

# HOLNE PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council held on Zoom on Tuesday 19 May 2020 at 7.30pm

### Present

Cllrs B Owen (Chairman), J Bellamy, T Crook, M Fairman and E Ross

### Also present

Suzanna Hughes (Clerk), County Cllr Hosking, District Cllr Smerdon and District Cllr Pannell. There was one member of the public present (from 7.35pm).

The meeting was opened by Cllr Owen at 7.30pm.

190520.01	<b>Apologies for Absence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cllr R Applegarth</li><li>• Cllr J Barkas</li></ul>
190520.02	<b>Open Forum</b> <p>Ross Gray commented on the response from Cllr Keith Baldry in respect of the termination of his grass cutting contract at the churchyard (item 7).</p>
190520.03	<b>County &amp; District Councillors' Reports</b> <p>District Councillors' report is attached.</p> <p>District Cllr Smerdon also reported that SHDC has been administering the government grants available as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic. To date, £37.5m has been paid through the Business Support grant scheme and the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure grant scheme. Self-employed people may also be eligible for a grant and will have been contacted direct by HMRC. A further scheme has been set up to accommodate certain small businesses previously outside the scope of the business grant funds scheme. Businesses will be able to apply from the end of next week.</p> <p>SHDC officers have been working as usual but from home. No officers have been furloughed. Public toilets in Salcombe, Slapton and Bigbury have reopened but town centre toilets remain closed.</p> <p>There was a brief discussion about whether Holne had been impacted by an increased number of visitors. Members had observed increased vehicles in local car parks and a large number of vehicles at Newbridge including a vehicle parked across the new boulders and blocking access to the gate. Venford car park was also reportedly full to overflowing. Increased anti-social behaviour has also been noted including fires, dogs without leads and camping. Concern was expressed about DNPA's lack of power to deal with these issues.</p> <p>County Cllr Richard Hosking suggested that the Parish Council makes an alternative application for a grant from his locality budget as the Newbridge issue was proving very difficult to resolve. He advised that DCC has issued a 60 page document on COVID guidance - Stay Alert. The government has announced a £250m emergency active travel fund to improve cycling and walking. Recycling centres reopened on 11 May for essential use only. Schools are preparing for the possibility of a phased reopening from some year groups from 1 June.</p> <p>Cllr Ross raised concern about children's services in Devon and the serious failings, which Ofsted found during their recent inspection, in the way some vulnerable young people were helped and supported to become independent after they left the care system. Cllr Ross hoped that funding will be available to improve this.</p>

190520.04	<p><b>Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensation</b></p> <p>Members were reminded of their responsibility to continually update their Notice of Registerable Interests and invited to state whether they have any interest in the items to be discussed during this meeting in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct.</p> <p>Unforeseen requests for a Dispensation to be considered at this point only if there was no way a Councillor would have been aware of such before the meeting.</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest or requests for dispensation.</p>
190520.05	<p><b>Ratification of Minutes</b></p> <p>Members received the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 21 April 2020 and agreed unanimously that they be signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record of the meeting.</p>
190520.06	<p><b>Finance and Governance</b></p> <p>6.1 There were no payments requiring approval.</p> <p>6.2 Members considered quotations for insurance. It was agreed to accept the quotation from Pen Underwriting Limited for a 3 year long term agreement. The cost for this year is £388.05.</p>
190520.07	<p><b>Churchyard Maintenance</b></p> <p>Members received a response from SHDC's Executive Members for the Environment, Cllr Keith Baldry, regarding SHDC's decision to take back the churchyard maintenance contract in-house. The decision was cost-driven and no reflection on Ross Gray's work. It was acknowledged, however, that communication with Mr Gray could have been better.</p> <p>Concerns were raised that contractors had recently visited the churchyard but had not completed a full cut. After a discussion, it was agreed that Cllr Smerdon would have a look at the work and try and establish with SHDC why the job had not been completed and what are the plans to mitigate this. It was also suggested that the Parish Council may consider making a financial contribution to the church by way of grant to enable more frequent cuts if necessary.</p>
190520.08	<p><b>Planning</b></p> <p>8.1 <b>New applications/appeals:</b> None.</p> <p>8.2 <b>Decisions:</b></p> <p>8.2.1 0102/20 – Extension to agricultural building (16.5m x 22.7m) at Higher Mill Leat Farm, Holne Members noted that DNPA has granted conditional planning permission.</p>
190520.09	<p><b>Playpark</b></p> <p>Cllr Bellamy reported that signage has been replaced reminding people that they shouldn't be using the play equipment. Cllr Fairman advised that the signs from the gate on the path between Little Bewden and Playpark have been removed.</p>
190520.10	<p><b>Leats</b></p> <p>There are no current issues. The leats are flowing albeit with limited water.</p>
190520.11	<p><b>Highways and Footpaths</b></p> <p>It was noted that the pothole on the road from Hill Top into the village has been filled. It was also noted that the ditches around Chase Gate Farm have been dug out</p>
210420.14	<p><b>Clerk's or Councillors reports on matters authorised by the Council at previous meetings not otherwise on this agenda</b></p> <p>None</p>

210420.15	<p><b>Chairman’s urgent business for action by the clerk if covered by delegated powers or for inclusion on the agenda of the next meeting</b></p> <p>The Chairman informed members that she had been asked by the Chair of Holne Commoners for the Parish Council’s input into proposed tree planting sites along the Mardle Valley as part of the work associated with natural flood management on Holne Moor. The Chairman invited Ross Gray to comment and he advised that it would be likely that single tree planting would fail and only larger areas back up from that area would work. Members did not feel qualified to comment at this without further information.</p>
210420.16	<p><b>Correspondence</b></p> <p>Members received correspondence from Hannah Best expressing concern about landowners’ use of herbicide and the impact this is having on wildlife. It was acknowledged that it is a difficult issue to tackle particularly if being used on private land. It was agreed that information could be placed on the parish noticeboards to highlight the problems of using herbicide in an effort to encourage alternative methods. This could also include local success stories. Cllr Crook suggested that the Parish Council could consider adopting the telephone kiosk which could be used to publicise such information as this. It was agreed that Cllr Crook would explore this idea for further discussion at the next meeting. Cllr Bellamy agreed that he would discuss the matter again with Hannah Best with a view to publishing something on the notice boards.</p>
210420.17	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>It was agreed that the next meeting of the Parish Council would be held on Zoom on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> May at 7.30pm.</p>

The meeting closed at 8.20pm.

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**Cllr B Owen**  
**Chairman**

## Parish Councils update from South Hams Cllrs. Pannell & Smerdon May 2020

- **SHDC.** Council has been in emergency mode, with urgent decisions being taken by senior officers in consultation with the Leader. As with Parish Councils, SHDC has now received guidance that meetings may be held remotely using video conferencing. The advice is that this should only be used for decisions on Coronavirus-related issues and matters of the utmost urgency. SHDC had so far held two Full Council Meetings. There will also be some remote meetings of the Executive. One of the first decisions was to confirm the appointment of the new Chief Executive for South Hams and West Devon, following the move of Sophie Hosking to Cornwall. He is Andy Bates, who comes to us from the Local Government Association, where he is Principal Adviser for the South West. He has already been working with South Hams in that role.
- **Finance.** There could be significant financial implications from the emergency for SHDC – loss of income and emergency expenditure – but it will depend on whether the Government is able to recompense local authorities in full. The council is facing a shortfall of several million pounds from the crisis – for example due to the Business Rate and Council Tax reliefs, and the loss of income from car parking etc. The Government has declared that it will recompense councils for their losses but there is concern that this should be in full or local authorities will face a very difficult financial situation. In the first round of additional Government funding SHDC was awarded £33,962. After strong lobbying this was increased in the second round, announced on 29<sup>th</sup> April, to £866,545.
- **Planning. FOR THOSE NOT IN DNPA AREA.**  
New applications are once again being accepted. Less controversial plans are being decided, as in the past, by officer delegation, with local Ward Member consent. It is possible that Development Management meetings will be held by video conferencing. If not, major planning applications and those which cannot be decided by Ward Member approval are likely to be held over until normal meetings resume.
- **Waste services.** Household recycling centres opened again on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> May – but only for private cars and for materials which present a hazard if they remain in homes, for example toxic materials or broken glass in a home where there are young children. Refuse collections continue as normal at present, although collection days are changing in May because of the two Bank Holidays, please check. The introduction of the new recycling system with plastic boxes replacing bags has been delayed until February, because the crisis has halted construction of the specialised lorries needed, in Ireland, and the building of the new waste transfer station at Ivybridge.
- **Public areas.** Public toilets remain closed for reasons of public health, as are children's play areas. Parks and open spaces should be kept open for exercise, so long as people respect distancing
- **Beach car parks.** The beach car parks at Bigbury, Slapton and North Sands, Salcombe, have reopened following the relaxation of the rules on trips out for exercise. Charges apply - pay by card if possible. The public toilets at these locations should be open by next weekend.
- **Council tax reduction.** Help is available for people who already receive help with their Council Tax because of low incomes, and may be extended
- **Small Businesses.** By 1<sup>st</sup> May SHDC had paid out £37.5million in business support grants to 3,264 businesses in the South Hams – 80% of those originally identified.. Help is available to businesses which have had to cease operations because of Government regulations. Business Rate holiday for the current year – nothing to pay. Cash grants of up to £25,000 from the Government for those in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors. There is also the Government assistance available to pay 80% of staff wages up to £2,500 per month.
- **Small business grants of £10,000** are available for businesses with a Rateable Value of less than £15,000. This also applies to Village Halls, Recreation Associations etc.
- **Discretionary grants** for businesses which haven't previously qualified were announced on 1<sup>st</sup> May. SHDC will have £2.4million to administer for businesses in shared spaces, bed and

breakfasts, charities etc. Details of how this scheme will operate are still being worked out and will be announced later this week.

- **Help for self-employed and small businesses** is available from the Government. Go to the Gov.uk website for details.
- **Emergency Welfare Fund** has been set up together with Devon County Council to help people such as those waiting to receive Universal Credit and the self-employed. Food and essential travel to a hospital appointment are the types of need which will be helped. Secondary schools are also being given allocations to award directly to students suffering hardship.
- **Grants for local community groups and Town and Parish Councils.** Quick grants of £500 from Devon County Council and also £500 from DNPA (for those in the National Park) are available to community groups/parish councils who are supporting people with food banks, shopping, emergency financial assistance etc. Bigger grants of up to £6,000 also available from Devon CC. SHDC has funding of up to £250 per parish for virus-related work in the community, but the size of depends on the number of applications in each area.
- **Food parcels.** The Government has identified a small number of people 'shielding' at home because they are vulnerable with health conditions. SHDC arranged the delivery of 25 food parcels to those who needed them but this is now being handed to a food distribution company to manage.
- **Working with Community Groups.** Devon CC and SHDC have identified and published lists and maps of community groups who are helping those in need. They are liaising with these groups so assistance can be co-ordinated and to avoid duplication. Groups are being issued with a short guide covering issues such as selection and registration of volunteers, safeguarding, risk assessments etc.
- **Food banks.** Morrisons have said they will supply surplus food to groups running food banks
- **Domestic abuse.** There is an increased risk of domestic abuse. Help is available from Devon and Cornwall Victim Support. Email [victimservices@devonandcornwall.pnn.police.uk](mailto:victimservices@devonandcornwall.pnn.police.uk) Tel: 0300 303 0554

**HELPFUL LINKS:** Here are some links which may prove useful, if you don't already know them:

- **Covid 19 related Helpline for South Hams** **01803 861297**  
Advice is still available for other matters through the South Hams DC website, but responses may take longer as some staff have been switched to virus-related activities.
- **Local Action Support Fund** <https://southhams.gov.uk/LASFund>
- **Post Office support for getting access to cash**  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-52229698>
- **Info on grants and funding for individuals, groups and businesses.**  
<https://www.devon.gov.uk/document/grant-and-funding-support/>
- **The Silver Line** - FREE confidential helpline providing information, friendship and advice to older people, open 24 hours a day, every day 0800 470 8090 - <https://www.thesilverline.org.uk>
- **The Mix.** Online support Webchat for 10-18 year olds, online counselling for up to 28. Group chat, general chat, helpline, email and text support and webchat 0808 808 4994  
[www.themix.org.uk](http://www.themix.org.uk)
- **Victim Care Unit** on 01392 475900  
<https://www.victimcaredevonandcornwall.org.uk/Help-and-Support/> This link is more local support and covers a wide range of topics which is useful.
- **National Domestic Abuse** free phone helpline 24 hours is 0808 2000 247 - the web link <https://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/>