

Draft minutes subject to confirmation

MARY TAVY PARISH COUNCIL
ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Held in The Coronation Hall

Monday 19th April 2010

Present: Cllr T Pearce (Chairman) (WDBC), Cllr M Anning, Cllr C Downham, Cllr R Elton, Cllr G Hill, Cllr A Prosser, Cllr M Robins, Cllr M Roe, Cllr S Street (9) – N Gardiner (Clerk)

Others present: Inspector David Hammond, Pippa St John Cooper (Devon County Youth Services), Jane Savage & Cathy Aubertin (West Devon Borough Council)

Apologies for absence: Joanna Albon, Nicky Pratten (Headteacher, Mary Tavy & Brentor School), Janet Piper (Guides), Ged Tucker, Mr & Mrs Sykes, Naomi Salmon, (Youth Club), Mandy Kenyon (West Devon CAB)

Parishioners present:

45 parishioners were in attendance.

The meeting was opened at 7.30 pm with Cllr Pearce welcoming everyone.

83-2010 Information on recycling and waste collection - Cathy Aubertin & Jane Savage of West Devon Borough Council advised that the new external contract for waste collection & street (& public toilet) cleaning began on 1st April, although not all services are yet in place. Public toilets are now open for longer hours & the level of cleanliness is improving. Delivery of new street cleaning vehicles is awaited before the new waste collection services can start – this might be done in phases, probably from September. The Council wishes to offer a more equitable service for people in towns & rural areas; it also has to improve recycling rates & reduce the amount going into landfill. Recycling collections will increase both in frequency & items included; the new service will include textiles, batteries, mobile phones, plastic bottles & food – this is in response to a recycling questionnaire. New collection boxes will be supplied for plastics & for food - J Savage showed an example of the latter, as well as the caddies (with lockable lids) & liners; she also showed one of the 90 litre reusable sacks for garden waste. Food waste & recyclables will be collected weekly; garden waste fortnightly; the frequency of the residue household waste collection will drop to fortnightly. A trial of food waste collection has been done in Tavistock. Waste will be sent to a bio-plant at Holsworthy & then into national grid energy supply. As a result of public consultation, WDBC will not be introducing wheeled bins, as this is not a suitable area.

A member of the public said that residents of Horndon do not have green boxes. **Jane Savage** confirmed they are entitled; the only restriction is that the boxes must be placed on kerbsides for collection.

Q: Is there a calendar for the new service?

A: Yes, it can be obtained by phoning WDBC offices. Every household will also get a notification pack approximately 2 weeks before the new containers are distributed.

Q: Will the plastic recyclables still exclude margarine tubs & food trays?

A: Yes, these items at present have to go abroad for processing. However, some other sites, such as the Crowndale depot, may take yoghurt pots & other plastic items that WDBC cannot.

Q: Where can information be found about which items are recyclable?

A: On the WDBC website.

Cllr Pearce thanked CA & JS; they then left the meeting.

84-2010 Community Policing – Inspector Hammond (who is based in Okehampton & is responsible for Response & Neighbourhood matters) reported on crime, speeding & neighbourhood policing in the parish over the last 12 months, referring to statistics & figures: Crime - 17 crimes had occurred in the 12 months from April 2009 to April 2010; this was an increase from 11 in the previous year, but it is close to the average for Mary Tavy in the recent past. (There was an overall reduction in crime of just over 1% in West Devon.) The crimes were made up of: 5 burglaries – of outhouses or commercial buildings, with machinery & power tools stolen; 4 thefts from motor vehicles – one of these occurring on the same night as more than 10 offences all over West Devon; 3 non-specific thefts – including 2 thefts of domestic heating oil (people should be warned that this could become a trend); 3 assaults; 1 criminal damage to a motor vehicle; 1 sexual offence, which was not a threat or risk to the community.

Speeding – is a problem in all rural areas, particularly in villages such as this on busy arterial routes. Mary Tavy has the additional factor of a long, straight stretch, along which local people sometimes drive fast due to familiarity with the road (it is unusual for tourists to speed). At his request, special unmarked police vehicles routinely carry out speed checks in the area – one done in August 2009 showed the average speed over 24 hours was 30.1 mph, with more than 1,800 vehicles recorded. Although this factual figure cannot be contested, it was acknowledged that slow vehicles lower the average; it had been calculated that 15% of vehicles travelled at more than 30 mph, the fastest at over 46 mph. Many drivers are reducing speed, but often not to 30 mph, as it is widely believed speeding tickets are not given for speeds of 32-33 mph. Police understand this is an issue that concerns villagers; it is set as a priority item at Southern Link meetings & PC K Reed & PCSO D Chapple are working for an improvement. Initiatives that can help include: Community Speed Watch (people are trained to use speed guns & police follow-up reports of speeding drivers) & School Speed Watch (school children stop drivers & ask questions related to speeding). Inspector Hammond particularly recommended the latter system, which has proved very effective.

Inspector Hammond took questions from parishioners:

Q: How many accidents have there been on road through Mary Tavy?

A: It is difficult to give an exact figure, as accidents have to be reported to the police only if there are injuries, so they do not always get involved & many low level accidents are not reported. He will consult the police records & report back to the Parish

Q: What speed are police vehicles restricted to?

A: There has been a recent cultural change in the way police officers drive & it is not acceptable for police vehicles to be travelling at more than twice the speed limit and less than this if possible. They have large distances to cover, but should contribute to road safety & not scare other road users, by forcing drivers through red lights or using blue lights when not necessary.

Q: The statistics are nonsense. Some drivers go through the village at nearer 70 mph, especially early in the morning & overtake cars that are in the process of turning off the main road. Enforcement is needed.

A: Previously there was a speed check done using a mounted box, where it was too dangerous for personnel to stand. Wherever it is safe enough officers, wearing reflective gear, carry out the checks.

Cllr Pearce confirmed that the Community Police have been responsive to reports of speeding through the village.

Q: A simple chicane in the road past the Royal Standard would slow cars down & the capital cost of that would probably be far less than the police carrying out speed checks.

Cllr Pearce: This would be the responsibility of the Highways Authority

Q: Why has a chicane been installed at Lake where there are only a few houses & not in Mary Tavy? Presumably the budget is allocated to places where there is a fatality.

Q: How much would a fatal accident cost?

A: An estimate of £1 million. However, the problem in Mary Tavy is duplicated all over West Devon.

Q: Might double white lines be put through the village? It could be cheaper to prosecute for this contravention than for speeding.

A: the Road Casualty Reduction Officer will be consulted about this possibility.

Pippa St John Cooper confirmed that School Speed Watch is a very successful system & easy to manage; she encouraged the parish to take it up.

Cllr Pearce thanked Inspector Hammond, who then left the meeting after saying he will speak in more length to villagers at a later date.

Cllr Pearce introduced the members of the Council to parishioners.

Item 7 on the agenda was taken next & the original item 5 was moved to later in the meeting.

85-2010 Short talks by various village organisations:

Youth Club - Pippa St John Cooper from Devon County Council Youth Service reported the Club has been very successfully re-introduced to the parish. Arts, crafts & other activities have had much support from & been well received by the community, with positive feedback & keen volunteers. DCC Youth Service is working to try & find sustainable ways of keeping youth clubs in the county open, by creating an umbrella organisation. Prospective volunteers were asked to contact Sally Edwards at the PO. Children from Mary Tavy can join a scheme offering free activities such as trips to Plymouth Pavilions; it is hoped there will also be free activities in school holidays. Cllr Pearce reminded everyone of the forthcoming Quiz on the evening of 12th May. (Full report appended to minutes).

West Devon CAB – Cllr Prosser (on behalf of Mandy Kenyon) stated that the group serves both the Tavistock & Okehampton areas. She read out the report prepared by M Kenyon (appended to minutes), who was unable to attend this meeting. Cllr Prosser will supply the relevant telephone number for contacting CAB, if anyone requests it; she also said there will be a fully detailed report from CAB at a later date, which the public can ask to see.

Tavistock Ring & Ride – had not responded to the invitation to attend this Meeting

Methodist Church - Diana Barrass thanked the Parish Council for the chapel grant given last year. This had supplied support for the community organisations' drop-in facility. The church has also been a temporary home for Brentor Garden Club while Brentor Village Hall was being refurbished. It has also hosted rehearsals for the Tavonian Theatre Company & Mary Tavy & Brentor Carol Service. The only rule is that no alcohol is allowed on the premises.

MTVMRG - Melanie Baldry reported as Chairperson, having taken over in January 2010 from George Hill, a valued Trustee, who she thanked for his hard work over the last year. The Parish Council grant had been gratefully received – 2 picnic benches will be delivered next month & will be securely fixed & positioned to also benefit Coronation Hall users. The changing rooms need refurbishing, but the main priority is a new roof. Members are continuing to look for funding (2 quotes have been obtained for the total cost of works – these are for approximately £6,000). Work will begin in May to dig out a deep channel at the corner of the football pitch, which will then drain out near the ramps. The ground will be made good & re-seeded with grass. Last year's Country Fair was very successful; thanks are due to Martyn Smale for the hog roast. This year's Fair will be held on 14th August (12 noon start) – there will be more events for children this time &, it is hoped, another hog roast. Profit will go towards the changing rooms refurbishments. Dog fouling on the Recreation Ground is an ongoing problem; there have been written & verbal complaints. The situation is

not acceptable, so reminders in the Community News & at the next 2 meetings are hoped to make a difference. This will be an expensive year, but the aim is to maintain the RG to be a good asset for the village.

Comment: There are many responsible dog owners, but a few who do not clear up after their dogs. It would be very sad if everyone was forbidden to go on the Field with dogs.

M Baldry: There is, as yet, no intention of banning dogs, but if anyone is seen not behaving in a socially aware fashion in regard to dogs on the Field, please let her know. If necessary the Dog Warden could be contacted. **Cllr Prosser** read out an e-mail from Joanna Albon, saying that it would be a shame to have to ban dogs as this is a good facility for less agile dog owners. **Cllr Pearce:** The Parish Council does contribute to the cost of the Dog Warden, so if there are particular times of the day that incidents happen, please report to the Clerk, who will ask the Warden to come out at the relevant time to apprehend offenders – penalties up to £1,000 are payable.

Mary Tavy & Peter Tavy WI – Jenny Roe reported that there are currently 24 members, but more would be welcome. There is a meeting on the afternoon of the 2nd Thursday every month. A wide variety of speakers are invited – subjects of forthcoming talks include: CHICKS, Totnes Museum on Victorian costume & the Children’s Hospice. Other activities are: walks, a book club & jazz performances. The WI do the teas & refreshments for the village pantomime cast. The Spring Sale of plants, cakes & books will be held at 2 pm on 8th May. Thanks are due to the Parish Council for all its help & support.

Mary Tavy & Brentor Under 5s – Lorraine Beely reported as the Play Leader was away. The Pre-school is currently very busy & people involved include an Early Years teacher, an occupational therapist & a piano teacher. The Pre-school is almost full & there are 3 new children waiting to join. 23 pre-schools in West Devon are waiting for funding in order to stay open; MT&B Pre-school is very lucky to have a maximum number of committee members, who make an enthusiastic working committee. A special mention was given to Lucie Hilton, Mike Allen, Briony Baxter & leader Alli Hatcher, who has been identified as someone who is making a difference to children in their early years. MT&B Pre-school had scored 5.2 on the Early Childhood Rating scale; the average is 4.3. Thanks to: the Hall Committee for making the group comfortable (now there is heating babies are able to have their nappies changed without getting cold!), Field Trustees for creating the herb garden, ATS in Tavistock for the raised beds (any seeds for donation will be gratefully received), the Parish Council for financing the storage areas in the cupboard, the Post Office, anyone who has visited & parents. Staff hope to be able to return the trust shown in them by parents who send children to the Pre-school, by fulfilling their expectations.

Mary Tavy & Brentor School – the Headteacher was unable to attend or send a report.

Guides – Janet Piper was unable to attend. Cllr Pearce read out the report she had submitted (appended to minutes); he stated that Janet Piper had worked very hard for the Guides, which now had a waiting list to join the local group.

Coronation Hall – Bob Hines reported he had taken over as Chairman from Tony Williams. There is a very stalwart committee & tremendous improvements have been made in the last few years. The money from the Parish Council in the last financial year was used for lighting & other projects; any further money granted will be used to make the building more secure. All the toilets have been re-plastered & it is hoped the committee will help with the painting. There is to be a Fun Day on 12th June, with a £100 first prize for the raffle; other prizes will be obtained from businesses in Tavistock – he asked that anyone who runs a business & would like to donate a raffle prize to contact him. Thanks were due to the Parish Council for its continued support. B Hines stated that the Hall is a wonderful asset to the parish; Cllr Pearce agreed & praised the foresight of those who created it in the 1950s.

86-2010 Village Emergency Plan – Cllr Roe reported the Plan was updated in January 2010 & will continue to be updated. The village has been divided up into 8 areas, each under the responsibility of one Councillor. The winter recently experienced was a good reminder of

the importance of having such a plan - many people helped each other, by digging cars out of snow, walking to work or ensuring neighbours had sufficient food & coal. In a national emergency small rural communities like Mary Tavy have to look to themselves. He invited anybody interested to view the Plan. Also, anyone new to the parish or who is not already a volunteer & who has any useful facilities or items to offer (e.g. spare bedrooms, generator or chainsaw equipment) please contact him.

Comment: It is difficult to accept, if everyone is supposed to be 'pulling together', that parishioners are not able to clear paths, without being held liable for injuries.

Cllr Pearce: There is to be a letter sent to all villagers to dispel the myth that people could be liable if they clear pavements which then freeze & cause someone to be hurt.

Comment: The report regarding liability was in a national newspaper.

Cllr Pearce: The correct position (as stated by him above) was confirmed at a meeting he had attended. In fact, householders are liable to clear pavements the full length of their own property.

Cllr Pearce: The greatest shock for most councillors when drawing up the Emergency Plan, was that some 60% of properties were solely relying on electricity for heating and cooking. Fortunately, in the recent winter electricity was not lost, but the loss for up to a week or more is a possibility in harsh winters. In such a situation the Coronation Hall will be the assembly point.

87-2010 The work of the Parish Council over the past year

Cllr Pearce reported that planning matters are a major part of the Council's work, the number of applications submitted is large & the Council is consulted by the DNPA on each one.

Community News – this is issued once a month; Cllr Prosser & Keith Rogers are responsible & are assisted by volunteers.

Parish Cemetery – many complimentary comments have been received about how well it is looked after by Bill Wardell, caretaker.

Blackdown Garage site – planning permission was granted nearly 3 years ago for 19 houses but Kingscourt Homes has gone into administration. A housing association is working with 3 prospective developers to plan development for the future & it is hoped a start will be made by the end of this summer. The situation is a great disappointment to the Council & the site is an ongoing eyesore which is very visible to people passing through the village.

Community Plan – was completed in 2008 & the Council is continuing to work on the action plan within it; the public will be kept updated on progress.

Members of the public are welcome to attend **Parish Council meetings**; these take place on the 2nd Tuesday of each month.

Annual Litter Pick – Cllr Robins announced this is now done annually & this year's event will be at 9.45 am on Saturday 24th April at the Coronation Hall. DNPA will supply pick-up sticks & bags. Free pasties will be on offer. WDBC is responsible for the A386.

Community News – Cllr Prosser gave thanks to all who assist her: Keith & Doreen Rogers (proofreading) & the deliverers. She is very grateful for the pieces submitted for inclusion & welcomes any newsworthy items on events that have happened or are due to happen.

Cllr Pearce thanked all residents for their support of the Parish Council. He stated that an illustration of the level of financial contribution that households make to the annual Precept is the estimate of 66p per week for a Band D property. This year the Parish Council is making a total contribution of £2,370 to village organisations, which are very much valued.

Speaking as a member of WDBC, Cllr Pearce said that it will now be 1st July before the bus pass scheme for over 60s comes into being at 9am, although it had been hoped this would start earlier. Carers will be able to make use of the scheme when the changes take place.

88-2010 To receive parishioners' questions

Q: Where does the remainder of Parish Council money go (after grants to village organisations have been issued)?

Cllr Pearce: Payments such as upkeep of the Cemetery, Clerk' salary & expenses, insurance & grass-cutting.

Q: Is the land at the Blackdown Garage site toxic &, if so, is there any danger to the village?

Cllr Pearce: when development begins, a metre depth of soil will have to be taken away for disposal as contaminated material. The area is now fenced off, as a warning.

Q: Is there a chance of the village having a bus shelter?

Cllr Pearce: This was in the Community Plan, but the Parish Council felt it should be on the other side of the road from that first planned – it is hoped a shelter will be in place before next winter. WDBC & DCC are aware of the need for a shelter.

Q: Has the question of reducing street lighting been considered at Parish Council meetings?

Cllr Pearce: Yes, a letter had been received from DCC informing the Council that a scheme is being developed. It is hoped this will be in place for next winter. In some parts of the village lighting is excessive & causes light pollution at night.

Comment: The DNPA will fight to have the railings on the redundant bridge at Harford Bridge, Peter Tavy taken away.

Comment: On the gate at Moorland Hall, Brentor Road there is a sign asking that dogs be kept on leads after 1st March, so that ground nesting birds are not disturbed. However, recently a large area of gorse was cut. There ought to be some interaction between DNPA & the commoners to prevent such an anomaly. Cllr Pearce stated that there was much disquiet within the Parish that this gorse cutting could have taken place in an ESA (Environmentally Sensitive Area) & particularly when the area of moorland near Brentor is one of the largest linnet nesting areas in the South West; cirle bunting have also been spotted here. Representations are being made to the higher authorities on this matter.

Cllr Hill raised the issue of his position on Mary Tavy Parish Council. He has had a long discussion with Mr D Incoll (Chief Executive of WDBC) regarding the behaviour of the Chairman of the Parish Council. It was reported in February 2009 in the press that the Parish Council had been trying to get a Conservation Area for 3 years, but actually the Council knew nothing about it. Cllr Pearce stated that the public knew there was a 2½ year consultation period for the Conservation Area. Cllr Hill continued to speak on this & other issues, ignoring the Chairman's request to stop, as members of the public were leaving the meeting. Cllr. Hill stated that the public were idiots to leave when they should have been listening to what he had to say.

Cllr Pearce declared the meeting closed at 9.25 pm, due to the disruption and the large numbers of the community leaving the meeting.

N Gardiner
Clerk to the Parish Council

4th May 2010

Signed as a true and accurate record.....
(Cllr T Pearce - Chairman)

Date.....