

# **THROWLEIGH PARISH COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING IN THE VILLAGE HALL**

**ON MONDAY, 11<sup>TH</sup> APRIL, 2011 AT 7.30 P.M.**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs Jackie Crawford (Chair), Peter Bennett (Vice Chair), Julian Edwards, Roger Paul , WDBC Cllr. Paul Ridgers (part of time)  
PC Nadine Wilson (D & C Constabulary), Stephen Emmanuel and Hugh Arnold (North East Dartmoor Community Land Trust – part of time)  
Clerk in attendance: Julie Macey

- (1) Welcome:** Cllr Jackie Crawford thanked everyone for attending
- (2) Apologies:** Cllrs. David Hatton, David Jordan, Duncan Vincent, James McInnes (DCC)  
Ian Brooker (DNPA) Tony Rubbra (Chair of Governors Chagford C of E Primary School)
- (3) The Minutes of the last meeting:** The minutes for the APM held on 12<sup>th</sup> April, 2010 were presented and signed by the Chair as a true record.
- (4) Matters arising:** There was still a concern by Parishioners in respect of the unreliability of the buses, particularly service 510. Lack of funding had prevented the Leigh Bridge proposal from going forward. The stepping stones had yet to be completed.
- (5) Hugh Arnold and Stephen Emmanuel gave an interesting presentation on the North East Dartmoor Community Land Trust which is a community controlled organisation set up to own and manage land and other assets for the benefit of the community. The trust consists of Trustees and Members who recognise the importance of the issues. The trust works with people in intermediate housing need i.e. those who do not qualify for social housing but who do not earn enough to buy their first home. Their objectives are to create a stock of sustainable, affordable housing so that those who currently cannot afford it, have the opportunity to stay in the area. They are looking to work with both Parish and District Councils to progress their objectives and at the same time to seek suitable land and funding to bring projects to fruition. A booklet setting out their objectives and activities in greater detail was distributed at the meeting.**
- (6) Reports:**
  - (a) Chagford Church of England Primary School.** Toby Rubbra, Chair of Governors reported that after a period of unsettled leadership, the academic year had kicked off to a good start with their new head teacher Catherine Rees-Stephan. He stated that Catherine had made huge strides to turn the school towards a brighter, positive and much more exciting future. Children who had moved away to other schools were returning, there was more focus on teaching and learning and that pupils, parents and staff were happier. Both Ofsted and SIAS Inspections had both returned very strong “Good School” verdicts. A full report is attached to the minutes.
  - (b) Devon County Council:** Cllr James McInnes reported that for the first time the Council had a negative budget. The net budget for 2011/12 is £516 million with 0% rise in Council Tax. Reductions have been made in respect of Children and Young People’s, Adult and Community and Environment, Economy and Culture services. There would however be a cash increase for social care for older people, people with disabilities, children in care and children with special needs. Following the third cold winter in a row, more money has been put into the highways budget for potholes. An additional salt bin has been provided in the Parish by using funds from the Locality Budget. A more comprehensive copy of Cllr. McInnes report accompanies these minutes.
  - (c) West Devon Borough Council:** Cllr. Paul Ridgers reported that it was going to be a tough year. The Council’s grant had been reduced by 14%. There would be no increase however in council tax, nor would there be cuts in front line services. The Council would be likely to see cuts in the senior management team with some redundancies. The council will continue to offer support where applicable to local organisations with grant monies and would continue to support the Citizens Advice Bureau, Villages in Action and Domestic Violence. He

confirmed that Rural Outreach had not got as far as Throwleigh yet. Cllr. Bennett asked that advance notification be given before such visits. Rural rate relief and small business rate relief were still available. A payment plan for people with hardship had been introduced and parishioners were urged to come forward at an early stage to seek help in the event they found themselves in this situation.

- (d) **Dartmoor National Park Authority:** Ian Brooker reported that he had been reassigned to the parishes of Throwleigh and Gidleigh. He confirmed that there would be a 20.5% cut in the Park's budget over the next four years, which with inflation and transitions costs for redundancies, would in effect amount to an approximately 33% cut. Mr. Brooker confirmed that he would attend the next parish meeting in May.
- (e) **Neighbourhood Watch:** Cllr. Hatton confirmed there was nothing of significance to report. He continues to receive bulletins for West Devon and South Hams areas but there has been nothing specifically relevant to the Parish or nearby neighbourhoods. The main advice has been that which applies nationally such as not letting strangers into the house, accepting work from cold callers etc.
- (f) **Police:** PC Nadine Wilson outlined the forthcoming changes to policing services in Devon and Cornwall, the savings of £50 million the Force had been requested to make over the next four years, the major re-organisation programme embarked upon to achieve this goal and the possible reduction in numbers of officers by 700 and staff by approximately 500 during that period. She confirmed that the way they deliver local policing will have to change but that it would remain at the heart of everything they did. PCSO Beck Tolley will cover Throwleigh Parish to tackle local issues, provide a visible presence in the community, carry out effective community engagement and reduce crime and antisocial behaviour. Regular consultation with local people through beat surgeries and the "Have Your Say" Consultation process will continue and people can still email their neighbourhood team via [okehampton@devonandcornwall.pnn.police.uk](mailto:okehampton@devonandcornwall.pnn.police.uk) or make an appointment to speak to an officer face to face. A more detailed copy of this report is attached to the minutes.
- (g) **Throwleigh Centre for Young People:** Cllr. Hatton reported that the centre was closed in 2010. The buildings remain with Devon County Council. It is understood that it is to be used again as a residential centre by Community Action who are a youth organisation from North Devon.
- (h) **The Archive:** This is still being maintained by a small group of people. Plans are in hand to collect more memories of Throwleigh from local people. A botanical survey was carried out last summer in respect of a small area of the moor which was first recorded over several months in the summer of 1929 by Amy Harvey. This survey will be repeated this summer. The book is now out of print with 600 copies having been sold or given away. A further print run is possible given sufficient enquiries.
- (j) **Parish Council:** Cllr. Jackie Crawford confirmed that the Council remained focused on the issues throughout the year, from planning matters to potholes, overgrown hedges, blocked gutters and drains. An achievement during the year was the redoing of the lettering on the village cross but sadly due to lack of funding the bridge project at Millfordleigh had had to be shelved. After consultation with Gidleigh Parish, the idea of a parish plan was laid to rest. The Council were sad to receive Mervyn Hayes resignation as clerk due to relocation to Exeter but pleased that Julie Macey took over the position in November, making it a very quick and easy transition. Another cold and snowy winter made it difficult for residents and local transport and isolated many for quite some time. The Council is running to the end of its term. It is pleasing to note that everyone is still wanting to carry on and an election has once again not been necessary. The Chair thanked the Members of the Council and the Clerk for their work.
- (7) **Matters raised by Parishioners:** None
- (8) **Any other business:** The clerk confirmed the three quotes obtained in respect of the payroll and accounts services necessary as a result of the HMRC changes. It was agreed to accept the cheapest from Hawthorns Accounting Services in the sum of £48.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9 p.m.

