

**STOKENHAM PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING
HELD ON 16TH MARCH 2017 IN THE
STOKENHAM PARISH HALL**

PRESENT:

COUNCILLORS:

P. SPENCE (Chairman)
MRS S. ROWLAND
MRS C. PEARCE
T. LYNN
J. ANSELL
J. BRAZIL (District and County Councillor)

J. GARDNER
A. GOODMAN
MRS T. DAYMENT
C. ROGERS
R. JACKSON

Also in attendance:

Clerk – Mrs G. Claydon

APOLOGIES:

L. COWLEY

MRS P. DOUST

1. OPEN FORUM

Anne Bowyer, Chairman of Stokenham Village Community Association, was in attendance as she wished to ensure a night-time landing site for Devon Air Ambulance. The Chairman explained he had met with Toby Russell of Devon Air Ambulance to look at possible sites in the parish for night landing as there was an increasing move towards night flying and for that they must have specific conditions to land. The area needed to be pre surveyed and deemed safe and lit. It must also have reasonable approaches good visibility and no adverse conditions. Devon Air Ambulance had issued a call to parishes for possible sites which they surveyed before starting discussions to install and advising on what was needed/funding. For such installation it would cost about £2000 for the aluminium pole with 150W LED lights and switching technology with GSM operated by phone from a helicopter.

They visited three sites in the parish two which Toby had picked from a map as parish council had suggested Helmers Playing Field, the other two being Stokenham School and the football pitch at Beesands. Helmers was not bad but they had difficulty mapping out a 50x50m square as it was just fractionally less and there was the issue of goal posts, tall trees and the power lines along Tanpits so it was not optimal but second choice. Stokenham School was suitable but the school had yet to put this to their governors so they explained they were only looking. They walked at Beesands from the car park along the inner road and noted the huge breakers so this was a less attractive option. The next stage would involve a detailed survey by a former pilot, after which Devon Air Ambulance would make contact with parish council. The Chairman felt that between the Village Association, Chillington Community Association and parish council there should not be an issue with funding. Anne Bowyer noted she had contacted Sue Jezzard but the governors had not met and then she noted parish council were also in contact with Devon Air Ambulance. Cllr Rogers asked if it was Anne's preference for the site to be at the school and why not on the village green but the Chairman explained that the Village Green was not under consideration as it did not have a 50x50m clearance on level ground.

Anne continued that after the last Apple Day everyone wanted to repeat it. She was advised that parish council were in full support. She suggested that it would be an ideal occasion to raise funds for the Air Ambulance night landing site.

On a final note Anne wished to understand the current draft Joint Local Plan and why District had not taken notice of the views of the village as expressed at the previous summer's consultation

event with regard to preferred sites. The Chairman responded that he didn't understand it either. He gave an account of the proceedings of the Development Management meeting the previous day at which the Green Park Way application was discussed. He recounted how, although the committee had seemed finely balanced on the question of whether to approve, the mood of the meeting had changed when District Councillor Pearce got up and reminded every member that they must consider how it would look to an Inspector if, having included Green Park Way in their draft Joint Local Plan, they were now to refuse it. To the Chairman this seemed the clearest possible indication that the so-called "draft" Joint Local Plan was already being accorded "approved" status. It implied to him that if the site in Stokenham was allowed to stand in the JLP, then by the time an application appeared it would be nodded through without any proper scrutiny. The Chairman concluded by saying that he felt this was evidence of a serious failure in the entire planning process. In the previous consultation the people of Stokenham and Chillington had objected to the proposed sites on solid grounds but these appeared to have been set aside with no discussion or explanation. He suggested that the current consultation was a last chance for people to make their view known and urged everyone to attend the meeting on 3rd April.

Anne noted that the old playing field behind Holbrook had not been taken into account in the plan even though it was well on the way and questioned why this site was not included. Mick Garrod attended the Development Management Committee for Green Park Way and had found it a depressing meeting. He agreed with the Chairman as the District Councillor said if there had been an alternative site she would have considered it but there was no alternative site in their Joint Local Plan. However they had put the sites in the plan forward. Also the no objections from the other agencies had destroyed their case. He also questioned why the Chillington site was still in the plan when many in Chillington objected and offered other sites but District Planning had not listened. He also questioned where the developer, Acorn, got information from that this site was the District's Joint Local Plan preferred site option. The flooding mitigation condition put forward by parish council was rejected as were all comments on flooding and infiltration. Mick continued that Devon County Council flooding/flood risk report did not seem to understand the infiltration on that site as opposed to drainage water, which he felt were two things, and were saying they, would contain all infiltration on the site. With a soakaway, permeable driveways and swales the report felt it would not go anywhere else. It must go downwards and get into fissures and if the land is on a slope he felt it would go towards the houses in Green Park Way. With regard to Highway drainage there was a drain on the western side which had 39 fractures and the developers and agencies talked about how they would replace this but no one talked about the drain on the eastern side and the route it must take and which had no surveys carried out on it. The water that was discharged down those pipes drained into a flood risk 3 site, Meadowside, but this has been totally ignored. Flooding would get worse due to weather changes. CHAT had now submitted a report to the National Planning Casework in Birmingham and asked for the Secretary of State to call this application in and until this was done the District decision could not be ratified. If it was called in then the Secretary of State could decide and if not there were other options that CHAT were considering which would have a serious effect on the Joint Local Plan. If it was turned down by District Council they would be looking for other sites within the local centre which would also affect everyone. The Chairman shared Mick's disappointment as he felt the drainage report was a travesty of facts and implausible. District Members were still not in possession of enough information and therefore had to rely on officers' professional judgement. The Chairman agreed CHAT should pursue their course of action even if it affected the Joint Local Plan as he felt this had been top-down planning.

Anne asked if it was worthwhile rallying the troops and attending the consultation meeting 3rd April. The Chairman felt that if others were aware of the Green Park Way decision and its implication for the Stokenham site and they turned up with a view District Officers and members might think again. Cllr Rogers noted that parish council wanted to support the views of the parish

and from his experience a group of people with feeling, meaning and purpose were a lot better at putting across a wealth of feeling. Parish council had to consider and cover all parish matters so local assistance on this matter was urged.

DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr Brazil felt that Mick Garrod and the Chairman presented the points very well and he was disappointed these had not been taken up. He continued that successive Governments of all flavours had got it into their heads that we must build millions of homes as soon as possible. Cllr Brazil did not agree as this merely put pressure on planning authorities forcing the Joint Local Plan to have numbers of houses in sites across the South Hams. He definitely felt everyone should attend the meeting on 3rd April where there would be a strategic planning officer from the Joint Local Plan process. All views and comments from this meeting would be collated to go forward directly to the Inspector. In the autumn the Joint Local Plan would go to enquiry, probably held somewhere in Plymouth, and then individuals and groups could make representations to the Inspector. The Green Park Way application pre-empted the Joint Local Plan and if the Inspector said the Joint Local Plan was not correct but outline permission had already been given could they expect to continue. The Secretary of State could call the application in but probably would not as this would affect a Joint Local Plan. The other sites in the Joint Local Plan were at Stokenham and a further 10 houses each for Beesands and Torcross. Cllr Brazil did not have a problem with 10 houses as long as the vast majority were for local people. However they were now fighting the 'Right to Buy' but also there was a new definition of 'Market Value' which was 80% of the current market value which was not locally affordable. All these points needed to go to the Inspector. When the decision was taken at District Council he did emphasise that he did not think District were right and there must be somebody who would pay if adjacent houses were flooded but this was not included as a condition but he managed to request that this point was Minuted. Therefore District cannot in future state it was a case of no one saw that coming. This was a culmination of Government pressure to build houses and he been trying to rally the troops and make Government be forced to do something as people in Westminster would reply it was the 'locals' plan so it was their problem. It was particularly disappointing as the work CHAT had done and the representations made were purely on a sound basis and technical points. Anne noted that Stokenham was not against housing but they wanted them built where the locals wanted them. On top of this developers were not building all the houses permitted because there would be too many houses on the market and they would not get a good price. Dist Cllr Mrs Pearce, he felt, had played the establishment card and said what officers would have said. A vast majority of district councillors at the planning committee meeting had already voted for the Joint Local Plan whereas he had voted against it. The Chairman wanted to know how the Stokenham site got into the draft Joint Local Plan and asked Cllr Brazil to explain. During the last previous Local Development Framework there were various sites including Green Park Way and Carehouse Cross which was thrown out but District was now going back to these non-sustainable sites as the other sites were used up. The Chairman thanked Cllr Brazil for his support at the planning committee. When asked for consideration of sites for development within Stokenham Parish Mick Garrod asked what the relevance of this consultation was. Cllr Brazil felt a lot of weight had been given to Green Park Way for its inclusion in the Joint Local Plan as there was a current planning application in for it because District Council could be penalised if the sites included did not come forward within a certain time period. Alternative sites could have been put forward at the Inspector point but now outline planning permission on it Cllr Brazil felt this was gone.

Mick Garrod and Anne Bowyer left the meeting.

Cllr Brazil went on to advise that County Council tax had gone up by 2%. Devon had received extra money for part of the budget settlement but it was slightly disappointing that there had been an overspend in special education needs by £2.2million. Therefore County was clawing this back

by taking £33 per pupil. Historically Devon always had a lot less from Government for each pupil than the national average (a figure in the region of £1/3 million for Kingsbridge Community College so it was significant) so there had been a lot of representation from schools and school governors.

District Council tax had gone up by £5 per household (£5 or 2%). The Local Authority Company proposal was over although District report did manage to put in some words like 'at this time'. However the District's latest plan was to borrow £82 million and invest it in commercial property. Cllr Brazil comment that it may be a good idea but he did not know that any of the District Councillors were experts in commercial property or fund managers and District should stick to collecting rubbish bins. He felt District could spend £100,000 taking legal advice and going to consultants and then have the same outcome as the Local Authority Company and meanwhile a loss of concentration on the main matters. He felt there had been little consultation with elected members and parish councils on the Joint Local Plan because of officer time involved in the Local Authority Company. South Hams District Council was financially stable with no debt and money in their account. But they had a budget deficit on their year on year spending so it was more about trying to balance that so the income matched outgoings. For example they sold the council house stock for £40million and it was a legacy of that they had reserves. When questioned where the evidence of this was he advised that the Executive Committee additional papers for the meeting the previous Thursday showed this information. Cllr Mrs Pearce enquired if there was a notional figure of time spent looking at the Local Authority Company proposal as she felt this was a disgrace. Cllr Brazil responded that those figures were strangely hard to come by and had heard plenty of other members horror stories of people who were meant to be billed and were not billed, sent bills that were not paid and he felt District had no controls over spending and budgets and was just living on fact that they had lots of reserves. He had himself asked who is taking responsibility for the Local Authority Company project but no one at District had responded.

Cllr Rogers asked if Cllr Brazil was confident that Highways new contractors were up to speed and ready to go on 1st April. He responded that the Mill Farm signs were to be paid for out of his locality budget but because of this changeover might have to wait until the next financial year. Other than that no one would know about the new contractors until such time as they took over but the contract for works was far better. District car parking charges were going up by 2%.

2. 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.

3. CO OPTION

It was AGREED to co-opt Bill Fletcher-Neal as a parish councillor and he would be provided with the Acceptance of Office and given the Declaration of Interests to be completed before the next meeting.

4. MINUTES

The Minutes of the:

- (a) full council meeting dated 16th February 2017 were approved by all present and then duly signed as a true and correct record.
- (b) Planning Committee meeting no meeting held March 2017.

5. PLANNING & PLANNING MATTERS

The applications below were considered at this meeting and the following observations submitted to District:

- 0113/17/HHO Householder application to erect PVCU conservatory to the rear of the property 3 Cotmore Way, Chillington – Already responded No Objection due to District Council not allowing an extension of time to bring to the meeting.

PLANNING CORRESPONDENCE

- An email had been sent to District Planning with regard to the Brooklea and Grist Mill development and concern with regard to whether the drainage improvements had been completed before the site was left. The District drainage engineer had been requested on 3rd March to make contact but nothing had been heard so far.

6. PORTALOOS AT HALLSANDS

Jane Jenner emailed to advise that she had consulted with other residents within the management company and they were in agreement to site portaloos beside the public bin. Cllr Mrs Pearce noted that the residents around wanted the toilets but landowners did not want them on their land until Cllr Lynn had negotiated and Jane Jenner had been kind enough to seek agreement. The residents also raised a concern with regard to wishing ‘No overnight camping’ signs but as this was on private property it was another matter.

It was AGREED to invite portaloos companies already approached to review the proposed site and advise of cost.

7. LAND COVENANT

Concern had been raised by one of the Trustees even though their consent had previously been sought and in principle given. Following discussions the parish council solicitor had emailed explaining that parish council only intended to completely release the covenant which restricted the size of the hall, which it was understood the Trustees were content with.

What they had also drafted was to ‘loosen’ the covenant which restricted the use of the hall. As it currently stood it stated ‘not to use the property otherwise than for an open space play area or for similar community purposes’. ‘Similar community purposes’ the solicitor felt was narrow and subjective. They had therefore proposed to vary this covenant to read ‘not to use the property otherwise than for community purposes’. This allowed the parish council a bit more leeway in future if they wished to add say another ‘community building’, whilst still restricting the area usage to only community purposes. A response was awaited and therefore it was AGREED to await further developments.

8. ACCOUNTS ENDING MARCH 2017

It was AGREED that there were no specific aspects of the accounts that parish council wished the internal auditor to review and report on this year.

9. JOINT LOCAL PLAN

The consultation on this document had commenced to run from 15th March to 27th April 2017 and the District parish roadshow event would take place on Monday 3rd April at Stokenham Parish Hall and it was AGREED that such attendance of as many parish councillors as possible was to be organised to collect local opinions and form a response to be considered at the next meeting.

10. REPORTS

Various issues raised around the parish:

- Cllr Lynn advised that the bottom of the hedge bank at Muckwell needed attention. Years ago a tractor with a plough would maintain many hedge banks but this was no longer done. Strete Parish Council had arranged for a private contractor to do from Strete to Blackpool Sands costing roughly £4500. Cllr Rogers noted that Adam Keay Highway Maintenance was arranging from Coleridge down to Beeson Pool and a few other areas. Cllr Lynn had also received complaints from larger vehicles with regard to overhanging vegetation along the A379 from the telephone exchange to Stokenham Cross. This had already been raised with Highways and letters had been sent to property owners although it was felt that this one had not carried out any works. A resident at Beesands complained about wooden stakes all over the green which needed picking up. It was advised that the Beesands Village Green Committee dealt with this point and advised District it needed dealing with it. Cllr Mrs Pearce felt that perhaps local people should do tasks such as these within a community clean up.
- Cllr noted the Hallsands steps/gate erosion.
- Cllr Mrs Rowland attended the Sustainable NHS Transformation Plan for Devon held by three managers. They were basically saying hospitals were victims of their own successes and struggling to maintain their expectation level as they were closing community hospitals but had nothing else in place. They were trying to think of ways to attract staff to go out into the community and this was challenging with the geography as was getting people into hospitals quickly enough after strokes. Dr Sarah Wollaston MP was on Cllr Mrs Rowland's table and said staffing should be assisted initially by giving people affordable houses to attract the people needed to staff community centres and that is what she was putting forward. But the question of affordable or Affordable by name was highlighted. She personally felt that by Government saying they had these meetings there had been public consultation but they had no ideas on what was affordable. IT provision for the day was a shambles with papers back to front and a microphone that did not work.
- She then attended the Stokenham Parish Hall Committee meeting wherein they advised that the hall was well supported but support of the Garden Society reduced recently. John Cadman resigned as Chairman of the hall but remained as Secretary and Jean Brooking was the new Chairman on a temporary basis. They had increased rental charges for the first time for four years and new £1 coin meters were to be installed for electricity. Anne Bowyer was staying on as Vice Chairman. A member of the committee had attended Chillington Village Hall and the lights were included on the electricity meter so when the money ran out they pitched into blackness and there was no safety light. This matter was raised with parish council as it was felt that the hall was within their land remit and it was not safe for lights to fail. A question was raised about fire exit or emergency lights and these would need to be checked with the Chillington Community Association. Stokenham Parish Hall Committee was hoping to do the roof work by August and obviously the hall would be closed for about 5 – 6 weeks but it might usable on Saturday and Sunday. As the biggest and best kitchen in the area they were hoping to run lots of courses.
- The Chairman and Cllr Rogers had reviewed Helmers play equipment and field and felt that all finger trap areas had been removed. They looked at the matting which was well and truly beyond use for falls and slippery. In order to get the gas tank in the area proposed play equipment would need to be moved so wet pour for this was suggested. Someone believed that there was currently a £1/5million District grant/budget for upgrading play equipment.
- Cllr Ansell advised that the channels to the buddle holes at Lannacombe Green where mud was removed were suffering as some removed mud ran straight off into the holes.
- Beesands Village Green Community meeting was short as there was not much to discuss. The new sea works appeared to be holding better than the previous provision. It was noted that some felt the meeting was almost not needed as any idea for parking areas, play

equipment moving etc did not happen when suggested. Clearance of the playground was to be done by Easter but still nothing had been done. Parking has worked out alright as less people go down there due to less parking. The caravans had gone and the Village Green was receding into the beach. However it was considered that continuing to meet would ensure that maybe if there were issues in the future at least there could be dealt with as and when.

CLERK'S REPORT

- South Hams District Council had produced a draft Events Policy for consultation by 30th April 2017 with the final version to be implemented on 1st April 2018. There was now to be a set fee of £55 for administration when using District land. Use of land would be free of charge so long as no damage was incurred. There was however an exception if a pay and display area was used and a charge would be made to offset such loss unless it was felt that adjacent car parks had capacity to deal with this loss but such decision would be made at District discretion. There would be costs for users for Public Liability insurance, bin provision and clearance and licences. No further input required for Stokenham Parish.
- Following concerns last month with regard to an event in the parish South Hams Events Safety Advisory Group (SAG) had confirmed that they would be meeting on 16th March and this event was on their agenda and the parish council email would be raised. WPC Jane Gerrard had also advised that she would attend and raise points.
- With regard to the future usage of telephone boxes in the parish BT have advised that the one at Hallsands serves a community use due to its proximity to the coast. The same applied to Torcross, Chillington and Stokenham but Kellaton would be removed. Therefore an email was sent on a direct pay phone email address that was provided by District who had no further details to assist. In asking the question of how to proceed to take this matter to parish council and ask if they would take this on for Beeson no response had been received as yet from BT.
- Beeson Village had concern with regard to a drainage alleviation project promised by an outgoing resident and also an issue in relation to the newly installed pond dipping platform and extension. Advice had been sought from planning as to whether the pond matters were permitted development and highways had advised that the alleviation works could continue so long as no gate opened onto the highway and suggested perhaps an open fence would suffice.
- Final documentation with regard to the funding for the Orchard Link Stokenham Cluster had been compiled to be submitted the following day.
- An application was made by Stokenham Parish Council to the Devon Highways budget for £4000. The County response was that if the work was to be done by a contractor and not volunteers they expected the expenditure to be match funded by parish council. They would consider a grant this week if parish council would reduce the sum required and match fund. This meeting felt £1000 could be paid towards a £1000 grant.
- An email had been sent to Rob Sekula to request up to £4000 Section 106 monies to cover the land drainage expert costs. The TAP fund application had awarded £1500 and Community Reinvestment Fund £8500 towards the buddle and surface improvement works on the footpath from Summerye Lane. Devon County Footpaths had only ring fenced £3400 so consideration would have to be given to the project funding. Also there was £500 TAP Fund offered towards the Hallsands Portaloos if a site and provider could be found and finally the Community Reinvestment Fund application by Stokenham Parish Council had been awarded £39475 towards the Stokenham Parish Hall roof works.
- There had been further erosion at Hallsands so that the gate from Beesands onto Hallsands beach had needed barriers and perhaps moving the gate on the National Trust land. It had since been advised that the barriers had been cable tied to road pins with grit bags to weigh

them down. Also up the other side there had been a further cliff fall which highways had barricaded off.

- Another playground report had been submitted and whilst some areas had been rectified others needed addressing like grass erosion, mats etc. A quote received by Playdale only provided for the safety mats to be replaced not lifted and cleaned. The other incidental items came to £7.87 but replacement mats and basket swing plus delivery took the quote to £10,152.74. Further discussion was required with District to ascertain if they had Resistor keys and whether these were used to tighten the cables. Also it would be ascertained if they could quote for this work and our maintenance contractor would also be asked to judge costs before this matter came back to parish council.

11. FINANCE AND CHEQUES

Balances were provided and the below were noted and agreed for transfer or signature:

Current £1081.01

Instant savers (1) £54382.08

Instant savers (2) £4929.23

Transferred £1500.00

Received – Nil

Payments to be made in February:

Wages £1077.96

HMRC £252.43

DCC Pension Fund – Pension payment £334.11

Underpayment for VAT element of Screwfix £4.82

Play Inspection Company Ltd – Quarterly inspection of Helmers £60.00

Orchard Link - Subscription £12.00

BT – telephone and broadband £189.65

DALC – Subscription £455.24

M.J. Hallett – Hedge trimming Torcross and Chillington Village Hall £156.00

12. NEXT MEETING

The next full parish council meeting would be held on Thursday 20th April 2017. A planning committee would be held on the first Thursday in April 2017 if applications were received that required consideration before next full council. Both meetings commenced at 7.30p.m. in the Wesley Smith Room at Stokenham Parish Hall.

Meeting finished: 9.40p.m.

Signed Chairman Dated: 20th April 2017.