

St GILES IN THE WOOD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held.
_____ on the February 14th 2024

736

Present: Mrs L Herniman took the chair, Mr G Hookway, Mr B King Mr R Petherbridge Mrs G Hookway Cllr A Chamings Mr P Middleton, Mr J Ayre, Mr S Dyer and Mrs A Snell (Clerk)
Apologies Cllr R Lock, Cllr T Elliott (District Councillors) and PCSO Brown
In Attendance Cllr A Saywell (County Councillor) and nine members of the public.

Time for Public Participation

Cllr Graham Hookway gave a report on the court case between Torrington Farmers Hunt and TDC in relation to the noise from the dogs that has been emitted from the kennels, this has been going on for some considerable time (3 years). TDC brought in noise abatement personal. The results of findings will determine if there is a case to answer against TFH.

The kennel man has had two written warnings and is leaving in April, TFH have carried out alleviating measures which they were asked to undertake, all has been done apart from building an earth bank. Members of TFH went to Exeter today, a follow up meeting for TFH will be held in St Giles Parish Hall next Thursday the 22nd February.

The residents of Stevenstone feel exasperated at the length of time this has been going on and the lack of finding a solution, the result of the Parish Council meeting, in the opinion of the Parish Council it was felt there has been a break down in relations between the residents and TFH which needs to be addressed, a liaison person from TFH needs to be responsible for communicating with residents the suggestion was James Morrish the Chairman of the TFH and a solution to the noise problem found. Pre three years ago there was not a noise problem.

The residents were thanked for attending the meeting.

Declaration of Interests – Councillors are invited to declare any personal or prejudicial interest, including the nature and extent of such interests they may have in any items to be considered at this meeting. They are also reminded to consider whether in the light of recent activities any items within their Register of Interests should be updated.

1. The minutes of the meeting held on the 10th January were agreed and signed.

2. Clerk's report i. Wicksteed playground inspection, Cllr Ayre and Cllr Hookway are to meet and organise corrective action in due course when the weather is better
ii. Parking on the Village Green, the sign has been erected, thank you to Cllr King for the excellent job.

3. Chairman's report i. Coronation tree, the tree guard has been delivered, a meeting of councillors will take place to agree a site for the commemorative tree.

ii. Defibrillator, Mr Sevenoaks reported he is giving up the administration of the Stevestone Defibrillator, for which he was thanked for all his time and effort in getting it up and running, Mr Matthais Nussar is to take over the administration and has kindly offered to run a defib training class as he is professionally qualified to do so, it is hoped he will attend the next meeting to organise a date. It has been suggested to situate one in Kingscott a site will have to be found as the next step.

- iii. A free portrait of the King is available if the hall would like to display one, one will be ordered.
- iv. D Day celebrations in June, yet to be confirmed but will include a bonfire and food, further details will be circulated in due course.

4. Highways, i. The white lines at Deep Moor have been reported again.

ii. Mr Penfold has visited and a quote has been given for a strip of tarmac past the Alms Houses 40mm thick, for £1600 excluding VAT, but logically the strip should be the full length from the council road to the cobbles, so a further quote is to be obtained, it was advised that patching will not suffice and would be out in no time. Cllr Saywell was asked if he would be able to give a grant towards this, Cllr Saywell is to liaise with the grants department. Further quotes will be required before a decision is made.

iii. The yellow lines by the Sports Club need to be repainted this will be undertaken.

iv. The road to East Dodscott was highlighted to be in extremely poor repair, visitors to the tea rooms are being put off by the state of the road, this was reported to Cllr Saywell. The question was also raised why is Langridge Ford closed, it appears to be an emergency closure.

5). County and District Councillors items.

Cllr Saywell reported on the **Potholes** Please remember to report potholes online on **devon.cc/report-it** or telephone 0345 155 1004.

Cllr Saywell reported **DCC Budgets** – The Budget meeting will be held on the 15th February. The overall revenue budget is set to increase to £743 million. Adult Care and Health gets a 6% (£20.5m) increase with an overall budget of just under £361m. Children's Services gets a £21.5m increase of 10.4% for a budget of just under £228m. The Highways and Transport Directorate gets a more modest 4.7% increase of £3.9m... but that is still welcome!

In addition, the final Central Government Financial Settlement was more generous than expected – a further £1.5m will go into Highways Drainage on top of the proposed budgets. Councillor Locality Grants will also be increased from £5,000 back up to £8,000.

DCC's share of the Council Tax will increase by 4.99%, of which 2% is specifically ringfenced for Adult Social Care. I know Council Tax increases are never welcome... but it is needed to fund the continued demand on social services and Highways and to ensure we have a sound budget. If we took the money out of reserves, we would weaken Devon's financial position and start getting into the mess that Councils like Somerset and Birmingham have got themselves into...

Devolution – The Devolution Deal for Devon and Torbay has now been published. The 40-page proposed Deal sets out in detail proposals that could see the transfer of powers and funding to a Devon and Torbay Combined County Authority, subject to approval by Devon and Torbay following a public consultation.

The proposed Combined County Authority would be a partnership made up of Councillors representing the councils of Devon and Torbay, including District Councils, and representatives from business and education. Together, that partnership would deliver on a jointly agreed programme, working alongside a wide range of local stakeholders to tackle key local priorities. The Government has chosen Devon and Torbay as one of only a small number of local authority areas in the country to form a Combined County Authority (CCA), that will **not** require an elected Mayor or changes to the current structure of local councils. The Deal should allow important decisions to be taken locally by people who know their areas best, on priorities that matter to the people of Devon and Torbay such as building more affordable homes, investing in new quality jobs and skills, and improving public transport.

Highlights of the proposal are: Direct control of adult education to create up to 50,000 new training and retraining opportunities by 2030. Government transfer of over £16 million to invest in new green jobs, homes, skills, and business growth, and accelerate Devon and Torbay's transition to a net-zero economy.

Stronger partnership with Homes England to create a joint local action plan for affordable housing schemes for local people and reduce homelessness. Even closer working between Devon and Torbay to improve the efficiency and co-ordination of public transport. There is an ambition to introduce a single ticketing system for travellers and investment in services to provide greater access to public transport. Devon and Torbay would be responsible for developing, designing and delivering the next stages of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund from 2025. Boosting and supporting high growth business sectors in Devon and Torbay, such as advanced marine engineering, defence, photonics and digital.

Highways – On more local matters, I have been discussing the Dragon Patching taking place in the Parish with my Neighbourhood Highways Officer who is going to inspect some of the recent treatments around Whitsley. The Wooley Bridge recycling resurfacing scheme is due to take place next month in March.

Cllr Lock reported the Devolution deal for Devon and Torbay has been agreed and it is expected to give more powers and more importantly in the current climate the associated funding to local areas such as ours. We have meetings scheduled at TDC to discuss the deal. The Maritime Innovation Centre at Middle dock Appledore has already received 15.6 million pounds. This will establish Torridge as a leading research and development destination – already working with leading universities and businesses. It is expected to open in 2026 and this will help to produce the next generation of scientists and engineers. It is an exciting project. There is new planning guidance to help farmers in planning applications and permitted development regulations – this includes new buildings, slurry stores and engineering operations. There are so many obstacles and difficulties at the moment for farmers I welcome this and will continue to work hard to make sure our rural communities and activities can flourish. We are in the process of producing a new joint local plan – and I know that rural housing is one of top priorities as once again “in the open countryside” and “not in a rural settlement” stop so many applications being approved. I sit on the joint local plan working group and will continue to stress this point as will other councillors representing rural areas. We have a full council meeting at TDC to approve the budget and to set the council tax – so watch this space. Cllr Elliott reported back in January, at full council TDC voted to apply the following:

1. 100% premium council tax to second homes, (these are furnished but not a main residence)
2. Until now, we applied 100% premium council tax to empty houses. These would have had to of been empty for 2 years or more. We have now brought this down, so a house now only needs to be empty for 12months to then be charged 100% premium council tax.

These are to try to free up more homes for the population of Torridge and aid the housing crisis we are currently experiencing. Also, you have probably already received the letter, but I have seen the deadline has been increased and there is always the possibility you may have missed it. So, I attach the letter to this email on how you could claim a free portrait of His Majesty the King for the Parish council.

6. Finance

i. Approve and sign the following cheques: -General Account.

626	Upsite	£90.00
627	Dolton Designs	£326.00

7. Planning

P C recommendations TDC

1/1198/2023/FUL	Conversion of existing outbuildings to ancillary accommodation to the main dwelling, Heron's Lake	Awaiting decision
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8. Police Report i This is the report for January, there has been 1 crime reported: a burglary which was residential.
During the same period there has been 6 calls to the police where incidents have been recorded, they are as follows: 2 Highway disruptions, 1 Intruder alarm, 1 Sudden death, 1 police generated and 1 RTC damage only.
9. Recreation Field, no report.
10. Correspondence i. DALC Newsletter ii Royal Garden Party nominations, the nominations to be put forward are Cllr Herniman and Cllr Chamings.

Date of next meeting—: **Wednesday 13th March 2024 7.30pm in the Parish Hall**

..... Chairman.....Date

Forthcoming meetings: Wednesday 10th April 2024 for the Parish Council meeting 7.30pm