

**MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY  
HELD ON THURSDAY 18<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2024  
AT 7.15pm  
AT THE MILLENNIUM CENTRE**

**In attendance:** Coun.Palethorpe (Chairman)  
Coun.Rattlidge  
Coun.Mrs.Calland  
Coun.Smith  
Coun.Latter

**The Clerk:** Miss.Cat.Freston

**District & County Councillor:** Coun.Dewhurst.

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

**Apologies:** Coun.Carnell (Vice-Chair), Coun.Burnham, Coun.Farrow, , Coun.Ranjit,  
Coun.Jerwood.

**Chair:** Coun.Palethorpe

**Minutes:** The Minutes of the last Assembly held on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2023, were taken as read and approved.

The Chairman welcomed everyone present at the meeting.

**SPEAKER: Russ Holbert** from Maverick Skate Parks.

Russ is one of the Directors of Maverick Skate Parks. They built the first spray concrete skate park 17 years ago. Maverick have built over 150 concrete skate parks across the country.

There are three stages to a new skate park, which starts by deciding which contractor to use.

- Consultation – post online to get a design together to see what the Community in Ipplepen would like to see.
- Planning Permission – May need to be sought (could be done under Permitted Development) as currently have permission for a skate park or achieve Planning Permission if needed.
- Funding – There are various options to help with funding.
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Once all of the above have been complied with, the building of the skate park can start.

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – Coun.Palethorpe**

It has been another busy year for Ipplepen Parish Council that started with the Parish Council Elections and the extremely important Ipplepen Neighbourhood Plan Referendum back in May 2023.

The Neighbourhood Plan in one of the highest votes across Teignbridge was overwhelmingly supported by residents and has now been included within the new Teignbridge Local Plan. This was an important step in Ipplepen being able to determine its own priorities and development into the future.

As Chairman of the Parish Council it has been an honour to represent the Parish Council at events across the District but perhaps more importantly along with the other Parish Councillors to

actively support the fantastic organisations, teams of people and residents at Village events and activities.

In looking back on a year where, in spite of the weather, the Cottage Garden and IppleTipple took place, the brilliant Carnival Float which took the District and further afield by storm, the Lantern Parade return and of course the many other things such as the fantastic Poppy Display around the War Memorial in November and not forgetting the Coronation makes you realise what a special place Ipplepen is and even more importantly how creative and special those who commit so much time in making things happen are to life in the Village

On behalf of the Parish Council my thanks to all of those who have and continue to create and support events and activities, (of which there are far too many to mention here), in Ipplepen. It is really appreciated.

In conclusion I would like to thank our Parish Clerk, Cat Freston, and the Parish Councillors, who as you will see from the respective Chairs of Committees reports have once again, much of it in the background and unseen, worked tirelessly on behalf and in support of all residents to make Ipplepen a fantastic place to live.

Regards and best wishes to everyone

### **COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT – Coun.Dewhirst**

Money, the lack of it, has been the thread that has been running through my reports for some years – central government has denied Local Government funds for more than ten years and the consequences are obvious to all – this coupled to mismanagement over Special Education Needs and Disabilities has denied people in Devon the impact of the council tax they pay.

Devon County agreed another 4.99% increase in council tax for this year – 2024/25. 2.99% for general services with an extra 2% for adult care. This allows an increase of 10.4% in spending on children's services, 6% on adult services and 4.7% on climate change, environment and transport.

Devon's revenue spending on services increased from just under £700 million last year to £743 million this year - an overall rise of 6.3%. Additionally, a capital budget of over £155 million for investment in infrastructure such as schools and roads was agreed.

The council tax for an average Band D home rose by £81.54 to £1,715.67 – an extra £1.56 a week.

The budget was approved by 34 votes to 14. I however, did not vote for this Budget, preferring the Opposition Lib Dem motion to add a further £1.5million for pothole repairs, £1/2 million for white lining and an additional £60,000 for Libraries Unlimited to help them increase Community Library provision – this amendment was voted down by the Conservatives. An yet just a very few weeks later the administration has 'found' a further £10 million for our hard pressed highways.

Last month an agreement was been signed between the County Council and the Government which will see an extra £95 million of national funds set aside to reduce our deficit on special needs education.

Our cumulative spending on education for children with special needs and disabilities (SEND) over the past 10 years is set to create a deficit of £206 million by the end of this financial year.

In common with many councils, Devon was negotiating with the Government for extra funding for special needs education under the so-called Safety Valve programme. We have also set aside £10 million this year to help bring down the deficit.

The new agreement will see the Government contribute £38 million by the end of March with the remaining cash being spread out over the following eight years.

We will contribute a further £5 million a year from its revenue budget and £20 million from reserves to bring the deficit back into balance by the end of the agreement.

It's not just about money though – last year we held a series of the highly successful webinars, aimed at parents of teenagers and pre-teens. The Let's Talk Teenagers and Let's Talk Pre-Teens series covered a range of topics relevant to young people. It provided online support sessions and an opportunity for parents and carers of teenagers and pre-teens to hear about the challenges young people are facing today, and discover ways to help them navigate their way through them.

Delivered by parenting experts, the webinars discussed the tools and techniques that can be used to support young people and their community.

Amongst the many Notices of Motion brought to the Council two stood out. We agreed to give care leavers – young people who have been in the care of the local authority – protected characteristic status. Recognition that young people's experience of being in the care system can be a potential source of discrimination similar to other protected characteristics such as race or disability.

Studies have shown that 70 per cent of care experienced people die early; that more than half of the people who are in custody up to the age of 21 years old have been in care; and that a quarter of the homeless population is care experienced.

I brought a NOM to the Council condemning the war in Gaza, the Motion Council expresses its concern at the UK Government's failure to attempt to ensure that the Israeli government and its military adhere to the requirements of international law and the UK Government's refusal to publish legal advice it has received in relation to the conflict. Council further called for the international community to revisit UN Resolution 242, supporting a long term, peaceful, two-state solution for both Israel and Palestine.

Further the Council thanked community leaders for reducing tensions and the Police for their work and urged the Government to work towards a lasting ceasefire.

Children in Devon and their families will see a new model of support services this year.

Since first introduced in the late 1990s in response to the Government-led Sure Start initiative, Children's Centres in Devon have supported thousands of young children and their parents, with targeted early years support and other services.

But last year, the Government proposed a new initiative, and now the Department for Education and the Department for Health and Social Care are working with local authorities across the UK to roll out their 'Start for Life' programme and develop Family Hub programmes in accordance with local need.

The Hubs will focus on a partnership approach for early help and support for families and children including support for children with special educational needs and disabilities.

The Government has chosen Devon and Torbay as one of a number of local authority areas in the country to form a Combined County Authority (CCA), that will not require an elected Mayor.

The new powers would be devolved to a proposed CCA – a partnership comprising Councillors representing the councils of Devon and Torbay, with input from District Councils, and representatives from business and education.

Under the proposals the new body would have direct control of adult education to create up to 50,000 new training and retraining opportunities by 2030.

The Government is proposing to transfer over £16 million of new funding to invest in new green jobs, homes, skills, and business growth and accelerate Devon and Torbay's transition to a net-zero economy, capitalising on the area's world-leading expertise in green science and technology.

The Government is offering partnership with Homes England, capitalising on the Affordable Housing Programme and Brownfield Infrastructure and Land Fund to create a joint action plan for affordable housing schemes for local people and reduce homelessness. The proposal includes additional land assembly and compulsory purchase powers.

The CCA would be responsible for working with Devon County Council, Torbay Council, District Councils and the business and education sectors to support high growth business sectors such as advanced marine engineering, defence, photonics and digital, and improve the look and feel of local communities with street and town centre enhancements.

## **DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – Coun.Palethorpe**

It has been a busy year since the election in May 2023 and is an honour to have been elected to represent Ipplepen as the Councillor on Teignbridge District Council for the next four years. All 47 District Councillors have a role in considering the impact of issues across the whole District and in my capacity as the District Councillor I have been appointed a member of the Executive as the Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Assets, Estates, Car Parking and Economic Development.

I should stress Car Parking responsibilities apply to the 82 owned Teignbridge Car Parks across the District and not on street parking which lies with the Devon County Council.

Teignbridge District Council itself covers an area of 246 sq miles with a population of 136,000 in such diverse communities such as Dawlish, Teignmouth, Buckfastleigh, Ashburton, Newton Abbot and of course Ipplepen with their own issues and needs, many of which are similar, that put demands on services of the Council Officers.

Across the District, against a background of continuing reductions in Government Funding, which all Councils are having to deal with as we are hearing about daily in the media, Teignbridge has continued to provide essential services to the vulnerable, such as those who through no fault of their own are or face being homeless, waste collection (through a highly committed and dedicated team), leisure centres and the delivery of other statutory and non-statutory services.

The Council has also opened the new Ridgtop Park and has continued to improve facilities across the District to support residents and visitors, such as the Adult Changing Places that will be available in the summer at Decoy Park, Dawlish and Dawlish Warren.

The Newton Abbot enhancement of Queens Street with the widening of the pavements and greening has now been agreed and is planned to go ahead later this year and the work to improve the Market Hall and Market Square is now, subject to Planning Permission being agreed, planned to go ahead at the end of the year.

The Council is committed to a policy of reducing carbon emissions and protecting the environment to which end the decarbonisation of Teignbridge owned assets such as our Leisure Centres is being carried out. The Council is also in the progress of replacing its diesel vehicle fleet with electric vehicles wherever practicable and planting 140,000 trees over the next four years as part of the aim to become a net zero carbon emission Council by 2030.

Everything of course has not been plain sailing, the extremes of weather during the winter saw very serious damage to the sea fronts at Teignmouth and Dawlish which needed to be urgently addressed and there continues to be issues around the Planning legislation and processes in particular the delays in decision making which are being addressed with additional resources being put into the service to improve performance.

The Council also faces the ongoing issue of a lack of affordable rental homes across the District with over 1100 families/individuals on the waiting list.

I have not throughout the year forgotten that I represent Ipplepen and have continued to support and raise resident issues with the Council.

Planning issues are amongst the most contentious and especially when it comes to retrospective planning applications and I thank residents for their patience whilst the issues raised are being addressed.

I did successfully oppose the proposed inclusion of a parcel of land being added as an amendment to the Teignbridge Local Plan on the grounds that it was not within the Neighbourhood Plan. I am grateful that a majority of those who voted at Full Council agreed with me and the proposal was removed. The Teignbridge Local Plan is now with the Planning Inspectorate with a view to it being adopted later this year.

During the year I have also raised issue on behalf of individuals across the village with the Council.

I am grateful for the support I have received for residents and also the advice and views that have ensured Ipplepen voices and concerns are being heard by Teignbridge District Council which has on two occasions resulted in senior officers coming to visit our village to see the issues for themselves.

In conclusion, it has been a busy first year and a role that I am proud and honoured to have been elected to represent Ipplepen as your District Councillor.

Thank you to everyone for your support.

### **FINANCE REPORT - Coun.Smith**

The balance at the end of the financial year 2023/2024 stands at **£11,851.06** in the working account which includes VAT of £ **1,184.38** The allocated reserve account currently holds **£195,767.54** and therefore our total financial assets stand at **£207,618.60**.

The main expenditure still lies in the maintenance of the two public conveniences £20,962.62 which includes the re-roofing of the Clampitt Road building and redecorating and installation of heating in the playing field toilet block. The cost of the Coronation event was £4,666.37. The Millenium Centre Car park was resurfaced at a cost of £6,599.00.

The wheeled sports area is still an issue, having been flagged up as high risk in the recent inspection report, it has been removed and the Council have formed a separate group to take forward a project to replace it. Funding allocated thus far totals £92,375.40.

The Precept for 2024/25 is set at **£73,292** paid to us by Teignbridge District Council in two instalments at the end of April and September 2024.

The insurance has been increased from £4,000 to £4,500. The Office hire has been increased from £1,200 to £1,500, and the stationery has increased from £700 to £750. The legal fees has been increased from £500 to £1,000 and the Election expense has been increased from £500 to £1,000.

The Grass Cutting has been increased from £4,500 to £5,000. The £9,000 for the Skate Park Project from 23/24 will be transferred into the Reserve Account bringing the total to £86,375.40.

The Grounds Maintenance Footpath has remained at £750, and Infrastructure (CIL) has been added under Highways. Any CIL monies received will be put into the Infrastructure for Highways.

#### **Millennium Centre**

£3,000 has been allocated for 24/25.

Finally, I should like to record my thanks to Cat, our Clerk and RFO, for all her hard work in helping to keep our finances in good shape, and to the committee for their work in setting the precept.

### **PLANS REPORT – Coun.Farrow**

The Planning Committee have, this year, commented upon forty-five planning applications, a decrease on the previous year of ten applications; to the majority we have recommended approval, others we have not. We have, this year, seen an increase in applications for work to trees subject to Tree Preservation Orders. This is a cause for concern where the applicant is requesting the removal of a mature tree.

We have seen a marked decline in applications for Certificates of Lawful Development. Although the Parish Council is not required to comment on this category of application; they can be contentious and controversial and Ipplepen Parish Council has felt on occasions, the need to comment.

Although Ipplepen Parish Council is only a consultee in respect of all planning applications we like to think that our opinions and recommendations are listened to by Teignbridge District Council and form part of their final decision.

Recommendations for these and all other applications are not given without full discussion, either at the monthly Planning Committee meeting or a Full Parish Council and if the need arises a site visit. To this end, when a particular recommendation is made at a Planning Committee 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 Committee 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.

We are still having to review Retrospective Planning Applications, although the number has reduced. We are concerned that there is still the attitude of 'you can build anything anywhere and get away with it'. The Planning Committee together with the Full Parish Council are still concerned at the lack of Planning Enforcement being taken by Teignbridge District Council; this has been noted by other Town and Parish Councils, the Group Planning Forum, formed last year, has been engaged in a discussions with Teignbridge District Council about the planning process in general.

Town and Parish Councils are now able to 'call-in' planning applications which they consider need to be decided upon by Committee and not on the recommendation of the Planning Officer. Ipplepen Parish Council will use this power only if agreed necessary by the full Parish Council.

Our Neighbourhood Plan has been approved and is in operation. Ipplepen Parish Council is mindful of the contents of this document when reviewing and commenting upon planning applications.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow councillors who have served on the Planning Committee 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 was one amendment to Planning Guidelines for Ipplepen. The amendment is:

**A Neighbourhood Plan has been agreed and approved for the Ipplepen Parish; the Council are mindful of this document when reviewing and commenting upon planning applications.**

## **HIGHWAYS – Coun.Smith**

The Highways Advisory group have been meeting on bi-monthly basis both, to pursue projects and to endeavour to keep on top of issues, in particular those created by the storms that have increased in number over the past twelve months.

These storms have brought excessively strong downpours which have been causing flash flooding and damage to the surface of the highways. There are now a number of roads within the village boundary that flood on a regular basis with easements onto surrounding land being unable to cope as the land becomes more and more saturated.

In the event of flooding such as this, utilising local knowledge is essential for DCC to gather key information on the affected areas and overall impacts.

If any of you have been affected, please use the DCC Report site detailing the following information:

The date and location that the flooding occurred

- If any properties were flooded internally (and the addresses of these properties, if known)
- Any key roads which were affected
- Photographs (if possible)
- Any other information you feel would be relevant.

To report flooding of the highway and blocked drains contact Devon County Council's Highway Customer Service Centre on [0345 155 1004](tel:03451551004) or visit the Flooding and Drainage Pages on the County Council website.

On 1<sup>st</sup> February Cllr Rattlidge and I met with the County Highways Superintendent for our area regarding extending the footpath on the east side of the Tones Road towards Two Mile Oak. We are still waiting for a response to our proposal. We also discussed with him the potential for installing Vehicle Activated Speed Signs and he sees no issues except that we shouldn't install too many. Quotations are being obtained and we hope to go ahead in the near future.

Despite the sometimes extremely unpleasant weather during the November to February Inspection period, all the public rights of way were inspected by Cllr Rattlidge, Cllr Latter and I and the reports sent to DCC by the due date. Issues reported were damage to a field gate Footpath 4/bridleway 5 (Miltor Mator to Bickley Mill) and standing water at the Biltor Road end of Footpath 8 (Clampitt Road through Luscombe Close to Biltor Cross). The finger post opposite Park Cottage has broken off and that was also reported. Unfortunately our plan to have a permissive footpath installed behind the wall at Foredown Road has had to be put on hold as the land has been sold off.

In closing I thank Cllr Mrs Calland, Cllr Latter and Cllr Rattlidge for their commitment and, as we are now into the growing season, remind residents whose garden hedges and bushes encroach onto the pavements and highways that they should keep them trimmed back, taking care not to disturb any nesting birds.

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

The Parish Council continues to find that Teignbridge DC and Devon County Highways are cutting back on many services due to budget constraints, therefore additional maintenance and repair work has been filtering down to local Parish level.

Soon it would also seem many other tasks such as road drainage and pothole repair will join grass verge and hedge cutting to become part of the Parishes responsibility and expense.

As part of its current work the Amenities Sub Committee with the aid of the Parish Council has again 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 Parish Council is pleased to announce that a quote for a major refurbishment and upgrade of the public conveniences in Clampitt Road has been agreed and work will soon be underway, this follows the re-slating of the roof last in the year.

In the Village Park, many of the fences have been replaced, new gates have been installed, and items of play equipment have been repaired and put back into use.

This year has seen the removal of the old steel skatepark and it is our fervent hope to be in the position to upgrade and replace it very soon.

I would like to thank Mr Simon Birbeck for his continued hard work in all weathers, mowing grass, litter picking, and all the other work he undertakes for the Parish Council, also I would like to thank our cleaner Mrs Clare Locke for the wonderful job she does keeping both our Parish public toilet blocks clean and tidy.

Thanks, also goes to the many Parishioners of Ipplepen who have done their bit on behalf of the Community this year by Litter Picking, Hedge Trimming and Weeding, etc.

It all helps to make Ipplepen a better place to live.

On a personal note, I would finally like to thank all members of the Parish Council for their support throughout the year.

### **OPEN FORUM**

One member of the public mentioned about the amount of dog mess along Newhayes and Clampitt Road. The Parish Clerk will email the dog warden.

**The meeting closed at 20.32pm.**