



**MINUTES of a Meeting of Cullompton Town Council  
held on  
Thursday 22 October 2015 commencing at 7pm at Cullompton Town Hall**

**PRESENT:** Town Mayor Cllr Rachel Sinclair (in the chair), Deputy Town Mayor Cllr Chaim Ebanks and Cllrs: Eileen Andrews, Deborah Christopher, Gordon Guest, Camille Harrison, Janet Johns, Martin Smith, Mark Stevens and Mike Thompson.

Also in attendance: Cllr John Berry (DCC), Cllr Rosemary Berry (MDDC), Cllr Terry Snow (MDDC) , three members of the public, Sgt Dave McFadden and PCSO Katie Butt (D&C Constabulary), Andy Busby and Andrews Jarrett (MDDC)

Mrs Judy Morris: Clerk

**85. APOLOGIES** were accepted from: Cllr Anthony Buczkowski (unwell) Cllr Phil James (personal), Cllr Brett Lewis (unwell), Cllr Kate Haslett (unwell) and Chris Standford (work).

**86. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** Cllr Eileen Andrews and Cllr Mike Thompson declared a personal interested in respect of a question to be asked by Mr MacIlroy (see below) with regard to Shortlands Lane as they have been in contact with Mr Macilroy on several occasions about this matter.

**87. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME:**

- (i) **Mr MacIlroy** had circulated his questions to council members in advance. He explained that his main concern was that the Council responds to a letter it had received from the local MP. He then explained the background to his concern about the registration and ownership of land abutting his property. He stated that Devon County Council had not legally adopted any section of Shortlands Lane and he would like the Town Council to arrange a meeting with Devon County Council and the residents of Shortlands Lane in order to resolve this matter.

Cllr Mike Thompson explained that this is a complex issue and not something that the Council can deal with in a few minutes. He offered to explain the background to the Shortlands Lane issues to the Council members at a meeting to be arranged.

*It was explained to Mr MacIlroy that the Council was unable to make a decision at the meeting as there was no formal agenda item and members first needed to understand*

*all the issues involved. It was further explained to Mr MacIlroy that, as this matter was take any action.*

Mr MacIlroy left the meeting.

**88. PRESENTATION BY AND DISCUSSION WITH MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL'S FINANCE OFFICER ANDREW JARRETT AND MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL'S PROPERTIES MANAGER ANDY BUSBY**

- (i) **Andy Busby (MDDC Properties Manager):** explained that MDDC will not be funding public toilets after 1 April 2016. He thanked the Council for agreeing to pay 50% of the running costs of Station Road public convenience for 2015/16 and explained that if the town council wanted the toilets to remain open after 30 March 2016 then it would need to pay 100% of the running costs or take over the management of the toilets from MDDC.

It was explained that the Council's General Purposes Committee will be asking MDDC to pay the business rates and the Town Council will contribute 50% of the remaining running costs. Andy Busby stated that he could put this offer to the relevant MDDC Committee but he thought that the likelihood was that it would be rejected.

In response to a question he explained that the district council would look at transferring ownership of the toilets to the town council but any transfer would be subject to legal clauses to ensure that the building remained as a public toilet and couldn't be converted for any other use.

He suggested that the toilet could be remodelled to provide unisex units and lower running costs. In response to a question he thought that there maybe grants available for this work.

Andy then went on to explain that MDDC currently cut the grass verges on behalf of DCC but their funding has been cut and, although MDDC has subsidised this until this financial year they will not be able to continue to provide this service and will, instead be looking for funding. They estimate the cost to be £3.51 per 100 sq metres cut or £971 per cut for Cullompton's verges. The verges are currently cut 8-10 times per year. If Cullompton Town Council decides to do this work itself then DCC will pay the money directly to the Town Council but this is being reduced, the contribution for 2015/16 was £2276.

MDDC will only cut the verges if the Town Council pays for the work to be carried out.

- (ii) **Andrew Jarrett (MDDC Head of Finance):** MDDC has had its central government grant cut by 40% over the past 4 years and has lost approximately £2.5m in government funding. This reduction in funding is set to continue. MDDC has already tried to offset these cuts by making the Council as efficient as it can. This includes:

- Reduction in the number of Officers by 45 (saving £1.25m).
- Increased income from the three leisure centres (£0.5m)
- Solar panels on leisure centres and Phoenix House
- Increase in charges such as cemetery fees and car parking.
- Cuts in grant funding.

- Changes to recycling and waste collection services (£0.5m)

However MDDC still need to find more budget savings and changes to the mechanism for funding local authorities such as the new homes bonus and business rates could make the situation worse.

In response to a question about increasing the Council Tax to help pay these increases it was explained that principle local authorities are only able to increase Council Tax by 2% otherwise they will be 'capped'. This is not the case for town and parish councils which, at present, are still able to increase their precepts with no fear of 'capping' but this could change in the future.

Andrews Jarrett explained that MDDC are trying to be more business like.

The Town Mayor thanked Andy Busby and Andrew Jarrett for attending and they left the meeting.

**89. MINUTES:** The Minutes of the previous Full Council meeting held on 24 September 2015 were approved and signed. Proposed Cllr Chaim Ebanks, seconded Cllr Eileen Andrews.

**90. REPORTS**

- (i) **Chairman's Report:** The Chairman reported her attendance at the Autumn Fruits Festival held in Cullompton on 10 October. It had been amazing to see so many people in the town and the event had been a tremendous success.
- (ii) **Police Report:** Sgt Dave McFadden explained that he is responsible for both Cullompton and Crediton Police services and is, therefore, only in Cullompton for 50% of his working time. He reported his concerns about cuts in Police funding which mean that Cullompton could lose more frontline officers. In 2010 Cullompton Police Station had 5 Neighbourhood Beat Officers, 6 PCSOs and one full-time sergeant. It currently has 2 Neighbourhood Beat Officers, 4 PCSOs and a half-time sergeant. Cuts in funding could result in the loss of more PCSOs as police resources will be concentrated on the areas with the highest crime i.e. urban communities and rural areas will lose out.

**RESOLVED:** That the Council writes to Neil Parish MP to request a meeting with him to discuss cuts in Police funding and the impact this will have on Cullompton parish and, at the same time, discuss the issues raised by Mr MacIlroy with regard to Shortlands Lane. Proposed Cllr Mike Thompson, seconded Cllr Rachel Sinclair.

**(iii) County/District Councillor Reports**

**(a) Devon County Councillor John Berry** reported on traffic matters, including route proposals for the Eastern Distributor Road and whether parking in Fore Street should continue to be restricted once the Tiverton Road junction is reopened. He asked the Council to also consider a one-way system for Tiverton Road. Try to get all the highway amendments into one Traffic Order before March 2016.

**(b) Mid Devon District Councillor Rosemary Berry's** report included:

- The Local Plan delayed due to the need to carry out survey work to understand how an eastern extension can be linked into the existing highway infrastructure and provide a

road to relieve the town centre of traffic. Concern about why it has taken DCC so long to get this work carried out.

- She would support the current proposals for development at J27 to become a destination stop as it is the gateway to Devon.
- Planning application for Knowle 2 approved by the MDDC Planning Committee.
- The MDDC High Street Innovation Fund has recently awarded £9,500 to the Farmers Market for a community shop and £7,000 to the Town Team for projects that support the town centre economy.
- New refuse and recycling programme underway.
- Proposed changes to the Cullompton Article 4 Directions have now been approved.
- MDDC now recommends that non of its properties allows Chinese lanterns to be let off for celebrations and are encouraging DCC to do the same.
- Cllr Berry agreed to follow up a question about a recent central government directive that local councils can now complain about unreasonable delays to Local Plans.

(c) **Mid Devon District Councillor Terry Snow** reported on progress with regard to an initiative to re-open Cullompton's railway station. In response to a question from Cllr Mike Thompson about whether the Town Council could send a representative to meetings he explained that this would not be possible but that he could report the Town Council's comments to the meeting.

(d) **Mid Devon Councillor Eileen Andrews** reported her attendance at a 'Budgets and Precepts' training day and that a MDDC representative will be a drop-in session at Communities House on Friday 13 November between 10am-12noon to explain the changes to the recycling/refuse collection system to members of the public.

(iv) **Devon Association of Local Councils AGM:** As Cllr Anthony Buczkowski was not in attendance this item was deferred until the next meeting.

(v) **John Tallack Youth & Community Centre:** Town Clerk agreed to email a written report to all members.

(vi) **Any other reports:** All other reports to be submitted to the Clerk who will then email to all members.

## 91. BUSINESS AND FINANCE

(i) **To approve the Financial Statements for September 2015.**

**RESOLVED:** That payments totalling £38,802.66 for September 2015 are approved and the Financial Statements for September 2015 is approved.

**NOTE:** Clerk confirmed that the Council will also be provided with a bank reconciliation statement from the next meeting.

(ii) **Roadside verges:** To consider providing funding to Mid Devon District Council to continue to maintain grass verges on land owned by Devon County Council in 2016/17.

**RESOLVED** That, due to time constraints, this item is deferred until the next meeting.

**92. COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT:**

- (i) **Community Recycling Centre:** To consider writing to Devon County Council to find out the current situation with regard to the provision of a site in the Cullompton area.

**RESOLVED:** That due to time constraints this item is deferred until the next meeting.

- (ii) **Post Office consultation:** To approve a response

**RESOLVED:** That the Council is pleased to note that the Post Office opening hours are being extended but would like the passport 'check and send' service to be retained as it is a very useful facility for local residents.

**93. COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS:** To receive the Minutes of the following Committees and Working Groups and approve the recommendations contained therein:

- (a) Traffic & Environment Working Group meeting on 22 September 2015: Noted  
(b) Community Bus Working Group meeting held on 23 September and 7 October 2015: Noted  
(c) Community Wellbeing Committee meeting held on 29 September: Noted  
(d) Planning Committee meetings held on 24 September and 8 October: Noted  
(e) Policy, Finance and Personnel Committee meeting held on 6 October 2015.

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Policy, Finance and Personnel Committee meeting held on 6 October 2015 are noted and the recommendations contained within are approved as follows (Proposed Cllr Rachel Sinclair, seconded Cllr Eileen Andrews):

- (i) That the Council underwrites the Christmas event to a maximum of £1,000 and the event is organised using the Council's Public Liability insurance on condition that:
- (a) The Council is involved in the washup meeting and  
(b) The Committee decides in January 2016 whether it is the Town Council that has overall responsibility for the event or a committee entirely separate from the Council.  
(c) That the Council applies for a TAP Fund grant of £1,000 towards the cost of the Christmas event.
- (ii) That the Council makes a grant of £150 to the Cullompton Community Choir.

**94. MOTIONS PUT FORWARD BY COUNCILLORS:**

- (i) That the Council writes to Devon County Council requesting that the section of Swallow Way that goes through the Knowle Lane development is designated as a 20mph zone. (Cllr Martin Smith)

**RESOLVED:** That the Council writes to Devon County Council requesting that the section of Swallow Way that goes through the Knowle Lane development is designated as a 20mph zone. Proposed Cllr Martin Smith, seconded Cllr Rachel Sinclair.

- (ii) That the Council investigates ways to make Willand Road safer (Cllr Eileen Andrews).

**RESOLVED:** That, due to time constraints, this item is deferred until the next meeting.

**95. CORRESPONDENCE**

- (i) Neil Parish MP: Shortlands Lane issues. *Noted*

- (ii) Age UK: AGM 3 November at 5pm in the Tiverton. *Noted*
- (iii) St Andrews Church: Remembrance Service 8 November at 10am. *Noted*
- (iv) Local resident: Concern about St Georges View being used as an access route into the NW Extension. *Noted*
- (v) Local resident: Objection to the zebra crossing in Fore Street becoming traffic light controlled. *Noted*
- (vi) Local Government Boundary Commission: Further consultation in North Devon. *Noted*
- (vii) MDDC Cllr Karl Busch: Meeting with MP to discuss concerns about using St Georges View to gain access to the NW development. (Cllr Rachel Sinclair offered to attend)

**96. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING:** Thursday 29 October 2015.

The meeting closed at 9.15pm

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_