

# HOLNE PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held in Holne Village Hall on Tuesday 7 May 2024 at 7.30pm

### Present

Cllr B Owen (Chair), R Applegarth, M Fairman, L Grun and C McLean

### Also present

Suzanna Hughes (Clerk), County Cllr Thomas, Rob Steemson (DNPA) and two members of the public

The meeting was opened by Cllr Owen at 7.30pm.

070524.01	<p><b>Election of Chair</b></p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Grun, seconded by Cllr Applegarth, and unanimously agreed that Cllr Owen is re-elected as Chair.</p> <p>Cllr Owen signed her Declaration of Acceptance of Office.</p>
070524.02	<p><b>Election of Vice Chair</b></p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Owen, seconded by Cllr Fairman, and unanimously agreed that Cllr Crook is re-elected as Vice Chair.</p> <p><i>(Cllr Crook will sign his Declaration of Acceptance of Office at the next meeting).</i></p>
070524.03	<p><b>Apologies for Absence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cllr Crook</li><li>• District Cllr Pannell</li><li>• District Cllr Hancock</li><li>• Ross Gray</li></ul>
070524.04	<p><b>Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensation</b></p> <p>Members were 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. None were declared.</p> <p>There were no requests for dispensation (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>
070524.05	<p><b>Open Forum</b></p> <p>There were no comments.</p>
070524.06	<p><b>Minutes</b></p> <p>Members received the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 2 April 2024. It was agreed unanimously that they be signed by the Chair as a true and correct record of the meeting.</p>
070524.07	<p><b>Roles and Responsibilities</b></p> <p>The following roles and responsibilities were agreed:</p> <p><b>7.1 Planning</b></p> <p>It was agreed that Cllrs Fairman and Crook would look at the planning applications when received and make recommendations to the Parish Council for its consideration.</p>

	<p><b>7.2 Playpark</b> It was agreed that Cllr Owen would represent the Parish Council on Holne Playpark.</p> <p><b>7.3 Village Hall Committee</b> It was agreed that Cllr Fairman would represent the Parish Council on the Village Hall Committee.</p> <p><b>7.4 Snow Warden</b> It was agreed to ask Paul Arrowsmith to continue as the Parish Snow Warden.</p> <p><b>7.5 Tree Warden</b> It was agreed that Ross Gray would continue as Tree Warden.</p> <p><b>7.6 Leats Liaison</b> It was agreed that Cllr Applegarth would act as the Leats Liaison Officer.</p> <p><b>7.7 Website</b> It was agreed that Cllr Crook would look after the Parish Council page of the village website.</p> <p><b>7.8 Defibrillator</b> It was agreed to ask Paul Arrowsmith whether the shop will continue to check the defibrillator.</p> <p><b>7.9 Devon Air Ambulance Night-Landing Site</b> It was agreed that Cllr Applegarth would continue as the guardian of the DAA night-landing site.</p> <p><b>7.10 Footpaths</b> It was agreed that Cllr Crook would walk the paths and report any matters which need action.</p> <p><b>7.11 Climate &amp; Biodiversity</b> It was agreed that Cllrs McLean and Grun would lead on Climate and Biodiversity.</p> <p><b>7.12 Trustee of Holne Church Charity</b> Members received a request for a nomination from Holne Parish Council for a Trustee of Holne Church Charity. The Chair advised that she may consider the role subject to satisfactory answers to some questions she has.</p>
<p><b>070524.11</b></p>	<p><b>Review of Parish Council Governance Documents</b> The Council reviewed its governance documents and no changes were proposed.</p>
<p><b>070524.12</b></p>	<p><b>Reports</b></p> <p><b>12.1 County Council</b> Cllr Thomas circulated a written report as follows:</p> <p>Devon County Council and Torbay Council have formally submitted our joint proposal for a Devon and Torbay Combined County Authority (CCA) to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, the Rt Hon Michael Gove MP.</p> <p>It follows agreement by both councils for the formation of a Devon and Torbay CCA that, if agreed by the Secretary of State, would oversee a raft of new decision-making powers and funding devolved to Devon and Torbay from Whitehall.</p> <p>Opportunities like this don't come around often, so it's seen by both councils as a major achievement to now submit the application to the government, and to be closer to having the CCA in place in the Autumn.</p> <p>The CCA will deliver the devolution deal which will enable important decisions to be made locally on local priorities such as jobs and skills, housing, and the environment.</p>

Councillors at Devon and Torbay councils were given an analysis of the feedback following recent consultation that drew responses from a broad cross-section of organisations including Devon's District councils, Town and Parish councils, and representatives from the business, education and skills, housing, transportation, health service providers and voluntary sectors.

Taking that analysis into account, Councillors at both councils agreed the next steps: to submit the proposal to the Secretary of State, and subject to receiving the approval and the making of the necessary Regulations, to draft a constitution for the Devon and Torbay CCA for consideration this September.

At Torbay Council's specially convened meeting, the vote to progress the CCA proposals was carried unanimously. But not all Councillors at Devon County Council were in agreement – Councillors Bailey, Brazil, Connett, Cox, Leaver, Letch, Roome, Thomas and Wrigley abstained from the vote.

The recommendations, however, were carried. In addition to the Devon and Torbay CCA, the County Council will begin the process of establishing the statutory Team Devon Joint Committee, to formalise the existing long-standing partnership between the eight District, City and Borough Councils, Devon Association of Local Councils (representing town and parish councils) and the two national park authorities.

## 9.2 District Council

Cllrs Hancock and Pannell circulated a written report:

### **Community Safety Partnership update:**

The end of the financial year is always a busy time for the CSP team, as it is for so many people.

At the beginning of March we hold our annual priority setting meeting, where we get together with our lead members and partners from a number of agencies to take a look at the intelligence we have and agree what the priorities of the CSP should be for the coming year.

These priorities include a mix of statutory duties such as the Domestic Homicide Reviews, along with additional local priorities. Sadly the intelligence shows us Devon has seen a rise in suicides. As a result of this, suicide prevention and awareness will be one of our priorities for the coming year.

You will also see we have recently been publicising the need to be aware of rogue traders. This has been as a result of some recent incidents in Devon and we will also be looking at carrying out more awareness work around rogue traders and the online space.

Our overarching priorities for the coming year are domestic violence and sexual abuse, violence prevention and violence against women and girls, problem drinking and drug use, exploitation and hate crime, changing youth culture and anti-social behaviour.

In addition to the priority setting meeting, we held our annual forum. For the first time in many years this was a hybrid option so was a great opportunity to network with our partners face to face.

The forum gives an overview of some of the work carried out by the CSP and its partners over the year. We are looking at the possibility of holding it face to face again next year.

Finally we have launched two bitesize awareness sessions. The first is aimed at professionals working with young people and is to raise awareness of gaming and gambling harm. This session will be run on 23 April.

The second is our exploitation awareness session which is available to any professionals.

Both sessions are completely FREE of charge and are held online. We will also be recording the sessions for those who are unable to attend.

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Cllr Pannell also sent a written report as DNPA Link Member:

The main news from Dartmoor National Park Authority is that we heard of our financial settlement from the Government on the last working day of the financial year. The grant has been frozen again at £3.8million. There's been no increase since 2019. If our funding had kept pace with inflation we would have been receiving nearer £7million. This has clearly had a severe effect on our ability to provide the range of services we would like and led to a reduction in staff. The ray of sunshine is that we have received an additional one off payment for this year of £500,000. This was to have been restricted to capital spending only but after strong lobbying from DNPA we have been told we can use half of it for revenue spending, so this will ease pressure on staffing costs for one more year.

### 9.3 DNPA:

Rob Steemson reported that he has put some signs up over the area and has some more on order. He is also undertaking the PROW surveys. He advised that there is a tree down and some drainage issues on FP9 which he has been made aware of and he has responded to a report about the mesh at the bottom of the gate at Lane End which needs replacing.

**070524.10**

## **Finance and Governance**

### 10.1 **Payments for Approval**

The following payment was approved:

- Holne Church Charity (Playpark rent 2023 & 2024) - £40
- DALC Annual Membership Fee - £115.11
- Lee Accounting (SW) Ltd - £108
- South Hams District Council (Recharges in respect of uncontested elections in 2023) – £134.40

### 10.2 **Insurance**

Members reviewed the Council's insurance and agreed to accept the quote for £545.90.

### 10.3 **Audit 2023/24**

10.3.1 Members received and noted the year end bank reconciliation.

10.3.2 Members received and noted the internal auditor's report and agreed that this Council is confident that the internal audit arrangements provided by Lee Accounting (South West) Ltd provides excellent reassurance for the public that the financial systems are robust and fit for purpose and to continue with their appointment as the Internal Auditor to the Parish Council.

10.3.3 Members agreed that this Council is exempt from a limited assurance review under s9 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015 and authorised the Chair and RFO to sign the Certificate of Exemption.

10.3.4 Members completed and authorised the Chair and Clerk/RFO to sign Section 1 of the Annual Return (Annual Governance Statement 2023/24).

10.3.5 Members received, approved and authorised the Chair and Clerk/RFO to sign Section 2 of the Annual Return (Accounting Statements 2023/24).

<p><b>070524.11</b></p>	<p><b>Planning</b></p> <p>11.1 <b>New applications/appeals</b> None</p> <p>11.2 <b>Decisions</b></p> <p>11.2.1 0071/24 – Sky Garden, Holne External changes to existing dwelling, enclosure of interior courtyard, associated updated landscaping works and new outbuildings</p> <p>Members noted that DNPA has granted conditional consent.</p>
<p><b>070524.12</b></p>	<p><b>Request for a Memorial Bench</b></p> <p>Members received a request to site a memorial bench. After discussion, members agreed that they would be happy for a bench to be sited in playpark; it would be very well used and would have the most benefit in this location. Rather than the bench becoming an asset of the Parish Council, it would be preferred if the bench remains in the ownership of the donor and therefore ongoing maintenance would be their responsibility. If, at any point in the future, the bench becomes unsafe, it would have to be removed if repairs were not made. Members also requested details of the style and design of the bench.</p>
<p><b>070524.13</b></p>	<p><b>Playpark</b></p> <p>13.1 Members received the inspection report and noted the highlighted defects. The majority of issues relate to the wood cracking but there were currently no major defects. Cllr Applegarth had a couple of outstanding jobs to do which he planned to complete next week. There were also some items Cllr Crook had agreed to carry out and this would be followed up next month.</p> <p>13.2 Members discussed the problem with people defecating in the field next to Little Bewden. It was agreed that the clerk should write to the Shop asking whether they would have any concerns about a sign being put up directing people from playpark to the toilet facilities in the shop. Whilst this might increase how much they are used, it might also be a way of drawing people into the shop.</p>
<p><b>070524.14</b></p>	<p><b>Climate and Biodiversity Emergency</b></p> <p>Cllr Grun advised that around 20 people attended the Energy Efficiency workshop on 30 April. The slides will be published on Holybrook. South Dartmoor Community Energy will visit residents' homes and give advice on energy efficiency. They can be contacted through their website <a href="http://www.sdce.org.uk">www.sdce.org.uk</a>.</p> <p>Cllrs Grun and McLean continue to work on the Gardening for Wildlife booklet and are in the process of obtaining print costs and looking at ways to personalise it for Holne and Scorrison.</p> <p>Cllr Grun has been approached by Ruth Leonard-Williams who has recently been appointed by Sustainable South Hams to network with Parish Councils about what Parish Councils might want from Sustainable South Hams to make things better. Members were very happy for Cllr Grun to speak to her and find out more.</p>
<p><b>070524.15</b></p>	<p><b>Leats</b></p> <p>There were no new issues reported; all appear to be flowing well.</p> <p>Cllr Fairman commented that the leats running from Little Bewden through Playpark are running very well although the edges will need to be strimmed soon as there is a lot of hogweed coming through. He has also undertaken a tick count and is worried that if the area at the bottom of playpark is not cut back, there will be a tick infestation. It was agreed to look at this again with Cllr Crook next month to see what has been agreed in terms of maintaining this area.</p>

070524.16	<p><b>Highways and Footpaths</b>  <i>Residents are encouraged to report all potholes:</i>  <a href="https://www.devon.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-a-problem/report-a-pothole/">https://www.devon.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-a-problem/report-a-pothole/</a></p> <p>Members noted that the new highways signs have been erected and thanked Cllr Applegarth for doing this in Cllr Crook's absence. He advised that he has not yet put the Animals Crossing sign up underneath the Running Pony signs, however, as it may interfere with pedestrians on the informal roadside path. He will give the sign back to Cllr Crook to try and find a solution.</p> <p>It was agreed to monitor whether the new signage will reduce the speed of traffic before looking further into a 30mph speed restriction which would be very costly.</p>
070524.17	<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>  None</p>
070524.18	<p><b>Correspondence</b>  The Chair picked up a message on the Holybrook advising that a tree has come down at Venford and has left a big hole in the fence to the left of the first entrance gate. Cllr Fairman offered to go and have a look.</p>
070524.19	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting</b>  The next Parish Council meeting will be held on 4 June at 7.30pm in Holne Village Hall.</p>

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