

# Ugborough Annual Parish Meeting

on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2022 at 7pm

in the Main Hall, Ugborough Village Hall

## Draft Minutes

**Present:** Cllrs Fletcher (Chair), Beable, Hart, Holway, Hosking, Nelson & Slater; 2 public & Ella Peters, Four Rivers Dementia Alliance

**1. Apologies for absence** were accepted from Cllrs Cooper, Greaves & Johns, DNPA C Pannell, SHDC Cllr Abbott & DCC Cllr Thomas

### **2. Introduction & Annual Report by Chairman Cllr Joan Fletcher**

Thanks were extended to the support groups throughout the Parish who provided invaluable help to residents during the challenging times we all experienced over the last two years. Despite Covid, it had been a busy year for the Parish Council. In Bittaford Play Park, we replaced some of the play equipment and added a new picnic bench, for which SHDC and DCC provided some funding. We plan to replace the old climbing frame and working with DNP to improve the footpath through the park.

The state of our lanes continues to improve as a result of the continued work of our Community Lengthsman. DCC started work on the new roundabout at Kitterford Cross as part of the A3121 Safer Roads project, resulting in temporary road closures. DCC hope to widen the B3196 (Loddiswell Road) to remove the pinch points, although there is currently no time scale. Ugborough Village meets the criteria for a 20mph speed limit and is now officially on the list for consideration

The Parish Council are still working with Ugborough Primary School and Westcountry Schools Trust to try to reinstate the license enabling public use of the school playing fields outside school hours.

The Parish Council finances are healthy and we continue to provide grants towards community initiatives, including community planting in Bittaford and Ugborough, Christmas lights for Ugborough Square and Bittaford, support for the Ugborough community website, Parish newsletter, Ring and Ride and the CAB.

A new flagpole is being sourced for Ugborough Square and walking leaflets prepared. Identifying a safe route through Bittaford for the proposed Ivybridge to South Brent cycle route is still proving a challenge.

Cllr Fletcher recognised the support and hard work of the Parish Councillors and the Clerk, and the enthusiasm of our community.

### **3. Resolved to confirm the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on the 5th May 2021**

**4. Presentation by Ella Peters, Development Worker, the Four Rivers Dementia Alliance** There are 19 Parishes in the Alliance, including Ugborough, with the aim of supporting dementia sufferers in the community and enabling them to contribute to the community. This includes dementia friendly GPs, transport links, easy access, uncluttered noticeboards and a user-friendly website. Help is also available to carers and support provided on bereavement.

Building checklists advise avoiding flickering lights or a black entrance mat and, with appropriate signage, ensure that a space is created for everyone, including dementia sufferers.

Parishes can help by signing up on the Dementia Friendly website and displaying dementia friendly signage, posters & leaflets (with a yellow background). Free monthly meetings are held and training sessions are provided. A conference will be held in Ivybridge on the 25 March.

### **5. Reports from District & County Councillors, Dartmoor National Park Authority & Police**

**DCC: Cllr Thomas** After the difficult year with Covid, Cllr Thomas would support the Parish, where possible, to remain connected and resilient. The NHS Devon Clinical Commissioning Group were praised for the vaccination programme, including disseminating covid vaccine information.

The budget included an extra investment of £29.6million into adult care & health, with an extra £17.1million investment in children's services, primarily out of County reserves, as central government

support dwindled still further. As a direct result, Council Tax had been raised again.

Cllr Thomas supported Ugborough Parish with £600 locality funding towards a vehicle activated sign. Next year, Councillor budgets will be reduced from £10k to £8k.

DCC has now decided that Parishes can apply to be considered for 20mph zones as part of a new trial, and Nick Colton has already put Ugborough on the list to be considered. Cllr Thomas supports sustainable travel, through contact with PL:21 and Gup, in relation to cycle routes and speed issues.

**SHDC: Cllrs Abbott & Holway** All SHDC activities continued whilst under Covid restrictions, with the dominant issue of waste and recycling collection gradually improving through the year.

The Council had set a balanced budget, with annual Council Tax Bill rising by £5 for Band D properties.

A Community Ownership Fund of £150m over 4 years is available to support community groups to take ownership of assets that are at risk of being lost to the community, such as pubs, post offices, shops and sports facilities. On behalf of H M Government, SHDC will forward £150 towards the rising cost of energy bills to those in Council tax bands A to D.

Funds are available for Climate Change & Biodiversity projects, with each councillor having £3,000 for projects in their wards and more available centrally for larger grants involving Crowd Funding. There was overwhelming support for Council plans for rewilding on Council owned land, following a consultation with residents, and Cllrs Abbot & Holway have been involved in local planting schemes.

The District Council declared a Housing Crisis and has set up a Community Benefit Society to support the building of affordable homes. A Household Support Fund provided rapid short-term financial support for people who don't have enough for food or to pay for heating, with a link on the SHDC website.

The council supported a motion to advise builders of the intention to implement changes to sustainable heating immediately, without a grace period, and SHDC secured £1.5 Million funding for the Green Homes initiative, making grants available for air source heat pumps and external insulation.

Recycling & Waste Collection: Mobile Localities Teams inspected towns and beaches each weekend over the summer, then moved focus to waste & recycling collection due to the increasing backlog. The brown bin collections are due to be reinstated at the end of March.

Parking for motorhomes overnight was trialled in certain car parks on payment of a suitable fee. Leisure centres re-opened quickly following Covid lockdowns. Consultations included Co-Cars, Enhancing Biodiversity and Better Lives for All.

**Dartmoor National Park: Cathie Pannell** reported that the new Local Plan had been adopted after public consultation and approval by the inspector. The National Park Byelaws are being reviewed. The Landscape Review was recently published and Members will respond following consultation.

National Park Funding is likely to be flat for the next 3 years, which will be challenge, with inflation at about 5%.

Farming in Protected Landscapes is a new grant scheme for farmers and land managers until March 2024, developed by Defra and delivered locally by DNPA. It supports projects that support the natural environment, mitigate the impacts of climate change, provide public access opportunities or support nature-friendly, sustainable farm businesses.

Under the South West Peatland Partnership, South West Water secured funding for the Nature for Climate Peatland Grant Scheme, for peatland restoration work in the South West. The Dartmoor spend is £8m, which will restore 931ha of peatland across Dartmoor within the four year scheme. The Dartmoor Headwaters Scheme, a partnership between Dartmoor National Park and the Environment Agency, has been looking at measures to reduce flooding, focussing on five river catchment areas including the Hanger Down area of the River Erme, upstream of communities such as Ivybridge. Green Recovery Challenge Funding of £409,300 is secured for the Changing Lives, Nurturing Nature project, focussing on new green jobs involving the DNP, National Trust, Woodland Trust and South West Lakes Trust.

Body worn cameras will be provided for certain staff for trial period of 2 years, necessary because of increased verbal and at times physical abuse towards our rangers.

**DNP Ranger Ella Briens** added that Ivybridge Railway Station car park was available to visitors to Dartmoor. The car park at Shipley Bridge, was now adopted by the South West Lakes Trust and the parking meter was raising funds to maintain facilities.

**Office of the Police Commissioner Cllr Advocate** Police advocates Cllrs Tom Holway & George Beable attended a presentation on how a town council and the local police hold regular Zoom update meetings on issues in their area. Requests for a similar scheme in Ugborough have not materialised. However, Cllr Advocates receive regular emails on issues and initiatives concerning the Devon and Cornwall Police. Grants are available for projects and initiatives raising awareness of drug use and trading. Vaccine and other scams are highlighted. The Project Wingspan was launched to raise awareness of wildlife crimes against badgers, raptors, bats, wildlife trade, and poaching.

Thankfully our parish continues to be a relatively to be a very safe place to live.

## **6. Reports from local groups**

**Ugborough Village Hall** Due to Covid-19 the Village Hall has had limited use once again. However, it has seen a gradual increase in hirings, including: Preschool, Toddlers, Breakfast Club, After School Club, Preschool Meetings, Yoga, Sustainable Saturdays markets for local suppliers with the Café, Tuesday Lunch Club, Children's parties, Police Commissioner Election, Parish Council meetings, Defibrillator Training, Greener Ugborough Parish meeting & Amateur Dramatic Group Meetings. All hires have been Covid-19 restriction compliant.

This year, the first-floor meeting room carpet and the gas combination boiler have been replaced. The Hall is in a healthy position financially despite limited hire opportunities, as the accounts reflect the Covid-19 small business support grants totalling £10,667.

Kate Brampton was thanked for regularly checking the defibrillator outside the Village Hall, and thanks were extended to Committee members and all those who have supported the hall over the year.

**Bittaford Village Hall** has experienced a difficult year. While income has increased over recent months, it is yet to reach pre-covid levels. Rental income from older age groups in particular had yet to recover.

Cleaning and maintenance was undertaken by management committee volunteers, and special thanks were extended to Carole and Viv Howard. The £10,000 Covid support had helped finance roof repairs, the central heating boiler replacement, landscaping, interior decoration and kitchen equipment.

**Ugborough and Bittaford Preschool** The West Academy team were unable to support the plan to build a pre-school in their grounds as they were expecting to need the area themselves to accommodate growth in the future. This was a huge disappointment and setback. Can you help us think of alternative solutions please?

Pre-School and Breakfast and After School Club continue to be very well supported, with the largest proportion of schoolchildren ever, and our small band of highly-qualified and experienced staff are a pleasure to work with.

Cllr Hosking would seek an alternative site for the Preschool. The Clerk would write to the school expressing its disappointment, particularly as the school bid for academy status was on the basis of 2-18 year continuous education.

**Greener Ugborough Parish** has worked with private landowners to support Wildlife and Biodiversity: Ugborough Steepers have received training and worked on a hedge bank on the north side of Northways Lane; Parish residents have re-homed rescued hedgehogs and Gup has displayed information displayed on supporting hedgehogs; Wildlink aims to encourage everyone in Ugborough Parish to do something simple for wildlife in their gardens, providing all-important wildlife corridors that allow wildlife to forage over a wider local area.

G-UP has focussed on Ugborough burial ground and on Ugborough play park, where Members will cut back shrubs and plant wildflower plugs to make the area more pollinator friendly and enhance the green area.

Recycling collections for hard-to-recycle-waste-streams (crisp packets/pens etc.) continue, including with Ugborough Primary School. The Mobility and Transport working group supports the reduced

local reliance on cars, encourages Active Travel, a 20mph speed limit through Ugborough and safer walking/cycling/riding between Ugborough and Bittaford.

#### **7. Questions and issues raised by Parishioners**

- The pole on the southern edge of Ugborough beacon disintegrated in the high winds. As a historical feature, the clerk would ask Secretary of the Commoners Council, Anne Wilcox about its replacement.
- Do the recent and current developments at Ivybridge have adequate storm water systems in place or are they connected to the foul water system? Will the district and or county council either ask South West Water to release its data on CSOs or will they ask an independent body to take steps to monitor the water quality on the Erme? What is the current capacity of the Ivybridge water treatment works, and have the new developments pushed it over capacity - if so, how can the authorities sign off on these developments if the extra foul water treatment can't be met without increasing the CSOs? Should reed beds be provided on future large development planning decisions in our area, to clean the storm water before it is put back into the natural stream network and to keep it out of the foul water system?