

Inwardleigh Parish Council Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held at the Village Hall on Wednesday 27th March 2024 at 8:00 pm

Present: Cllr. Timms (Chair), Cllr Dennis (Vice-Chair), Cllr Piddington, Cllr Ions, Cllr Hooper, Cllr King, Cllr Dexter, Mrs Clarke (Clerk), no members of the public attended.

01/03/24 Apologies for absence -The Chair opened the meeting at 8pm; apologies were received from Cllr Henderson and Cllr Leech.

02/03/24 Declarations of interest for items on the agenda - none.

03/03/24 There was no Public participation period.

04/03/24 Reports from Councillors:

Cllr Dexter:-

1. Provided details of the Proposed Devon and Torbay Combined County Authority and Devolution Deal.

This is structured within the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023, which doesn't require local government re-organisation. WDBC responded with their concerns including:-

A)The Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) will be replaced by the CCA, due to its failure in meeting democratic mandates and local relevance. The council emphasizes the need for the CCA to maintain current local business support delivery methods.

B)Housing Empowerment - They expect the CCA to enable and accelerate delivery from districts and local housing associations.

C)Governance and Voting Rights - The council finds the voting rights on the CCA inequitable. They propose converting "Team Devon" into a statutory joint committee to ensure fair representation in voting at the CCA board.

D)Transport - Operational highways matters will stay under the jurisdiction of DCC and Torbay. However, WDBC advocates for the involvement of district councils in formulating a joint strategic transport plan across the CAA geography.

E) Community - Working with and for our communities is a key priority for this Council and it expects that the voice of those communities, organisations and of the towns and parishes which deliver services at a very local level are also heard by the CCA.

2. Okehampton Business Improvement District - WDBC, with Okehampton TC, Okehampton Hamlets PC and DCC and Locus Management Solutions, suggested a Business Improvement District (BID) to support the town and its activities. Further consultation with businesses has been concluded, a BID in Okehampton would be appropriate. This will progress to a ballot after the Secretary of State has been notified.

3. Okehampton Area Review Conservation

The Hub Committee approved the Draft Okehampton Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan 2024. The area has been surveyed, no recommendations to make any changes to the boundary lines. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local authority to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of the Conservation Area, for public consideration and comment.

4. South Devon Community Safety

Community Safety Partnerships was introduced by S6 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. This brings together local partners to formulate and deliver strategies to tackle crime and disorder in their communities. It has been allocated £8,000 from Serious Violence funding. £27k from the PCC.

5. Leisure Centres

WDBC contracted Fusion, to manage its leisure centres in Okehampton and Meadowlands in Tavistock. Fusion's Contracts Manager indicated:- Pre-pandemic attendance levels have not returned, Swimming lessons have had a growth rate of 160%. Cafés have opened in Meadowlands and Parklands. A pilot scheme with Okehampton Medical Practice to provide a non-gym-based class in the college is in progress. Fusion is also looking for partners in communities to work with.

6. Annual Accounts 2022/23

There are significant problems nationally with the audit process. West Devon has had its statutory accounts for 2022/23 signed off by the auditors.

Cllr Dexter wanted to point out that its often the case that many councils do not communicate what they are doing to the wider community.

Cllr Leech; (report read out by the clerk)

- 1. Speed watch:** This is being run through the Okehampton Hamlets PC contact the Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council Clerk who is the coordinator to join them.
- 2. Planning:** Variation 0790/24/FUL: The original housing provider, was for affordable homes has pulled out of this development and Rent Plus has taken them on. Rent Plus rents out properties on a 5 – 10 - 15 -20-year basis and after these periods the tenants can apply to purchase the properties. The funds that Rent Plus makes goes into building more properties. This has proved a very successful scheme. (Further discussion on this, SEE PLANNING 8.1 BELOW)
- 3. Long Stay parking review:** This is coming to the WD Hub committee in April, it is expected that the recommendations will be agreed.
- 4. Garden Waste:** payment for this year is now due and can be paid for through the [www.westdevon.gov.uk/garden waste](http://www.westdevon.gov.uk/garden_waste)
- 5. Household support fund:** The Chancellor has extend this fund for six months. This will start in April, but there will be a short delay, but WDBC will distribute the money to those most in need as quickly as possible.
- 6. Future benefits:** Urgent Discretionary payments are still available for those who find themselves in difficulty paying their rents and service costs. Housing Benefit / Universal Credit changes are causing a lot of problems, so those affected can apply for a grant from WD, these are short term, and the fund is limited.
- 7. Peer Review:** West Devon /South Hams has just gone through a Peer Review, councilors across the country comes for a week to take evidence of what WD / SH's are doing. The idea being to share good practice from across the country. The last Peer Review pointed out the shortcomings in Planning, hence the review that has taken place.
- 8. New Communities Development Team: (CDT)** WD are about to set up a separate CDT that will work alongside their Localities Team. It is about building effective relationships in communities, encouraging active participation in community life, and enacting positive social change.
- 9. Housing** - a new housing initiative to support the delivery of community housing development in the Borough, by launching the "West Devon Housing Offer." It will be working with partners and prospective landowners to see how best we can provide truly affordable (social) good quality housing through all sorts of ways including Community Land Trusts. (Further discussion on affordable housing can be seen in planning s 8.1 below).

05/03/24 The Minutes of the last meeting of Wednesday 17th January 2024 were approved and signed by the chairwoman.

06/03/24 Matters arising:-

6.1 - IPC Reserves, Cllr Piddington, proposed 12 months in reserves. The clerk had checked what the amounts are and there are no guidelines. On the basis that there maybe changes over the next 12 months, it is appropriate to store a sufficient fund to be able to continue through the year. Cllr Dennis raised some concerned about future precept levels.

6.2 - Insurance renewal query has been deferred to the next meeting.

6.3 - Standing Orders and Financial Regulation Polices, to be approved. The clerk indicated the changes that have been made and indicated this is also needed for the annual audit. A resolution was passed to approve these, proposed by Cllr. Dennis and seconded by Cllr. Glebe.

6.4 - Bridleway Maintenance query which has been raised. The clerk has raised queries with DCC on P3 which is footpaths and related. However IPC is not responsible for the maintenance. This needs referring to Devon County Council and has subsequently been referred to DCC.

07/03/24 Updates from previous meetings.

7.1 - Roads - the clerk plans to bring a large map, for marking up at the next meeting. Cllr King raised the problem with pot holes on the lanes, clerk indicated that the road category has some bearing on this, however, Cllr King noted that cycleways were being maintained.

Councillors raised the need to resurface Chapel lane, as a number of residents have complained about this. Areas also in need of repairs or resurfacing are:- Crossways A386, Tongueland Lane, Padson, Prism lane - A386 T junction. The camber on the roads has been affected in many places and a few personal injuries have occurred.

7.2 - Speed watch update - as per Cllr Leech. As one of the volunteers has passed away, IPC are in need of another volunteer, forms have been received by Cllr. Timms and there were a few suggestions of people who are interested in taking part. Cllr Piddington also volunteered for taking part in Speed watch.

08/03/24

Planning -

8.1 - 0790/24/VPO variation for affordable homes - further to the report by Cllr Dexter and Cllr. Leech above. IPC will agree to it, if the s106 funds are not affected and will be paid. These were the conditions that went with the original planning.

Cllr Dexter mentioned the 4-5 year plan, Cllr Piddington asked, who would develop this and went onto indicate that the statement indicating this is affordable housing is not correct, as the housing within the parish is not affordable. IPC were told to define the needs which it did a number of years ago, IPC indicated that the parish needed up to 10 properties. Part of this was fulfilled by parties doing their own thing i.e. providing for the next generation of their families. Then the development of the garage occurred, however, there is only one person from Devon in there, there are no local occupants and the rest are from other areas in the UK for example from the South East.

In effect this is not dealing with our needs, all that is happening is it's bringing people into the community where there is a lack of jobs, where services are stretched and now we have another wave of development, none of which will be truly affordable to anyone. Taking the average wages in the area, unless there are properties under a 100k, none of the youngsters are going to be able to afford it.

Some of these properties they put up as affordable, as in you purchase half and rent half, which in theory is good, but the mortgage payment and the rent for the lease part of the remaining half is restrictive to young people. Cllr Dexter agreed with what was being stated. The income to price is approximately 10 to 1. Cllr Piddington pointed out a mortgage at best would be 4 to 1. Cllr Dexter indicated that this is a national problem. There is a lack of social housing due to the lack of grants. So there is a whole generation of people who can't afford to live here which brings in future population problems due to the lack of children. Cllr King indicated that landlords are being penalised by the government, which results in landlord selling up which increases pricing and therefore the rental market is out of the reach of the local people.

Cllr. Dexter indicated more houses need to be built. WDBC can only work within the parameters they have. Cllr Dennis indicated affordable houses are built last. Cllr King wanted to know which ones were due to be affordable housing.

The council/community feels let down as no funds have been received from the garage and now the 20 houses, the money was supposed to be coming in for the community. The planning enforcement haven't really worked. Cllr King indicated that in Okehampton they were supposed to build a school when an estate was built but this never happened.

Cllr Dennis said no one seems to ask what the housing needs of Devon are and if they should put in double that amount. Cllr Dexter says that people are saying that a consortium is in place for this. Cllr Piddington indicated that this doesn't solve the problem as when a development is built, others from a more expensive area in the country move in.

Cllr King was on a working party for education in the area looked at transport and other matters this was backed up by evidence etc. and the council appeared not to take this into account.

8.2 - 3524/23/FUL - WDBC have sent this for information, Cllr Dennis explained why this happens when a planning matter may affect the neighbouring parish. Durdon Farm Northlew, agricultural building. Previous applications on this were discussed.

8.3 - updates 3936/23/FUL - Field shelter erection was approved. Hillside Barn was approved. Curworthy Slurry-pit is still ongoing.

8.4 - S106 application - notification has been received by the chair indicating that forms have already been submitted by the parish hall committee, for a new / or refurbished hall to be used in the next five years. Cllr Dexter indicated he would follow this up first with Cllr Leech, to ascertain where the s106 funds will be coming from and what has been determined to date as approximately it is £8800.00. Various tests have been carried out to see if the building is strong enough to put a new roof on. Another set of test holes will be carried out to determine what foundation the hall currently has. All these reports are needed before the roof can be refurbished.

Mention was made of grants and apply for them in relation to securing further funding. A discussion was held on match funding and a starting fund to move matters forward.

09/03/24

Finance

9.1 - Budget update - document showing the figures to date and as year end is due, this was provided to the councillors. Mention was made of 3-4% increase on the precept. Confirmation of one year of reserves.

9.2 - Payments and authorisation for the hall (Two years hire) £156.00, HMRC £84.73, Salary and expenses £394.09 (two months). Dalc for £72 training

9.3 - Current Balances and information on NatWest £ 3766.66 and Lloyds £4294.72 Mention was made of the current state of banking and the move to Lloyds continues.

9.4 - VAT re-claim £233.01.

10/03/24

Matters brought forward by the Chairwoman: All, already covered in this meeting.

11/03/24

Matters brought forward by Councillors: Cllr Dennis, indicated the bus shelter roof needs sorting out and needs painting in wood preserve. Mr. King will cut the shingles for the roof, at a date to be arranged. Cllr Dennis reported on the amount of bottles that have been collected on a local walk. A suggestion was raised about contacting Sgt. Otley about any dates that he will be able to attend an IPC meeting.

Cllr Dennis mentioned a ditch that was due to be cleared out after the last meeting, this still hasn't been cleared even though they were in the area clearing ditches. The clerk will investigate and raise concerns with highways on this. Fly Tipping which has been there for the last three weeks at Toads Island by Curworthy, a trailer (ex caravan chassis) needs to be removed between East End Cross and Curworthy Farm. Clerk will report this to WDBC - fly-tipping and abandoned vehicles.

12/03/24

Correspondence received/clerks report:

12.1 - Cllr Mc Innes update on Dental dilemmas in Devon

12.2 - Garden Waste notices as per Cllr Leech above.

12.3 - Bus timetable changes Service 5A (Okehampton – Hatherleigh – North Tawton – Crediton – Exeter): The 13:50 bus operating Monday to Saturday from Okehampton will operate 30 minutes earlier. The 16:50 bus operating Monday to Saturday from Exeter, will depart 10 minutes later, to logically follow after a 5 bus, to ensure there is capacity for passengers travelling beyond Crediton.

12.4 - A list of potential funding from DCC was read out, to see if any apply to the parish. A query was raised if any of these might cover the parish hall refurbishment.

12.5 - Notice of the police and crime commission elections.

12.6 - Complaint about a tree that has now been moved.

13/03/24

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 15th May 2024 at 7.30PM

14/03/24

Meeting closure: 21.28pm

_____ Chair

_____ Dated