

**Minutes of the Chagford Annual Parish Assembly Meeting held at Endecott House on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2022 commencing at 7.30 p.m.**

**Present:** The following Parish Councillors; Parish Electors and Members of the Public were recorded as being present:-

Cllr: Mrs. Gay Hill (Chairman)  
Cllr: Kevin Coombe  
Cllr: Mrs. Margaret Haxton  
Cllr: Jill Millar  
Cllr: Paul Mortimer  
Cllr: Andrew Parrott  
Cllr: Gill Printy  
Cllr: John Shears  
Cllr: Rachel Short  
Cllr: Marion Stanbury  
Cllr: Stuart Wright

Cllr: James McInnes  
(Devon County Council)

Cllr: Nicky Heyworth  
(West Devon Borough Council)

Chris Beckhurst  
Fred Orme  
Pheudhas Nair  
Chris Webber  
Charles Pearmain  
Kim Smith  
Michele Boston  
Claire Ash Wheeler  
Roger Ash Wheeler  
Peter Shields  
Clare Stanton  
Lucy Taylor  
Jo Hodges  
Eric Hodges  
Holly Watt  
Zsa She  
Isabeau Walker  
Mark Smith  
Christine Burke  
Michael Creighton  
Belinda Hayter Hames  
Mo Dowling  
Toby Tufon  
Emma Middleton  
Ralph Mackridge  
Vicki Cairns  
Peter Goudge  
Frances Goudge

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllr: Christine Malseed and Mr. Colin Haxton.

**2. Alex Gandy, Senior Policy Officer for DNPA  
Dartmoor Local Plan**

The Dartmoor Local Plan has been worked on for the last 4/5 years and was adopted by the Secretary of State in December 2021.

The Dartmoor National Park Local Plan guides what development can and cannot happen in Dartmoor National Park. It is the starting point for all planning decision in the National Park. Planning decisions must be made in line with the Local Plan unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise.

The Local Plan sets a clear and positive strategy for Dartmoor's future. It responds to today's challenges of climate change and ecological crisis through a pattern of sustainable growth, policies and reduce energy use, and a ground breaking approach to biodiversity net gain. It responds to the needs of communities by raising the bar on the quality, efficiency and accessibility of new homes. It will deliver a mix of housing which responds to local needs, recognising the gap between local incomes and houses prices. Business and enterprise which is consistent with National Park purposes is encouraged and supported.

**Climate and Ecological Emergency**

Positive action to tackle climate change is exceeding expectations with good progress made on work so far.

Dartmoor National Park Authority has pledged to continue its excellent work on making changes and improvements to how it works, with the aim of becoming net zero by 2025.

In July 2019, the Authority declared a climate and ecological emergency – the first National Park to do so. In March 2020, Members agreed an organisational Climate Action Plan.

The plan set out a range of ambitious but realistic actions aimed at meeting that target. It also explored how the Authority's nature enhancement work could offset any remaining carbon emissions.

- Reduced, gas and electricity emissions by 20% between 2018/19 and 2021/22
- Install electric vehicle charging points at the National Park's Haytor Visitor Centre, with another planned for the centre at Postbridge
- Introducing electric vehicles as part of the fleet replacement plan
- Promoting flexible working to reduce staff commuting emissions by 18%
- Begin calculating the footprint of our land assets carbon footprint to better understand how Dartmoor's habitats contribute to tackling climate change

- Working with partners to buy renewable energy and make our energy use greener
- Plans for installing solar panels on the National Park Visitors Centre at Haytor
- Reduced print materials across all DNPA Services

Dartmoor National Park Authority has a vital role in tackling climate change and biodiversity loss. It is working with a range of organisations to restore natural processes so resilience to climate change is improved, carbon emissions are reduced and ecosystems become more sustainable.

### **3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Parish Assembly Meeting held on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2021 were confirmed as a true record and signed.

### **4. The Audited Accounts of Chagford Parish Council for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021**

a) The Chairman presented the current Financial Statement for the year 1<sup>st</sup> April 202 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. These have been audited by the Council's Internal Auditor and District Auditor. The accounts were adopted.

### **b) The Financial Statement of the Chagford Parish Council for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.**

The Chairman presented the current financial statement for the year 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022. A statement of receipts and payments were circulated and attached to the Minutes.

The Accounts for 2021/2022 have been approved by the Internal Auditor. The accounts will be sent to PKF Littlejohn LLP at the end of June having been made available to the Parishioners.

The bank balances look healthy, however finances keep rising, energy cost of the Market House, grass cutting, insurance, litter and dog bin emptying etc. The Public Conveniences at Bellacouch Meadow have been handed to the Parish Council which is an extra energy charge. The Parish Council have spent over £64,000 on play equipment and continue to upgrade the Jubilee Field equipment. Over £3,000.00 was given in grants to local events and projects.

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee is forthcoming in June when the Parish Council will be hosting cream teas, lunch and a beacon. The Parish Council will be giving a Platinum Jubilee coin to each child in the Parish.

The Parish Council are still looking to purchase land to provide a burial ground for Chagford.

**5. The Annual Report of the Parish Council – Chairman Cllr: Mrs. Gay Hill**

The past year has been a year of many parts which has meant at times it was quite difficult to move forwards. Covid dominated the early part of the year, and the Parish Council meetings were being held on Zoom, and right up until the new year many other meetings were still being held on Zoom including the DALC conference, the Highways Conference and the West Devon Locality Meeting.

Zoom meetings save a lot of travelling and delivers the goods but prevents all the interaction and discussions which take place in small groups or with people you meet. For the time being I think many meetings with outside authorities will continue online.

There has also been a lot of change with the make-up of the Council, we said goodbye to Anthony Pope, Yuli Somme, Debbie Phelps and Peter Williams we thank them for their hard work and contribution to the Parish and wish them well. We also acknowledge that one of our Councillors has moved house out of the area but is still able to complete her term of Office on the Council until the next elections, and another Councillor has been coping with ill health and a bereavement and has needed time off.

There was a call for an election for the first two vacancies but unfortunately there were insufficient candidates putting themselves forward as prospective councillors.

The Council welcomes Jill Millar, Rachel Short, Stuart Wright and Paul Mortimer, all new members are encouraged to do the Good Councillor Training which is held online by the Devon Association of Local Councils. This provides a broad understanding of the rules and responsibility of a Councillor.

The whole Parish Council will be required to stand again at the 2023 Elections, alongside any other parishioners who wish to stand. The relevant notices will be published in March 2023.

Following the Annual Assembly last year, the Parish Council were asked to review the installation of Bike Stands, the re-ordering of the Square, the introduction of 20mph and the purchase of a burial Ground. These matters were taken forward for a Consultation which was held in Endecott House on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2021. These matters will be pursued later this evening.

The Parish Council held the Beating of the Bounds Ceremony on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> September when they were joined by more than thirty Parishioners. There were fewer followers this time as it was restricted to Parishioners only, because of Covid, also dogs were not allowed, in order to comply with the insurance regulations, The Warren Inn did not welcome us for lunch due to covid regulations.

The people who joined us seem to enjoy their day.

Throughout the year there has been a steady trickle of 42 Planning applications four of which were refused and four were withdrawn the remainder have been granted, some with conditions.

I thank Cllr Parrott and the planning Group for their commitment and hard work in processing all these applications

The new Dartmoor Local Plan has introduced some different planning regulations to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework and these came into being from January 2022

The Councillors continue to have a monthly rota to be responsible for the Jubilee Field and the Public Toilets. The stream in the Jubilee Field attracts fly tipping, some items are obviously young people building dams, but others seem very inappropriate.

The usual amount of petty vandalism continues either with removing locks and toilet seats in the Square or by breaking fence panels around the field.

Unfortunately, nowhere is safe from graffiti not even the seats in the bus shelter.

The Play equipment has been inspected by RoSPA which means that there are various repairs and adjustments to be carried out, and some pieces of equipment are getting very worn The Councillors will need to consider replacing them with something more dynamic.

A group of residents of New Street and Meldon Road have asked to take over the care of the Pound Garden, the Conservation Group maintain the Southcombe Garden in return the Parish Council give them a grant towards their insurance.

The Flowers of Chagford continue to brighten the town, again the Parish Council give them a grant towards plants but a big thankyou to all the volunteers who plant the troughs and water the flowers throughout the year.

The Parish Council Climate Emergency working group had a very successful consultation day on March 19<sup>th</sup> and are planning a further consultation in June.

The Parish Council are preparing to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee this year in line with the announcement which was made on June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2021.

As requested by Her Majesty The Queen, Parishes are asked to plant trees to form part of a National Queen's Green Canopy. The Parish Councillors with the help of the Conservation Group and Paul Bartlett from Stone Lane Gardens have planted seven trees on the Jubilee Field to mark this occasion. The Jubilee Field was purchased from DCC to mark the Silver Jubilee and was placed in the Fields in Trust scheme to mark the Diamond Jubilee.

The Beacon will be lit on Meldon on June 2<sup>nd</sup> at 21.45hrs as part of beacons across the UK and the Commonwealth. On Friday there will be a cream Tea

in Endecott House and on Saturday a coffee morning in Endecott House. The Finale will be a Parish Picnic on the Jubilee Field followed by the presentation of Jubilee Medals to all the young people resident in the Parish under 16 on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021.

We all owe our Clerk Sarah Curtis a huge debt of gratitude for the way she manages to keep everything up to date and keep all the Councillors informed. She liaises well with all the other authorities and the Parishioners. She often has to multitask and second guess what is required.

She is the Official Officer and the Responsible Finance Officer for the Council, therefore is responsible for making sure that all the information is disseminated and accurate. All the publicity is her responsibility whether online on the website or on Noticeboards.

All the business must come to a Parish Council Meeting for debate and a Resolution.

Thank you Sarah may you keep up the good work.

**6. Cllr: James McInnes – Devon County Council**

As I write this report, Covid 19 infection in Devon is very high. We are seeing unprecedented demand for Children's and Adult Services. This is putting tremendous pressure on services and staff. Living with Covid is the way forward, it is not going away.

**Proud to Care**

Across Devon, Adult Social Care has over 2000 vacancies and we are working hard to encourage carers to return and welcome new carers, through the Proud to Care Program. [www.proudtocaredevon.org.uk/findyourcalling](http://www.proudtocaredevon.org.uk/findyourcalling), providing careers advice and information about jobs and training in care and health. Thanks to the European Social Fund, there are free and flexible courses to support people to find the right role.

The courses are being offered by partners across Devon including Learn Devon, City College Plymouth, South Devon College, Exeter College and Petroc.

**Vaccination**

The vaccination program has been very successful which has allowed us to live a more normal life.

For many of us work has changed for ever, with a combination of working from home and going to our place of employment. We must also remember many residents have continued to work on the front line, in our Businesses, and Public Services as well as those in Social Care and the NHS.

## Budget

Putting together the County Council budget for 2022/23 has been the most difficult in living memory, more difficult than the period of austerity.

The DCC portion of the Council Tax will rise by 2.99%, including 1% additional funding for Adult Social Care. We have taken the unprecedented step of using £23 million from reserves to support the budget. That rainy day has arrived, and we need to support the most vulnerable children and adults as best we can with the resources available. The Budget for 2022/23 is £629.362 million.

Below is a table with the high-level detail of DCC net budget:

	2021/22 Adjusted Budget *	Inflation Pressures	Savings & additional Income	2022/23 Budget	Net change	
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	%
Adult Care & Health	283,294	47,875	(18,241)	312,928	29,634	10.5%
Children's Services	159,036	28,787	(11,675)	176,148	17,112	10.8%
Community Health, Environment & Prosperity	40,280	3,809	(2,846)	41,243	963	2.4%
Corporate Services	40,937	3,612	(2,830)	41,719	782	1.9%
Highways, Infrastructure Development & Waste	57,124	3,349	(3,149)	57,324	200	0.4%
	<b>580,671</b>	<b>87,432</b>	<b>(38,741)</b>	<b>629,362</b>	<b>48,691</b>	<b>8.4%</b>

\* Adjusted for permanent virements

## Devolution Deal

Working closely with Devon Districts, Plymouth and Torbay, the partnership has put proposals to Government for a Devolution Deal. We are asking for powers to be able to work closer together in the eight areas below, to speed up the recovery from the pandemic.

### What do we want?

Partner authorities, working closely with stakeholders have identified eight initial areas to focus on in negotiations with Government:

- **Housing**, more affordable housing for key workers and local families and drive economic growth.
- **Skills, Employment and Education**, better support for young people and adults to learn and gain the skills that the economy needs.
- **Transport and Infrastructure**, tackling gaps in our public transport, and improving our broader transport, energy and digital infrastructure, supporting the area to thrive
- **Economic Development, Business Support and Innovation**, working with the business community to ensure that they have the support they need to drive economic growth.
- **Health and Care**, working together to better align national funding to support the health and care needs of Devon, Plymouth, and Torbay's residents.
- **Climate Change**, working together and aligning national funding and activity to accelerate our progress towards net zero

- **Regeneration and Place**, securing the funding and flexibilities we need to accelerate levelling up, and ensuring that every community can meet its potential.

## Devon Climate Emergency

All through the pandemic Devon County Council and partners have continued to work on the Devon Climate Emergency follow this link for the latest information:

<https://www.devonclimateemergency.org.uk/response-to-devon-climate-assembly/>

We have held a citizen's assembly and there is a consultation till the 14<sup>th</sup> of April 2022, for you to take part in.

## Highways

We have had a mild winter/spring so far. The best way to report any highway issues is online at this link: [www.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/](http://www.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/)

A new Neighbourhood Highways Officer has been appointed, Josh Scillitoe.

## Ukraine

The Council is stepping up its response, alongside key partners, to the **Homes for Ukraine** scheme. This went 'live' on the 25<sup>th</sup> of March, enabling local **sponsors** to match with **guests** from Ukraine. This initial phase of the scheme is designed to supplement the **Ukraine Family Visa** for people in the UK to now support friends and colleagues. In addition, we have seen matches of guests and sponsors, often through third-party organisations supporting those fleeing the conflict.

At a later point, the government will extend the scheme in order for local charities, organisations and businesses to sponsor families directly, potentially in larger groups.

The key initial role for Local Government, as outlined in Government guidance, is to develop processes to i) conduct a DBS check for all adults within the sponsor family; ii) assess the sponsor's accommodation; and iii) to assess any key safeguarding risks arising in each match. We are awaiting further guidance from Government around the specific nature of each assessment.

The situation is evolving rapidly, with updated guidance coming through from government daily. All Team Devon partners are working together to develop a rapid response.

You will be well aware of a huge groundswell of positive local support and goodwill and we will want to ensure that this can be utilised by guests, sponsors and partners in a safe way and where appropriate to give guests consistent opportunities to settle and feel welcome.



The Council's website is being updated with the latest information and provides wider background and links. [Devon stands with Ukraine - Devon County Council](#)

## **Locality Budget**

I have supported many Locality Budget applications in the last year, not a lot of money, but it can make a difference having the support of the Local Member through the Locality Budget, when applying for other grants. Link: <https://www.devon.gov.uk/democracy/councillors-nav/locality-budgets/>

### **7. Cllr: Nicky Heyworth – West Devon Borough Council**

The “Plan for West Devon” has been adopted and aims to respond to the housing challenge (affordable housing), support and encourage business, protect the environment, encourage Active Travel, work towards Net Zero and increase biodiversity.

£32 million in Business Support Grants has been distributed by WDBC, with really impressive efficiency.

Plans are underway to remove tax breaks from 2<sup>nd</sup> homeowners so that they pay fairly for local services.

WDBC is working with DCC to put in place support for Ukrainian refugees, and to support members of the public able to offer accommodation.

The responses to the 19th March Consultation revealed community concern over Active Travel, Energy Conservation, increasing Biodiversity, Community resilience and sustainability, affordable housing, traffic Congestion, unkindness on social media, dog poo and litter.

WDBC will be applying to Tranche 2 of the “Levelling Up Fund” for funding for the new Travel Hub and Railway Station east of Okehampton.

The newly opened Dartmoor Line connecting Okehampton to Exeter has been very successful – in the first 84 days the Dartmoor Line has carried the number of users forecast for the whole first year.

Pan Devon, including Plymouth and Torbay are working together as Team Devon to develop a County Devolution Deal to improve bus routes, support Active Travel and broaden Digital Connectivity.

Our MP Mel Stride has written to Grant Shapps, Minister for Transport, re improved funding for Devon Highways. Devon CC lost 20 million Highway funding, and the state of our local roads is unacceptably poor, with lethal potholes causing damage to cars and potentially serious injury to cyclists.

Councillors have been offered Debt Awareness training to help them support residents in financial difficulties.

Waste Services are improving after the problems of COVID related staff shortages, but COVID cases are on the rise. Advice from WDBC to take care and work from home if unwell or vulnerable. The response of community

volunteers across Devon has been outstanding with over 3224 individuals helping with the vaccination programmes.

**8. An Update on the Consultation October 2021 – Cllr: Jill Millar**

Chagford Parish Council wanted to know what the community care about when it comes to our natural environment. We invited the community to share their views.

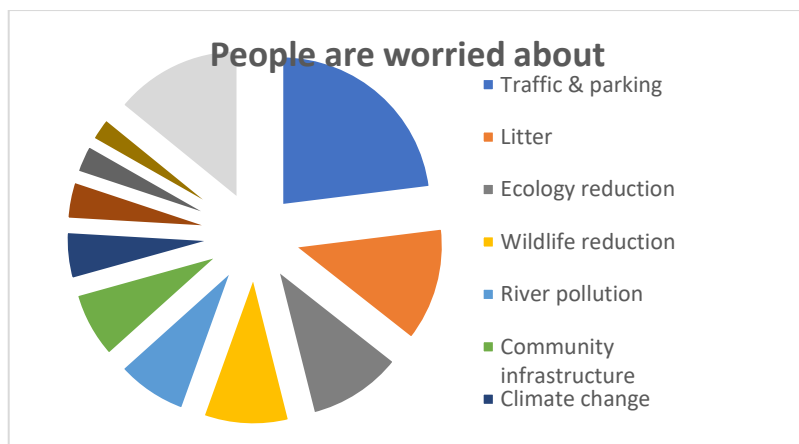
We started by listening to voices within our community and sharing their views and listened to a range of views in a panel discussion. We gathered the views of those who attended both at the Jubilee Hall at Run4Rosie, online and the Church.

We harvested the views of at least 180 people & interviewed 25 people We asked people to share their favourite places and what it is about that place they love – what makes it special.

We asked what they worry about. And what they might do to reduce their impact on the natural world.

Favourite places include: Meldon, Kes Tor, Stiniel, Nattadon, River Teign, Fernworthy to name a few.

People worry about -



**What next?**

- Parking, litter and traffic management were the top 3 concerns
- Environmental concerns are largely focussed on the river as well as a reduction of ecological and wildlife diversity
- A further group had been formed regarding re-ordering the Square. Cllr: Parrott is arranging a meeting with Dartmoor National Park and Highways to ascertain how this can be taken forward.

**The meeting closed at 9.30 p.m.**

**Date** ..... **Signed** .....