

MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

BIGBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 10th APRIL 2013 in the Memorial Hall, St Ann's Chapel at 8.0 p.m.

PRESENT; Cllr B Carson in the chair, Cllrs.J. Grace, A Klidjian, R.Owen and J. Simes. PCSO Stacey Thorn and C. Cllr.W.Mumford were also in attendance, together with 4 residents Guest Speaker: Jan Birch – Active Villages

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Cllrs S Watts and T Boys

2 POLICE REPORT: PCSO Stacey Thorn reported that there have been 3 crimes since 2nd January this year – one burglary, one theft and one common assault. Thieves are in the area at the moment with break-ins to sheds recurring especially on building sites. Marine crime has been fairly quiet but speeding is an issue. Concern was expressed about vehicles going down the No Entry at Bigbury Village Green and PCSO Thorn stated she will put an article relating to the matter in the next Bigbury News. She will also visit the two Challaborough camp sites and ask them if they can draw the attention of their visitors to the problem and will also contact Nick Colton to see if he could advance some ideas. A suggestion was put forward that DCC be asked if it is possible to have an advance warning to drivers to take the 2nd road on the right at the Green and not the first when heading for Challaborough.

PCSO Thorn announced that she is leaving the "patch" as she is to become a regular police officer – her replacement is a Kingsbridge girl who has been a Special Constable for 2 years. Councillors expressed their sorrow that Stacey is leaving and thanked her for her regular attendances.

3 JAN BIRCH, Active Villages addressed the meeting on a scheme offering help for more leisure activities for rural areas. Applications have to be submitted before September and there is £2,600 for each village which can be used for training or equipment. The money can also be used for a one-off event but commonly, most villages submit requests for more than one activity. Already, she has been in discussions with Discovery Surf School which are providing very useful teaching in surfing. A few ideas were put forward from the floor and Cllr Grace will approach Dane Vanstone for his views on the subject. Mrs J. Gubbins will also be in contact with Ms Birch. Ms Birch asked that if anyone has any ideas that they put them forward through the Parish Clerk.

Ms Birch was thanked for her report and she left the meeting.

4 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT C.Cllr William Mumford reported that the County Council has not increased its share of the council tax for the 3rd year running. It has reduced the level of the debt by £90m. with concomitant savings in interest payable School meals programme has been outsourced.. The Pension fund administration and Trading Standards Department are being run in conjunction with Somerset County Council. The dominant issue this year has been flooding and he has managed to get the problems at Yealmpton, Modbury and Aveton Gifford prioritised. Work has started on the South Devon Link Road between Newton Abbot and Torbay and the Rural Broadband contract has been signed.

Rural Growth Network to encourage local businesses has been launched and there has been a note of a disproportion in females in higher levels of business.

The Locality Budget had been granted to Bigbury Parish to cover the cost of a survey required for the proposed Affordable Homes site. He has been fighting for better funding for Devon from the EU as Cornwall receives £1,300 per annum per person whereas Devon only receives £130.

CCllr Mumford was delighted that after a long process of objection, Viridor have now pulled their plans for an energy-from-waste plant at New England Quarry. Cllr Carson asked when repairs to

Jubilee Bridge were due to be completed and C.Cllr Mumford stated that they were due to be finished at the end of April when work then will progress at Sheepham. C.Cllr Mumford apologised for traffic confusion when the specified diversion at Ermington did not follow the planned route.

C.Cllr Mumford was thanked for his report and for his continued good work on behalf of the Bigbury Parish.

5 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT D Cllr Carson stated it had been difficult to set the budget – unlike the County Council they are free of any debt. Shared services have saved over £2,000,000 since 2007. Further savings have been made by the County Council opening offices within Follaton House. Planning fees have risen. Under the Boundary review there will be a cut of about 30 district councillors working out to approx. 2,400 residents per councillor.

Cllr Simes said that he understood there was a 7% absence rate of employees and asked what measures are in place to tackle the problem.

6 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT. Cllr Watts had requested that his report be read out in his absence:-

'This has been my second year as Chairman since my election in the autumn of 2011. Throughout the year I have been very grateful for the help and support of my fellow Councillors and the Clerk. I am very conscious of the fact that the Parish Council should act as a focus for local opinion and provide a way to get things done in a manner best suited to our community. Therefore, I'd like to thank all those parishioners who have helped to point the way forward either by attending Parish Council meetings or by taking the trouble to contact individual councillors in person; I encourage others to do the same.

As last year, use of the internet has resulted in an increase in speed and efficiency and a reduction in costs but I recognise that, because more gets done, this places an extra burden on all Councillors and the Clerk as expectations are raised for the quicker delivery of results! The community website has proved an additional, helpful, if underused communication tool both for parishioners and for those living outside, but with an interest in, the parish; as webmaster, I have been contacted by several people in this way.

This year, we set our parish precept at the same level as last year in anticipation of extra financial burdens being off-loaded on to the parish from both the District and County Councils. Both of these other councils are being forced to make economies. Currently, we are challenging one such economy by SHDC; that is, the decision to close the toilets at Bigbury-on-Sea for 4 months in winter. The pressure to fund any parish improvements ourselves will continue; for example, we are having to pay DCC for some expensive changes to signage about seasonal parking restrictions in Bigbury-on-Sea in order to improve road safety - a top priority in our Parish Plan. Other signage at the Easton road junction has been awaited for over a year and it now seems the parish will have to pay DCC for new 'SLOW' signs to improve road safety there if we want anything done.

Assessing and commenting upon planning applications remains one of the most important areas of involvement for the Parish Council. We have been asked for our views on about two dozen applications of varying degrees of complexity over the last year. Many of these applications have required site visits by Councillors and we have made requests for alterations or have objected to plans on several occasions in the interests both of neighbours and of the parish at large, guided by our Parish Plan. We are learning from both our experience and our training although our views are not always reflected in the decisions of the District Council! I genuinely feel that our performance is improving in this important aspect of our work. Communication with the planners has become much better as a result of changes in their way of working following the amalgamation of SHDC with West Devon DC. These changes include better participation and collaboration by parishes in early parts of the planning process together with a new programme of training events for parish councillors. It may be that with the recent introduction of the new National Planning Policy Framework, which some media have labelled as a developers' charter, we shall need to consider drawing up a Neighbourhood Plan to help in safeguarding the integrity and infrastructure of our parish. For example, who knows what plans might be afoot for the beach at Bigbury-on-Sea after its auction in May! Partly, our response will

depend upon what happens at District Council level in re-formulating the Local Development Plan in response to the national changes.

Our plans for affordable housing in the parish are continuing but at a slower than ideal pace. The initial archaeological survey of our preferred site was completed in January and we are awaiting publication of the first stage of the report. Whatever was found, a secondary survey involving some trench digging will be necessary but this will have to wait until crops have been harvested in June or July. The current economic climate makes it more difficult to interest builders in what will be a relatively small housing development but we are being advised by the professionals at SHDC.

As last year, a sustainable community requires more than just the efforts of the Parish Council. Therefore, my thanks are due again to all the people who produce and distribute Bigbury News on a regular, monthly basis; to everybody who helps in keeping our roads relatively free of litter; to all those running the Memorial Hall, its associated groups and events; to those supporting the Church, and to the local businesses which provide employment and sustenance. I am very grateful to the relatively new Footpath Warden and his canine assistant for their entertaining and informative contributions to the greater enjoyment of Bigbury’s wonderful environment. I’d like to thank those organising parish events such as the Fun Run (which we hope will be able to continue this year) and the Christmas carols – they all help to make the community stronger. Last, but by no means least, I am grateful to County Cllr William Mumford, District Cllr Bryan Carson and to the police for their work on the parish’s behalf.’

7 FINANCIAL REPORT The clerk gave the financial report as follows;

Income		Expenditure	
Brought forward	6,675.86	Subs & donations	560.00
Precept	7,469.99	Office expenses	1,068.95
Bank Interest	4.93	Clerk	1,450.00
SHDC recycling cr.	292.46	Hall & play.field expenses	91.00
Bigbury News	319.00	P3	70.00
Sundry credit	39.60	Insurance	246.79
Defibrillator grant	1,525.00	Audit fees	235.00
VAT refund	880.44	Environment	4,631.99
DCC grants	2,552.00	S137s	410.00
		Website	49.00
		Bigbury News	703.12
		VAT	625.04
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	19,759.28		10,140.89
Deposit.Account.	8,405.35		
Current Account	<u>1,683.09</u>		
	10,088.44		
- unrepresented chqs	<u>470.05</u>		
	9,618.39		
+ Expenditure	<u>10,140.89</u>		
	19,759.28		

8 OPEN SESSION

Mrs Gubbins asked if any result had been received from the planning application for Mount Folly Farm and was informed it was still in the pipeline.

Mrs Wright asked if there was a chance of a bottle bank in Bigbury village – Cllr Carson stated he would approach the owners of the Royal Oak.

Mrs Gubbins expressed gratitude to the councillors for all their hard work.

Meeting closed 9.38 pm