**MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY**

**HELD ON THURSDAY 20th APRIL 2017**

**AT 7.30pm**

**IPPLEPEN MILLENNIUM CENTRE**

**In attendance**: Coun.Tompkins (Chair)

 Coun.Carnell

 Coun.Mrs.Calland

 Coun.Mrs.Wilson

 Coun.Mrs.Hutchings

 Coun.Mrs.Northwood

 Coun.Palethorpe

**The Clerk:** Mrs.Fay Olding

**District & County Councillor:** Coun.Dewhirst on behalf of the District Council

**5 Members of the Public were in attendance**

**Apologies:** Coun.Farrow, Coun.Smith, Coun.Tomkinson

**Chair:** Coun.Mrs.Northwood

**Minutes:** The Minutes of the last Assembly were read out by the Clerk and approved.

The Chairman welcomed the members of the public.

**SPEAKER: Mr.Bruce Hooker** spoke on the need for Community Defibrillators and Ipplepen Village are very lucky to have two and possibly a third, which will be sited at the recreation ground once the new toilet block is finished. Mr.Hooker gave an explicit demonstration on how to use a Defibrillator and expressed how important it is for the casualty, as every minute that ticks by waiting for an ambulance, prevents their chances of being resuscitated.

**CHAIRMAN’S REPORT – Coun. Tompkins**

Another year has seemed to have literally flown by and that in many ways is attributable to the hard work and dedication of my fellow parish councillors which makes the post of Chair that much easier.

I have no intention of stealing the thunder of the Chairs of the various sub-committees who presently will report on the works and issues which they have been involved with over the past twelve months. However, as a brief resume; projects and achievements completed in the past twelve months many of which were objectives identified in the Parish Plan and Transport Plan for Ipplepen include:

1. Footpath off A381 into Clampitt Road, making it much safer walking for Parishioners.
2. Re-surfacing of Basket Ball Court
3. Re-Tiling of floor and refurbishment of Public Toilets in Clampitt Road.
4. Mains water supply to the Allotments
5. Queen’s 90th Birthday Celebrations in June with the “Picnic in the Park”
6. Painting of Bus Shelters
7. Refurbishment and reinstatement of the “Finger Post” in the Centre of the Village
8. Community Defibrillators
9. Maintenance of Play Equipment and Skate Park

Others projects that are on-going include:

1. Bus Shelter outside Wellington Inn
2. Toilet Block at Recreation Ground
3. Adult Exercise Equipment for Recreation Ground
4. Footpath along A381 to Two Mile Oak
5. Neighbourhood Plan

With regard to the Neighbourhood Plan we have now formed a Steering Group comprising local residents and councillors. A NP for the Village is important as it will sit just under the Teignbridge Local Plan and will be a material consideration in land use planning decisions. It will enable local people to shape the community where they live in terms of residential development, including Affordable Housing, employment land, as well as community facilities and green spaces. I would like thank all who have volunteered their time and expertise to the Steering Group with the objective of bringing the NP for Ipplepen to fruition.

During this last year we have had to say farewell to Cllrs Mrs. Barbara Cleasby and Mr. Richard Henderson, however, we were pleased to welcome on board Cllrs, David Palethorpe and Peter Tompkinson and appreciate the enthusiasm and skill-sets that each has brought to the Council.

Finally, I would now like to take this opportunity to thank all my fellow Councillors for all the hard work and commitment they have resolutely shown again during my year as Chair. As I said earlier, their hard work and support has made my term that much easier. Finally, I would particularly like to give thanks to our Parish Clerk, Fay Olding, who has been a constant support to med and who has endeavoured to keep me on the straight and narrow.

**COUNTY & D ISTRICT COUNCILLOR’S REPORT – Coun.Dewhirst**

*“Council Members across the different groups work together constructively in the interests of residents and the Council while respecting their political differences. The Council has dedicated and talented officers, who are well regarded by members and by the Council’s partners.”* These are comments made by a cross Party Group from the Local Government Association who visited Teignbridge last year. They praised the Council’s purchase of the Market Walk Shopping Centre. However they did suggest that the Council’s Scrutiny arrangements could be beefed up, particularly with regards to our outside bodies such as Strata and the LEP.

Tuesday 21st February saw the Council meet to agree a Budget for 2017-18. With a total expenditure of £66.78m and an income of £50.45m something had to give and so yet again the Council decided that sadly for the second year running with a maximum allowed £5 increase or 3.22%. This comes down to £248.58 for each Band D household as Teignbridge’s part of the Council Tax.

After being contacted by an Ipplepen resident I was pleased to help steer a successful Motion through the Teignbridge and Devon County Council in support of Women Against State Pension Inequality and supported our contention that some women who have lost up to £42,000 in pension entitlements should get a fair settlement from central government. And this was supported by Devon and Teignbridge, and many other County, Borough and District Councils wrote to the Pensions Minister concerning this matter.

The County Council showed the huge improvement in their Children’s Services since Ofsted and the Council arranged for support for the children arriving from the Refugee Camp in Calais, including language skills and translation, medical assistance, and sports and other activities for the young people – I am pleased to say most of these young people are now settled in college and fitting in well. Through my role on the Children’s Overview Standing Group I enjoyed Christmas lunch with a number of them.

On 31st March this year, after sixteen years of underwhelming performance, South West Highways lost their contract to maintain Devon’s roads and Skanska Construction took over the highways contract. The contract will run from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2024, with extension options for a further three years. Skanska Construction’s proposals, as part of its winning bid, include a range of initiatives to tackle potholes, job creation for Devon residents, introduction of an efficiency and performance manager, an affordability review every three years to target investment, and improved communications.

The County Council’s new Head of Schools, has been very active in raising the issue of our Devon schools’ funding problems. Under the Governments “Fairer Funding” programme we learnt that while 212 schools in the county would benefit (Ipplepen for instance received £6,000) another many would be far worse off than they are now.

Key figures from the budget agreed are £216.5m for adult services, £118.1m for Children’s services, £35.2m for communities, public health and environment, £33.4m for Corporate services and £56.4m for Highways.

At the end of the year my Teignbridge Community Budget has been spent on £500 for a village hall coffee station, £250 to Ipplepen Cricket Club for junior cricket and £750 towards the Air Ambulance lighting.

My County Locality Budget has been fully spent. It went on the following:-

£250 for a strimmer for Coffinswell PC; £325 for a grit bin in Abbotskerswell; £500 for a coffee station in Ipplepen Village Hall; £500 for nets at Ipplepen Cricket Club; £250 to the Kingskerswell Directory and £250 for the Kingskerswell Fete; £500 for lights to the Kingskerswell Village Hall; £4,095 for defibrillators Broadhempston, Coffinswell, Denbury and Ipplepen; £1,000 for planting on the Aller Interchange roundabout; £500 to Buckland football club juniors; £500 for Teignbridge Titans Netball Team; £1,000 for Hits foodbank when they were in crisis; £200 for the Devon Youth games and £130 to a Christmas Lunch for local care leavers. In addition to that I allocated through Investing in Devon £2,000 to Ipplepen tennis club for a new court surface; £2,500 for improvements to Ipplepen Village Hall and £5,500 for new windows to Kingskerswell village hall.

Finally I would just like to say it has been the greatest pleasure to work with you over the past four years and I truly hope to see you all again as your County Councillor after 4th May election.

**FINANCE REPORT Report written by the Financial Officer**

The balance at the end of the financial year 2016/2017 stands at £17,410.55 in the working account with the VAT for the year end still to be paid into our account and £47,09.95 in the reserve account making a healthy total of £64,450.50 plus the VAT refund due of £15,845.91.

**Expenditure for 2016/17**

Our main project for this last Financial Year was the Clampitt Road Footpath, which has now been completed and provides a safer walkway for Parishioners. Water has now been provided at the Allotments and the Basket Ball Court has been resurfaced. A Community Defibrillator has been installed in the Centre of the Village and a further one will be installed outside the new Toilet Block in the Recreation Ground when it is finished. With the one outside the Methodist Church, this will then make a total of 3 Defibrillators available in the Village for emergencies. The Toilet Block at the Recreation Ground, which many parishioners will have noticed is now well underway. Other expenditure has been the painting of the bus shelters, a new Sign Post for the centre of the village and refurbishment of the Clampitt Road Public Toilets. Several of these projects have received grant funding towards them with the Precept picking up the balance.

The Precept for 2017/18 stands at £66,560 plus a council tax support grant of £3,130.00 paid to us by Teignbridge District Council making a total of £69,690 for this coming Financial Year.

**Expenditure for the coming Financial Year:**

Funding is still being put together for the footpath project along the A381 from Ipplepen to Two Mile Oak and the new bus shelter at the Wellington Inn is now on order and will hopefully be installed by the end of April 17. We have been lucky to have been awarded two grants towards Adult Exercise Equipment for the Recreation Ground and it is hoped that we will be awarded a Rural Aid Grant for the Junior Swings to be reinstated together with a disabled swing once, the Toilet Block has been finished.

**PLANS REPORT – Coun.Farrow read by Coun.Calland**

As another council year draws to a close we have a chance to reflect upon what we have achieved in the way of planning and planning matters.

The Planning Group have commented upon a variety of planning applications; to the majority we have recommended approval others we have not. These recommendations are not given without full discussion either at the monthly Planning Group meeting or a Full Parish Council Meeting. To this end, when a particular recommendation is made at a Planning Group meeting or a Full Parish Council and to have it overturned by Teignbridge District Council later, you could think ‘why do we bother’. Your Planning Group do ‘bother’ because we want what is right for Ipplepen; we love our village and will continue to fight to maintain its character and unique nature.

I now turn to another matters that has concerned the Planning Group; Enforcement or should we say the lack of it and an increase in Retrospective Planning Applications. Over the past year various reports have been made to Teignbridge District Council concerning breaches of Planning Conditions within the Parish. I am disappointed to have to report that very little progress has been made in trying to put these ‘wrongs, right’. Teignbridge District Council has but one Enforcement Officer; although we have been informed on good authority that ‘each Planning Officer is their own Enforcement Officer’; if this was true there should be no outstanding Enforcement Notices. The increase in Retrospective Planning Applications has also concerned the Planning Group; this practice is giving credence to the phrase ‘you can build anything anywhere and get away with it’. The Planning Group wants to remind Ipplepen that if this practice is continues what will your village look like in years to come.

Modern technology is now employed in trying to make the Planning process run more efficiently. The Parish Council has invested in a new laptop computer, projector and screen to be able to review Planning Applications. As from April 2017 it is the preferred method, by Teignbridge District Council, that all applications are made online, thus eliminating the need to copy and post drawings etc. to Town and Parish Councils. For our meetings we are now able to login to the Planning Portal at Teignbridge District Council and review the applications online. This system has been employed by the Parish Council and ‘so far, so good’ but time will tell.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow councillors who have served on the Planning Group for their time and effort over the past year and would like to reassure the Parish that we will continue to look after their interests, as far as we are able, in respect of planning matters.

**RE-APPROVAL OF PLANNING GUIDELINES**

There were no changes to the present Planning Guidelines for Ipplepen.

**AMENITIES REPORT** – **Coun.Carnell**

The Parish Council are continuing to find that Teignbridge DC and Devon County Highways are withdrawing many services due to Government cut backs, therefore additional maintenance and repair work has been filtering down to Local level.

On several occasions this Winter the Amenities Group Sub Committee have been called on to provide distribution of sand bags due to flooding and also to attend to several fallen trees, in the future it would also seem that many other tasks such as grass and hedge cutting will also be passed on and become an additionally PC reasonability and expense.

As part of its responsibility’s the Amenities Sub Committee with the aid of the Parish Council has also inspected Parish Properties, overseen work contracts within the Parish and carried out various other general maintenance tasks, many of the smaller tasks now being undertaken by the Parish Councillors themselves so that we can keep cost to a minimum and stretch the budget.

The PC is pleased to say that a quote for the new toilet block in the Park has now been accepted and Mr John Hooper will soon have the building work underway.

Also in the Park, the PC are hoping this year to find additional funding for the refurbishment of the basketball court and to provide a range of adult exercise equipment.

Most will be aware that the Parish Council has now taken on responsibility for the Public Conveniences in Clampitt Road, the work of re-tiling the floors has now been completed, we next need to consider the rest of the building which is in need of general repair and an upgrade.

Finally, on behalf of Myself and the PC I wish to thank all members of the Amenities Group for the time that they give freely to the Community, often behind the scenes and un-noticed.

I would also like to thank Dave Cartwright the Parish Handyman for his continued hard work in all weathers, mowing grass, litter picking, and all the many other duties he performs so well for the Parish.

A big thank you should also go to the many Parishioners of Ipplepen who have done they bit on behalf of the Village such as Grass Cutting, Litter Picking, Hedge Trimming and Weeding, Etc throughout the year, it all helps to make Ipplepen a better place to live.

And of course thank you to all members of the Parish Council for their support throughout the year, and in particular our Clerk Fay Olding, without whom I am not sure that we would function at all.

**HIGHWAYS** –  **Coun.Smith read by Coun.Mrs.Wilson**

Firstly, I should like to thank Cllrs Mrs Hutchings, Cllr Mrs Northwood and Cllr Mrs Wilson for their time and commitment as the Highways Advisory Group continue to meet a bi-monthly. The minutes of these meetings are publicised and available from the clerk. I should also like to thank our County Councillor for his support with the DCC highways department.

During the past year we had issues with the stone wall falling out into Orley Road adjacent to the Public Footpath 14 and thanks to Cllr Carnell and our County Councillor we were able to get the repairs done with the minimum of fuss. The contractor, Ben Towell, and the owners of the adjacent property, who allowed materials to be stored on their land, ensured that the job could be completed with the minimum of disruption.

I am also able to report that two of the sustainability issues in our transport plan have been addressed and it is hoped the get the third, a footway between Park Hill and Two Mile Oak, under way later this year if we can secure a grant from National Lottery Awards for All. The first project involved bringing the pavement on the Totnes Road into Clampitt Road to provide a safe pedestrian access and thanks to the patience of the landowners and our perseverance that has now been completed. The second item goes back to the time of our Parish plan and that is the provision of a bus shelter in Fore Street. Following discussions with the County Council, District Council and the owner of Penlee a suitable design has been agreed. An order has been placed with B & C Shelters and at present work is expected to begin on 24th April.

Other works that have been carried out during the year involved the resealing of the footways and the introduction of drop kerbs in Luscombe Close, patching throughout the main thoroughfare from Foredown Road to Silver Street and the markings at the rear of the school were replaced onto fresh tarmac. We have also had the Cooke Drive access resurfaced and Barn Park Close resurfaced. At the beginning of the month a section of Moor Road from Park Hill to Dornafield Cross was surface dressed. So, given the budgetary issues the County Council Highways department are faced with I think we have had a good year.

Members of the Advisory Group and the Amenities Group are about to embark on Chapter 8 training and once that is completed we will have to decide how much we will be involved in the County Council Road Warden scheme which is gradually being rolled out across the county.

Finally, I have inspected our public footpaths and bridleways and reported to the County Council’s Public Rights of Way that they are all serviceable. There are one or two outstanding issues and the more regularly used paths will need cutting back soon but other than that there have been no real issues this past twelve months.

**OPEN FORUM**

Thanks were given to the Parish Council on behalf of the community by Chris Popham and Rob Vallance for all the hours that the Councillors give to the Village.

**The meeting closed at 8.55pm.**