

MINUTES of WEEK ST MARY ANNUAL PARISH OPEN MEETING
held on Thursday 21st April at 7.30pm in the MSR

The Chair, Mrs M Smith welcomed 9 Parish Councillors, approximately 30 parishioners, PC Stuart Dixon and Mrs N Chopak, Cornwall Council Ward member.

Apologies: Mrs S Russell Head, Jacobstow Primary School, Leslie Booker, Rob and Sue Dickenson.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave her report.

Chair's report:

Year of Change and Continuity

This year has seen many changes but also continuity in that the Parish Council has continued to deal with matters affecting the village.

Change

Firstly, you will have noticed that the Parish Council now holds its meetings here in the Methodist School Room and tonight's Meeting is also being held here. This is because Parish Councils are not permitted to meet in licensed premises or premises that hold a temporary event license that permits the sale of alcohol. This ruling is from the Local Government Act 1972 and appears in our Standing Orders and probably those of all other councils. Unfortunately this move is beyond our control.

Secondly, three parish councillors resigned during the year; Peter Coulson, Nicola Johns and Pauls Sachs. I would like to thank them for their efforts during their terms in office. I would particularly like to thank Paul Sachs who was a councillor for 8½ years and did a great deal of practical work around the village, particularly on the playing field. In addition to saying goodbye to three councillors we now have three new members of the Council: Ashley Colwill, Wayne Hannaford and Margaret Johns who were co-opted last week and I would like to welcome them to what is their first official Council meeting.

Finally, we had to say goodbye to our Parish Clerk, Bobbie Courtney who decided, for personal reasons, to reduce the number of hours per week that she worked. However, we were very fortunate in recruiting Esther Greig who is a highly experienced Clerk and who was able to step into the breach almost immediately that Bobbie left. Welcome Esther. I would also like to thank Jeremy and the other Parish Councillors that were involved in the recruitment process. I had previously worked with one of the applicants which disbarred me from taking any part in the process.

Continuity

Although the above changes have taken place Council life has also gone on much as before. We continue to do our best to look after the village assets discussion of which takes up much of our meeting time - particularly considering the costs in relation to our income.

We now have a urinal in the toilets and have changed the tap to one that cannot be left running – to cut down on water bills. In addition we have fitted a collection box for donations and although the toilet will never pay its way every little helps. As previously we have received many compliments re. the cleanliness of our public convenience and I would like to thank Jamie Sachs for the great job that he does.

We continue to look after the parish greens and playing field and these are cut regularly during the growing season – weather permitting, along with the hedges again weather permitting. I would also like to thank Phil Dorren for continuing to walk and arrange maintenance of the footpaths around the village and Peter Coulson for continuing computer training.

This year we have spent considerable time and money on the playing field with the refurbishment of much of the equipment and the skate ramp – unfortunately the storm with no name arrived and put the skate ramp out of commission again but further repairs are in hand. We have also replaced the fencing around the tennis court and in addition have ordered new bark mulch which will be topped up regularly, hopefully this will discourage future weed growth.

In addition to Parish Council meetings councillors have attended various training meetings and Bude Network meetings throughout the year. There were also a number of meetings during the year, and a great many more emails, that ultimately resulted in the payment of community benefit from Primrose Solar which is an agenda item later in the evening. Thanks to our Councillor Nicky Chopak for her sterling efforts on this.

Thanks also to Carol Slade for her research in the minute archive which enabled us to produce the historic list of councillors that is on display this evening.

Continuity and Change

Planning remains a constant on our agenda but here there have also been changes. Cornwall Council announced, with little warning, that we would no longer receive paper copies of plans. There was an outcry

from the small parish councils which resulted in a longer period of notice – we opted to go paperless from 1st April and all councils received a one off payment of £700 for any necessary equipment and/or increased clerk time that the change created. This also entailed training sessions for clerks and councillors. We are still concerned about the change as we are not sure how practical it will be to view two different views on a single screen. However, due to cost cutting this is now the system we have to work with. What has not changed is that any comments we may make about a planning application do not have to be acted upon by Cornwall Council.

Cost cutting by Cornwall Council has had other effects over the year. Weed treatment around the village by CC was withdrawn which we were not aware of and by the time we received quotes for the job it was too late to do anything as the growing season was over.

It is quite likely that we shall continue to feel the pressure of Cornwall Council cost cutting measures over the forthcoming year. The mobile library is still under threat and the future of Bude library is uncertain.

Finally one thing that doesn't change is the effort that the Councillors and our County Councillor put in during the year to balance the finances and maintain the village so that it is a pleasant and safe place to live. Thank you to you all and thank you to all the parishioners who support our efforts.

Reports from Village Clubs and Organisations, including: Jacobstow Primary School

CARE - Dick Sowerby. Hope all have seen the report and the new photo montages – which are based on the new dimensions of the turbines. We also had some photos taken from Marhamchurch church and Ashbury Fort so that these views will be seen. Good Energy didn't take from that angle as the WTs will be seen quite clearly. Appeal starts in Launceston Tuesday the 26th in the town hall. Questions – none.

Football Club – Stephen Smith. The most recent youth football training – 30-40 boys and girls turned up for training. Credit to the coaches for a fantastic job. Holding a summer draw to coincide with the euro 16 tournament – raising funds for more posts, fence and drainage. He has a stock of tickets to sell!

Footpaths Co-ordinator - Phil Dorren – Thanks to the walking group for their help clearing up the leaves on back lane. Small landslide due to the amount of water. Footpaths signs are disappearing at an alarming rate – will look into it this year.

Magazine - Dick Sowerby. Questions – none. Cllr Smith noted the fantastic efforts - thanks to all the people that put it together.

Methodist Church – Jeremy Ward. Nothing to add to the report – a busy year as always, date for your diary 18/19th June drama and musical extravaganza. Grateful for all the help that we get so thanks you

Parish Hall Committee – Len Davies. Our object is to carry out some urgent repairs – applying for grants but have to prove it is well used by the community. Need to encourage more use of the hall in the evenings. Date for your diaries; Friday 13th May 2.30-4pm, an afternoon of boards games for anyone – to get a little crowd going. Must maintain the Hall – the windows are falling out and the roof is leaking.

Parish Church – Linda Cobbledick. Adventure Church has been very successful 18-30 children every Tuesday afternoon – they're having a wonderful time. People are very busy in the church all the evens are in the magazine.

Police – PC Stuart Baxter attended. Was previously with Thames Police. This patch is 115 square miles covered by 3 Officers. Number of crimes and logged incidents: 3 logs for WSM; 2nd April 15 – an out of force enquiry - they wanted contact the member of the parish, 23rd April, and abandoned child called 999 to which they attended, and 3rd March 16 harassment incident in Whitstone (on the computer Whitstone and Marhamchurch, WSM grouped together). 4 crimes reported; 14th June 15 public communications issue, 25th dog not under proper control, in May a non-counting fraud, and Jan - theft by finding – item wasn't handed in. No significant crime in WSM. Questions? Do you think no one really answers the 101? 101 response is shocking, he has tried to use it himself average waiting times 20-40 minutes – people can use the website, facebook, email. 999 answered within seconds – for use when immediate assistance is required. Use the private message facility on facebook and leave contact details. Trying to develop their communication networks. Can write to us and use the wall phone at the force enquiry centres. If you search Devon and Cornwall police online – contact information will come up. Are civil incidents counted? If you rang in, they would take all the details – at that point you would be told if it was a police matter or a civil matter. If it's not a

civil matter then it isn't counted. Suggest steps to try to slow traffic at the top of the village? problem for all villages – you need to provide evidence to Highways. Police do monitor the speeds when they are about. Never had speedwatch in WSM – we do have interest in the village to undertake one. Community speedwatch assessment would need to be done to find a good place to stand, training on the speed guns is needed and notation of the vehicles registration. Police then send a warning letter. PC Baxter noted that a high proportion of the offenders will be locals or will be residents of the village! Cllr Ward noted that Highways have come to the village – They stated that inconsiderate parking traffic helps with speed management. Moving the 30 signs is an elongated process and could cost £6000 flat fee to change and we would have to go through the process. If you can do anything to help that would be handy. If the Parish could provide names to help in a speedwatch – PC Baxter would be happy to help organise. Mr Ward noted that a motorbike speeds past his house at 6.25am and the same in the evening at 100mph – Bodmin traffic would take that task. Village speedwatches display a warning of the traffic camera about 250m before it – isn't that pointless?. If a police camera, speed enforcement is taking place, there won't be a sign. The community speedwatch will have a sign. The sign convinces people to slow down, and notes a general presence. The flashing sign Wainhouse and Jacobstow seem to work well. Speedwatch at Widemouth caught about 4 people, letters were sent and for quite some time afterwards that the traffic slowed. Effective.

Transport Representative - Bill Pearce. Buses still operating, he fears that government cuts may reduce a routes or cancel them altogether. He has been speaking to Mr Truscott in his office. One journey to Launceston 13 went and only 12 came, but back normally fewer people using it. Use it or lose it! Essential service for some. Please use it once in a while to help retain it.

Village Website – Linda Cobbledick. Please to report it had ¾ million hits last year and they have been running it for 16 years. Would like to publicly thank the PC for their support. Cllr Smith noted it was a great asset for the village.

Walking group – nothing to add.

Women's Institute – nothing to add

Report from County Councillor Nicky Chopak

Cllr Chopak noted that his was her 5th APM in the last 10 days. Bobbie was a brilliant Clerk. WSM is 1 or 7 Parishes in her patch. She is starting her final year of office. Privilege to work with WSM – interesting times. Her time is taken up with planning, potholes and parking. Potholes stupidly underfunded. CC class the pothole 40mm deep and the size of the dinner plate. Frustrating. Planning – looking at sites all the times – it's an education. Has to read the planning policy documents to try to interpret how the planners will view the application. She recommends seeing her first, before application to try to ensure the application is successful. Parking/speeding are more Highways issues. Trying to address that but with budget cuts, it will only get worse. CC has got to find another £57m of cuts. Adult social care – CC want the carers to get the money (2% Council Tax rise) not the providers. Lots of horrible news in the last year – she's the middle man. The repairing of potholes is abysmal - not being repaired properly; not even lined them or even reinforced – temporary repair. Highways can only repair the ones that fit the criteria – even if there are lots of other nearby!. They will only do a temporary repair, then the pothole goes onto the Highways lists for annual inspection. They are obliged to inspect it – a full road repair might be scheduled after that. £10m extra given by the government doesn't cover what is needed. A39 road is rippling in places and Highways have put 1 temporary sign up after 1 year of Cllr Chopak complaining about it. The unclassified roads are a low priority. Please report the potholes if it is going to cause an accident or it is in a dangerous position. A question of priority. Can volunteers fill potholes? a safety and liability issue. Trained volunteers are filling potholes in Devon.

Future Management of Poor Man's Piece

Cllr Smith noted that the ownership and management has nothing to do the PC. It's the land behind Nigel Barriball's workshop. Income negligible – only covers essential maintenance. Area max 1 acre. There should be more than 2 trustees. One of the trustees hasn't been down there for years to see the problems. Pat Barriball would like something about the drainage. More trustees needed. Getting trustees isn't easy. It is a Parish asset – could be a nice garden and orchard. But who would maintain it – volunteers? The fences are in poor condition. We could advertise for trustees in the Magazine. **One lady** put her name forward to be a trustee and was refused. Can the trust document changed. PC wanted to generate conversations about the field and Cllr Smith recommends folk to go have a look at it. Could be a useful community resource with low maintenance. Identify a viable use for it. Should the PC have it as a village asset? The PC can raise a precept to maintain the field but it does not have the rights to do that. Up to the Trustees to deal with this issue. Conclusion is that there are maintenance issues and insufficient income. Lots of volunteering needed – no one is going to do it with shovel – need a machine in there. How do we get more trustees? Mr Smith

noted that the issue came up about a year ago – didn't get around to doing anything. Only found out yesterday that it was going to be a topic at the APM so haven't talked to the other trustee about it. If the PC could assume responsibility for the plot and cover the insurance for the plot that could ensure meaningful activity. Trust deed dates from 1710 and doesn't cover procedure! Transferring the asset has some obstacles, but to him that would be the best long term solution. Suggest some Trustees could come from the PC. £20 per annum income. Clerk suggested that the PC could become a Trustee as it is a corporate entity. PC will investigate the legalities of situation. Does the PC want to get involved? -it's got enough things to do within the village as it is. This drainage issue has been going on since October.

Management of Community Benefits from Renewables

Secured payment from Solar farm a North Petherwin. First payment £10,000. Then £1250 for 18 years, balance year 20 of £2500. £10,000 has been received and has to be used for community benefit – produce a report for the developers. Ideas? Poor Man's Piece. Community Shop – Cllr Smith reported that the PC agreed to join the Plunkett Foundation at the last meeting – started the action on that. Pay the loan back for the playing field land. Flashing 30mph warning lights. Cllr Ward noted that the developer had no contractual obligation to pay CB – it had to be wrung and shamed out of them – commend the PC and Cllr Chopak for their efforts. Parish Hall. £10,000 for useful things already mentioned and use the annual payments to cover the annual loan repayments on the £22425 still outstanding. Cllr Smith would invite parishioners to attend the PC meeting to help us in our discussions and decisions regarding the CB. Tidying up the village a bit. The pavements and edges - have a tidy up campaign around the village. Developers eventually accepted that the PC are an elected body who can run the CB fund. Marvellous that we got it but only a fraction of the money original company offered – development has been sold on twice. Pearce construction promised everything and didn't pay out. Cllr Smith thanked everyone for their suggestions.

Questions & Observations from the Public

Mike Is it correct to say that the PC gave £1000 donation to the CARE organisation? Cllr Pearce was the Chair at the time of that decision - group of 3 councillors decided as those who had declared interested left the room. They felt obliged to give. The PC had joined CARE and had a duty to support the group. Surely the Parishioners had a right to be consulted about it? Cllr Pearce noted that the independent Councillors made a majority decision, they reflect a fair proportion to the population. Everybody should have had a say. Money could've been put to a better cause. **Pauline** – Mike, if we'd put this to the village – the majority how many people don't care about it. Would never been a proportionate. Everybody has a right to say. Cllr Smith noted that this is a democracy. The Parish has selected us as councillors to make decisions on its behalf. If the PC turned around to ask the villages every time a decision was needed, it wouldn't get anything done. Peter Coulson noted that the PC would've needed legal advice to speak at the appeal. £1000 was given to join the CARE group saving the PC potentially thousands – decision saved us money – best option that we could do at the time. Cllr Pearce noted that the councillors worked hard to get the money in from the CB. It will make decisions that not everyone likes. Cllr Ward spoke regarding democracy; the PC did run a special consultation event – it received over 100 written responses to that request. Bearing in mind most people don't write a good response. It ran the same consultation process with treetops and only got 17 responses. 103 responses of which 98% of them were actually opposed to the application. Treetops were 50/50. The only other way would have been by referendum. In context the PC have given the Parish Hall £8,500 over the years, bought the playing field.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.55pm

Signed.....Chairman

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