

**Minutes of the ANNUAL PARISH MEETING held in the Institute, Ottery St Mary on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2008 at 7pm**

<b>Present</b>	<b>Mayor</b>	<b>Councillor Dobson</b>
	<b>Councillors</b>	<b>Holmes, Giles, Abbott, Lewis, Richardson</b> (Town Ward) <b>Bloxham, Potter, Howard</b> (West Hill Ward), <b>Hansford, Baker</b> (North Ward) together with the <b>Clerk</b> and <b>Deputy Clerk</b>
<b>Apologies</b>	<b>Councillors</b>	<b>Williams</b> (Town Ward), <b>Carter and Harding</b> (Tipton St John Ward)

**1. WELCOME BY THE MAYOR**

Councillor Dobson welcomed everyone to the Meeting and was pleased to see approximately 40 members of the public. He invited Revd Preb Simon Franklin to say the Council prayer.

**2. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF 13<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2007**

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2007 were received and signed by the Mayor.

**3. PRESENTATION BY MR JOHN SPOONER, INTERIM MANAGING DIRECTOR OF EXETER INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT**

Mr Spooner gave a history of the growth of the Airport up to its sale to Regional and City Airports in January 2007. He explained the values of the holding Company (60% Balfour Beatty, 40% Galaxy) and its plans for improvement and expansion. He explained that the overdue Master Plan was likely to be published in May. He received questions from the floor. He explained that Exeter Airport was not in a position to influence the type of aircraft use by Royal Mail for the night flights and that he was not aware of any changes to its schedule although in the short term he said there could be inbound night arrivals of charter flights in the summer months. He explained that it was not possible to adjust the flight path of Royal Mail flights. Regarding the building of Cranbrook he said that the Airport does not support the development of nearby residential areas and hopes that Planners will insist on a high level of sound insulation in the new homes. There is no plan to extend the runway or to build a second runway. Regarding issues of noise he gave information that issues are discussed by the noise sub-committee, a sub-group of the independently chaired Consultative Group Committee. A Representative from the Town Council serves on the Committee and any issues/feedback/ideas regarding the Airport can be passed to the Committee through that Councillor.

The Mayor thanked Mr Spooner for his contribution and suggested that any issues should be sent to the Clerk who would pass them on through the Councillor Representative.

**4. REPORT FROM THE DEVON AND CORNWALL CONSTABULARY**

The Mayor welcomed PC Phil Thomas and PCSO Maria Clapp and expressed thanks for their work. PC Thomas summarised the crime figures for preceding years: 2004- 325, 2005 – 273, 2006 – 271, 2007- 264, 2008-281. He explained the higher figure of 281 as being the result of 50 crimes at the Beautiful Days Event. The main events (Carnival, Tar Barrels, Pixie Day etc) had seen very few arrests. Two ongoing priorities are anti-social behaviour and drinking at the Land of Canaan and maintaining a free flow of traffic through Jesu Street and Yonder Street. The latter will fall to the new Traffic Enforcement

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Officers from EDDC from May who will be more able to give a continuity of service. There is to be a Force Day of Action on May 13<sup>th</sup> to engage with the Community.

#### **5. CITIZEN OF THE YEAR PRESENTATION**

The Mayor said that many people deserved this Award and that the Council had chosen the person who had received the most nominations. He had great pleasure in announcing that the Citizen of the Year 2008 was Mrs May Kenealy and presented her with a commemorative plaque. She was proposed for the valuable work she has carried out for the Coleridge Pre-School Playgroup for over 20 years

#### **6. REVIEW OF THE YEAR BY THE MAYOR**

The following is the Report given by the Mayor:

**MAY** was the first meeting of the new council and I had the honour of being elected as the new Chairman. It was noted that many experienced Councillors had resigned including three previous Chairman and the Treasurer. But to counter this we had the benefit of new enthusiastic Councillors who have proved their worth over the last twelve months.

**JUNE** At the start of the meeting I had the pleasure of presenting an inscribed Plaque to Ottery 12 and under Football Team who had achieved a remarkable treble by winning the Axminster Cup, the Oasis Cup and the East Devon League - an outstanding achievement. This month also the new Police Sergeant was appointed to the Town Sgt Nick Harper. It was agreed to create a Website for the Parish and to start negotiations again to purchase the Land at St Saviours to enable us to build the bridge across the river.

**JULY** The Council Meeting this month was held at Tipton St John. It was agreed at this meeting that the Council needed to be more proactive and communicate more with the public. The Tourist Information Centre was changed to a Local Information Centre and a Councillors' Surgery was formed to meet there once a month to give the public the opportunity of meeting a Councillor to discuss any concerns they might have. We have also resolved to look at the council offices to see if they could be made more user-friendly. This has proved very difficult owing to access problems. Two new councillors were co-opted: Councillor Harding for Tipton St John and Councillor Williams for Ottery Town Ward.

**AUGUST** It was my pleasure to present a Cup to Beverley Hemmings as having the best allotment, and after visiting it I can assure you she was a very worthwhile winner. Mr Rix and Mr Potbury of the Twinning Association presented the Council with a picture inscribed 30 years of Friendship with the Town of Pont L'Eveque. The Town Council is happy to support this active association. The Council agreed that it would adopt the new Code of Conduct for councillors from the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2007.

**SEPTEMBER** This was the month that a proposal was put forward by Councillor Holmes to have the title of Chairman changed to Mayor of Ottery St Mary. It was decided to set up a working party to put forward a proposal.

**OCTOBER** This month it was decided that the Town Council would look again at producing a Town Plan and this task was delegated to the Deputy Town Clerk. Regarding the title of Mayor it was resolved that a page be allocated on the website where the public could vote for their choice.

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**NOVEMBER** A Public Meeting to present the Town Plan was held in the Old Boys School in Ottery. There was a good attendance and all comments were recorded. The Plan was also on our website, copies at the Tourist Information Centre and the town Library. Ottery was successful in its bid to become part of the Sustrans bid to win a lottery grant. After all votes were counted it was resolved to change the title of Chairman to Mayor of Ottery St Mary from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2008

**DECEMBER** The Council resolved to write to Devon County Council with a request that some of the money received from the sale of the Airport be used to create a footpath/cycle way on the old Feniton to Sidmouth Railway Line. Our Town Plan was formally adopted by EDDC and put on their website as well as the Council's website. Thanks go to the Deputy Clerk for her hard work.

**JANUARY** We were informed that the Council were not the preferred bidder for the Marist Convent. Thanks go to Elli Pang and Robert Neal for raising public support for our bid and obtaining 1,000 signatures in 5 days.

**FEBRUARY** An update was given regarding the Council's progress to become a Quality Council. We are about 70% there. I believe that Ottery deserves a Quality Council and is even more important with the proposed boundary changes.

**MARCH** Interactive speed limit introduced in Tip Hill. Thanks to Devon County Councillor Giles. A Shed was purchased for Winters Lane Tennis Courts. It was agreed to hold the next Council Surgery at West Hill

The Mayor concluded by stating that it had been an outstanding year for the Council He gave an update regarding the Convent explaining that the Developer has approached the Council and negotiations are ongoing for a possible purchase of the building. Land at the Bowling Club is likely to be soon available for Community use. Now that land at St Saviour's has been purchased the construction of a bridge for pedestrians and cyclists can go ahead and the Council will press for this to happen. The availability of affordable housing in the Parish is a subject the Council plans to address.

## **7. REPORT ON THE PARISH PATHS PARTNERSHIP (P3)**

The Clerk presented the following Report. The Parish Paths Partnership scheme (P3) has run very successfully for many years with Derek Baxter's excellent work as Co-ordinator. Derek relinquished this post at the end of 2007 and it was taken on by Robin Stammers. There is an enthusiastic group of volunteers who walk public footpaths in the Parish and report on their condition so that clearance work, maintenance or improvement of paths or stiles can be undertaken. The Council receives an amount from Devon County Council to spend on this. The amount is ring-fenced and can only be spent on footpath and bridleway maintenance or improvements. In November Footpath 47 (Metcombe area) was diverted so that it no longer runs through the gardens of two properties or passes over very boggy areas. It actually formalised the route that was already being used by walkers. Recently you may have seen advertised that DCC intends to divert part of footpath 46 (on the east bank of the River Otter). This diversion is required as sections of the existing path have been eroded by the River Otter. If you are interested in joining the P3 group of walkers please let me know and I will pass on your name.

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## **8. REPORT ON OTTERY IN BLOOM**

Sarah Clarke (who has taken over as Chairman of the Group) thanked all those who had worked in past years on the group and thanked the Town Council and the Rotary Club for its support. She reported that the group aims to become more independent and would welcome new members. A fund-raising Coffee Morning had recently been held and plans are being made for a Business Competition, a Children's competition and possibly a garden competition. A future aim is to enter the Britain in Bloom Competition once again.

## **9. REPORT FROM THE ALLOTMENT GARDEN MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

Adrian Forster, the new Chairman since its AGM on 8<sup>th</sup> April presented the Report by the outgoing Secretary Margaret West including information on plot inspections, some evictions, an increase in rental to £20 for a full plot since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2008, revised tenancy agreements and a shortened Waiting List. There had been a great improvement in appearance of the site. The 2008 AGM marked the passing of long-time past Secretary Bob Johnson and the Cup awarded annually for the best Allotment is to be renamed in his honour. Priorities for the new Committee are to hold more regular Committee Meetings, have more liaison with the Plot holders and the Council and to formulate a policy and process regarding the condition of plots.

## **10. FINANCE REPORT**

The Treasurer, Councillor Lewis reported on a successful financial year 2006-7. The financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2007 had seen many projects, including the purchase of the land at St Saviours to enable the construction of a pedestrian and cycle bridge across the River Otter.

## **11. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

Q: Has there been agreement on the placement of the 500 trees given to the Parish by the Gas pipeline Company?

A: Ideas should be given to the Clerk. An additional 400 oak trees are also available.

Q: Has there been any progress with the creation of a footpath from Claremont Field towards the River Otter?

A: Councillor Roger Giles will be asked to provide information.

Q: Is there any update about the future of the Factory?

A: The Town Council has been promised that a Planning Application will be submitted but that none has yet been received.

Q: PC Thomas was asked about how many crimes had been solved.

A: Information is not to hand at this Meeting.

Q: What progress is being made with the pavement at West Hill?

A: Councillor Giles is pursuing this with Devon County Council.

Q: Why has no further action been taken to deal with the narrow and dangerous footpath at the top end of North Street?

A: The Mayor offered to speak to the questioner and asked that copies of previous correspondence should be given to the Clerk.

Q: Traders are concerned about recent increases in Car Parking charges by East Devon District Council.

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A: The Mayor reported holding a meeting with District Councillor David Cox to express concerns. Councillor Cox reported that he had suggested to EDDC that 30p for 20 minutes would be more acceptable.

Q: Why is there no improvement in the bus service with no Sunday bus service?

A: The TIC Manager reported that there will be a Sunday bus service from the end of May to the end of September.

Q: How can the approach to Ottery from Barrack Hill be improved, as there is unsightly land near the Hospital and past the Industrial Estate.

A: The land is privately owned. The “Cleaner Ottery” Group is looking at ideas with one suggestion being the planting of trees as screening.

**12. MAYOR’S CLOSING REMARKS**

The Mayor thanked all those who had attended the Meeting and invited everyone to stay for refreshments and to take the opportunity to speak to Councillors.

The Mayor declared the Meeting closed at 9.10pm.

**Mayor’s signature:**..... **Date:**.....

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