre approach had appeared to harden and last year they said that regular cutting was once every 20 years. Cllr Rogers noted that parish council were to trim the vegetation on the footpath by the end of February. It was noted that the Coleridge Association meeting of all surrounding parishes had discussed coastal erosion and one topic that all agreed on was that the one way systems were ineffective. County had looked at the diversion signs in situ since the last time and noted that some had been removed. One Torcross resident felt there was a need to put 'no entry' to ensure a one way system but it was explained that this could not happen without a Traffic Regulation Order and householders needed access.

DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr Brazil further explained that they could not just make a public highway one way and on a public highway law of the land stated that any changes must go through due process. Local authorities did not work like private companies and were risk adverse and thus carrying out a munitions survey, some might say it was 70 years since bombs landed but that was how the Government rules were and these things must be complied with.

His understanding was that the car park diversion would be open the following day at some point and light traffic would be able to access along the line with traffic lights. There had been a slight delay as they needed to liaise with the fire brigade to ensure they could get through the proposed diversion. This route was not publicised as lorries, buses and coaches were not to be encouraged to use it but go around the Kingsbridge to Dartmouth way but Stagecoach might run a service through. Cllr Brazil acknowledged the recent inconvenience of 'the rat runs' and the frustration of trying to get through as he had just come from Strete. The bus shuttles and timings were not perfect and the company had been asked to tweak these and the number 3 was now running through Strete to Totnes Road. They were still trying to get better linkages between these services. Any protection in front of the promenade houses was totally an Environment Agency issue but County would facilitate any assistance with the promenade closed as a public highway to traffic at the moment but open to pedestrians.

With regard to the section of road above the older wall this work was a partnership between the Environment Agency, Devon County Council and South Hams District Council and once the munitions survey was done work would be carried out as soon as possible but how long it would take he did not know. The Road Closure was for 18 months but they could only apply for either 1 day, 1 week, 1 month or 18 months and therefore the 18 months was chosen. However they hoped to be sorted by mid April. He understood the inconvenience but working with this number of agencies he felt the response time had been good and ultimately the village would get a much longer term solution towards protecting a section of road at one of the most vulnerable points. They were placing piling 6.5m down with a wall on top but it was noted that the munitions survey only went 4m down. He hoped there would be 20-30 years of protection for this section of road plus if it breached further along with the investment here hopefully the agencies would feel it worthwhile to protect further sections. The Chairman raised the point that Dr Sarah Woolaston MP had said that there was an economic survey carried out and wondered what the results were. The parish Clerk noted that she had been advised of these results and shared these and a councillor felt that with the South West Coast Path along there it was worth a lot more than the £5million suggested. Pat Nettleton asked about the road being opened again but noted that the agencies were not going to publicise the access and felt this was not good news for the pub and shop. Cllr Brazil

acknowledged this but said they did not want juggernauts coming through so were keeping it to local knowledge. The local road closure signs would be removed so if a motorist was driving from Dartmouth to Torcross they could press on but sign would stay up at Dartmouth and Kingsbridge to deter heavier traffic. Cllrs Mrs Doust suggested a weight restriction sign and Cllr Brazil agreed this was a good idea. The Chairman noted that everything was about striking a fine balance and he agreed this was a longer term solution and was encouraged that during all the on-site discussions with everyone in attendance he had not heard at any point of view of anyone saying 'was it worth it'. All were positive with 'how are we going to get this fixed' and the future danger would be when one of them said 'how long are we going to keep throwing money at it'. During the previous breach they had formed the Slapton Line Partnership and the agreed policy was pro-active recycling and reactive realignment and they were sticking to this policy. The Local Enterprise Partnership and devolution were all about increasing productivity and building infrastructure and this was highlighted along the line.

Robin Rose-Price queried that in 2001 Natural England had made the authorities take the boulders out that they had put in and questioned how they were reacting this time. Cllr Brazil noted that this time they appreciated the emergency and were far more 'what will be, will be'. He had thought that Natural England would not like them bulldozing an access into the car park but they were content so this was good news. They were not putting rock armour in this but laying sheet piling with a wall on top as rock armour did not do as well as the sea picked them up and chucked them around! Anyone only had to look at Hallsands.

All Torcross residents together with Fran Ansell left the meeting.

County budget was set as expected at 3.99%. No doubt the press would pick up on the loss of funding for lollipop people as that money had come out of the budget but County would like to transfer this on to schools. Interestingly due to lobbying County received an extra £8.4million which had not gone into the base budget as it was a one off payment so it had been invested in areas where there were grave concerns at County. He had spoken in the budget meeting and stated that the Road Warden Scheme was a farce and that County should be devolve this funding allocation directly to parish councils and letting them contract someone/a company to do these works. He was also frustrated as County were about to re tender the road maintenance contract and this would have been a perfect opportunity for the introduction of a local solution. Parish Councils knew what needed doing in their community i.e. lengthsman. There was £60million p.a. needed for roads and they received £40million so every year they were £20million worse off. Hopefully with devolution they would be given powers to raise other income from 2nd home council tax or road tolls or whatever ideas came forward. 'A' roads would remain in good order but the side roads in future could need a tractor to get over them. He was asked what the general opinion to devolving money to parish councils had been but this had been a budget meeting so the budget was decided but he wished to put his thoughts forward. A debate needed to be had at County as to what other felt with regard to devolving more to parishes but this would be a policy meeting in future.

The District Council budget meeting was last week and again there was a slight change of position as there was a bit of extra money from the Rural Council Grant so they held a surplus of £760,000 this year but by next year this would have all gone into the running total due to the future loss of the Government Grant. They were allowed to put up council tax by 1.99% or £5 whichever was the greater so they had put tax up by £5 which was equivalent to 3.4% so this year people would note their council tax bill had gone up quite a bit, Band D by £70p.a. Cllr Brazil did not like the increase but had supported the proposal to protect services they deliver. It disappointed him that Government passed the buck but the Chairman assured him this was how parish could defend the District decision. At District Council the following Thursday they were to discuss creating a local authority controlled company to run all the services they deliver. This would be owned by the Local Authorities of South Hams and West Devon. If people were interested there

was a paper on it on the District website. The Chairman enquired if the company would have as its aim to make a surplus and if they did make any would such come back into the council pot. Cllr Brazil was personally not opposed to the scheme but felt there were risks and questioned whether they had the right people doing this.

He was asked whether this would be akin to the South West Highways contract for roads but advised no because they were a private company who paid profit to their shareholders. Cormac in Cornwall who dealt with roads made £6million but were set up differently and all their money received went back into council funds. It was noted that as elected members they had less control over South West Highways than their counterparts in Cornwall. For the District proposal elected members could choose the Chief Executive at SHDC and they could fire them as there would be a remuneration committee to be made up of elected councillors. What worried him however was whether those currently creating this proposal were so enamoured with setting up the company maybe they had taken their eye off the ball for running the council. This however was an opportunity and if they got it right it could be ground breaking. Cllr Rogers asked whether Cormac would be allowed to tender for the South West Highways current work. Cllr Brazil noted that there was complicated law involved and Cormac could have tendered but South West Highways was so large it had everything in place with regard to staff and equipment. Unfortunately if members of the public had services delivered well they were happy and did not question things.

With the proposed new District company with their current CEOs they were dealing with people who had had a lifetime in Local Government and a certain mind-set that was totally risk adverse so this would pose challenges. He thanked everyone with regard to all the information they had provided on the A379 line. The Chairman noted that parish council needed to improve their link and be included in the partnership forum and Cllr Brazil said there was a meeting in two weeks and he would suggest this possibility.

Cllr Brazil left the meeting.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the:

- (a) Full council meeting dated 21st January 2016 was approved by all present and duly signed as a true and correct record.
- (b) Planning Committee meeting none held February 2016.

4. CO-OPTION OF COUNCILLOR

The information already provided with regard to the three candidates Jamie Cunliffe – Beesands, Lucy Powell – Chillington and Colleen Pearce – Hallsands was provided. The Chairman asked whether councillors felt they wished to make a decision on what they had before them and noted that Colleen Pearce was present.

It was AGREED to co-opt Colleen Pearce as a councillor and she duly signed the Acceptance of Office and was provided with the Declaration of Interests form for completion.

5. PLANNING & PLANNING MATTERS

- 2983/15/LBC Listed Building Consent for refurbishment of existing donkey shed Myrtle Cottage A379 Port Lane To Coleridge Lane, Chillington – No objection.
- 3040/15/F Householder application for front dormer and balcony Cartref, Kiln Lane Stokenham – Objection. This was felt to be overdevelopment of the first floor by virtue of its position it would dominate the skyline of the village. The expanse of window proposed for the sea view was felt to overlook the neighbouring properties and the design was not in keeping with the locality.

- 3099/16/HHO Householder application for replacement garage Old Barton, Port Lane to Coleridge House, Chillington – No objection.
- 3122/15/HHO Householder application for new single storey rear extension to replace existing extension and sun room Cliff House, Torcross Point Service Roads – No objection.
- 0095/16/PAT Prior notification for proposed installation of 3 antennas, 1 ground based cabinet and associated works Arqiva Slapton Transmitting Station, Lower Widdicombe Farm, Stokenham – No objection.
- 0102/16/HHO Householder application for a proposed conversion of loft space 9 Chestnut Park, Beeson – No objection.

PLANNING CORRESPONDENCE

0309/16/FUL Erection of industrial building containing 3 workshops Fairfield Meadow, Orchard Way, Chillington – No objection. There was a concern raised with regard to parking ‘on site’ and whether there could be increased provision situated elsewhere nearby due to the overflow congestion already within this location in Chillington. The existing units had parking and there was a need to incorporate identified allocated parking for the new industrial units out of the non-allocated spaces although it was felt that with increased usage further parking should also be provided.

0310/16/CAC Erection of industrial building containing 3 workshops Fairfield Meadow, Orchard Way, Chillington – No objection as above.

6. LAND AT HELMERS WAY

The original plans definitely showed a section of land within the estate as part of the open space. Adjacent to this was a ransom strip passing by the electric substation which now formed part of the permissive path into Orchard Way. Due to this access and the size of the land it made it feel that it could be used for additional housing if released. Taylor Wimpey Developers appeared to have passed this matter to agents to finalise all matters on site and they had in turn re offered the strip of land to parish council. It would cost in the region of £30-£40,000 to create a car park which would ultimately serve the estate and was hard to justify such expenditure for the whole parish. However if the offer of land was rejected would TW utilise it for housing as it was originally the area provided for a community hall. The Management Agreement for Helmers currently covers the costs of all maintenance. Therefore there would be no change in charge if parish council took the land and this maintenance agreement continued with perhaps the provision of a few trees and in time a junior playing field.

It was AGREED that the small section of land within the Helmers Estate now again offered to parish council would be accepted and discussions undertaken with Remus as to maintenance.

7. HELMERS FIELD, CHILLINGTON

It was AGREED to;

- (a) pursue legal action with regard to the recent land encroachment before progressing the land transfer without encumbrance and designating this area a natural wildlife corridor.
- (b) note the feedback from the Chillington Community Association parish council representatives with regard to responsibility on various tasks around the hall.

8. OPEN SPACES SPORT AND RECREATION

It was noted that parish council could only spend funding on land that they owned or leased to ensure longevity of benefit from such funding. It was suggested that project ideas should be broken down across each of the villages to see how they met the criteria for sport, recreation and open space provision.

It was AGREED;

- (a) that the following projects be taken forward for inclusion in the draft document;
- Helmer's playing field drainage – £15,000
 - Installation of packaged bio-sewage treatment for Chillington Village Hall – £15,000
 - Stokenham Cluster Orchards (Beeson, Stokenham Village Green, Chillington Millennium Wood) received some excellent suggestions by Orchard Link in their reports for ways to enhance public use and enjoyment of these important community assets: Provision of picnic benches, signage, and tree labelling in the three Stokenham Cluster orchards – £2,000
 - Purchase of trees to plant in small piece of land near substation at Helmer's Way – £100
 - Allotments were an area of discussion a few years ago but parish council were unable to identify any suitable land. Would it be possible to incorporate allotments into the Helmers land as it may help to address the unsociable actions of some dog owners.
 - It may not be a project that would illicit great enthusiasm but in the near future the graveyard at Stokenham would reach capacity and council had an obligation to ensure that adequate space were provided and it would address the needs of the whole community.
 - There was a small area of land above Torcross (Butterfly Field) which would possibly benefit from an upgrade, ie seating etc.
 - Chillington was lacking for parking and public toilets. Torcross and Beesands were fortunate to have them and if Chillington village was to grow even more, and the open space at Chillington was also for the use of all residents of the parish, then these were the areas in which Chillington had a problem which needed addressing. Suggested was a field which was owned by someone who probably would not sell, but things do change, so maybe worth approaching. If it could be obtained it would make great parking, toilets and allotments could also be incorporated. It was the field opposite the entrance to Shorneywell, (which is also the entrance to the Open Arms car park). Overgrown and marshy ground but the only accessible field close to the village centre. Unless of course anyone knew of another more suitable site, with a willing donor!
- Cllr Gardner to organise a meeting next Thursday 25th February at 7p.m. in the Wesley Smith room for the working party to consider further.
- (b) to defer consideration of the format for consultation with the community awaiting a response from CHAT with their suggestions for projects.

9. CONSULTATIONS

It was AGREED to offer the following responses to District Council on their aims and proposed projects:

(a) South Hams and West Devon Playing Pitch Strategy – 29th February

To query whether the site survey for Beesands Football ground remained sound due to the recent coastal erosion. Also to note that parish council would be taking over responsibility of the Chillington Playing Field and that drainage was necessary before any other projects would be considered.

(b) South Hams Green Infrastructure Framework – 25th March

The Green Infrastructure Strategy highlights various aspects of the South Hams and says that there is no green space, no public open space nor any inland flood zones across this parish and this criteria was questioned due to all the footpaths and South West Coastal Path. It also acknowledged the impact of coastal erosion but parish council were concerned that the document does not go further and highlight the problems with any overview of such coastal changes and need to relocate provision of play and protect certain aspects of the green infrastructure. There is a list of small scale projects not large enough to be included in the document which states this is from community consultation but parish council are not aware of feeding into this consultation. There are the Devon

Bug Lines which also highlight the Orchard at Beeson but there is no mention of Stokenham and Chillington Orchards and these are included within the cluster funding and there was work currently progressing to highlight the need for usage of these spaces. Of interest the Green Infrastructure Checklist included for developers as noted and welcomed.

It was acknowledged that new development should include providing links between the communities from any future development. It was felt that projects to enhance the bridleways and green lanes to connect within the parish and improve access to Chillington Orchard were needed.

10. GRANTS

It was AGREED;

- (a) to grant Stokenham Guides a total of £500 towards a trip to broaden their understanding of different cultures, learn new skills and forge new friendships as it was acknowledged that they were the only youth group in this large parish. They would in turn be asked to assist in running the collection of the apples on the proposed apple day.
- (b) to grant Coleridge Bus Committee £500 towards the ongoing provision and maintenance of the voluntary bus service.

11. REPORTS

Various matters around the parish:

- Parish Council had dealt with the Beeson Pool flooding and areas further along towards Beeson with the permission and support of the landowner Edward Perraton. The works to the passing places along Cotmore would be done as soon as the ground was dry.
- Cllr Mrs Doust had attended Stokenham Parish Hall Committee meeting and did not feel that there was a need for parish council to be represented due to the amount of hall users on the committee. They had however made her very welcome and gave apologies for using parish council tables in November and said what they had now ordered replacements. The Hall Trustees were oversubscribed and if there were two representatives from Stokenham Parish Council this would be too much. The Chairman noted that he had still not received their promised diary of usage of the hall and requested this. Cllr Mrs Doust continued that they were looking to replace the roof and were actively seeking funding. She noted that both Stokenham and Chillington had the same running costs and income which showed that both were well used. The Chairman suggested she attend just one meeting every quarter to keep updated. Their AGM was to be on Monday 8th March 2p.m
- At the Coleridge Association of Parish Council meeting there was a presentation by Matt Barrow on broadband, Superfast 24 megabits per second. He advised that there had been several occasions when BT did not know on their database in an area. The aim was to get 90% of dwellings on superfast this year with another 5% by the end of next year and the remainder by the end of 2020. Discussion took place with regard to the requirements i.e. distance from green box and community grants for 'per household' outside superfast reach networks. Grants were £100 per household so if 400 households clubbed together grant monies they could afford a new green box fitted for £40,000. The police report noted crime over the whole area had dropped 30% with Stokenham going from 27 to 19. However Sgt Green was worried that people were not reporting crime and this could have an effect on policing provision. The newly installed traffic calming at Charleton had received an accident there within 10 days. The meeting continued with all parish council reports and a brief discussion about the wind turbine at Winslade. Cllr Hoeksma noted that superfast broadband could also be provided by AirWave which was covering the whole of Dartmoor and maybe was more reliable, quicker and cheaper
- Cllr Ansell attended the South Devon Wood Fuel hub meeting run by Peter Sandover and felt that their aspirations were getting too high before the basic set up. If it was just

community wood fuel and taking care of hedges this might create more impetus for this scheme but he would continue to monitor.

- Discussion took place at the Coleridge Association meeting with regard to the coastal problems at Torcross and all surrounding parishes were supportive. It was felt that there might be a need to look at the alternative back routes and the general local view was that the current planned route was a waste of time. Cllr Hoeksma noted he had spoken to volunteers at Torcross and the salt was stored along the Hannafords driveway inside the shed/barn and he had permission enter and use it to grit around Torcross.
- The puddle on the road up around the back of Coleridge needed attention as motorists were now having to use it more when there were closures. Cllr Rogers advised that the ditch needed ditching and clearing but within the field in question the ground level was higher than the ditch. Therefore the landowner needed approaching and Cllrs Goodman and Rogers were asked to do this.
- At Hallsands the coastal situation was noted and that the footpath had diverted to the car park due to loss of land. Beesands had also lost a lot of the Village Green.
- Cllr Gardner noted a meeting Friday 26th February which he had been invited to by Sarah Woolaston MP at Slapton Field Centre along with Devon County Council.
- Cllr Cowley advised that Anne Bowyer of the Stokenham Village Community Association was willing to assist with the apple day. The group were also the oil buying group in Stokenham which was successful and they were thinking of branching out into an electricity buying group.
- The Chairman highlighted the Orchard reports forwarded to all parish council and felt that the content was all upbeat. He was now a fully qualified apple pruner and was happy to organise training days.
- He had also been very encouraged by the meeting at Torcross with Dr Sarah Wollaston MP as it contained lots of organisations and all were talking openly to the public which was very refreshing.

CLERK'S REPORT

- Notification received from Adam Keay Highway Officer and Paul McFadden Footpaths Officer that the sea has breached the road and therefore access is now only possible through the car park.
- Slapton Line was currently closed since the collapse of the old slipway wall and cracks appearing in the promenade. New more accurate diversions signs were in place and would remain until after the works had been completed to repair the wall. A shuttle bus had been organised since no service was being provided since the closure.
- Alan Denbigh advised that an economic study had been carried out by Plymouth University with regard to the income generated by the Slapton Line. It was set at £9million with a GBA of £4.5million with £0.5million attributed to traffic disruption bring the sum to £5million. They were currently looking at creating a Beach Management Plan. A request had been made to the Slapton Line Partnership to include the parish council in the officers meeting rather than the community liaison as there was a gap in the spread of information to advise the Emergency Plan and community feedback.
- Up to date report on the damage and works being carried out at Torcross were on the parish council website.
- District had requested the names and contact details of Snow Wardens as County would not provide this information for South Hams only. An email had been returned providing contact details of Cllr Lynn and expressing the concern that these volunteers were for grit duties only.

12. FINANCE AND CHEQUES

Balances were provided:

Current £1428.01

Savings (1) £48904.07

Savings (2) £4926.46

Transferred £2700.00

Payments below were considered and approved to be remitted electronically or by cheque, if applicable:

HMRC – Tax & NI £281.82

Wages (including Councillors Allowance) – £1897.13

Devon County Council – Peninsula Pension £330.81

Eclipse Internet – Council internet £14.40

Greenspace – Chillington bench repairs £43.80

Concorde Copiers - £10.51

Electricity Meter - £20.00

Post Office – Stamps 40 1st @ 63p each and 40 2nd Class @ 54p each £62.23

13. NEXT MEETING

Planning Committee would be held the first Thursday in March if applications are received that could not wait until full council. The next full parish council meeting would be held on the 17th March 2016. Both meetings to commence at 7.30p.m. in the Wesley Smith Room at Stokenham Parish Hall.

Meeting finished: 10.30pm.

Signed Chairman Dated: 17th March 2016.