

HOLNE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council held in Holne Village Hall on Tuesday 1 November 2022 at 7.30pm

Present

Cllr B Owen (Chairman), J Bellamy, T Crook, M Fairman & C McLean

Also present

Suzanna Hughes (Clerk) and District Cllr Smerdon

The meeting was opened by Cllr Owen at 7.30pm

011122.01	Apologies for Absence <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cllr Applegarth• County Cllr Thomas• District Cllr Pannell• Ross Gray
011122.02	Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensation <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 and requests for dispensation.</p>
011122.03	Open Forum <p>No comments.</p>
011122.04	County & District Councillors' Reports <p>District Councillors' report was submitted and circulated (attached).</p> <p>County Cllr Thomas's report was submitted and circulated (attached).</p> <p>Cllr Smerdon, in his capacity as DNPA representative, reported that DNPA will be discussing the review of the byelaws on 11th November. They will not be discussing the wild camping issue at this meeting, however, as there is a legal challenge currently going through the courts regarding this.</p>
011122.05	Ratification of Minutes <p>Members received the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 4 October 2022. It was agreed unanimously that they be signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record of the meeting.</p>
011122.06	Finance and Governance <p>6.1 Payments for Approval The following payment was approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• B Owen - Poppy wreath - £25
011122.07	Planning <p>7.1 New applications/appeals 7.1 0402/22 – Glebe House, Holne Proposed alterations to existing vehicular access</p>

	<p>Members agreed to support the application.</p> <p>7.2 Decisions None</p>
011122.08	<p>Highways and Footpaths</p> <p>Members were advised that Bill Allen has been asked to look at the position of the obscured finger post at the end of Church Path. In the meantime, Cllr Crook offered to cut back the vegetation around the sign.</p> <p>It was noted that the large pothole on Carriage Drive (on the hill from Langaford to Holne) has not yet been filled. This has been reported on 'Report a Pothole'.</p> <p>It was noted that there has been no work yet on the Shanty's/Greatcombe path; the surface is in poor condition and the two gates are still in need of repair. It was agreed to follow this up with Bill Allen (DNPA).</p> <p>It was noted that an emergency repair has been carried out on the cattle grid gate leading on to the moor. However, a more permanent repair is needed. It was agreed to follow this up with the Highways Officer.</p> <p>Cllr McLean advised that the enclosure on the second kissing gate going down into Holne Woods is missing. This was not a particular concern but was noted.</p>
011122.09	<p>Playpark</p> <p>There was a very successful pumpkin carving competition at the weekend.</p> <p>There was a brief discussion about the management of the wildflower area. The Chairman advised that she had asked those managing this area for a management plan but had been informed by them that this was not necessary and the information that they supply when they write to the Parish Council was sufficient. After discussion, it was agreed that it would be helpful for the Parish Council to know how this area is being managed and whether any funding will be required in the future. It was therefore agreed to ask for a short list of key points (with costings, if needed) so that the Parish Council were aware of the group's plans and intentions for that area of playpark.</p>
011122.10	<p>Devon Air Ambulance Lighting Mast</p> <p>No report.</p>
011122.11	<p>Christmas Tree</p> <p>Cllr Crook will contact Tom at the Church House Inn regarding his intentions.</p>
011122.12	<p>Leats</p> <p>There were no issues reported and the leats are flowing well. Cllr Fairman advised that he and Yvonne had cleared out the leat going through playpark taking out the bracken and gravel and cutting the edge on one side. The flow has now improved.</p>
011122.13	<p>Venford Reservoir</p> <p>Cllr Fairman reported that he had attended a meeting at the reservoir regarding the management and ecological structural plan that is supposed to have started last week. However, information was lacking. The two employees admitted to a lack of knowledge and were not au fait with the programme from the forestry management company. After discussing the photos of failings/lack of maintenance by SWLT around the lake, it was agreed that there needs to be more and better communication from SWLT /SWW to the Parish Council thereby improving the understanding of what is going to happen and how the Parish Council can respond.</p>

011122.14	Clerk's or Councillors reports on matters authorised by the Council at previous meetings not otherwise on this agenda None
011122.15	Chairman's urgent business for action by the clerk if covered by delegated powers or for inclusion on the agenda of the next meeting None
011122.16	Correspondence None
011122.17	Date of Next Meeting It was agreed that the next meeting will be held on 6 December 2022 at 7.30pm.

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Clr B Owen
Chairman

Parish report from your District Councillors

NOVEMBER 2022

WASTE - Improvement in performance across the board for October

Since taking back control of the waste service from FCC on 3rd October we have seen a marked improvement in staff attendance, resulting in almost no missed collections for the month of October. Recently all the brown bin rounds have been running, compared with an average of only 50% in recent months under FCC. SHDC is now once again responsible for all waste collection services, together with street and public toilet cleaning. The move is likely to result in the council incurring additional costs of several million pounds in the next few years as a consequence of the mutual termination of the contract with FCC.

A major review of all collection rounds is currently taking place, the plan being to move all residents currently on recycling bags to the new boxes by next Spring. This review should allow for better deployment of vehicles and staff, to make best use of our resources.

Preparations for subscription garden waste service

As well as easing financial pressures, ceasing the garden waste (brown bin) service from 31 October will also ease pressure on the core waste and recycling collections, helping to keep those as stable as possible in the early months of the transition from FCC.

The Council will ensure that all households will get their brown bins emptied on or around their last scheduled collection day before the service is ceased. For a long time South Hams District Council has been able to provide the garden waste service without charging a subscription fee but doing so from spring 2023 will bring us in line with most other districts in Devon, who have charged separately for garden waste collections for several years.

The current garden waste service will cease from [31st OCTOBER](#)

The proposed new service will start from [MARCH 2023](#)

The subscription will be [£49 per bin](#), with a maximum subscription of two bins per household.

If you want to sign up to the new collection service go to the website www.southhams.gov.uk/gardenwaste or call [customer services on 01803 861234](tel:01803861234)

IMPORTANT You **MUST** subscribe to this service between [1st NOVEMBER 2022](#) and [22 JANUARY 2023](#)

This will be a yearly service, collection every two weeks, suspended for four weeks over Christmas.

[If you don't want to sign up for this service](#) no further action is required.

You can keep your brown bin, we would encourage you to re-use it as storage in the garden. If you want it removed go to www.southhams.gov.uk/recyclingwaste and select '[contact the waste team](#)'

Cllr Keith Baldry, South Hams Executive Member for the Environment, said: "We know that nobody will want to pay a subscription fee for the service, but the inescapable truth is that rising costs have forced our hand. Ultimately, we must protect our core statutory services. Ceasing the collections over the winter will help us do that as we transition to an in-house waste collection service. We consider that the fee of £49 represents good value for money. The subscription fees will purely cover the cost of the service and there will be no profit made. We will provide residents with information in due course on how they can sign up and subscribe for the service.

We would also encourage more home composting, residents can find out more on home composting possibilities here: <https://www.recycledevon.org/in-the-garden/how-to-compost>

For those who decide to not sign up for the service, they can take their garden waste to all three recycling centres in the South Hams, or seek out one of the growing number of Community Composting projects locally. Full details, including opening hours, are available online at:

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/wasteandrecycling/centre/>

Keep up to date on the latest at: <https://southhams.gov.uk/recyclingwaste>

PLYMOUTH and SOUTH DEVON FREEPORT

SHDC Full Council agreed at a special meeting on Thursday 13th October to apply to turn our Freeport areas (Sherford and Langage in the South Hams, part of the Dockyard area in Plymouth) into one of the Government's new Investment Zones. These bring greater tax benefits for employers, to encourage inward investment and high quality jobs. In some cases in the future planning and environmental controls may be slightly relaxed, but the two sites above are currently subject to all current planning and environmental legislation as they progress through the planning process. Details of how the change of category will affect planning procedures etc. are yet to be announced by the Government. It is very unlikely that any other sites will be approved in the SHDC area other than the two at Langage and Sherford.

The issue was hotly debated by Council Members, the vote being 13 in favour and 11 against.

COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF)

A total of £1.68million was made available by Government to SHDC to support businesses that have been affected by COVID-19, but have been ineligible for other business rates support.

Councils were responsible for developing and implementing a scheme based on local need, however we were unable to award relief to ratepayers who were entitled to Extended Retail Discount (covering Retail, Hospitality and Leisure), the Nursery Discount or the Airport and Ground Operations Support Scheme. Relief can also not be given to unoccupied properties.

The Council has awarded rate relief totalling £1.61million to 509 business properties following a meeting of the Council's rate relief panel on 23 September. The amount of relief awarded is equivalent to 26% of the 2021/22 business rates liability, based on rateable value. We have primarily been able to support businesses in the manufacturing, wholesale and supply chain sectors. Ratepayers benefiting from relief will shortly receive a new bill with a covering letter explaining the terms of the award of the relief. As the relief must be applied to the 2021/22 business rates liability, most businesses will find that their account for 2021/2022 will go into credit. This will be transferred to the 2022/23 financial year thus reducing the amount of business rates payable. Should a ratepayer request that any credit be refunded, a refund will be raised.

Council Tax Reduction Scheme

South Hams District Council Executive agrees to ask the public for their opinion on changes to their Council Tax Reduction Scheme. The Consultation opens Monday 17 October and will run until 27 November. The Council Tax Reduction Scheme is a scheme which is run by councils across the country. It recognises that households have different pressures and depending on where you live, your income, how many people live in your home, how many children you have and what benefits you already claim, you could have your council tax bill significantly reduced.

Each year councils must review their scheme and decide if they are going to make changes to it or leave it the same.

At a meeting on the Council's Executive (Thursday 13 October), the Executive agreed to go out to public consultation on the proposed changes, which would start in April next year and that reflect the extra pressures that many households are feeling right now.

The Council are inviting the public to tell them what they think of those proposed changes, before deciding if they should make them happen.

Cllr Nicky Hopwood, South Hams Executive Member for the Cost of Living, said: "This is a banded or graded scheme, which means the lower your income, the more pressures your household has, the greater the reduction you get.

Bird Flu

Following a number of detections of avian influenza in poultry and wild and captive birds across the southwest of England a regional Avian Influenza Prevention Zone (AIPZ) was declared on 31 August in Cornwall, Devon, Isles of Scilly and part of Somerset.

From 17 October the [Prevention zone](#) was declared across Great Britain.

All bird keepers must follow strict biosecurity measures to help protect their flocks from the threat of avian flu.

We have received notification of a confirmed case of Avian Influenza (HSN1) within a private flock of geese at a setting located in Dartington. The flock has been culled. This is the third notification within the Dartington area.

Annual Rough Sleeper Estimate

All local authorities are required to submit a 'snapshot' estimated figure on the number of rough sleepers in the local area during a specified night between 1 October and 30 November.

South Hams will be submitting an Estimate based on the number of people believed to be sleeping rough on the night of Monday 14 November through to Tuesday morning of 15 November.

We will also conduct a 'snapshot' count in Totnes as our main hotspot for people sleeping rough.

We choose to submit an estimate as the most accurate way of arriving at a number because due to the large geographic area of South Hams, a full count would not be able to encompass all the areas involved.

County Councillor's Report – November 2022

Grave budget warning from Devon County Council leader

Deep cuts to Devon's vital local services are inevitable unless the Government provides more support, county council leader John Hart warned today.

Mr Hart said he fully agreed with new Prime Minister Rishi Sunak that the country faced a "profound economic crisis".

But he urged Mr Sunak and Chancellor Jeremy Hunt to use the extra time they now have to produce their economic recovery plan to ensure the balance between tax rises and spending cuts was fair and equitable. And that local government is not singled out for cuts.

"I have been a county councillor for more than 30 years and leader of Devon County Council for nearly 14 years during which time we have been through the austerity years and the pandemic," said Mr Hart.

"But our financial situation has never been so bleak as it is now.

"Before the summer we revealed a black hole in our finances for this year due to surging demand for help and support for vulnerable children and adults, the continuing costs of the pandemic and the dramatic rise in costs and inflation.

"We have been working hard to find savings in this current financial year but it's like filling the bath with the plug out as demand for our services and our costs keep escalating.

"On top of that we now calculate that - as things stand - we face a £75 million shortfall in our budget for next year."

Mr Hart said a report from the National Audit Office had revealed a 53.7 per cent cut in Government funding for local councils between 2010 and 2020. Devon's core funding from the Government had reduced by 72 per cent in real terms in the 11 years up to 2021/22.

"Despite that, this council has maintained help and support for the young, the old and the vulnerable by becoming more effective and efficient," he said.

"When other councils were closing libraries to save money, we kept all ours open. We maintained a youth service in every district. We've seen a steadily reducing number of potholes on our roads. We've ensured communities weren't cut off by subsidising bus services. We maintained our farms estate to give aspiring young farmers a chance to begin a career in farming.

"And we've helped to drive economic growth by overseeing infrastructure improvements on the A380 in South Devon and the North Devon link road, re-opening the Okehampton railway line and other stations and investing in improving high-tech skills through developments like the new training centre at Exeter Airport and support for work hubs for start-up businesses and small companies across the county.

"We've done all that without large-scale staff redundancies and we've kept council tax as low as possible. And we've done it all while committing to be net zero carbon by 2030.

"I am proud of that legacy. But all of the work we do will be under threat if we have to make drastic cuts across all our services to balance the books as we are required to do by law. However that will be the reality if the Government doesn't act to protect local government."

Mr Hart said Devon was not just calling for financial support and doing nothing to help itself.

The council had already put a freeze on staff recruitment in non-frontline areas, delayed planned investment in IT and infrastructure projects, cut its heating and lighting bills, squeezed all external contracts, stopped some routine road maintenance and reduced winter gritting routes as well as reviewing its school transport contracts and public transport subsidies.

Devon MPs were being briefed so they could champion the county's case at Westminster and the authority was working with the County Councils' Network and the Local Government Association on national lobbying.

"We are here to do the very best for local people and to protect and support the most vulnerable and those in real need" he said.

"We will do everything in our power to continue to do this and find new ways to do things better and more sustainably.

"But, quite obviously, a bankrupt council can do none of these things and we have no choice now but to make savings that will inevitably hurt some people."