

**Minutes of a the Tywardreath and Par Parish Council Annual Parish Assembly
held on 6th April 2017 at Par Running Track Pavilion**

Present Cllrs Brasier, Foster, Hughes, Scrafton, Phillips, Rowse and Taylor

In attendance Parish Clerk, Sally Vincent
PCSO Rebecca Harris (part)
12 members of the public

16/199 Apologies Cllr Waddington, Cllr Wildish

16/200 Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on 5th May 2016

It was proposed by Cllr Scrafton, seconded Cllr Hughes and RESOLVED that the minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman

16/201 To receive the Annual Report of the Parish Council –

Cllr Wildish gave her report on the work of the council over the previous year.

As this Parish Council term draws to a close I would like to thank the Clerk and the other Councillors for all their hard work and support over this period. Although it has taken time we have at last started to see the return of some of the assets we requested.

Although we have failed to get the beach returned to the Parish Council we have continued to work as part of the Par Beach Management Group to challenge the council where needed and help edge them towards making improvements. We have had the Public toilets at Par beach and Hambly's Corner signed over and have renovated the beach ones. We would like to hear from people who would like to rent space off the council at Par Beach or Hambly's corner. Play area at Par beach has been passed back to the Parish Council. We are working with village organisations to replace the equipment removed by Cornwall Council with new equipment although this is progressing slowly at the moment

We are concerned at the amount of dog fouling in the parish. If you want to report an instance please call Cornwall Council or let one of the Parish Councillors know.

It is good to see that the Butter Market in Tywardreath has a new seat after a lot of delays. Thanks to the Environment Committee and Cllr Foster for getting this done. We are still waiting for the land behind Vine Place to be returned to the Council, it is more than likely that this will be planted up as a community orchard we have had some offers of help on this and it will be good to see this derelict piece of ground put to use so that the weeds from it don't grow into neighbouring gardens causing problems as they have recently.

We have started up a Joint Emergency Committee with St Blazey Town Council. It's going to take time but we aim to prepare a Community Emergency Plan to help us to be better prepared to assist Emergency Services where incidents occur within the parish. We are looking for more Emergency/Flood Wardens so please spread the word to anyone that you think may be interested. Please get in touch with Cllr Wildish or Cllr Taylor if you would like to know more.

At long last the Allotments have been returned to Council control thanks to hard work from Cllr Phillips and the Clerk. Existing tenants at Wood Lane, Poldrea and Glenview have got new contracts and the new Allotments at Lower Poldrea are ready for use. There are still a few spare so more people can apply to clerk if interested.

16/202 To receive the Annual Police Report

PCSO Rebecca Harris gave the annual report

There had been 106 recorded crimes during the year: 20 x violence with injury, 17 x violence with injury, 4 x rape, 1 x other sexual offences, 4 x robbery, 2 x burglary dwelling, 8 x burglary non dwelling, 8 x vehicle offences, 9 x shoplifting, 10 x other theft, 12 x criminal damage, 4 x public order offences, 1 x possession of weapons, 6 x possession of drugs and 302 incidents recorded.

Crime figures for the year have increased by 27%., the biggest increase being in shoplifting crimes. Many of these crimes are being investigated at the moment as it seems Par and St Blazey have been targeted by offenders coming from St Austell over the past few months. Apart from this noticeable increase, the other crime categories have not increased too much. Logs/calls to the Police have decreased by just over

20% compared to the same period for the previous year.

The Police team covering St Blazey has changed slightly, Sgt Dowlen has been replaced by PC Hamley who is the neighbourhood Sergeant covering St Austell, St Blazey and all the surrounding areas. PC Andrew Barnicoat remains as Neighbourhood Beat Manager for Par and St Blazey as well as Fowey and Lostwithiel. PCSO Jamie Ward now covers Lostwithiel due to PCSO Merrikin being on maternity leave. PCSO Rebecca Harris still covers Par, Tywardreath and St Blazey. We also have three dedicated Par, St Blazey, Fowey and Lostwithiel response officers who when they have the opportunity dedicate time to being on the patch. The biggest change has been a move into our Police Office which is part of the St Blazey Community Rooms. This happened last August after St Blaise Town Council bought the building. We are very pleased to still be able to operate from patch instead of having to be based in St Austell.

Local police are still actively involved in the Par and St Blazey Pub watch scheme which holds regular meetings throughout the year. We also work with PL24 Community Association and produce a report in the newsletter they distribute around Par and St Blazey.

Our St Blazey Police Facebook page is gaining popularity. It contains important appeals for information on recent crime, news from the local police team, local events and meeting dates. We also have a St Blazey and Par Police Website at www.devon-cornwall.police.uk containing similar information together with access to local crime statistics and priorities.

16/203 To receive the Financial Report

Cllr Phillips gave the annual financial report

The Par Beach toilets are up and running and, after early teething problems, are being properly serviced. Approval for change of use of the vacant space is being sought to enable it to be a source of income to cover or, at least, reduce the shortfall between income and expenditure. It is hoped that the Hamley's

Corner site will also provide an income. Currently it incurs business rates and water and electricity standing charges.

While acquisition of the allotments incurred significant expenditure in legal fees, they are proving to be a very welcome and, therefore, valuable asset for the parish. The Lower Poldrea allotment site has been cleared, fenced and gated and provides 10 plots of which 4 have been taken up. The record of tenants we inherited from Cornwall Council contained inaccuracies and the waiting list was also error strewn. We have 9 vacant plots but hopefully sufficient local applicants can be found.

We agreed an increase of 4% (£1609) in the Precept, which added about £1 a year for each Band D property. It was necessary to budget £6567 for the cost of the Parish Council election in May.

As always there is the unknown cost of future devolution commitments hanging over us but we shall continue to balance the benefits against the impact in our decisions on acquisition.

My committee has continued to provide invaluable guidance and support and the Parish Clerk, Sally Vincent has kept the books peerlessly so I think the Parish can have continue to have confidence in our financial stability going forward.

16/204 To receive the Annual Report of the Environment Committee

Cllr Foster gave her annual report

This past year we have trimmed all our parish footpaths, also the County have repaired the path through the marsh from Treesmill Bridge to St Andrews Road Bridge.

We established that no-one owns the area outside the Buttermarket and have assumed ownership and repaired the large seat around the tree. Our volunteers have worked with us to maintain and plant the area; they have provided plants and bulbs for the planters and raised beds as well as their labour. This is much appreciated

Our two other volunteers who care for the Well Street Wells have continued to care for and plant bulbs and plants and never fail to give us a lovely year round display.

We must thank David Hughes for getting all the weeds and saplings cleared from the foot of the wall in Mount Bennett Road.

The Allotment Society have given us much help, support and advice while the Parish Council worked on taking over the allotments and getting the Poldrea plots in good condition. All this has been achieved this past year. We thank Dave George for attending our meetings representing the allotment holders.

We are continuing with our plan for the community orchard on the overgrown land behind Vine Place.

We would like to congratulate the Church and the Living Churchyard Friends on their hard work and perseverance in getting this project back on course. We shall see many more wild flowers, birds, bee's and butterflies (to name but a few flora and fauna) there in the future.

16/205 To receive the Annual Report of the Planning Committee

Cllr Phillips gave the annual report

This year not a month has gone by without a meeting and we have considered 46 applications of which 31 were unopposed, 3 were supported & 12 were

opposed. Most of the applications to which we objected were approved, at least one was withdrawn but that for 10 age-restricted dwellings at Elmsleigh Care Home, which went to appeal, was refused by the Inspector. We agreed to join the Pre Application Agreement Scheme which should encourage applicants particularly of complex or contentious schemes to approach us first and we shall be privy to any non-confidential advice offered by the planning officers. Where necessary public engagement will be arranged and any reasonable costs will be met by the applicant. However, there is still a strong need to have a formally approved Neighbourhood Plan in place to boost local control over development in our area. Following the introduction of paperless planning, we have purchased a portable WiBE broadband unit, which will enable us to connect to the Internet wherever we hold our meetings. As always, I am most grateful for the efforts and support of my committee in our efforts to ensure where possible that any development is beneficial and does not spoil our area.

16/206 To receive the Annual Report of the Cornwall Councillors

Cllr Hughes gave his annual report

The past year has been difficult for Cornwall Council as the effect of Central Government funding cuts is starting to affect “frontline” services such as road maintenance, libraries and social services. Increasingly we are seeing services which we have taken for granted being cut back or removed completely.

Overall, whilst it is easy to pick on details, I believe that the Council has not done a bad job of reducing the impact on the public, not a little, thanks to the dedication and hard work of our Council staff. Unfortunately, unless the Government has an unexpected change of heart, we can only expect things to get worse in coming years. We have been told to expect further cuts of about one third in funding in the next three years.

For me, the greatest achievement of the past year has been getting the Cornwall Local Plan approved by the Inspector and adopted. Those of us on the Planning Policy Committee and our officers spent many hours working on the plan to ensure that it complied with the many essential criteria laid down by the Government, having to accept a higher level of new-builds and lower levels of affordable housing than many of us would have wished.

Unfortunately, the Inspector made it clear that, without accepting the alterations, there was no way that the Plan would be accepted. Without a Local Plan in place the National Planning Framework would be the basis for decision making, giving virtually carte-blanche to developers. The harsh reality is that we have to abide by government policy and, however much we “huff and puff” and sign petitions, until we have a national government which is prepared to devolve real power to local authorities and listen to local concerns, there is no chance of this changing.

However, the new Local Plan does give Cornwall far more power than we have previously had to oppose developments which do not comply with its policies. In the three months that it has been in effect we have seen far more refusals of applications and our success rate on appeals has improved from 60% to 80%. Even more significantly, because Neighbourhood Plans are an integral part of the policy, Inspectors are now prepared to give significant weight to them in their decisions.

After a slow start, I am pleased to report that the Tywardreath and Par Neighbourhood Plan is starting to make real progress and I would urge all local residents, of all ages, to play an active part in its development. This is your opportunity to help shape the way our community develops over the next 20 years. We cannot “ban” any future development but we can influence where development should take place and shape the nature of that development in terms of scale, design, housing mix etc.

With my fellow Cornwall Councillors I have been involved in the STARR Project. This £30 million pound project seeks to control river-flows in the whole catchment of the Par and Tregrehan Rivers to reduce the risk of serious flooding to no worse than an average of once in 50 years. Apart from reducing the threat to roads and homes in the low-lying parts of Par & St Blazey it should also make additional areas of land available for economic development, bringing much needed employment. At a parochial level, it should significantly reduce flooding in St Andrew’s Road and at Brook’s Corner and should bring more security to the residents of Par Green & Moreland Rd.

Working with Cllr Scrafton, I have persuaded Cornwall Council to freeze car-park charges at Par Beach and have secured an undertaking that an improved maintenance regime will be introduced on the car-park to reduce the incidence and duration of potholes. We have also managed to negotiate the transfer of the Par Beach Toilets to the PC, securing this essential facility for locals and visitors alike.

Following the disaster of the summer before last, I have worked with concerned local residents to set up “Friends of Tywardreath Churchyard” to work with Cornwall Council and the PCC to manage the lower part of the ground as a “living churchyard”, encouraging biodiversity and its value as a public open space without detracting from the tranquillity of the setting. Part of this scheme will involve maintenance of a circular walk through the area with discrete “interpretation” notices. I would urge everyone to recognise that dogs are currently excluded from the churchyard and that this will be increasingly important if we are to encourage diversity of fauna.

The problem of anti-social parking around the school is of huge concern to many local residents, not just here but across Cornwall. As a result of a Motion to Council to which I was a signatory, a study is under way into how the situation might be improved. An early finding was that much of the signage was not legally enforceable and measures are in hand to rectify this. Another part of the problem is that, as a response to Government cuts, the number of Enforcement officers had been reduced. To deal with this specific problem it has been agreed that more officers will be recruited. However, the reality is that the only way in which the situation will improve is if individuals act in a more responsible, less antisocial manner. Peer pressure can make a big difference in this. Rather than say “someone should do something about this”, groups of parents/carers could approach “offenders” politely pointing out the danger and nuisance which is being caused. Undoubtedly some of those approached will respond rudely but, a bit like smoking or drink-driving, little by little the message will get through.

I am pleased to report that the Par Bay Big Local, Cornubia Hall and St Blazey Roundhouse Projects, of which I am a trustee, are all working well although progress can be frustratingly slow. The same cannot be said of Cllr Scrafton’s

project to bring control of Par Running Track back to the local community and establish a top-quality skate-park, in which I have played a minor part. This is now well under way, with visible effects.

We are very fortunate to live in a place with a strong sense of identity and community with many unsung heroes and heroines who work selflessly and often unseen to keep it vibrant. It has been my privilege to serve the community over the past 15 years as a councillor of one sort or another and I thank all those who have helped me. If re-elected, I make only one promise: to do my best and do my duty.

Cllr Scrafton gave his annual report

A major preoccupation throughout the past year has been the future of Par running track. I am delighted that arrangements are now in hand for it to be transferred into the hands of the local community. The group of volunteers with whom I am working are in the process of establishing a legal entity, which will enable us to apply for grants etc. I expect this immediate work to be completed soon, so that we can proceed with further consultation with our community about precisely what we might all wish to see achieved. I should stress that at the top of our agenda is the project for a new skateboard facility, and background work is well underway on this.

In the meantime, as you will have seen work is underway on the resurfacing of the track. I was glad to have been able to convince Cornwall Council that this £250,000 project must go ahead before the track could be taken over by the community.

Another regular concern has been planning. A number of applications in our parish and on its outskirts have proved contentious in one way or another. Some of them have not been resolved in the way I might have liked. One issue that seems to me to be very unfair is the way in which a Planning Inspector from outside Cornwall has the authority to overrule the decisions made by our own, democratically-elected, planning committees. I hope soon to bring forward realistic proposals for a change in the planning rules that would restrict this practice.

As a result of concerns expressed over traffic speeds, I have arranged for monitoring to be undertaken at some sites in our parish. I will naturally share the results of this monitoring when these are available.

It will have been noted that charges for parking at Par Beach have been held constant for the second year in a row. I am also pleased that David Hughes and I have been able to convince Cornwall Council to re-grade the main car park twice a year, instead of just once. The inspection and repair regime for the road along the beach is also being improved. I was glad to see work being done on the car park yesterday and today.

There are numerous other things I could report on here, if time allowed but I am happy to give a more comprehensive report after the meeting to anyone who would like me to.

Cllr Taylor gave his annual report

The landslip that closed the road at Kilhallon took some ten months to complete the restoration, much longer than I would have liked. They have done a good job that will last for many years but I worry there may be other failures on so far unaffected sections of the road.

Local funding has sustained the youth work from Fourways so far, the charity is grateful for matched funding made available from this council and trustees are working to obtain grant funding to maintain the service into the future. There is an ever present risk of flooding for many properties in the division. Inappropriate development refused locally then granted by a government planning inspector can undo the good work of our members involved with planning. This may change drainage patterns and can have unpredictable consequences downstream. As a Coordinator of the Local Joint Flood Group and Treasurer of the Cornwall Community Flood Forum CIO working with the Environment Agency, SWW and Cornwall Council officers to enable the StARR project that has the potential to reduce the risk of flooding to more than 1000 homes and to free up industrial and or commercial space for economic development. The potential for the area is huge.

Excessive speed of some vehicles and a lack of funding for highway measures has been a regular problem. I have been trying to achieve what I believe to be urgent safety work in my division but have often been frustrated by the way highways finance is allocated. Local knowledge is key and there is a need to give divisional members a greater say in spending on our highways.

Cornwall Council has recognised the need for strategic regeneration and investment in our area. 69% of local businesses employ 0 - 4 people and these small businesses are often excluded from bidding for public authority contracts. I will work to get a review of Cornwall Council's procurement policy that could open the door to these businesses and generate more revenue spend locally.

16/207 Public Participation

Gill Butler queried if the toilet block at Hamleys Corner could be used for storing PL24 documents. It was agreed that this should be investigated.

Progress on the equipping of the playpark in Poldrea was queried. Cllr Hughes explained that only one officer at Cornwall Council was working on the project and he was also dealing with parks in other locations in Cornwall so progress was inevitably slow. However he assured the meeting that the grant funding was secure.

The Clerk noted the grant money from Cornwall Council for the refurbishment of the toilets was still outstanding. Cllr Scrafton would follow up.

It was noted that it was good to see Mount Bennett Road mainly weed free but the rest of the village was very untidy. Cllr Hughes reported that Cornwall Council no longer undertook weedkilling and that other ways must be found to address this. The Clerk confirmed that Fowey Town Council contracted a qualified landscaper to weedkill the roads in Fowey twice annually.

Meeting Closed 7.37pm

Following the meeting the parishioners were invited to join the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group for refreshments. Members of the SG had staged an exhibition and were available to answer questions and receive feedback.