

## Minutes of Churchstow Parish Council Meeting

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016 – 19.30

Present Roger Hind – Chairman

Geoff Stewart

Yanine Tarr

Paul Williams

John Woodley

Rufus Gilbert – DCC

Ian Bramble – SHDC

Jody Fendick – Clerk

Apologies Eddie McLaney

1. **WELCOME, APOLOGIES AND CHAIRMAN'S REPORT.** The Chairman, Cllr Hind welcomed everyone to the meeting. He formally welcomed the new Parish Clerk, Jody Fendick.  
  
Apologies were received from Cllr McLaney.
2. **MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING.** The minutes from the previous meeting were approved and signed by the Chairman.
3. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE ABOVE MINUTES.** Cllr Bramble asked that an amendment was made in reference to SHDC financial position. That 98% of monies invested in Icelandic banks had been returned, as opposed to the 100% figure that was originally documented.
4. **CLERK'S REPORT.** The Clerk queried the TAP fund application as the deadline for applications was 14/01/16. The response from both Cllr Gilbert and Cllr Bramble was

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that further funding could most probably be found for projects and development within the Parish Council's remit.

The Clerk also mentioned that she had been updating social media and using it as a tool to engage with some of the 'harder to reach' community.

**5. REPORTS FROM DEVON COUNTY COUNCILLOR – RUFUS GILBERT.** Cllr Gilbert stated that following the latest round of budget cuts DCC is going to lose around £500,000 per week. The rural areas are losing money whilst the urban and metropolitan areas are gaining more.

He also stated that the money that has been ringfenced for the new playarea to replace the demolished one in Churchstow should be accessible once proof of the award had been provided. Cllr Tarr and Cllr Hind felt certain that a letter pertaining to this had been received.

DCC are hoping to save £1million on road salting and gritting. Cllr Gilbert informed us that it costs around £35k per night to prepare roads for icy conditions.

Cllr Gilbert is still trying to get the road between Totnes Cross and Halwell improved.

He also advised us that if we can produce a wishlist of Traffic Regulation Orders concerning parking only and forward to Adam Keay we have a good chance of getting these requests met.

Superspeed Broadband is imminent

Local libraries are facing further improvement with a customer-led policy rather than a staff-led one. This will hopefully lead to increased accessibility, more convenient opening times etc.

Council tax will increase. DCC approved a 2% increase. It seems that government have taken a more 'backdoor' approach to this and will offset the increase by using the extra funds to pay for the increase in the minimum wage. Local councils will be made more accountable.

**6. REPORT FROM SOUTH HAMS DISTRICT COUNCIL – IAN BRAMBLE** Cllr Hind queried whether more social/council housing was going to be built. Cllr Bramble agreed that people need affordable rents and security of tenure. Rents need to be index-linked to keep them manageable.

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Cllr Gilbert raised the issue of applications for locality funds.

Cllr Stewart also asked Cllr Gilbert where we stand regarding the bylaws for the car park. Is it the Parish Council's responsibility to pay for this and who pays for whitelining? Cllr Bramble suggested we contact Adam Keay to get confirmation of this - Cllr Hind to enquire.

On February 28<sup>th</sup> there will be an open seminar in Aveton Gifford regarding neighbourhood planning. Cllr Bramble recommended a representative from the Parish Council attends to see how they are consulting. He advised us to 'Keep an open mind'

There is a plan already pending and Cllr Gilbert recommends we pursue this as the plans will be relevant until 2031 and if we don't formulate a suitable one, we may be asked why and held accountable in the future.

Business rates retention – The government's proposal is that SHDC will retain 100% of business rates collected. This amount will be subject to balancing tariffs to DCC, Fire Brigade, Police etc. Currently we submit 50% of what is collected to Whitehall.

The current system of tariffs will continue. Uniform national rates will be abolished and will only be subjected to reduction **NOT** increases.

## **7. ADDITIONAL MATTERS**

***Defibrillator*** – Nothing to report. Sarah Wollaston's website can provide some information. It is understood that there is some sort of collaboration between local health authorities and the British Heart Foundation. Jody, along with Cllr Hind are to look into whether this is feasible.

***Planning application for the proposed barrier at Bantham*** – The planning application has been withdrawn, so it was not discussed during the meeting.

***No right turn sign*** - Following an accident last year, Cllr Hind queried the sign instructing motorists not to turn right onto the main road at Churchstow. It appears that one of the signs is a mandatory one and the other is just advisory. Cllr Hind to speak to Dave Gibson, our local Community Police Officer, to see if he can shed any light on this.

***Churchstow New Housing*** – No news at the moment. Cllr Hind had spoken to Keith Gazzard – The man in charge and he claims everything is on schedule and their proposed completion in April looks highly likely. Need to establish if Kier are going to tarmac the carpark.

## **8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Cllr Hind asked whether we can expect to see any Planning Enforcement Officers locally. Cllr Bramble stated that they are notoriously difficult posts to fill.

Obtain a replacement Parish boundary map from the ordinance survey office in Plymouth – Jody to arrange.

Contact SHDC and DCC to check they have email and address details of new Clerk – Jody to contact.

Cllr Woodley asked what we would like to do with the 30 Diamond Jubilee mugs we are currently in possession of. It was suggested that the new Churchstow housing residents should all receive one and we should decide what to do with the others.

Cllr Woodley mentioned the Kingsbridge and District Caring Alliance and the good work they do in supporting the older and more vulnerable members of the community. There is a regular gentle exercise class held by Gill Whitmore in the Church Hall which is being well-attended and further events could be advertised through the Parish Council's Social Media. This is particularly relevant as our Parish is home to many elderly residents. Jody to speak to Cllr Woodley for more information.

Cllr Stewart drew attention to the hedge bank on Church Hill which hasn't been cut for some time. There is also an open spring here too (Possibly from under Scott's Close) This does cause flooding in Tithe Hill and in front of Home Farm. The carriageway is also eroding and he felt that this needed fairly urgent attention. Cllr Bramble suggested that the local council may advise but as there is only one lengthsman for 50+ parishes and he is in high demand, it may be better that the Parish Council take the initiative, possibly involving the residents who are directly affected. Cllr Woodley said he would speak with those concerned in Scott's Close and report back. Cllr Hind to contact Adam Keay regarding erosion of the carriageway.

It was unanimously agreed to hold future meetings on the second Wednesday of each month, with the exception of August and December.

Next meeting will be February 10<sup>th</sup> at 19:30 in the Church House Inn.

***Meeting Ended 21:30***

Dr. J.