

THROWLEIGH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING IN THE VILLAGE HALL

ON MONDAY, 11th APRIL 2016 AT 7.30 P.M.

PRESENT: Cllrs Jackie Crawford (Chair), David Hatton (Vice Chair), Jon Bell, David Jordan ,Julian Wisniewski, Anne Warwick Oliver DCC Cllr. James McInnes, WDBC Cllr. Paul Ridgers, Ian Brooker, Simon Hill (DNPA) , Dawn Hatton on behalf of the Archive,
2 members of the community
Clerk in attendance: Julie Macey

- (1) **Welcome:** Cllr Jackie Crawford thanked everyone for attending
- (2) **Apologies::** Cllr. Duncan Vincent and police
- (3) **The minutes of the last meeting:** The minutes for the APM held on 13th April, 2015 were presented and signed by the Chair as a true record.
- (4) **Matters arising:** None other than those raised under the various headings.
- (5) Cllr. Bell explained Parishscapes/Moor than meets the Eye, a scheme sponsored by Dartmoor National Park which provides funding for parishes to explore, enhance and publicise the heritage of their locality. Up to £10,000 is available to each parish following approval of a submitted application. Projects should help tell a story of the people and landscape of Dartmoor from a community perspective at parish level. The aims of the scheme are conserving and enhancing the natural landscape of each parish and helping more and a wider range of people learn about, understand and enjoy the heritage. Cllr. Bell outlined a few ideas which were being discussed with regards to finding new secure storage space for the archive which could be in village hall, digitising photos, developing an app. for visitors to use for when wandering around village, creating two documentary drama shows possibly in village Hall. Cllr. Ridgers asked to be kept updated on progress.
- (6) **Reports (as available)**
 - (a) Chagford Church of England Primary School. Sheila Mead, Chair of Governors submitted a detailed report which is attached to the minutes. A new assistant head teacher had been appointed, the school received excellent comments from the LEA Review of Governance, Ofstead, and Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools. With regard to Academies, the current thinking is to continue working in partnership with their colleagues in the successful Dartmoor Community Learning Trust whilst at the same time exploring other opportunities. With regard to building news, they will be entering the design phase for a new building during the summer and the school has invited parents and community members to become part of a Focus Group to put forward ideas.
 - (b) Devon County Council. Cllr. James McInnes confirmed that the Council continues to implement reductions in its budget. The net budget for 2016/17 is £443 million based on a 3.99% increase and includes a boost of care services, adult social care. £8.4 million of additional funding was awarded by the Government at a later date of which the majority will go towards adult services and £1.5 million to severe weather reserve. Projected funding figures have been given for the next four years, By 2020 Local government funding will come from business rates. Details are not yet available as to how this is going to work for Devon. Cllr McInnes confirmed that they were seeing a large number of potholes reported which is causing concern and that the Government has allocated additional funding of nearly £2 million to help with this. He urged parishioners to report potholes on web site as quickly as possible. Clerk confirmed that since Steve Dawe had been given extra duties of other parishes, there was no longer any dialogue, the situation with removed signposts had not been resolved, clearing drains not completed, the state of repair of several roads was extremely poor. Mrs. Hatton also pointed out the poor state of the verges of the A30 between Whiddon Down and Exeter which are covered in litter and not a good advert for tourism in the area. Cllr. McInnes confirmed achievements during the year with regard to Ofstead inspection of childrens' services moving from inadequate to requires improvement to Good. Fair funding for Devon's schools is still under discussion. Whilst all schools are to become academies by 2022m there may be a knock on effect on small rural schools. With regard to his role as Member of DNPA,

he was pleased with the government's announcement that funding will remain flat for the next four years. Again there is a very small budget available which could help a project happen and council should bear this in mind.

- (c) West Devon Borough Council: Cllr. Paul Ridgers reported that the Council had received a one off payment of a rural services delivery grant. He stated that the main government grant would finish completely by 2018 and that business rates would be the source of funding after that date. During the last year the council has completed its merging of services with South Hams – not without teething problems particularly in the planning department. Recycling has remained static at 58% - leading the county and in the top 12 of all councils nationwide. Along with 17 other authorities in the South West, the council is putting forward a statement of intent for devolved powers to drive more funding from Westminster, improve economic growth and influence more strategic infrastructure. The council is also considering commercialising its services and creating a trading company to offer services to other public sector bodies. Many small businesses in the ward may now be exempt or receive reduction in their business rates.
- (d) Dartmoor National Park Authority: Ian Brooker confirmed the announcement in January from Central Government for a four year National Park Grant with no further cuts to DNPA's finances during the period. Whilst not returning to previous levels of funding, it would enable DNPA to have a period of stability and the ability to plan. In March an 8 point plan for England's National Parks was received which includes connecting young people with nature, delivering new apprenticeships, driving growth in international tourism, promotion of the best of British food, encouraging greater diversity for visitors to the park, enhancing peoples' involvement in the interpretation of the historic and natural beauty, the promotion of health and well-being schemes and creating thriving natural environments. Full details at www.gov.uk. Having interviewed several local people for the position of Voluntary warden for Throwleigh and Gidleigh, Ian appointed Bow Haworth who has already proved himself as a very valuable asset. 84% of all rights of way in Ian's area are now annually cleared by volunteers and Ian expressed his thanks to them for rising to the challenge. The rights of way budget has been kept the same for this year and as a result he will continue to employ a contractor to tackle the annual summer cuts on some of the narrowest paths such as Deave Lane. The latter was cut back last year with a community task involving StOC and community volunteers. Similarly volunteers have also been engaged in managing the gorse on Throwleigh Common especially near Pyke's Meadow and this will continue in the autumn and winter months.
- (e) Neighbourhood Watch: Cllr. Hatton confirmed a series of break ins to outbuilding over one night in November. A warning was circulated the next day and several people found evidence of forced entry to outbuilding and some had had items stolen. The police were involved but the crime remains unsolved along with many other similar cases in the wider area.
- (f) Police tabled their apologies.
- (g) The Archive: It is planned to create a Throwleigh Archive website to enable people to see what it contains. This will require considerable effort and as a result the committee has been increased by 4 new members. There is also an urgent need to find a suitable new home for the physical archive which currently resides in a private home and comprises of a four drawer filing cabinet, two large storage boxes, a large collection of framed exhibition photographs. A dry venue with easy access is important. It was suggested that John Wadlow be approached in this regard. Sales of the Throwleigh book continue with interest from the internet, the Church and more frequently through the Northmore Arms.
- (h) Friends of Throwleigh Church. Funds had been raised from two concerts (one successful, one not so) and a further concert is arranged for June. Major expenditure this year is redecorating/refurbishment of the inside of the Church.
- (i) Parish Council: Cllr. Crawford confirmed that two new members Julian Wisniewski and Ann Warwick Oliver joined as councillors in May last year. There were more planning applications to discuss with 12 in total and one enforcement notice. Following the sale of the Throwleigh Centre in 2014, a charitable trust has now been set up - The Providence School Charity for Young Persons. The aim is to distribute grants a couple of times a year from the income of the trust monies. More info to follow. The post office has become a regular fixture for the village during its twice weekly openings in the church and with refreshments on offer, it has made it the focal point in the village once more. Following a very successful privately run sheep shearing event last year for charity, the organiser has offered to cover the costs for the parish of a defibrillator. This is in the process of being organised and we should know more in a

couple of months. As a result of mild winter, the snow warden was not needed to be called upon. Water damage has caused problems with the roads and has been reported and gradual loss of sign posts to the village continue to be a problem as due to cutbacks are not being replaced.