

**WEST QUANTOXHEAD ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY – 4 APRIL 2018**

The Annual Parish Assembly was held in the Village Hall at 7.30 pm on the above date.

**PRESENT:** Councillor G Tizzard (Chairman)  
Ian Liddell-Grainger MP  
Somerset County Councillor: Cllr H Davies  
District Councillor: Cllr S Dowding  
Councillors R Hughes, J Roberts, Mrs S Sherry and Mrs P Tolley  
Ian Porter and Bill Jenman – Quantock Hills Landscape Partnership Scheme  
Police Inspector Neil Dillon  
Izzy Sylvester, Village Agent  
Mrs M Francis (Parish Clerk)  
11 Parishioners

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Mr K and Mrs H Rowlands
2. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5 APRIL 2017:** The Minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman.
3. **POLICE REPORT**  
The would be covered under item 6.
4. **SOMERSET COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT: COUNTY COUNCILLOR HUGH DAVIES:**  
SCC had problems with children social care, Ofsted were called which resulted in the director going and the service has since gone up – on the way to a good rating. A balanced budget had been set and ringfence adult social care – 3% increase, 1% local infrastructure bid, successful 1<sup>st</sup> bid. 17,600 houses in development sites already approved, but not yet built – possible sites in Watchet and Williton. The Library consultation had been extended until the 13<sup>th</sup> June; Williton library was safe. SCC had taken Wessex Water to court for 3 serious roadwork offences and were awarded £3,000. Cllr Hall, Deputy Leader, had just stepped down, Cllr Christine Lawrence was standing in temporarily until May. Dr Court had been awarded an Honary Alderman. Upcoming roadworks were reported upon. 16 weddings were scheduled during the bad snow, 10 were served and 6 were cancelled by the couples. Currently in the second year of free EDF bus; they would stop anywhere on the run.

Questions were taken:

Q1. It was reported the buses did not always stop.

A1. Cllr Davies would look into.

Q2. There was a very bad pothole between the Lodge, Weacombe Road and Honeyrow Lane. Water was pouring down the road and when it froze the area became an ice rink. Bollards had been placed there for a long time, but it was on a blind bend.

A2. Cllr Davies would contact highways.

**WEST SOMERSET COUNCIL REPORT: COUNCILLOR S DOWDING:**

It was reported the Minister had permitted the formation of a new council between West Somerset Council and Taunton Deane Borough Council, which will be formed after the May 2019 elections. This should mean the councils are more efficient. Council tax has risen; police precept has gone up due to underfunded by Government for

many years. West Somerset Council lottery was well supported raising money for good causes. 3,000 workers were now on site at Hinkley, 115,000 tonnes of concrete had already been laid. CIM fund – West Somerset had benefited by £3 million. Great shame the RNLI bid failed; Cllr Dowding hoped they would apply again. The Police move into West Somerset house had been delayed, it was hoped this would now take place in June. Somerset Armed Forces Foundation – helps ex-servicemen with mental health, housing etc, please contact Cllr for further information. Due to the highlights from the programme 'Blue Planet' West Somerset Council were committed to removing all single use plastic over the next year.

Questions were taken:

Q1. Vast amount of plastic from supermarkets cannot be recycled, yet other authorities were doing more.

A1. SWP were looking at recycling PET1 which can be sold at a higher price. Margarine tubs were being looked at, hopefully over the next 6 months/1 year. Black plastic is very difficult to recycle – please write to the supermarkets to complain. All need to write.

Q2. From West Somerset perspective, do you feel the area will have a fair say in the new council?

A2. Yes, a lot of Taunton Deane are rural areas and also feel left out, so between WS & TD there will be more rural views, so hopefully better coverage.

5. **PRESENTATION BY IAN LIDDELL-GRAINGER MP –  
PROPOSED MERGER OF WEST SOMERSET COUNCIL AND  
TAUNTON DEANE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

With the amalgamation of the two councils, it will be important for West Somerset not to be ignored and Councillors will have to fight twice as hard. Main concerns were:

- Taunton area approx. 125,000 people, compared with approx. £35,000 in West Somerset.
- Taunton has a Town Council with a Mayor; flower displays – all of which West Somerset residents will be paying towards.
- Two completely different areas – rural and urban.
- Magna in WS compared with councils own company in Taunton – WS may have to pay for this.
- Child services – more difficult for WS as a long way for the Police – wants a fair deal for the people of West Somerset.
- Not the best of roads in WS
- Hinkley – would like to see ringfenced
- Area worth protecting, will fight for the area.

In response to items already bought up – blocked drain, contact will be made with the gentleman in charge tomorrow and a work schedule will be requested. RNLI – very disappointed, felt it was the wrong decision. Felt they desperately needed the funding as female crew change in a cupboard and male crew change in the corridor. They need to be able to change quickly and launch as quickly as possible.

An explanation was given regarding plastic and the recycling of, especially the difficulties around recycling of black plastic. Alternatives were being looked into by companies, but more work was needed.

An update on Hinkley point was given, detailing the amount of staff on site, how the project was mainly on schedule, lorry movements were up to 250 per day and over 80 buses were being run over the area.

Questions were taken:

Q1. The amalgamation will take place, which you are against, what can you do to help WS?

A1. Taunton need to be precept and parished; WS should not be paying for their housing; Hinkley – needs to be ringfenced for WS; National Park needs correct representation.

Q2. Business rates on Hinkley Point – the Government are not prepared to commit if the business rates will stay in WS or go direct to central.

A1. The buildings on Hinkley C are subjected to business rates and are being paid. When completed, the buildings will be demolished as they are modular.

Q3. Tractors through the village are a real problem – please can you ask that they do not go through the village.

A3. The company has been spoken to and it had been requested they do not use the village as a cut through, will speak again. Please report the trailer numbers as this is how they can be traced.

Q4. Will there be a new headquarters for the new council?

A4. Taunton Deane has had £11m spent on building – WS will remain open and have a presence.

## **6. REPORT FROM INSPECTOR NEIL DILLON – POLICING IN WEST SOMERSET**

Inspector Dillon was in charge of neighbourhood policing in West Somerset and Taunton Deane. He was the sergeant in Williton 8 years ago and enjoyed being back in the area. The following was reported:

- Regular patrols taking place on Roughmoor Industrial Estate due to a few recent thefts.
- A warrant was recently served due to drug intelligence in Watchet and Williton.
- Rural theft was unfortunately still occurring; crime prevention advice was regularly given.
- The police were targeting prolific offenders.
- Crime statistics show this is a very safe area to live in; 11.3% up on last year equating to 71 extra crimes over the calendar year – this covered the Quantock Vale ward – Williton, Watchet and Old Cleeve and surrounding areas – not just in West Quantoxhead.
- The recent robbery in Williton – a male was charged and taken to court, the individual had been responsible for 10 other thefts and he was charged on them all.
- Auto Number Plate Recognition – currently not working but hoped to get back shortly.
- To date for moving into West Somerset House but hoped during the summer.
- One team, West Somerset wide, meet once a month, including housing, village agent, police, schools etc – look at any problems before they get worse. This was working well, it allowed partners to talk and solve problems quickly.
- Body cameras – all officers in West Somerset now have them which was a great asset. Everything being recorded often helped, particularly in domestic violence cases as victims may retract their evidence. Safety for police officers.
- In September resources were being divided. PCSO will become face of beat team, beat managers will be more flexible and will be able to deploy officers easier to areas needed and cover all areas. No officers moving area.
- PCSO vacancy in Williton had been filled.
- Beat Manager vacancy in Minehead had been filled.

Questions were taken:

Q1. Is there any laws against horse riders using mobile phones whilst riding?

A1. Unsure, please give me your name and I will get an answer.

Q2. Butlins passengers on buses – Bus stopping to allow urinating on main road

A2. Please take to number plate, the police can then approach driver.

## 7. **IZZY SYLVESTER, VILLAGE AGENT**

A verbal report was given re-capping on the priorities of a Village Agent and how their work had altered. Funding areas were reported upon. Referrals were being taken from the GP practice.

Some of the areas supported were:

Mental Health, Community Development, Support Libraries and Talking Café, helping vulnerable parents and tackling isolation. The work covers 18 parishes. A new foodbank had been set up in Watchet, with help from the churches.

## 8. **REPORT BY IAIN PORTER AND BILL JENMAN – QUANTOCK HILLS AONB SERVICE - QUANTOCK HILLS LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP SCHEME**

Bill was introduced as the employed officer to take forward Quantock land part scheme who gave a verbal report on the Quantock Hills Landscape Partnership scheme. Stage one had been passed, which outlined 26 projects including enhancement (hedgerows etc), activities, events, understanding, heritage, upskilling, apprenticeship and commons management.

The next stage was to develop further, any ideas, please let them know. Protected, improve etc it may fit into the project. If anyone has any issues, please make contact. Leaflets were left. Currently working on stage 2 of the project – has already proven a need for the funding, now needed to give the fine details. The funding was separate from the AONB. The project would cost £2.7m, match funding 30%, £800k, EDF - £500k, £300k from various other pots. October 2019 was the development phase with 5 years to deliver. Bill was based at Fyne Court, please contact to discuss anything further.

## 9. **PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** Councillor G Tizzard:

**Council Members:** The Parish Council's membership remains the same as at last year's Parish Assembly with 7 members: Gordon Tizzard (Chairman), Richard Hughes (Vice Chair), Sue Sherry, Tony Dunn, Pam Tolley and John Roberts with our Clerk Michelle Francis. Nigel Purcell-Herbert had recently resigned, so there was currently a vacancy on the Parish Council.

**Planning Applications:** We have had 8 planning applications being at St Etheldreda's Church; The Willows, Vinnecombe Lane; Silver Leaves, Weacombe Road; Home Farm Holiday Centre; Belle Vue, Weacombe Road; 2 at Staple Farm, Weacombe Road; Withenfield, Staple Lane.

**Website:** The Parish Council website – [www.westquantoxheadpc.co.uk](http://www.westquantoxheadpc.co.uk) Please take a look and if there are any comments you wish to make or would like to see something included please let the Clerk know.

### **Bus Shelter**

The new path had been completed, report submitted, and funding gained.

**Highways**

Various matters have been brought to the attention of Highways during the year. The most recent was the road signs which had been reported and mainly addressed.

**10. FINANCIAL REPORT: PARISH CLERK:** Copies of the Estimates for the Precept for 2018/2019 were circulated. A precept of £2473.76 had been requested.

**11. REPORTS FROM VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS:**

**ST AUDRIES WOMEN'S INSTITUTE:** The WI were celebrating their Centenary this year. Currently there were 26 members. Meetings were held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month in the afternoon and all were invited to attend. The WI have guest speakers and a variety of activities, going shortly to Horner Wood. The skittle team reached the semi-final. There would be a quiz in the summer – date to be confirmed.

**VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE:** It was reported the Village Hall was well supported by different groups which gave a good cross section. It was agreed the village hall was a real village asset.

**12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:**

A discussion took place regarding the telephone kiosk – it was agreed to include on the Parish Council agenda for further discussion and action.

The Chairman thanked all for attending.

The meeting closed at 9.12 pm followed by refreshments.

Signed: .....

Chairman

Date: .....