

DEAN PRIOR PARISH

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 4th April 2018 at 7.00pm at DeanPrior Village Hall

Present ; Cllr Weatherall , as Vice - Chairman of Dean Prior Parish Council , chaired this meeting and Karen Gilbert acted as Clerk

Cllrs,Mabin , Rutley & Thorn were in attendance
Cathie Pannell DNPA and County Cllr Richard Hosking

Cllr Weatherall welcomed everyone to the Meeting

1. **Apologies for absence** - Cllr Chew & Ella Briens - DNPA Ranger

2. To receive a report from the Vice - Chairman of Dean Prior Parish Council

Cllr Weatherall commented that it had been a quiet year . Funds had been secured to be able to provide a defibrillator in the Parish and steps were being taken to increase communication between the Parish Council and Parishioners . Planning Applications had been dealt with in an appropriate manner with site meetings held where necessary .

3. To receive a report from County Councillor Hosking

4. **Abridged Report from County Councillor Hosking** - Full report available from the Clerk
Cllr Hosking thanked the Parishioners for voting for him in the May 2017 elections - his patch now covers Parishes of Dean Prior, Diptford, Holne, North Huish, Rattery, South Brent and West Buckfastleigh as well as Ermington, Holbeton, Newton Ferrers & Noss Mayo, Ugborough and Yealmpton.

The Budget

We received a few pleasant and welcome surprises just before agreeing our Budget for 2018/19.

a) The County in partnership with our eight District and two Unitary Authorities has been made a Business Rates Pilot in 2018/19. This is estimated to increase potential funding to the County by £16.6 million, £6.6 million more than anticipated;

b) Rural Services Delivery Grant has not been reduced as expected but has been increased by a further £1.5 million to a total of £7.5 million;

c) Anticipated changes to the New Homes Bonus Scheme have not been introduced and Devon County Council (DCC) will benefit by an additional £300K to a total of £3.8 million.

d) An additional £2.2 million Adult Social Care Support Grant has been allocated to DCC specifically for Adult Social Care;

e) The County has received £2.1 million to compensate for a change in the inflationary increase on Business Rates as announced in the Autumn Budget;

f) We are permitted if required to increase our Council Tax Precept (excluding the Social Care Precept capped at 2%) by an additional 1% to 3% before triggering a referendum.

Before taking these sources of income into account our Core funding had been reduced to £115.2 million. This is a reduction of £13.1 million on 2016/17 (taking into account the additional £10 million from the Improved Better Care Fund Grant for 2018/19 announced in the Spring Budget of 2017(reducing to a final payment of £5 million next year)).

Additional Spending

We plan to increase spending to meet demand as follows;

g) an additional £6.5 million on Children's Services

h) an additional £13 million on Adult Services budgets

i) an additional £6.5 million on maintenance and repair of drainage, patching and potholes on our highways.

We have not opted to increase our Council Tax Precept by the maximum 5.99% permitted by Central Government in 2018/19, but by 4.99%, leaving the option to make a final additional 1% increase in the Social Care Precept next year.

Despite the additional funding it is still going to be challenging to meet our budget in 2018/19 and we will be seeking innovative ways of managing demand for Social Care.

Highways

Skanska are now operating our Highways Term Maintenance Contract and are reviewing the system relating to treatment of defects and Works Programmes. The objective is to combine the wisdom of Devon County Council Highways with the experience of Skanska and to trial different ways of working in 2018/19, adopting those that are successful in 2019/20. The additional funding announced above will give some flexibility to be innovative.

The timely announcement by Central Government of £2.5 million to fund the reinstatement of the A379 along the Slapton Line is very welcome for the County.

Cllr Hosking also commented on the continuing roll out of Broadband and mobile phone coverage as well as Libraries , adult and Children's care and recycling

4. To receive a reports from District Councillor Smerdon - None sent

5 . To receive a report from Kevin Bishop & Cathie Pannell (DNPA)

From Chief Executive (Kevin Bishop):

Local Plan Review – already engaged with local communities through series of roadshows.

Consultation Paper likely to be published at the end of 2018

Superfast broadband and mobile telephony – Airband and BT Openreach programme will mean circa 95% of all premises should be able to receive superfast broadband by end of the existing phase (Summer 2018). Now working with Connecting Devon and Somerset on what we can do to connect premises in so-called not spots and looking at how we improve mobile connectivity without lots of additional infrastructure

Future of Farming – set-up a Task and Finish group and have submitted proposals to Defra for a new scheme post Brexit

Published a State of the Park Report and are now starting work on a review of the Management Plan – a statutory plan to guide management of the National Park. We will be commissioning a series of 'Dartmoor Debates' topic papers.

Secured additional funding for peatland restoration on Dartmoor and are working with EA on natural flood management

Moor Otters – raised over 60K which we are now using to support junior rangers, tackling the spread of non-native invasive species and footpath erosion

Supporting a Moorland Birds Initiative and delivery Moor than meets the eye Landscape Partnership Scheme

From DNPA member Cathie Pannell:

National Park Purposes: to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of National Parks and to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the Parks by the Public. The Authority also has a duty to seek to foster the economic and social well being of local communities within the National Park

Funding:In 2016 the Minister responsible for National Parks confirmed the National Park Grant up to 2019/20. Until then we have an annual increase of 1.72% per annum. At present this amounts to £3,761,173 for 2018/19. After 2020 we have no idea what will happen to National Park funding – which as you can imagine is a very worrying prospect.

Reorganisation – officers: We no longer have a Chief Planning Officer, the Department has been reorganised and the Park now has a head of Development Management: Chris Hart, a Deputy head of Development Management: James Aven, and a Head of Forward Planning and Economy: Dan Janota. These are all existing Officers of the Authority who have proved their worth.

The Ranger Service has also seen some changes with Simon Lee taking on the role of Ranger Manager, and the areas covered by the Sector rangers changing a little to reflect Simon's new role. Ella Briens continues as the ranger for Buckfastleigh, Dean Prior, Harford, South Brent, Ugborough and West Buckfastleigh.

Parking charges: You will be aware that a few of our major Car Parks are now pay and display, the charges have been kept to a modest amount. Princetown, 2 car parks at Haytor, plus Postbridge, Meldon and Newbridge. £1 up to 3 hours, £2 all day

Moor Otters: Following the Moor Otters Art Initiative and the Sale of the beautiful Otters painted and decorated in a wonderful array of mediums, the total net income raised was £62,500. This sum was divided between three projects that were identified at the start of the project. Junior Rangers: £20,000 over two years, this had been a pilot project, and this money will enable it to be embedded into our core work, a new Youth Ranger scheme for 16-19 year olds will be trialled. We will then have a model which allows progression from Ranger Ralph, Junior Rangers, Youth Rangers through to an apprenticeship in the environmental field.

Invasive Non-native Plant Control: £20,000 over two years. This will be concentrated on two species, Himalayan balsam and American Skunk Cabbage. These species are closely associated with streams, rivers wetlands and ponds – the same habitats in which Dartmoor's otter population thrive.

Repairs to Erosion: £20,000 over 2 years. This will be concentrated on Wistman's Wood, Postbridge/Grey Withers and the Abbot's Way Route.

I have details of the proposed works, if anyone would like more details.

Love Moor Life

The annual number of visitors to Dartmoor, that is staying visitors and day visitors staying longer than four hours, is estimated at 2.31 million.

Visitor enjoyment of Dartmoor is very high, but having so many visitors can cause problems. The majority of visitors respect the environment but there are a minority who do not through ignorance or lack of understanding. A paper is being presented to members of the Authority on Friday 6th April, under the title "Love Moor Life" suggesting a campaign focusing on six behaviours to help visitors, offering simple messages to help their understanding of what we expect of them.

These are: Keep your dog on a lead, Bag up litter and take it home, Camping: use a campsite or check the website, Close gates, Share roads and Bridleways, Don't feed the ponies. There is a suggested Poster titled Ranger Code to go with this and all forms of Social media will be used. The full report is available in the website. I reiterate that this has not been agreed by Authority members, but shows the way the Park is thinking for the future.

As you can see, there is lots going on, I could go on – but I won't. I think that is enough for now.

Thank-you for your attention and please contact me if you would like any more information.

Cathie Pannell

National Park Parish Member.

Speakers / reports from Parish organisations - None

Public Forum

A Parishioner asked the Clerk to investigate an eyesore in the village - a pile of sandbags dumped in the verge

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending .

There being no questions or comments from the Public , The Meeting closed at 8.00pm