

THROWLEIGH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Throwleigh held on 4th April 2019 at 7.30pm in Throwleigh Village Hall.

Present: Cllr J Crawford (Chairman of the Parish Council)
14 members of the public.

01 Welcome by the Chairman of the Parish Council

02 Matters arising from previous minute

None and minutes accepted.

03 Report from Cllr P Ridgers, WDBC

- Last financial year, WDBC gave out £3.9million to residents who needed help with the Council tax bills.
- Given approx. £150,000 grants to housing sector. If anyone knows any hardship, there are financial hardship grants available - please contact WDBC.
- Issued £33 million of Covid grants on behalf of the Government and 434 residents who received test and trace funding.
- Council Tax gone up 2%. Had a problem with rough sleeping in Tavistock and are funding a rough sleeper outreach worker to help tackle the issues. Looking at getting unused properties in the area marketed and relet. Looking at low cost housing in the local area.
- Recycling figures - 55.2% of all waste is recycled.
- Thank you for everyone's support throughout the year.

04 Chairman's Report - Throwleigh Parish Council

- First Parish meeting held here since 2019.
- K Graddock came in post as new Parish Clerk and then lockdown happened.
- Cllr David Hayes and Cllr Drayek van der Horn resigned and thank you for their support and time for the parish council.
- Not been many planning applications in the last 2 years but pleased to see that Blindfield Meadow had been passed.
- Thank the Parish Clerk for her work.

05 Financial Report

- We started the year with a balance of £4,291.09 and the precept is £4,193.00. The Parish Council has given grants to the Church, Citizens Advice, North Devon Records Office and Chagford Cricket Club.

06 Police Report

The meeting welcomed Matthew Hawkins, Neighbourhood Beat Manager. He reported the following:

- 5 logs created in Throwleigh over the past year, one being a Covid breach.
- Main concern is heating oil and to ensure that they are locked and also theft of garden machinery.
- He reiterated the point about making sure that any crimes are reported either online or via phone.
- There is a dedicated email for the local team in West Devon.

07 Dartmoor National Park Report

The meeting welcomed Ian Brooker.

- First report since 2019 which reflects what we have all being going through since the pandemic hit us in March 2020. I have been working throughout the period and although I started feeling a little guilty of having Dartmoor almost to myself during the first lockdown, this feeling soon evaporated

when the unlocking began! I have never witnessed so many people visiting the area, and although it was nice to welcome many new visitors, we, like so many other areas in the countryside, witnessed some pretty appalling antisocial behaviour.

- I doubt if any of you didn't feel lucky to live in the area we do in comparison to those confined to urban centres or in a towering block of flats but we were met by some incredibly selfish attitudes with some people seeming hell bent on destroying the places they came to visit. Throwleigh didn't witness too much of this thank goodness with perhaps Payne's Bridge/Shilley Pool taking the brunt of the increase. Luckily last summer didn't see the same levels and I am sure things will ease again now that travel abroad is back on the agenda but I don't believe we will ever return to normal levels again.
- The National Park Authority has taken advantage of Green Recovery Fund which has given us short term funding to increase staff on the ground including three Engagement Rangers, one of whom has been specifically involved in promoting and setting up a programme for our Junior and Youth Rangers. Some of these got involved with the project we started last year to help control the bracken on the archaeological site near Shilstone Tor. This is a huge project linking with the local commoners to enhance this important archaeological area and you will see work start here again in May this year.
- Surprisingly, given the immense benefits of open spaces to people, our NP Grant was only received on April 1st and is a flat cash settlement, the same as in the previous three years, so overall we have seen a 50% cut in funding since 2010!
- We are being expected to deliver on a number of initiatives based on the Glover Review including Nature and Climate and People and Place but we are also awaiting a landscape strategy and outcomes framework which will highlight the key outcomes that government would like to see protected landscapes contribute towards.
- There appears to be a growing gap between Government expectations and the reality of what we can deliver with ever decreasing resources. Incidentally Scottish NPs received a 5% increase in core funding whilst the Welsh NPs saw an increase of 10%!
- Despite all this a great deal has been happening on the ground including the project already mentioned near Shilstone Tor.
- As many of you know Bob Haworth my VW left the area but it was really pleasing to see Jim Matthews coming forward as his replacement and he has already been active in the area working specifically on the rights of way network and with dealing with occasional problem visitors. A massive thanks to him for his continuing commitment to his role.
- It looks like we have successfully tackled the Japanese Knotweed outbreak at Waye Down and we have started to take on the Himalayan Balsam problem in the same area, but it needs further attention. Anyone willing to help 'pull' the offending plant would be welcome to join in to help reduce this invasive plant from taking over the area. We have also cut the main path running parallel to the road to improve access and my thanks to Mike Date for offering his service, voluntarily, to do this.
- Of greater worry was the report last year of the large outbreak of Skunk Cabbage in The Coombe owned by James Lowe. After reporting it to him, several volunteers braved the rather soggy conditions to remove over 600 flower heads to at least stop the problem getting any worse. A full survey has now been carried out showing that the spread is quite significant and the original source has probably been located at Gorsemoor House where it was planted in the pond over 40 years ago! DNPA has no jurisdiction to

force the landowner to do anything about it, but we are hoping that Mr Lowe will tackle this problem as soon as possible.

08 Devon County Councillor - James McInnes

- As I write this report, Covid 19 infection in Devon is very high. We are seeing unrepresented demand for Children’s and Adult Services. This is putting tremendous pressure on services and staff are still in emergency response mode. Living with Covid is the way forward, it is not going away.
- **Proud to Care** - Across Devon, Adult Social Care has over 2000 vacancies and we are working hard to encourage carers to return and welcome new carers, through the Proud to Care Program. Proud to Care Devon is calling for people who are interested to complete a quick online form at www.proudtocaredevon.org.uk/findyourcalling. Applicants will get a call back and the offer of free one-to-one telephone support, providing careers advice and information about jobs and training in care and health.
- Furthermore, thanks to the European Social Fund, there are free and flexible courses to support people to find the right role, or to take a step up, in health and social care. The courses are being offered by partners across Devon including Learn Devon, City College Plymouth, South Devon College, Exeter College and Petroc.
- **Vaccination** - The vaccination program has been very successful which has allowed us to live a more normal life.
- How many of us work has changed for ever, with a combination of working from home and going to our place of employment.
- We must also remember that over the last two years many residents have continued to work on the front line, in our Businesses, and Public Services as well as those in Social Care and the NHS.
- **Budget** - Putting together the County Council budget for 2022/23 has been the most difficult in living memory, more difficult than the period of austerity.
- The DCC portion of the Council Tax will rise by 2.99%, including 1% additional funding for Adult Social Care. We have taken the unprecedented step of using £23 million from reserves to support the budget. That rainy day has arrived, and we need to support the most vulnerable children and adults as best we can with the resources available. The Budget for 2022/23 is £629.362 million.
- Below is a table with the high-level detail of DCC net budget:

	2021/22 Adjusted Budget *	Inflation Pressures	Savings & & additional Income	2022/23 Budget	Net change	
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	%
Adult Care & Health	283,294	47,875	(18,241)	312,928	29,634	10.5%
Children's Services	159,036	28,787	(11,675)	176,148	17,112	10.8%
Community Health, Environment & Prosperity	40,280	3,809	(2,846)	41,243	963	2.4%
Corporate Services	40,937	3,612	(2,830)	41,719	782	1.9%
Highways, Infrastructure Development & Waste	57,124	3,349	(3,149)	57,324	200	0.4%
	580,671	87,432	(38,741)	629,362	48,691	8.4%

* Adjusted for permanent virements

- This is a challenging budget with high savings targets to achieve. We are grateful to the NHS in Devon for the one year only funding of £10 million to support Adult Social Care.

- **Devolution Deal** - Working closely with Devon Districts, Plymouth and Torbay, the partnership has put proposals to Government for a Devolution Deal. This is not a change to Local government structures in Devon. We are asking for powers to be able to work closer together in the eight areas below, to speed up the recovery from the pandemic.
- **What do we want?** Partner authorities, working closely with stakeholders have identified eight initial areas to focus on in negotiations with Government:
 - **Housing**, more affordable housing for key workers and local families and drive economic growth.
 - **Skills, Employment and Education**, better support for young people and adults to learn and gain the skills that the economy needs.
 - **Transport and Infrastructure**, tackling gaps in our public transport, and improving our broader transport, energy and digital infrastructure, supporting the area to thrive
 - **Economic Development, Business Support and Innovation**, working with the business community to ensure that they have the support they need to drive economic growth.
 - **Health and Care**, working together to better align national funding to support the health and care needs of Devon, Plymouth, and Torbay's residents.
 - **Climate Change**, working together and aligning national funding and activity to accelerate our progress towards net zero
 - **Regeneration and Place**, securing the funding and flexibilities we need to accelerate levelling up, and ensuring that every community can meet its potential.
 - **Governance**, securing a governance approach for the Devolution Deal that builds on our existing strong approach to collaboration and partnership working.
- **Devon Climate Emergency** - All through the pandemic Devon County Council and partners have continued to work on the Devon Climate Emergency follow this link for the latest information: <https://www.devonclimateemergency.org.uk/response-to-devon-climate-assembly/> We have held a citizen's assembly and there is a consultation till the 14th of April 2022, for you to take part in.
- **Highways** - We have had a mild winter/spring so far. The best way to report any highway issues is online at this link: www.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/ A new Neighbourhood Highways Officer has been appointed, Josh Scillitoe.
- **Ukraine** - The Council is stepping up its response, alongside key partners, to the **Homes for Ukraine** scheme. This went 'live' on the 25th of March, enabling local **sponsors** to match with **guests** from Ukraine. This initial phase of the scheme is designed to supplement the **Ukraine Family Visa** for people in the UK to now support friends and colleagues. In addition, we have seen matches of guests and sponsors, often through third-party organisations supporting those fleeing the conflict. We are now seeing several hundred people in Devon being matched and, following permission to travel, we will start to see those families arrive in Devon.
- At a later point, the government will extend the scheme in order for local charities, organisations and businesses to sponsor families directly, potentially in larger groups. This may be a further opportunity for local VCSE partners to engage and support.

- The key initial role for Local Government, as outlined in Government guidance, is to develop processes to i) conduct a DBS check for all adults within the sponsor family; ii) assess the sponsor's accommodation; and iii) to assess any key safeguarding risks arising in each match. We are awaiting further guidance from Government around the specific nature of each assessment.
 - As you will appreciate this is a significant undertaking, across local councils in partnership, but we have already made good progress in devising routes to meet these requirements safely and at pace.
 - The situation is evolving rapidly, with updated guidance coming through from government daily. All Team Devon partners are working together to develop a rapid response.
 - In addition, we will have a range of other logistical challenges regarding the co-ordination of wellbeing and wrap-around support and funding for each guest (and sponsor) and are in active dialogue with local councils, VCSE partners, health, DWP and schools. We are also mindful of the significant risks and issues, including the potential future break up of arrangements between guests/sponsors, and with it the need to find emergency accommodation solutions. We are working through related contingencies.
 - You will be well aware of a huge groundswell of positive local support and goodwill and we will want to ensure that this can be utilised by guests, sponsors and partners in a safe way and where appropriate to give guests consistent opportunities to settle and feel welcome. In the coming days we will work with partners to map out an approach in which sponsors, guests, communities and organisations can access responses particularly to sign post to key support and services.
 - The Council's website is being updated with the latest information and provides wider background and links. [Devon stands with Ukraine - Devon County Council](#)
 - **Locality Budget** - I have supported many Locality Budget applications in the last year, not a lot of money, but it can make a difference having the support of the Local Member through the Locality Budget, when applying for other grants. Link: <https://www.devon.gov.uk/democracy/councillors-nav/locality-budgets/>
- 09 Throwleigh Village Hall report**
- Covid has restricted activities.
 - Quite a large turnover of the population so decided to have a meet your village party.
 - Fete is a big success.
 - Whilst the Hall has been less used, it has been redecorated.
 - People are beginning to start to want to meet again.
 - Plant sale is on 21st May 2022.
- 10 Throwleigh Archive Report**
- Met several times throughout the year. New chairman now in place.
 - Put various exhibitions on in Village Hall and Providence Chapel.
 - There is now a design for a Jubilee Mug to be distributed.
- 11 Providence School Charity Report**
- Small grants of £250.00 are awarded for certain activities for local young people.
 - Covid restrictions enabled a different type of request such as distant learning tools but now gone back to more traditional grants such as coaching for a cricketer and tools for a college student.
 - Currently £152,000 in investments and approx. £1,000 in current account.

12 Providence Chapel Report

- Five years ago, likely to close but in a much better place now.
- Used one Sunday a month.
- A free Exhibition of photographs by Chris Chapman will be placed within the Chapel, starting from June and a Heritage Lottery grant of £9,600 has been received to complete this. Photographs of rural life in the 1970s. There will be 12 open days and possible private evenings for groups.

13 Throwleigh Church Report

- Gidleigh and Throwleigh Church have joined together and many joint events are now held.
- Out pattern of services, Throwleigh has second Sunday of the month, and Gidleigh has the third and fourth services of the month. Tried to make hymn sheets more user friendly. There are special services.
- Had a number of funerals take place.
- Pop up post offices held, which were well received.
- Good network of volunteers.
- Christmas tree project - gifts were left for those that were less fortunate.
- Food bank deposit box in the church which gets redistributed to those that may need it.
- Autumn Festival and concert in September.
- Ark Angels Way - people follow a route via some interesting churches. It's part of a scheme that is set up of the Diocese of Exeter.
- Everyone welcome to attend.

14 Comments/Questions from members of the public.

- Potholes within the village are a problem.
- Has the Parish Council got any plans to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.
- Plant a tree for the Jubilee.

15 Date of next meeting.

10th April 2023.

Meeting ended at 9.05pm.

Signed: Dated:.....