

ATHERINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 16 October 2013 at St. Mary's Church Hall, Atherington at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllrs W White (Chairman), J. Frayne, M. Milton, Ms C. Norman, Mrs D. Thiele

In attendance: 5parishioners, County Councillor R Edgell

96. Police Report

None. Police not present.

97. Matters Raised by the Public

1. Safer Atherington Streets. The recent petition to impose a 20mph speed limit gathered 106 signatures; at least one from every household in the village. The temporary use of the speed gun garnered over 1000 readings which are currently being analysed. The group have noted that Yanscombe already have a 20mph speed restriction; Cllr Edgell will contact Cllr Andy Boyde from Torrington to ascertain how they achieved this.
2. Cllr Gordon Weeks. Now out of hospital; Cllr White will contact him to pass on the best wishes of the village.
3. South Molton Hospital. Beds have been closed temporarily but the Health Trust stated that there are no plans for a permanent closure. The current situation arises due to shortage of staff. There is a consultation meeting with the Health Trust on 13th November regarding the closure of beds at Torrington. Cllr White will be in attendance. Cllr White was able to share a copy of a letter he received from a local GP to those protesting closure. The letter expressed support for the closure on behalf of Torrington Health Centre.

98. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. A Boyce and G Weeks

99. Declarations of Interest

None

100. Approval of Minutes of meeting held on 17 September 2013

Cllr. Frayne proposed the minutes be accepted as a true record of the meeting. Seconded by Cllr. Norman
The Minutes of the last meeting was agreed and signed as a true record.

101. Matters Arising from the meetings

None

102. County Council

Cllr. Edgell informed the meeting that David Wines has returned to Highways (Northern Division), taking over the northern half of the division and is the contact for this parish when needed at Highways.

1. The Public Enquiry in to the 'Conservation Area' is due on 13/15th November at Umberleigh Village Hall. Attendance is urged by as many people as possible. The meeting was reminded that anyone wishing to speak at the Enquiry should make contact with the Chairperson in advance or at the start in order that they may be called. Tony Riley can explain the mechanism for doing this.

103. Highways

1. The road closure (A377) is likely to run it's full course and it is affecting local businesses. Cllr. Edgell has been in contact with some of them already. Cllr. Edgell to seek clarification regarding the other outstanding roadworks at Umberleigh which do not form a part of the current works.
2. Cllr. Edgell stated that the bridge at Umberleigh has been checked
3. The meeting was reminded that there is a seminar at Filleigh on 1/11 on flooding; Cllr. White will attend
4. Cllr. Milton reported that the sign at the bottom of Easter Hill towards South Molton has nearly collapsed due to corrosion.

5. The bollard at Bond's Farm on the corner of the B3217 has been demolished (yet again). Cllr. Edgell said that he believed that Highways would wait until the end of all the works and the A377 was re-opened before surveying damage caused by the diversion and repairing them

104. District Council

6. Parish Forum; Cllrs. White and Frayne attended.
- Cllr. John Hart, leader DCC attended. Out of a budget of £600m they have so far found savings of £100m and are required to find further savings of another £100m over the next four years. He said that Highways have already been cut and are likely to be a target for further cuts although the council is already only spending half the amount it should do to stand still. He was looking for suggestions for future cuts from everyone.
 - Cllr. Brian Greenslade of North Devon District Council said that NDC is being cut in similar fashion albeit that the gross figures were substantially less than for the DCC. Steve Hearst of the Finance Dept gave a breakdown of the cuts made and planned. Front line services had largely been protected so far but this is not going to be possible in future. There was no clarity that Parish Councils will continue to receive a precept, a reduced precept or one at all. Cllr. Frayne to write to Steve Hearst to seek clarification.
 - Local Plan. There was a presentation regarding the Local Plan. The timescale has slipped but further consultation will be possible in the New Year. Five councils were picked out for the quality of their draft Local Plans, including Atherington. Cllr. White asked that the minutes record congratulations to Cllrs. Frayne and Boyce for their work on the Local Plan.

105. Neighbourhood Watch

Nothing of note reported.

106. Planning

1. Applications:

None received for the meeting

2. Decisions

None received albeit that Cllr. White has been informed that the decision over the Old Post Office is still pending

107. Finance

1. Completion of Audit

The audit has been completed and signed off, with no matters raising any concern.

Revised charges have come into effect this year, with small councils with income and expenditure of less than £10k not having to pay any fee. Unfortunately the VAT reclaimed and repaid to the Playing Field has pushed Atherington PC over the threshold, hence the charge of £120. On the bright side, the fee charged last year by the Audit Commission was £192, so there is still a significant saving.

2. **Receipt:**
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|---------------------|----------|--|
| 50% Grant & Precept | £2542.59 | |
| Precept | £2086.00 | |
| Grant | £ 351.00 | |
| Grant Assistance | £ 105.59 | This counters the reduction on the Precept caused by properties that claim Council Tax Relief. |

3. Payments:

- Grant Thornton – audit £120.00
- Clark's Salary & Expenses £131.60

The two accounts were approved for payment.

108. Playing Field

There are a number of events planned for the next few weeks which have been publicised around the parish. The application for the playing field to be registered with Playing Fields in Trust is to be finalised soon.

109. Correspondence

Reply received from Cllr. Mumford, DCC, regarding the letter sent to him on behalf of the Parish Council regarding the cuts and re-organisation of the Youth Service.

110. Matters Arising at the Chairman's discretion.

None

111. Date of next meeting: 19 November 2013

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.30pm.