

**MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF BRIXTON PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT THE COMMUNITY HALL ON WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 7<sup>th</sup> 2011 AT 7.30pm**

**Present:** Cllr Hitchins @ Cllr White \*  
Cllr Wills \* Cllr Murch \*  
Cllr Martin \* Cllr Cane \*  
Cllr Gray \* Cllr Lang \*  
Cllr Oates \*  
\* Denotes attendance @ Denotes absence

**Also attending:** Members of the public 11  
County Councillor 1  
District Councillor 1  
Police 1

**The Vice Chairman opened the meeting in the absence of Cllr Hitchins.**

**11.038 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

1. The chairman welcomed two new councillors to the meeting. Lynn Lang and Gay Murch who were interviewed and selected by Council.
2. Apologies from Cllr Hitchins

**11.039 POLICE MATTERS**

PCSO Andy Potter introduced himself as our new PCSO and reported:

July 2011

1x theft of motor cycle

1x criminal damage to car [paintwork scratched]

1x criminal damage [glass of greenhouse broken, Staddiscombe area]

August 2011

1x assault [domestic related, Staddiscombe area]

1x theft [egg money left out for egg delivery]

3 x thefts from cars, all three crimes linked [offender located and arrested and charged to court , he was not local to Brixton area]

**All parishioners**

This was a good example of notifying police of suspicious activity,

A lady at work saw a male acting suspiciously around her car; no offences were committed by this male however she did report the incident to Police and enquiries identified the individual. He was visited and at his home address and spoken to and an intelligence report was submitted regarding the individual.

The Police non emergency telephone number 0845 777 444 is being replaced by a national telephone non emergency number of 101as from September 9<sup>th</sup>.

In response to a question from Councillor Martin regarding crime rates since the street lighting reductions, Andy Potter advised that across the county, night time crime had reduced. Police are still patrolling the area as before.

**11.040 REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR**

Cllr Hart reported:

- Today, the road changes for the Hemerdon Mine were agreed. Planning permission granted in 1985 so do not assume fast developments.
- If Brixton want to hold a street party for the Diamond Jubilee in 2012 the

rules have been relaxed and it will be simple for you to achieve.

- The “Tough Choices” campaign for budget year 2012/13 is about to start. Another £40 million needs to come out of next year’s budget (in addition to this year’s £80 million). Some of this will come from further restructuring but the balance will be true reductions in costs. Year on Year, Devon’s costs are reducing and the historical indexation for inflation is no longer allowed. We will have 1500 less staff than 2 years ago. Natural staff turnover has been most helpful to date but some compulsory redundancies can be expected in 2012 and 2013.
- Devon will not do any more damage to the bus network. Gov subsidies to bus companies may reduce in 2012/13 which may affect services. (Over 50% of bus income comes from the Over 60s bus pass scheme.)
- After 4 months of this year, spending is on budget.
- There is an outline plan to link County Councillors to market town areas (currently 4 but may become 5 to cover the rural areas south of the A38). It is important for the County and the Districts to get closer together and to get Parish Councils more involved.
- Devon is being seen by Westminster as a ‘role model’ for change.
- Property portfolio will be reduced. The target is by 25% within 4 years. 100 desks are being moved into rented space at Follaton House.
- Pavement weed spraying has been cancelled for 2011.
- No libraries have been closed but a new one opened in Sparkwell
- Apologies in advance for non attendance in Nov and Dec as 17 ‘roadshow’ meetings already set up for the “Tough Choices” campaign.

#### **11.041 REPORTS FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLORS**

Cllr Squire reported:

- There are 25,000 empty homes (both private and public ownership) in Devon and Cornwall. The government want to bring these back into use by drafting in volunteer groups and homeless people to carry out the work.
- Over 50% of the waste collected is recycled and higher targets are now set.
- SHDC are reviewing “green travel” for employees to reduce travel costs and carbon emissions
- Follaton House, a Grade 2 listed building, is looking tired. It has been agreed to spend £88,000 on external refurbishment for roofing, guttering, window repairs and painting. New tenants will expect a smart building.
- Sherford. John endorsed all the comments made by the Clerk in Open Forum. The 106 talks are dragging on but it is hoped by officers to present a revised application before the end of 2011. At present, the intent is for the revised application to go before the Development Control Committee of 22 members (out of the full Council of 40 members). John believes that it should be a full Council decision and is taking advice.

Cllr Cane reported:

- Sherford. Very concerned at the ‘dilution’ of Affordable Homes(AH) from the original target of 60% to about 10%. We need AH for our nurses, ambulance drivers, teachers, welfare workers etc to maintain our services in South Hams. It will be a disaster if we just get another township of retired elderly people who, not surprisingly, would like to live in SHDC
- Ivybridge swimming pool is to be refurbished by SHDC and Tone leisure. There will not be a bigger new pool.
- Devon Connect. This is a project to bring together all types of social services into a ‘road show’ to help local populations. They will be in

Squire

Wolwell on Sept 24<sup>th</sup> and in Sainsbury's, Dartmouth later on.

#### **11.042 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Cane expressed a personal interest in snow clearing and composting items and reiterated that he will not take part or voting in any planning related matters.

#### **11.043 MINUTES OF THE JULY 6th PARISH MEETING**

Proposed as accurate by Cllr Cane and seconded by Cllr Gray. Approved by the councillors present at that meeting.

#### **11.044 LOCAL ISSUES AND REPORTS**

**7.1 Silver Bridge Way.** a) Cllr Gray advised of the new name to represent the project in its reality. Ros Mills was not present at the last working group meeting and so planned progress was not achieved. Promised documents have since been received by the Clerk. Draft Heads of Agreement between the Councils was presented along with a draft Outline Agreement for the Permissive Path. The bridge section will be funded and installed by DCC. Schools competition to be instigated for a logo for the project and brochures etc. Worst gradients likely to be zig-zagged for easier use. Plan to complete in June 2012 before the Yealmpton Show. Project plan to be drawn up in September. b) Cllr Murch was elected to join the JWG following a proposal by Cllr Gray and seconded by Cllr Cane.

**7.2 Revised Terms of Reference for JWG.** The Clerk advised that the draft updated TOR's had been circulated in advance. As there were no questions, it was proposed by Cllr Cane and seconded by Cllr Lang that they be approved. Voted unanimously.

**7.3 Standards Consultation.** The Clerk advised that the consultation document had been circulated and discussed at a recent business meeting. As there were no new questions, Cllr Oates proposed and Cllr Martin seconded that 'this council wishes to rely on the new statutory powers for standards to be controlled'. This was unanimously agreed.

**7.4 Welcome Pack.** Cllr Hitchins and the Clerk met during the summer and the proposed draft document had been circulated earlier. The Clerk presented the proposed pack for discussion. Cllr Gray was concerned that some important information had been omitted and that text and layout could be improved for those with poor eyesight. Cllrs Gray and Martin agreed to rectify these points and bring the revised document forward for approval at the October meeting.

#### **7.5. Active Village opportunities.**

- A 'gentle exercise group' has been set up at Venn Court on a Thursday morning at 11.30 for an hour. This will be run by a physiotherapist at a cost of £50 per session. Participants will pay £2 to start with rising to £4.50 later. Grant from Active Villages (Devon) will cover variances.
- Cllr Gray suggested that support for local canoeing be considered
- Cllr Oates wanted to get support for existing groups where a demand obviously exists

**7.6 Appointments for P3.** a) Cllr Oates was keen to become the P3 coordinator. This was proposed by Cllr Cane, seconded by Cllr Gray and unanimously agreed. b) Jack Gilbey was confirmed as the Footpath Warden for Brixton. His 'path condition report' was handed to the Clerk for action via Cllr Oates and DCC

**7.7 Freedom of Information.** a) The Clerk had circulated an updated document to cover current F.o.I. legislation. Adoption was proposed by Cllr Oates, seconded by Cllr Lang and agreed unanimously. b) The Clerk advised that under the F.o.I. act, information has been requested and sent to a parishioner in August.

**7.8 Local composting.** The Clerk is in discussion with SHDC and DCC

**Clerk/Agenda**

about this scheme. It was agreed to bring this matter to the October meeting. Mr Steven Cane was keen to start the scheme because of the financial benefits to the village.

**7.9 Brixton Magazine circulation.**

At a Brixton Alliance meeting it had been suggested that consideration be given to circulating the Brixton magazine to all parish dwellings. After some discussion, it was agreed that this was not a matter for the Council. Cllr Wills to refer back to the Alliance

**Wills**

**7.10 Approval of snow clearing proposal.** Steven Cane had kindly offered to provide a gritting service to the parish at an inclusive hourly cost. Cllr Martin proposed and Cllr White seconded that the Clerk write to Mr Cane to accept the proposal. Approved. The Clerk was asked to order a pallet of gritting salt for delivery to Venn Farm.

**Clerk  
Clerk**

**7.11 Jubilee Celebrations 2012.**

Cllr Wills spoke about the idea of putting a ‘burning beacon’ on the top of the church tower on June 4<sup>th</sup>. The PCC has approved but the cost would be £300. It was agreed to set up a sub committee consisting of Cllrs Hitchins, White, Gray and Murch to come up with ideas for the Jubilee celebrations for the October meeting.

**Hitchins/Gray/  
White/Murch  
Agenda**

**7.12 Youth Cafe options.**

- a) Tuscany’s is still not fit for habitation. Insurance progress is slow.
- b) Discussion about the possible use of the Scout Hut. Cllr Martin to liaise with Cllr White prior to an approach to the Scout movement.
- c) Woodland Park play area refurbishment has started today.

**Martin/White**

**7.13 Councillor training.** a) The Clerk advised that a Councillor refresher course is available on October 19<sup>th</sup> from 6.30 to 9pm at The Watermark. The Clerk was asked to book 4 places. b) A Planning Process course is available at Follaton House on September 28<sup>th</sup> at 2pm. The Clerk to advise 5 attendees. c) Computer training. The Clerk offered councillors basic PC training to obtain full benefit from the large amount of emailed reporting etc. Councillors to contact Clerk.

**Clerk  
Clerk**

**All Cllrs**

**7.14 Councillors' reports.**

a) Cllr Hitchins, via notes,1)advised that the progress on the Dementia Friendly Villages was progressing well. Holbeton are now represented on the steering group. Group is working on a 2 year project to employ a community worker. 2) That Councillors are invited to join the Livewires meeting on November 17<sup>th</sup> to talk about the council and its duties. 3) That the Carrolsland ‘canvassing’ evening was well supported and well received by the home owners/occupiers. 4) Woodland Drive play space should be completed by end of October. 5) No work has been done on the Parish Plan recently. Should this now become a new Neighbourhood Plan to tie in with the Localism Bill ? Cllr Oates stated that it is critical to get on with the parish Plan as outlined earlier in the year.

**Hitchins**

**All Cllrs**

**Hitchins**

b) Cllr Cane advised that SHDC Planning Department seemed happy about the new car sales sign in the middle of the village. It is a replacement of an ineffective old board and therefore does not need new planning authority.

c) Cllr Oates advised that there is likely to be a protest on September 24<sup>th</sup> by a cycling group against the creation of Silver Bridge Way. Clerk to prepare a press statement in anticipation.

**Clerk**

#### **11.045 PLANNING MATTERS**

a) Cllr Martin advised that site visits had been made by the subcommittee to both Torr Hill Farm at Spriddlestone and 6 Canes Cottages. (see agenda). Both these applications were acceptable. Cllr Lang proposed and Cllr White seconded the approval of these recommendations. Approved by all.

b) Cllr Martin spoke to council about a new application for signage changes at Brixton Road Garages. In summary the changes are to the colour and wording of existing signs and as such were an acceptable change. Acceptance proposed by Cllr Martin and seconded by Cllr Lang. Unanimously passed.

Clerk

#### **11.046 FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

- a) The tabled expenditure of £1338.73 for July and August was approved after proposal by Cllr Gray and seconded by Cllr Lang.
- b) Sherford subcommittee and use of Reserve Funds - deferred.
- c) Approval of year end accounts. The Clerk advised that the Audit Commission has approved our accounts for 2010/2011

#### **11.047 CORRESPONDENCE**

a) Letter from Plymouth City Council advising that the upgrade to the Dawes Lane section of the cycle track would be carried out with '106' monies.

b) Barratt Homes letter advising that a second exhibition on the planned development to the northeast of Venn Farm would take place on September 21<sup>st</sup>. This has now been delayed.

c) An email from Mr G Searle to the Clerk requested that the content of the email be read to council. This was duly carried out. In summary, Mr Searle was demanding the resignation of Cllr Martin who had decided to take his children away from St Mary's School and was therefore not meeting the Council's intent to support the school.

Cllr Martin made a statement in response: "Mr Chairman and Council Members. With your permission, I wish to respond to this communication with a short, clear, factual statement.

1. I will not be resigning from the Parish Council of Brixton. I will continue to serve as elected.
2. Brixton School will continue to receive support from Brixton Council and, as a member, I will work to support St Mary's School.
3. Now to speak as a parent of two school age children. It is the right of me and my wife to place our children in any school deemed fit and which meets the needs and circumstances to benefit their education. I have exercised my legal rights in making this decision.

I want this statement to be put on public record through the Council minutes and a copy sent to the complainant. Councillor Ian Martin."

Clerk

The chairman made the following comment. "No doubt you, like me, are somewhat shocked at the invidious position that Ian and his family are in. I feel sure that you will support the work that Ian is doing for the council at this time and will continue this support in the future".

#### **11.048 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next monthly Meeting of Brixton Parish Council will be held on Wednesday, October 5<sup>th</sup> at 7.30 p.m. in the Brixton Community Hall.

**The meeting was declared closed at 10.20 pm**

**Notes from the Open Forum held at 7.30pm prior to the Council Meeting.**

(These notes do not form any part of the Council minutes)

1. Mr Morgan Evans spoke about the history of the work involved in the Sherford development. He expressed concern about the use of the funds collected at that time which were to be used, as necessary, as a “fighting fund” in the event of needing specialist and professional assistance. He asked, despite project delay, that these funds be retained for their original purpose. He understood that the funds stood at About £30,000.

Cllr Wills confirmed that funds of £30,000 had been “ring fenced” for Sherford.

In the event of any Sherford sub committee being formed, Mr D Curtis would be prepared to stand and bring his considerable subject knowledge to the committee.

2. A lady who had lived at Brixton Tor since 1983 (name not given) expressed serious concerns about the reclassification of a ‘green lane’ which runs passed Torr Hill Farm down towards Cofflete Creek. It does not form part of Footpath No 2. The concern is that it will be used by motor bikes, quad bikes and even 4x4 vehicles with support from an organisation called GLAS. She stated that DCC were already involved in this debate.

Cllr Hart responded that he did know about this issue and had recently visited the site. He asked that a letter be sent to him for forwarding on to the Public Rights of Way team in Exeter.

3. Jack Gilbey had carried out a survey on most of the parish paths and passed a list of remedial work required to the Clerk. This was given to Cllr Oates who is the new P3 coordinator.

4. Mike Trower asked about the costs for the proposed Silver Bridge Way. The Clerk assured Mr Trower that external funds were being sought and that monies from the Sherford fund would not be used for this. If Council voted any money, it would be from the ‘general’ account. In response to the question of disabled access, Cllr Gray said that some zig-zagging was being considered to reduce the steepest slopes.

M J Stickland, Clerk to Brixton Parish Council

September 9<sup>th</sup> 2011