

Minutes of the Broadwoodwidge Parish Council meeting,

Wednesday 7th December 2016, 7pm

Those in attendance: Cllr Worden (Chairman), Cllrs Crocombe, Perkin, James; Cnty Cllr Parsons, Clerk.

Members of the public present: 1

4752. Apologies for absence:

Cllrs Stratton, Durstan, Banbury, Wonnacott, Nobbs and Hawken.
Cllr Watson.

4753. Declaration of Interests

The chairman declared that interests be raised as they arise.

4754. Public Open Questions (Standing orders suspended during this session)

No questions

4755. Police Report

No Report.

4756. County Councillors Report

Update Holsworthy Rural – 22 December 2016

I'd like, firstly, to wish everyone a very "Merry Christmas" and hope that 2017 will hold much happiness for you and your families as well as for all within our communities. In the build up to Christmas again this year I have seen some wonderful community celebrations with incredible turn-out of numbers despite some very cold weather. I take my hat off to those individuals, especially, who have organised some brilliant events and say a very special "Thankyou" for the time and effort spent in ensuring that our communities come together at this highly traditional and important part of our year.

I'd like, firstly, to report that 'Skanska' is the name of the company which will take over the business of Highways for Devon as from April 2017. Skanska will call the operation 'Devon Highways'; previous contractors, of course, used the name South West Highways.

One of the potential savings is that of the company's 'Dragon Patcher' (a device with a fire breathing nozzle used to dry out potholes prior to filling them) which will facilitate additional focus on repairing many of the defects that have yet to form into potholes. It will be interesting to see this in practise but from observation in Oxfordshire which is where Skanska also operates (along with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough) the benefits seem significant. Members were assured at the meeting that Skanska spends a great deal of its time investing in its workforce. Skanska is a member of the '5% Club' which has a focus on Young People and Apprenticeships. It has, too, invested heavily in Innovative Technology.

Local Authorities are, again, it seems being asked 'to take the strain' along with our Local Communities 'bearing the pain' in regard to Council Tax funding for Adult Social Care Services! Council Tax is a cumulative function, its weight bearing down mostly on rural areas, especially those (as in Torrington) with low average incomes. Council Tax increases (we know too well) are cumulative and non-reducing. The average council tax for a Band D

property in England (2015-16) is less than £1500. In Torrington, it is more than £1600. My view is that Central Government needs to look at this again and be accountable itself.

With my input alongside that of Council Leader, John Hart as Devon County Council representatives at the recent South West Councils Meeting the 19 December 2016 councils in South West made a call on Government to respond with some urgency for a new funding approach for Adult Social Care. The rising cost of delivering adult social care is placing council services under threat. As the region with the highest proportion of over 65s anywhere in the country (20% of the population) The South West is more exposed than anywhere else in the UK.

Speaking after the Government's announcement of the Local Government Finance Settlement Cllr John Hart commented in the same vein as all Members of Devon County Council at their last Full Council Meeting on 8 December 2016 that, "Whilst the Government's announcement bringing forward council tax raising powers shows they recognise there is a problem with the funding of adult social care problem – this will make only a small, short term, difference. It does not address the urgent need for a fundamental change in the way adult social care is funded if we are not to let down the most vulnerable members of our population. The problem is particularly acute in the South West given we have the largest proportion of elderly people in the country. We fully support the call by the National Local Government Association for the Government to take urgent action and fully recognise why social care matters and treat it as a national priority."

This morning at Holsworthy Memorial Hall along with around, roughly, 30 other local representatives I again met with officers of the NHS to discuss aspects relating to the above, which, of course, involved much comment about the way forward in terms of future care of our communities with particular focus on securing the meaningful involvement of patients and the public. I await the outcome with interest.

Following significant market interest, ultrafast broadband provider 'Gigaclear' has been awarded a contract to provide fibre broadband direct to homes and businesses in four areas of Devon and Somerset. This forms part of phase two of the Connecting Devon and Somerset (CDS) broadband programme which is the largest of its kind in the UK.

CDS offered phase two contracts in competitive lots (Holsworthy Rural falls within Lot 4) to encourage greater interest from providers with a range of technologies. The contract with Gigaclear will deliver a £62.25 million network to an additional 35,225 of the hardest to reach homes and businesses in the CDS region by 2019.

So, as ever there is a good deal going on which offers much thought and challenge. This part of the world, as shown so often before is not one for a 'nil response' and we will continue to deal with these challenges as opportunities – just as was done over 2000 years ago! So, it only leaves for me to say a very hearty, "Merry Christmas Everyone!"

4757. District Councillors Report

No report.

4758. Minutes of the Meetings:

12/10/16 Proposed Cllr Perkin, Seconded Cllr James. Vote Unanimous

4759. Matters Arising from the Minutes of 12th October 2016.

To see whether Ashwater Parish were dealing with the Bridges Inspectorate are Ashmill Bridge.

Air Ambulance landing site – being surrounded by farm land, there has never been a problem with the air ambulance landing when required. Not necessary to pursue a dedicated landing site.

4760. Planning

- 1/1078/2016/FUL Temporary Agricultural Workers Dwelling, Huntsdown Barton
The council feel there is lack of justification for the application and no business plan has been presented.

4761. Accounts for Payment

£33.98 Clerks Expenses

£20 SWLT Room Hire

£200 Chapel Grant

Accounts proposed by Cllr Crocombe, Seconded by Cllr James. Carried nem.com

4762. Village Green Issues

Cllrs James, Stratton and Worden met to look at the flooding issue. All that can be done is in the land owner's field, which is a private matter. Highways and the DCC Flood team may be able to work with the landowner for a solution, but property owners would probably need to put funds towards easements.

Clerk to write to property owner concerned to say the Council have met and looked at the issue, and that the flood team and Highways have been contacted and we are awaiting a response. The best solution currently would be to look at a long term agreement with the landowner at the source of the issue. In the meantime it may be worthwhile talking to neighbouring properties that maybe affected and the lessees of the church room to look at opportunities of working together to resolve the issue.

A letter was received from a property owner adjacent to the green asking for the council to give assertions as to the border to their property on the Green. The council acknowledge receipt of the letter, but are unable to offer any assertions unless notified of change of boundaries by DCC. The property owner needs to supply DCC with the original map of boundaries and they can look at the issue. The council have no legal authority on boundaries, and work to the information supplied from DCC Land Registries.

4763. Grant for Broadwoodwidge Website

Recommendation the grant to be increased to £100

To be brought to next meeting as insufficient councillors to vote that do not have an interest.

4764. Correspondence

Letter as notified 4743.

General sales emails, newsletters and updates.

4765. Chairman's Report

Nothing to report not already covered in the meeting.

4766. Clerks Report

Nothing to report that is not already covered elsewhere.

4767. Exchange of Information

Cllr Perkin asked if the Council would consider a grant towards the Community Transport Group, of £100. To go on next month's agenda.

4768. The meeting closed at 20.15pm.

The next meeting is Wednesday 25th January 2017. 7pm at Roadford Lake