WOODBURY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON Thursday 27 April 2016 IN THE VILLAGE HALL, WOODBURY

Present: Cllrs Mrs C McGauley (in the Chair), D Atkins, R Bartlett, Mrs C Bennett, P Bricknell, J Burgess, Mrs M Edwards, B Jones, G Jung, G Murrin, T Pattison and J Pyne. District Cllr B Ingham; 25 members of the public and the Clerk to the Council, Mrs Mandy Westlake

Also Present: Guests for Question and Answer session – Steve Moore (FCRM Advisor – Development and Flood Risk, Environment Agency) and Jessica Bott (Senior Flood & Coastal Risk Officer, Devon County Council)
Guest Speaker – Dr Sam Bridgewater
(Nature Conservation Manager, Clinton Devon Estates)

1. **Minutes:** The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 26 March 2015 were approved and signed (previously circulated to members).

2. **Chairman's Report:** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised that she had succeeded Cllr Graham Murrin as Chairman in May 2015 which coincided with election year. Several new Councillors came on board at that time and the PC reluctantly said goodbye to some old faces. There was a vacancy on the Parish Council for some months which was recently filled by Claire Bennett and Councillors were looking forward to working with Claire in the forthcoming Council year and beyond.
   After 17½ years in the role, the Parish Council's illustrious Clerk, Belinda Price made the difficult decision to retire in December and handed the reins over to Mandy Westlake, who had worked alongside Belinda as her assistant since July 2015. In addition, Annette Evens joined the team at the beginning of the year as the new assistant Clerk. So with a relatively new Council and a new Clerk/Assistant now in post there have been lots of challenges!
   Highlights of the year for the Parish had been many and varied but the following were mentioned specifically:
   - The Vehicle Activated Sign, in use from Easter weekend 2016 – huge thanks to Cllr Tim Pattison who spearheaded and delivered the project
   - Neighbourhood Plan, draft prepared and Steering Group formed to progress/finalise linking in with the newly adopted East Devon Local Plan
   - Going Paperless! EDDC will be withdrawing the provision of paper plans from 1st May 2016. The PC has already purchased a Laptop and Projector to display planning applications electronically at PC Meetings
   - Imminent upgrade of Play areas. Exton require replacement swings and Section 106 money is available for use. Woodbury Community Playing Fields Association have installed new equipment at the site off Town Lane but consistent wet weather has delayed the opening

- Installation of Phase 2 of WS gym equipment & Pavilion Shelter. The Shelter is in place and the gym equipment will follow when Section 106 contribution is confirmed from Webbers Meadow development
- Flooding and essential ditches/drainage work. Contributions now in place from the Parishes Together Fund and the Devon Resilience Forum.
- Allotments – plots have been halved in Woodbury and newly created plots are available in WS. No waiting list at present
- New PC Website launched this month www.woodbury-pc.org.uk
- Handyman scheme twice per month has been successful (employed by Exmouth Town Council)

Projects in the pipeline: Bus Shelter, Exton – Coombe Solar Farm Funding (Exe View Road) – Annual Community Grant Scheme – Ongoing production of Neighbourhood Plan
Finally, the Chairman thanked all her fellow Councillors for all their hard work throughout the year, all the Volunteers who give their time freely for the PC and within all 3 Villages namely - Sally Elliott, Peter King and John Treasaden (Tree Wardens); regretfully John would now be stepping down from his duties and the PC were actively looking to recruit a new Tree Warden for Woodbury by 1 June 2016.
Grateful thanks also went to: Anna and Lucy Eyres, Robert Gittings and Ngaio Southard (Play Area Wardens); Graham Joyce – for erecting Christmas Lights on the Green, overseeing Woodbury Allotments and his expertise in Tree management and last but not least the new Parish Clerk, Mandy Westlake for her advice and patience.

3. **Clerk's Report:** The Clerk thanked the Chairman, introduced herself and welcomed everyone to the meeting. She had taken over the post on 1 January this year having worked under the watchful eye of Belinda Price as her assistant who was a very worthy mentor.
Copies of the Income & Expenditure Account for the year ending 31st March 2015 were provided. The Clerk advised that the accounts had already been audited but any questions would be addressed. The accounts for the year ending 31st March 2016 had not yet been completed but would be presented to Council at the June meeting. The Clerk then gave a brief overview of their contents. The largest part of Parish Council outgoings, excluding staffing costs, continued to relate to the upkeep of the play areas, costs associated with ground & tree maintenance (including Grass Cutting) and servicing the public conveniences. In addition the Parish Council was committed to helping the Ring & Ride Scheme operated by Exmouth & District Community Transport Group and offers a small contribution to the local Citizens Advice Bureau currently based in Exmouth Town Hall.
The Parish Council also administers its own Community Grant Scheme from which local groups and societies can apply for a share of the total fund available. In the financial year 2015/16 the following grants were made:
£524.38 to Maytree Pre-School in Woodbury for the purchase of two new storage units;
£225.00 to Woodbury Local History Society for maintenance of parish archives so as to be accessible via the internet;

£385.00 to Woodbury Community Playing Fields Association to cover the planning application fee for the proposed Multi-use Games Area; and
£1,250 to Woodbury Village Hall for the upgrading of their sound system and provision of a screen and projector (£1,000 was requested with an extra £250 granted)
Keep an eye out in the Woodbury News, on the new Parish website (www.woodbury-pc.org.uk) or noticeboards within the villages for the date of the meeting at which the grant scheme fund is allocated. This is generally at the November meeting but may be brought forward this year to incorporate new extra funding from the Coombe Solar Farm, Exe View Road. Application forms will be available nearer the time either in hard copy form or electronically and can also be downloaded from the PC website.
Moving on to the Precept for the forthcoming year 2016/17. The Parish Council continues to make vigorous efforts to keep its requirement as low as possible. The ownership of the public conveniences and car park in Woodbury is an ongoing financial commitment and the PC continues to take over more and more responsibilities from the County and District Councils. The grass cutting work within the Parish has recently been re-tendered, with additional areas included and the PC now has use of a local Handyman twice a month who is employed by Exmouth Town Council and shared amongst several parishes. Therefore, overall and by budgeting carefully, this has resulted in no increase in the Precept which equates to £44.44 per annum per Band D property.
The Parish Office opposite the Village Green in Woodbury has been a huge success and following my recent promotion the Parish Council has now employed a replacement assistant Clerk, Mrs Annette Evens who has settled in extremely well. Opening hours for members of the public have been trialled between 11am & 12noon Monday to Friday. These are under consideration whether to extend but in practice Annette or myself will be happy to see anyone who calls in during office hours if time permits. The "shop window" is an excellent information point and is regularly kept up to date. The new Parish Council website has also been launched this month and we will endeavour to include as much information as possible. Although this website has been set up primarily for the Parish Council, it is also for the whole Community. Therefore if you are a member of a club or society and are organising an event, we can help publicise this for you.
Before I finish I would like to thank Roger Stokes for previously running the Parish Council website pages alongside the Village website. That has been an enormous help
& finally thank you all for listening and for welcoming me so warmly to your Parish!!

4. **Flooding in the Parish – Question and Answer Session:** The Chairman welcomed Steve Moore and Jessica Bott to the meeting and questions were invited from the floor. 10 separate issues were raised and responded to, summarised as follows:
    - Redirection of water, civil actions and responsibilities of Landowners
    - Changes in land use/alterations to agricultural practices (maize specified)
    - Surface water, run off – linked with planning applications and new developments
    - Building on flood plains
    - Exton flood relief scheme, culvert under the main road identified as inadequate

- Routine maintenance at Exton to clear stones under road bridge
- "Who do we report to?" DCC are responsible if culvert crosses the Highway
- "Who is responsible for what?" Several agencies involved
- Tri-annual programme of cleaning and prioritisation
- Dialogue required with Environment Agency before tackling any works to a watercourse, brook or culvert

The session concluded at 8.28pm and both Steve and Jessica were thanked for attending.

5. District & County Councillor's Reports:

County Cllr Mrs Christine Channon: The Chairman read out Cllr Channon's report as she was unable to attend at short notice due to another commitment.

"I was delighted at the beginning of my year as Chairman of Devon CC to be invited to open the new children's sports facilities in Woodbury Salterton and I can only congratulate both the Parish Council and the community on these excellent facilities. I would have quite liked to swing along the gondola myself but my clothes restrained me!

We have had quite a lot of concerns about the heavy goods vehicles using the lanes on the Common. Pat Bricknell has been most helpful in helping drivers stuck in narrow parts of the lane and advising them against taking these routes. We suspect that they are following SatNav instructions. Cllr Hughes and I contacted DCC Highways and a new sign warning of restricted width has been erected near the top of Toby Lane. I have also been in contact with Greendale and warned them of particular contractors who have been inclined to drive down the lanes and Tim Smith was most helpful.

DCC continues to fight the pothole battle and I believe that most of the deeper potholes in Woodbury Salterton have been dealt with over the year. However, we continue to suffer flooding in some areas of the Parish. Geoff Jung has been successful in pulling down money from the Resilience Fund to help with ditching to alleviate some of these spots.

The saga of the Planning Applications for Straitgate Farm and Blackhill Quarry continues. The recent applications have been withdrawn but we are told that there will be further applications. At present there is an application to take material from Hillhead Quarry to Blackhill for processing which I am opposing. In the meantime DCC has not included any further use for Blackhill Quarry in its Mineral Plan.

Three years ago, a waste planning application to DCC for the recycling of wood waste led to the setting up of a Liaison Committee at Greendale Park. This Committee was made up of County, District and Environment Agency officers, Parish Councillors, the Raleigh Ward District Councillor and was chaired by me, as County Councillor for the area. It was also attended by Tim Smith, as Manager of Greendale and one of the Directors. In recent times, Geoff became the District Councillor a representative of the Woodbury Salterton Residents Association was included. This Group has done some really useful work since its formation, particularly with respect to ironing out environmental health matters, such as noise pollution, dust, lighting and

even managed to keep track of retrospective planning matters. Unfortunately I had a very heavy cold on the date of the last meeting and had to send my apologies. I was told that the attendance had been poor and another date was set for April. However, this message was followed by another which stated that after an incident at the March meeting the Directors had decided there was little point in continuing with this liaison. I am very disappointed about this as I genuinely believe that we had made some real progress over the last three years.

I would like to pay tribute to Belinda Price who was an excellent and most helpful clerk. I wish her a happy retirement and welcome Mandy as her replacement. I would like to thank the Parish Council for their support and Geoff for working with me to look after the needs of the Parish."

District Cllr Geoff Jung:
"Woodbury has the advantage of 3 District Councillors Ben Ingram, Rob Longhurst who are ward members for Woodbury and Lympstone Ward, covering the villages of Woodbury and Exton and myself Raleigh Ward covering the village of Woodbury Salterton. We work well as a team on Woodbury Parish issues. In my ward I am working on a number of challenges.

I have to balance the needs of one group with the requirements of another. In the last year the challenge has been the balancing the needs of Greendale Employment Area and the rural village of Woodbury Salterton.

The local plan now provides substantially more certainty for future housing and recently the Planning Enquiry for 60 houses in Woodbury Salterton has been withdrawn because it did not comply with the Local Plan. The local plan has now removed the BUAB around Woodbury Salterton and therefore if a planning application for a dwelling is proposed it would be considered as a new property in the open countryside. In practice only a few properties will now be built whilst the local plan is in place until 2031.

With roads becoming busier and less safe new access to connect residents and visitors to enjoy the AONB by footpaths, bridleways or cycleways are most important.

In Woodbury Salterton I'm working with a group of residents to set up a Community Flood Group to help manage and protect property. I am also working with Devon County Council and the Environment Agency to see if it's possible to remove the threat of properties from being flooded altogether.

Through my work at District Councillor I am involved in a number of committees. One is overseeing the new Waste and Recycling Contract. At present East Devon is the 4th most efficient Authority for Recycling and with the new contract it should make us the leading UK district thus providing savings to ratepayers and reduce waste to landfill.

The other involvement I have is merging Teignbridge, Exeter and East Devon's Computer and Telecommunications services into one support company, thus saving money and providing a better and secure system.

The other issue on the horizon is the Government's strategy for "Devolution" involving the Unitary, District, and County Councils within Devon and Somerset plus the NHS. This proposal will hand the decision of funding down from central government through a non-elected quango and a Mayor. How this fits into our current democratic system is the big question!

It has been a challenging but most rewarding first year and I would like to thank Christine and Bernard our County Councillors for all their help and wise words. Rob and Ben for their teamwork. Our Parish Clerks and my fellow Parish Councillors for their support. Thank you."

District Cllr Ben Ingham:
"May I start by thanking all Members of Woodbury Parish Council for their support over the last twelve months? I also thank both Mandy and Annette for keeping me up to date with your planning application recommendations, Agendas and Minutes. I have found the current Woodbury Parish Council very easy to work with and a pleasure to support. Part of this is definitely due to the leadership of your Chairman. Thank you Cheryl.

I believe the biggest event in the last twelve months has been the approval of the East Devon Local Plan. It is hard to accept that this document was nine years in the making. The responsibility for this lies firmly with the leadership of the district council. No genuine sense of urgency was displayed during the process. Officers had huge workloads to deal with. Then five years ago, the District Council leadership decided to start the process again, rethinking the supply of housing, allegedly due to public pressure. That did not from the general public. It was from developers. The villages of Woodbury and Woodbury Salterton have paid a heavy price for that strategy as all of you know only too well.

Hopefully we can now look forward to a more measured period of housing provision, especially when the neighbourhood plan for the Parish is approved. This is all thanks to our local communities as we learn to use the Localism Act.

Unfortunately I can still see trouble ahead. The imminent chance of devolution is at first sight very attractive to those of us living in the South West. After forty years of underfunding, who wouldn't be tempted by the opportunity of self-determination for economic investment? But the Devon and Somerset bid led by the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership has been prepared, vetted and submitted behind closed doors. At no point have the public or the majority of district and county councillors been invited to discuss or contribute to the process by East Devon or County Hall. That tells me a lot about their implementation strategy.

I suggest devolution for Devon and Somerset separately would be viable, as long as all preparations for it are conducted openly and democratically. This is nowhere near the case currently. Did you know the Heart of the South West LEP Members actually appointed themselves? Some Members have strong vested interests in the primary projects being considered by the Heart of the South West. Can we really trust them to invest our money in the South West economy wisely and for our benefit? I do not think we should.

I would like to finish by saying how proud I am of my fellow district councillors, Geoff Jung and Rob Longhurst. They have both taken on their responsibilities with tremendous vigour, reflected by their achievements. I hope you approve. Thank you and I look forward to taking on all the new challenges that face us over the next twelve months."

6. **Dr Sam Bridgewater, Nature Conservation Manager, Clinton Devon Estates:** Dr Bridgewater was welcomed to the meeting by the Chairman and gave a most informative and interesting talk on "Managing Wildlife at a Landscape Scale in East Devon". This was accompanied by visuals on the overhead projector.

7. **Tree Wardens' Reports / Neighbourhood Plan update:**
   There were no Tree Wardens present due to other commitments. Sally Elliott (Woodbury Salterton Tree Warden) had reported that the work carried out in Woodbury Salterton on the main Plantation involved minor tree works and felling of the large Turkey Oak for safety reasons. Details were available in the Woodbury News and on the Woodbury Salterton Nature Blog. There was nothing to report from Woodbury and no issues in Exton.

   Neighbourhood Plan
   Cllr John Pyne was present and gave an update on the progress of the Neighbourhood Plan.
   "The Neighbourhood Plan was started in 2013 and included 4 working parties reporting on the areas of Community & Economy; Infrastructure; Environment; and Housing & Development.

   The reports that they produced led to a consultation document entitled "Visions and Policy Document" that was circulated to nearly every house in the Parish.
   This document requested a number of responses, about 82, and also included a checksheet that could be completed for a "quicker" response.
   Of the 1348 documents that were sent out there were approximately 212 responses. The responses varied from free text written documents, comments on the circulated document and also the checksheet at the back; and of course combinations of all three.

   After the local parish elections of last May a new Steering group was created to involve Parish Councillors and residents. The group presently consists of 8 councillors and 10 residents of the Parish. This group started by analysing all the responses returned from the Visions and Policy document. This was done by typing all the responses into a database so that each question from the Visions and Policy document could be individually assessed. Sweeping generalisations could be made from just reading through the responses but this enabled a subjective analysis of each question's responses. This took a lot time for the volunteers.

   The group also had to constantly remember that the Parish consists of 3 villages and not just Woodbury. Unfortunately the responses from the Visions and Policies documents and the composition of the steering group were, and are, heavily weighted towards Woodbury.

However, with the above in mind the group has started to put together a Neighbourhood Plan that can be supported by the responses given by the residents. It is the ability to show how the Plan is produced and how it supports the wishes of the Parish that is vitally important. It must be evidence based.

Documents that historically were produced by various groups have also been fed into the Neighbourhood Plan, including: Woodbury Consultation Results; East Devon Villages Plan Consultation Document (Built-up Areas); East Devon Villages Plan, updated August 2015
Woodbury Parish Historic Environment Plan; Map of responses by Postcodes
Woodbury Village Design Statement; Housing Needs Assessment January 2016

The production of the new East Devon Plan has also helped the Neighbourhood Plan. The number of houses to be built and where features in both this document and the needs of the Parish residents and has resulted in the possible withdrawal of some building applications.

The recent Housing Needs Survey that you were asked to complete has established that we have sufficient housing stock existing or the applications have been approved.

So where are we? There are still areas needing work.
Flood prevention and the built up area boundary are two that are presently focusing our minds. However, an initial document has been produced and like any first draft suits nobody. Draft 2 and its review is underway. It's not easy and at the moment is far from pretty.

Where are the residents in this process?
Volunteers have been requested to help in the process and have been welcomed into the group. There is room for more.

All the residents will be asked to respond to a draft Neighbourhood Plan in the near future. It will only be a draft; probably without pretty pictures and an expensive print run. Again the responses will feed back into the process. I hope that it will be feedback rather than throw out and start again. We have been told that any Neighbourhood Plan has to be evidence based and come from consultation with the residents. Please respond. It is your plan and we need help."

8. **Police Report:** The Clerk read out PCSO 30028 Donna Baker's report as she was unable to attend due to another commitment.
"The volume of crime has remained relatively static, and low, in the parish. There were 85 crimes reported in 2013/14, 79 reported crimes in 2014/15 and 81 in 2015/16.
Burglary and criminal damage represent the largest figures, 15 incidents of both this year.
Assaults were 12 and theft 9. Devon and Cornwall are still amongst the safest counties to live.
Speeding and parking are still the most commonly raised issues in the parish.

Speeding - I hope the "Parishes Together" investment in a vehicle activated sign will produce positive results in the locations designated for its use. The speeding motorists are almost always local drivers! We can all make a difference by simply maintaining our concentration and making sure that we do not exceed the speed limit. The Woodbury village Community Speed Watch requires new members to rejuvenate activity, let me know if you are interested in becoming a member and I will explain the process.

Parking – Villages by definition were built before the need for cars. Some areas have very little off-road parking and can become very congested. Everyone needs to be particularly considerate when parking;

- Does the vehicle prevent a disabled person/ mother and push-chair from passing safely on the pavement?
- Does the vehicle obstruct a drop kerb? Access to garage etc
- Is visibility obstructed around a junction?
- Am I parking on a restricted area, look at the lines and associated sign plates.
- Primary schools are particularly sensitive areas, children need to see clearly to cross the road and be seen by motorists. Park away from the school and walk children to the school.

Any of these should tell us this is not a place to park, again it is we, the local residents, who can make a difference and make our community a safer place to live.
I am retiring from my role in June and would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for making my time as PCSO for Woodbury enjoyable. I hope to be in a position to introduce my replacement before I leave. Thank you."

9. **Resolutions:** None were submitted.

10. **Any other items raised by the General Public:** Various questions were posed by the public and responded to by the Chairman or relevant Councillor.

Closure: The Chairman thanked all for attending and closed the meeting at 9.30pm.

Signed:……(Chairman) Date:…….