

LANGTREE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING

14th March 2024

Present	Councillors: Mark Glover John Davies Pat Mitchell Geoff Bond Anna Moseby Penny Stowell Jenny Coles Chris Whateley (TDC) Melissa Baker (PCSO)
In attendance	Linda Davies Parish Clerk 2 members of the public
657	WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Apologies were received from, David Ley, Colin Edworthy, Andrew Saywell (DCC), Cheryl Cottle Hunkin, (TDC)
658	MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING
658.1	Matters Arising <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The signage for Langtree Park had been received and was waiting to be positioned.• TDC had been contacted re bins again.
658.2	Minutes of meeting held on 8 th February 2024 to be confirmed and signed. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• These were agreed - proposed by Penny Stowell and seconded by Jenny Coles – duly signed.
659	DECLARATION OF INTERESTS <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There was no declaration of interests.
660	REPORTS
660.1	Police Community Support Officer: Crimes- 1 criminal damage, 2 violence, 1 sexual assault. Logs – 3 missing persons, 2 highway disruptions, 2 public safety, 1 breach of bail, 1 road traffic collision, 1 violence.

	<p>There are temporary probation officers as part of the team, which now numbers 4 officers.</p>
<p>660.2</p>	<p>County Councillor – report circulated prior to the meeting:</p> <p>Local Highways matters – There are a number of short road closures coming up on the B3227 as the road is due to be surface dressed. They are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 18 – 20 March, renewing 22m of damaged drain by Buda Farm and carrying out some post winter patching ahead of the surface dressing in April. These two schemes are being combined so that there is only one closure and not two. Although only a short closure I have reiterated to the team that I want clear HGV diversion signage so that we don't get lorries travelling through and then getting stuck... 2. 10 April, stud removal. The traffic notice advertises this as 10-14 April but this should <u>not</u> be a 4 day closure. It will be a rolling closure and completed in one day. The four day request is to provide a window within which the work will be done. 3. 26 April, surface dressing. This is the planned date on which they're planning to carry out the surface dressing of the B3227. Again I would anticipate this is a rolling closure and completed in 1-2 days. Will be weather dependent so if there is a lengthy closure notice that will be to allow for flexibility in case of inclement weather. <p>Finally, there will also be a closure on the road past Gortledge, 2 – 8 April, to rebuild parapet walls by the bridge following accident damage.</p> <p>DCC Budgets – I am pleased to report the projected overspend on general expenditure for the outgoing 2023-24 financial year has fallen by a further £4.3m and is now down to just £291,000, effectively a break even position. I would hope that will fall to zero by the month end. This again is a strong achievement by the Council and has meant that we have not had to raid reserves to set this year's budget, or get ourselves into the financial situation that Somerset are experiencing...</p> <p>For the incoming financial year, the Budget meeting was held on the 15th February and agreed. The overall revenue budget is set to increase to £743 million. Adult Care and Health gets a 6% (£20.5m) increase with an overall budget of just under £361m. Children's Services gets a £21.5m increase of 10.4% for a budget of just under £228m.</p> <p>The Highways and Transport Directorate gets a more modest 4.7% increase of £3.9m... but that is still welcome!</p> <p>In addition, the final Central Government Financial Settlement was more generous than expected – a further £1.5m will go into Highways Drainage on top of the proposed budgets.</p> <p>Councillor Locality Grants will also be increased from £5,000 back up to £8,000.</p>

DCC's share of the Council Tax will increase by 4.99%, of which 2% is specifically ringfenced for Adult Social Care. I know Council Tax increases are never welcome... but it is needed to fund the continued demand on social services and Highways and to ensure the Council has a sound budget. The alternative is to take money out of reserves to prop up day to day expenditure... and if we did that it would weaken Devon's financial position and start getting the Council into the mess that other authorities like Somerset and Birmingham have got themselves into...

Family Hub Consultation – The Council is changing the way that young families are supported at Children's Centres, and is inviting those who use the services, as well as professionals and community groups, to help influence the changes. It follows a national move, announced by the Government last year, for Children's Centres to become Family Hubs, as part of its Start for Life Programme initiative.

In Devon that means extending the age range, from current services that deliver targeted support to 0 to 8 year-olds, to future services that provide targeted and universal support to 0 to 19 year-olds, or up to 25 year-old young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. And it would mean a wider range of services than present, including support from local community groups, working together to help young families.

Having agreed at the end of last year to make the change in line with national thinking, Devon County Council is now inviting families, professionals and community groups to help shape what the new Family Hubs support network will look like in Devon.

Exactly which services will be integrated into a Family Hub will very much depend on the needs of local families. But the kind of services that families could access include early years services and education; Public Health Nursing and Midwifery services; activities delivered by local groups; drug, alcohol and domestic abuse support; mental health support and youth services.

So no, we are not talking about service cuts and/or reducing services, but expanding them and changing the way they are delivered. In particular I am keen to see engagement from young families in our rural areas because it shouldn't necessarily be the case that a family in Langtree should be told to travel to a building in Bideford, for example, to access a service.

Family Hubs are likely to be located in areas of greatest need, with outreach services extending from them into local communities. Much of the support families currently receive will still be available.

The consultation is available by visiting our [Have Your Say](http://www.devon.gov.uk/haveyoursay/consultations/family-hubs-engagement) webpage. www.devon.gov.uk/haveyoursay/consultations/family-hubs-engagement

	<p>The survey will run until March 23.</p> <p>Devolution – The consultation remains ongoing. Some interesting feedback is being received from the District Councils... feedback from the business community so far is generally positive.</p> <p>I am happy to talk about this in more detail when I am back in April but, if people are wondering what benefits we may get from Devolution, I happen to believe that had we had this set up in place already, it would not have taken 30 years to redevelop the old Creamery site in Torrington. The combined authority would have, in conjunction with our District partners, the clout and access to funding to have unlocked the regeneration of that site a lot sooner than what it took in the present with our un-devolved structures.</p> <p>More information about the Deal and the public consultation can be found online at www.devontorbaydeal.org.uk</p>
660.3	<p><u>District Councillor:</u></p> <p><u>Full Council:</u></p> <p>Roads:</p> <p>The following notice of motion was proposed and voted through unanimously regarding the state of our roads here in Torridge, and the council also invited the leader and chief executive of Devon County Council to come and visit us to see how comfortable they feel driving along some of our roads in their own cars. We are yet to hear back...</p> <p>“This council raises concern with Devon County Council over the level of maintenance of the highways, especially our ‘A’ routes and footpaths, across Torridge District. This goes beyond potholes, but into wider issues such as surface water drains, road markings, cat’s eyes and general pathway maintenance.</p> <p>We have concerns over the apparent lack of response to issues reported via DCC reporting systems, and the lack of clarity on maintenance levels across both our urban and rural areas. Here in Torridge the poor state of our roads and footpaths is resulting in considerable worry from residents over safety, even in regular weather conditions. This is leaving people feeling isolated and disconnected from vital services. At our budget meeting tonight, we hear that 72% of our council tax goes to DCC and we are concerned that we are not getting the highways we need and pay for.</p> <p>I propose we send a letter to DCC Highways raising our concerns and invite them to come to our External O&S committee to explain the policies and organisation they have in place for the maintenance of</p>

	<p>roads and footpaths in Torridge and explore options to overcome admitted service shortfall. “</p> <p>Council tax:</p> <p>Torridge Full Council voted to increase council tax in line with recommendations, but it’s important to note that the bulk of council tax (72%) goes to Devon County Council with only 8% retained by Torridge.</p> <p>Devolution proposal- Devon and Torbay Combined Authority:</p> <p>There were huge concerns raised that the districts are not being given fair representation and there’s a bias in favour of Torbay. We highlighted the fact that Torridge already feels forgotten by Devon County and we don’t believe this will change going forward, especially given our lack of voting rights within the County Combined Authority.</p> <p>There were comments made by district councillors last evening that it was a “talking shop” and a “farce”.</p> <p>The public consultation is open to everyone to respond (including parish councils collectively) and the deadline is 24th March.</p> <p>Southwest Water:</p> <p>TDC and NDDC had a meeting with Southwest Water, and we were horrified to find out that they do not measure the volume of sewage going into our rivers and seas at all, all they measure is a start/stop time which doesn’t really tell us a lot to be honest as it could be a trickle or it could be blasting sewage into them.</p> <p>We also raised concerns over bathing water quality. Current policies are to only monitor at a certain time of year (so-called bathing season). But we know in reality that people are swimming in the sea all year round because of the health benefits it brings (but not if the water is full of sewage!)</p> <p>SWW talked about their management plans and investment. This included desalinisation plants in Cornwall, pumping from rivers to storage reservoirs, and a potential new reservoir near Bristol.</p> <p>Councillor grants:</p> <p>We are really pleased to be using our councillor grants to fully fund a project organised by Appledore Book Festival which is providing sessions for all three of the local schools in our ward (Shebbear, Langtree and Clinton, Merton) where authors will be going into the schools to inspire the children, and they will all go home with a signed book free of charge.</p>
661	PARISH MATTERS
661.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on Langtree Park. - Issues in transferring monies from old, closed bank account, have been resolved and the relevant forms are being completed. • Signage on the entrance to the park will be changed as it currently shows ‘no dogs allowed’.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A representative from the Langtree Park Committee discussed the cost of new swings and the huge variation in quotes. From £3,000 to £26,000. <p>The swings will be sited on the grass and consist of 2 standard swings and 2 baby swings.</p>						
661.2	<p>Other matters impacting the parish.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aideene Turley contacted Council regarding the fact that surface water/mud runs off road into her doorway. Discussion followed, but unfortunately pavements and roads, are not Parish Council remit. Clerk to contact Aideene and explain that highways are Devon County Council. Copy to District Councillor. Beech Road Play area to be checked prior to inspection, and any major issues to be addressed; In particular the fence. 						
662	PLANNING						
662.1	Any updates on potential planning application for land at The Crescent, Langtree. - There is nothing new to report.						
	<p>To consider any other planning applications received between issuing of agenda and meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1/0138/2024/FUL removal of 11 existing windows and replaced with Grey UPC = council has no Comment. 1/0174/2024/FUL Retrospective application for creation of a sand school = Council has no comment. 						
663	CLERK'S REPORT AND FINANCE						
663.1	<p>To receive update on financial position at end February 2024.</p> <p>The position at the end of January was:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Lloyd's account</td> <td>£2431.26</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Reserve account</td> <td>£1556.20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>£3987.46</td> </tr> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Payment £ 114.00 to Jag Signs. Receipt of £500 for Langtree Park account. In addition, there is £2,512.58 in the Langtree Park account. 	Lloyd's account	£2431.26	Reserve account	£1556.20	Total	£3987.46
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663.2	To request approval of BACS Payments and cheques.						

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No payments to be made.
663.3	<p>To review correspondence received.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correspondence was received regarding shared ownership properties in Buckland Brewer. • TDC requested register of interest forms be completed by 4 councillors. • Play safe gave notice of playground inspection in March. • Correspondence from A Turley regarding Pavement.
664	<p>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No public participation.
665	<p>ANY OTHER ITEMS AT CHAIRMAN'S DISCRETION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A pothole in Church Lane had become very large, it was requested that as many people as possible report it to the Council. • It is possible the Parish website may be changed. • The meeting closed at 8.50pm.
666	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>The date of next meeting is Thursday 11th April 2024</p>