

EASTERN LINK

Notes of the meeting held on Thursday 2nd March 2017, 7.30 pm at
Spreyton Village Hall, Spreyton

PRESENT –

Belstone – not represented
Bondleigh Parish Meeting – not represented
Chagford - Gay Hill, Chairman
Drewsteignton - Bill Savage
Gidleigh Parish Meeting – not represented
North Tawton – not represented
Sampford Courtney – not represented
South Tawton - Clive Critcher
Spreyton – Judith Talbot
Sticklepath – Derek Moore
Throwleigh – Jon Bell

Steve Jorden – WDBC
Cllr Robert Sampson – Chagford & WDBC

Martin Rich – Devon Communities together
John Fewings – Devon County Council
Steve Edwards – Devon County Council
Jo Rumble – Dartmoor National Park

Jane Gillard – Links Clerk

- 1. Apologies** – Lin Warre (Bondleigh), Jean Trewitt (North Tawton), Jenny Lee (Spreyton), Insp Mark Sloman
- 2. Agreement of Notes of last meeting held on 17th November 2016**, these were agreed as an accurate record.
- 3. Matters Arising** – an update from Cllr Jan Goffey, Okehampton Town Council has been received on the announcement that the in patient beds at Okehampton Hospital are to be closed, details as follows - *It is with a heavy heart we have to report that the CCG in their considered opinion, have rejected our pleas and propose to close the 16 remaining beds in Okehampton. The Clinical Commissioning Group have 'synthesized and re-analysed' the various documents and petitions sent in to them. Our Document 'Our Future Care?' was received by each member of the Board and we were thanked for our well thought out and reasoned responses. We were told the geographic argument was accepted but other factors also played a part in this hugely disappointing decision. Factors no doubt like this one; the decision was predetermined and the consultation was an expensive tick box exercise. They have followed the 'due process' to the letter of the law but with no humanity. It is hard to believe that with the evidence presented of the need for community beds west of Exeter the CCG has decided that the residents in this area do not merit reasonable access to any community hospital beds. The decision directly contradicts the CCG's own aims of equitable provision across all its area. The strong impression has been given that the CCG simply doesn't care for residents in half the geographical area of Eastern Locality and those with fewer public transport options than the rest of its eastern area and is more disadvantaged. A fact shown by the CCG's own data and DCCC Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, these people are to be disadvantaged further. The CCG stated in our public meeting, that NO beds will be closed until the new system of Home Care is in place, tried, tested and effective and care will be as good as, if not better, than in the hospital. These promises made by the CCG must be kept. Unlike the now broken promises to people in Moretonhampstead and Crediton that they could go to Okehampton Hospital and be cared for there, when their hospital beds were removed.*

The staff need to know that we care about their futures and their roles in our community and we cannot stand by and see their expertise lost when our community needs them here and nursing in Okehampton. It will now be for consideration to be given to what recourse is open to us to challenge the decision. A challenge is a route no one wants to take, but we do not intend simply to roll over and allow our community to be sold short in terms of future health care in Okehampton and the wider area west of Exeter. But whatever happens to the beds, our priority is the Hospital itself and safeguarding it's future as a centre of medical care in the community.

- 4. Big Energy Saving Network – Martin Rich, Devon Communities Together**
Devon Communities Together was formerly known as Community Council of Devon, they have changed names and now also incorporate the Devon Playing Fields Association. Their role is to support and deliver a wide programme of activity focussed on helping communities help themselves. They are taking part in this winter's Big Energy Saving Network project to try and get more people involved in energy efficiency schemes and looking at the options for reducing fuel and energy costs. Focusing on those with low and fixed incomes. Most people ignore the advertising but are prepared to listen to people they know and trust, so they are trying to link with as many community organisations as they can. The expectation expected of those present tonight is that they will know of groups in their communities that would benefit from their help or how they can effectively communicate with their wider community. Attendees are not being asked to deliver the information, but to be a conduit for informed discussion.
Copy of presentation attached with meeting notes.
Anyone wanting help for their community or training for community members contact martin@devoncommunities.org.uk
- 5. DCC Highways – John Fewings**
John has replaced Peter Brunt as the DCC Neighbourhood Highways Manager. They are currently working through the change of contractor from SW Highways to Skanska, there is a lot of work taking place on this. Many staff will be transferring from the old to the new contractor. Skanska offered many efficiencies in their bid for the contract. The S W Highways Sign shop is closing down, this is not being taken over by Skanska. The current shop are not taking on new work as they are trying to fulfil all their outstanding work before the contract ends, DCC are currently looking for a new provider and details of this will be communicated when known.
DCC made a successful bid to the 'Pot Hole Action Fund'
They will be promoting the Roadwardens scheme during the summer months. The purchase of materials by parishes to fill potholes was raised as an issue as they are expected to do this on an individual basis which does not appear to be very cost effective or efficient. They are still looking at different and better ways of filling potholes.
General deterioration of roads – this should be reported to the local highways officer.
SCARF (Speed compliance and review forum) - meet 3 or 4 times per year, if parishes have issues they want raised they should contact their local highways officer, more information on this group can be found on the DCC website.
HATOC – looks at traffic orders.
- 6. DCC Update – Steve Edwards**
See separate report attached.
- 7. Future of Okehampton Hospital - update–** see item 3 above.
- 8. DNP Update – Jo Rumble**
Local Plan – the first consultations were at the end of last year, staffing issues have slowed the process down, there will be a revised schedule issued very shortly.
Broadband covered in the DCC slot, specific issues relating to coverage to Throwleigh discussed.
Dark Night Skies – a project DNP are looking into, more information to follow.
- 9. TAP Fund**
Total annual budget £6855.20, previously allocated £5038, amount remaining to allocate £1817.20, 3 applications submitted for consideration at this meeting totalling £3274 = a shortfall of available funds of £1456.80.
Applications received -
Throwleigh application supported by South Tawton for £496 Rural skills worker to assist with essential works maintaining the parish, predominantly ditching and draining works but to also cover maintenance of sign posts in the parish.
Sampford Courtenay application supported by Exbourne & Jacobstowe for £2028 to improve heating and insulation for the new meeting room at Sampford Courtenay Village Hall.

Drewsteignton application for £750.00 Parish Lenghtsman project , application approved at previous meeting, total cost of project £1500 when the parish were not aware the whole project costs could be applied for hence a further application for the remaining balance of £750.

Councillor Savage declared an interest in the Drewsteignton application and proposed the Throwleigh application be granted in full with the other 2 reduced.

Councillor Sampson proposed the Throwleigh application be granted in full and Sampford Courtenay application and Drewsteignton application be awarded the remaining £1321.20 and this amount be split between the 2 applications in pro rata to the amounts requested. This results in an award of £356.72 to Drewsteignton and £964.48 to Sampford Courtenay.

This results in the remaining £1817.20 being awarded as follows –

| | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| Drewsteignton | £356.72 |
| Sampford Courtenay | £964.48 |
| Throwleigh | <u>£496.00</u> |
| | £1817.20 |

This proposal was approved by all present.

- 10. Policing Issues** – statistics distributed prior to meeting. Insp Sloman reported to the meeting by email that there had been little incident in the east over recent months. There were parking issues in Exbourne with parking on the pavement in the centre of the village, the police attended on a number of occasions and issued advisory notices. They have had no issues with anti-social and little crime.

Questions to be raised with Insp Sloman (answers received in blue italics underneath) – possession of drugs figures down from 11 to 2, is this connected to the stop checks on roads not happening?

Looking at the figures we have actually seen an increase in drug seizures across the whole of West Devon, however I am unable to give a particular reason why we have seen a drop in the east.

Shoplifting incidents increased from 1 to 7, what are the reasons for this?

There has been a large increase in shoplifting across the whole of Devon and Cornwall and we have seen a similar rise in west Devon. The two towns of Tavistock and okehampton have seen large increases and we are working with individual stores to ensure we start to see a reduction. We have recently taken known shoplifters to court but get frustrated at the sentences they receive in court. Towns such as Chagford in the East have also seen small increases.

What is the current situation in West Devon (kiv item on the news today re East Devon where it was stated only 1 officer patrolling overnight and the public resignation of an officer reported). What cover is there in West Devon and what are estimated current response times to rural areas eg Bondleigh?

We always have more than one officer in West Devon patrolling on nights. Each section have four officers so unless there is, sickness annual leave etc this is the number I would expect to be working each shift. These officers are supported by traffic dept and CID as well as officers from the local policing team. We also have a strong and active team of special constables who often support regular officers at the weekend.

- 11. Parish Feedback and Issues** – no issues raised.

- 12. WDBC Update** – Steve Jordan

As a result of WDBC final budget, council tax will increase by £5 resulting in Band D being £218.39, a 2.34% increase on the previous year.

There is a 7.4M net budget for next year and a £700k annual cost ie shortfall. £600k of annual savings need to be found.

The Leisure Centre procurement gave an additional £350k extra per annum.

Business rate funding from Central Government has reduced, there is now a 37% funding gap from central government.

Capital works programme budget remains at £.5m

Performance of the Council still on an upward trend, response times improving. There is a new planning portal to be launched next week, all asked for feedback following the launch.

Joint Local Plan – now approved by all 3 councils involved. Neighbourhood Plans will feed into it. The next stage of public consultation takes place 10 march – 26 April, all encouraged to feed into it. There will be engagement events organised. The Inspectorate decision will be expected towards the end of the year following which it will be adopted by the 3 councils.

WD have received an extra £250k from Central Government for community housing, they are now looking at how this can be used with local groups.

The meeting was closed at 9.15 pm.

Dates and Venues for future meetings

Thursday 22nd June 2017 – Whiddon Down Village Hall

Thursday 14th September 2017 – Throwleigh Village Hall

Thursday 16th November 2017 – Sampford Courtenay Village Hall