

WEST HILL ANNUAL PARISH MEETING, MONDAY 16th APRIL 2019 AT 7.30PM IN THE VILLAGE HALL

Present	Cllr Margaret Hall (MH) - Chairman Cllr Jessica Bailey (JB) Cllr Alan Cook (AC) Cllr Quentin Tailford (QT)
In attendance	Parish Clerk Anne Oliver County Cllr Claire Wright PCSO Jonathan Sims Approx 25 members of the public Apologies: Cllr Jill Ingle, Cllr Jo Talbot, Cllr Christopher Hall Cheryl Boulton Headteacher WH Primary School Colin Baines (Speedwatch), Brian Taylor (Badminton Group)

Item (a)	Discussion and decisions (b)
APM19/1	Welcome and Chairman's announcements Chairman MH welcomed Councillors, guests and members of the public and started the meeting at 7.30pm.
APM19/2	To receive the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 23rd April 2018 The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of 23 rd April 2018 were agreed as a true and accurate record. Proposed: Scott Massie, Seconded: Ian Heard. Chair MH signed the minutes.
APM19/3	Chairman's report Chairman MH reported on the Parish Council's achievements in its second year of operation: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This is end of the tenure of the current Council. Three current councillors are standing down – Jo Talbot, Christopher Hall and Jill Ingle. MH noted their tremendous contribution to the village and their work to create the Parish Council. MH thanked them on behalf of the village and fellow Councillors. 2. The election for the new Council was uncontested. 6 councillors are confirmed for the next 4-year session, and one vacancy to be filled by co-option. 3. Last autumn the Parish Clerk, Alison Carr, resigned and has since stood for election as a Parish Councillor. She will be joining the Council in May. In addition Amanda Townsend, a former Chair of the PTFA, will be a Councillor. 4. MH reported that the new Clerk, Anne Oliver, started in January and has rapidly got to grips with the tasks involved in being a Parish Clerk, and will be a great asset to the Council. 5. Council meetings: During the past year we have held 21 council meetings. The aim will be in the coming years to just have one full council meeting per month. 6. Planning Applications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 73 planning applications have been considered, including many applications for works on protected trees. The Council is a statutory consultee, and our comments are taken into consideration when EDDC decides the application. The Council's primary aim is to protect the special character and landscape in West Hill.

- During the past year the East Devon Villages Plan has been adopted, which greatly reduced the settlement boundary (the Built Up Area Boundary) for West Hill. Inside the BUAB development is acceptable in principle, but outside the BUAB, development should be resisted. Also the Neighbourhood Plan for the Parishes of Ottery St Mary and West Hill was “made” in July 2018. The Neighbourhood Plan has a more detailed policy on design in West Hill, and also specifies projects on Open Spaces, Trees, and Road Safety which should be taken forward.
- The Council are having ongoing discussions with the Planning Officers and Tree Officers at EDDC to try and ensure that the Parish Council’s comments are given full weight, and that they fully understand the unique character of West Hill.

7. **Finance:** MH reminded the meeting that the Council started in 2017 with no funds. At the end of the first year the Council had a healthy level of reserves, £15,000 in the general reserves, which is an acceptable and prudent level, and £6,500 in earmarked reserves, for various projects. This has continued through the current year, and the Council should be in a position to add about another £20,000 to the ear-marked reserves. The precept was kept steady at just over £56,000. Because of the increase in housing in West Hill, the level of Band D contribution to council tax will actually fall slightly for next year.

8. **Public Open Space:**

- One of the highest priorities for the Council is to improve the provision of public open space in the village. The Council has met with mixed fortunes during the past year. Currently there is no public open space for residents to play sports, formally or informally. The thriving and successful Wasps Junior Football Teams have no permanent home. They are permitted to use the school field for the younger age-groups, but have to use the Kings Playing field in Ottery and the Tipton St John Playing Fields for other teams.
- We have entered into discussions with the school to see if the informal access to the school playing field outside school hours could be reinstated, but this has not proved possible.
- The Parish Council have assessed a number of other possible sites for a playing field have within the parish boundary. MH reported that it is difficult to find a suitably flat piece of land, and so far the Council have not found a willing landowner, or there are problems with access. The Council will continue their efforts in the next Council. MH reported that one of the problems is that people generally, and District & County Councils perceive West Hill as a place with trees and large gardens, and do not see the lack of open space with public access as an important issue.
- The one area that does have public access is the Woodland Trust land between Higher Broad Oak Road and Lower Broad Oak Road. The Council has liaised with the Woodland Trust, and a small area in the centre of the woodland has been cleared which can be used for picnics, etc. MH thanked Cllr Christopher Hall for his work on this. There is more work to be done to maintain and look after the woodland and increase biodiversity, and it could be improved with better signage and information to encourage more people to use it.
- Footpaths – around 5 miles within the parish – MH thanked West Hill’s Footpath Volunteer, Eileen Perkins, who liaises with Devon County Council and arranges for repairs to be done. A small grant has been received from Devon County Council for maintenance of the footpaths

9. **Play Park:** The Parish Council is also responsible for the Play Park beside the Village Hall. During the last year some new items of equipment have been installed. The cost of this was met from S.106 contributions from new development in the village. The Council are now working on replacing the wooden ramp to the treehouse, which had become unsafe. MH thanked Cllr Jess Bailey and the Clerk for their work on this. Maintenance work is ongoing including treating the wooden structures with preservatives and renewing the bark on the paths. The Council are considering setting aside money for replacement of the various items in due course.

10. Trees:

- MH noted that trees are a very significant aspect of West Hill's village landscape, and the Parish Council gives the highest priority to protecting trees. The Council also want to encourage good management of trees and planting of new trees.
- Recently EDDC and DCC have launched a "Landmark Tree" scheme, whereby they will provide one tree per parish, as part of the Ash Die-back resilience programme. The Parish Council have proposed that a Landmark Tree should be planted in Courtfield Close to replace the "Coronation Tree" in which is a horse chestnut but has been found to be diseased.
- Across the parish the Council plan to work with landowners and householders in West Hill to plant other new trees as part of good tree management, and also to mitigate the effects of Ash Die-back.
- Cllr Alan Cook, along with Dick Beardsall & Eileen Perkins, have been working on the "Special Trees of West Hill" project, which is now nearing completion. This has been a mammoth task, needing many hours of work over the past 4-5 years, and many thanks are due to the team. The Parish Council is supporting this project and will adopt the final report and finance the printing of a leaflet to be distributed to all homes in West Hill.

11. Devon Air Ambulance Community Landing Site: One successful project has been to identify a suitable site for a night-time air ambulance landing site, on the school playing field. The Council has worked with the school and Devon Air Ambulance Trust, and have submitted a planning application for the installation of a lighting column, which will only be used if an air ambulance actually needs to land. A consultation event was held to fully inform those residents likely to be affected. The Otter Valley Probus Group led a magnificent campaign to raise over £3,000 to fund the necessary works, and the remaining and ongoing costs will be met by the Parish Council. Cllr Quentin Tailford has done much of the liaison work on this.

12. Communities Together Fund:

- This is jointly funded by DCC and EDDC, and was formerly called the Parishes Together Fund. The Parish Council worked with Ottery St Mary Town Council and other local parish councils to support a bid to set up a Dementia Action Alliance with roaming memory café's around the villages. This was successful, and a grant of £10,390 was made.
- West Hill Parish Council made a bid jointly with the Wasps FC and Kings School PTFA to purchase new goalposts. This bid for £1,581 was also successful.
- There was a significant overall underspend on this fund, largely because the rules for it changed this year. It will not be continued next year, but the money instead will go to support Crowdfunding efforts.

13. Parish Lengthsman: MH reported that it has been apparent that cuts to DCC budgets have meant that many of West Hill verges have remained uncut and ditches remain uncleared. This is something that the Parish Council can take on. WHPC has been given a grant of £816 from DCC to help with this. They will shortly be appointing a lengthsman on a contract basis, to cut verges, clear ditches, clean road signs, and work on Himalayan balsam. This work overlaps with maintenance work at the Play Park and also the Snow Warden work. MH noted that the Council has been lucky to have Craig Williams helping with the snow gritter over the last two years, and many thanks are due to him. The Parish Council has also written to some householders to encourage them to trim back roadside hedges, where these pose a risk to road safety.

14. Dog fouling: One of the most frequent complaints received by the Council related to dog fouling on pavements around the village. MH commented that this is not only unpleasant, but a danger to health, and a criminal offence. The Council have obtained

	<p>red biodegradable spray paint and “Clean-it-up” stencils. Volunteers have helped Cllr Jess Bailey with this, which seems to have improved the situation. The EDD Streetscene department have also been helpful.</p> <p>15. Traffic: MH reported that another of the Council’s priorities from the start has been to address traffic issues in the village and to improve the safety of walking routes. This issue was highlighted in the Public Realm Study, which we commissioned last year. This was followed up by commissioning a Traffic Study from PJA Associates. A workshop was held last November for about 20 stakeholders, and a public consultation event last month, which was attended by around 80-100 residents. The Report on this stage of the work should be published shortly and will be uploaded onto the website. The consultation on the proposed 8 projects will be open until the new Council meets in May. The consultation posters can be seen on the website. Further work will take place to analyse the residents’ priorities, to undertake further detailed work with PJA and DCC Highways, as well as having further discussions with residents who might be affected by the proposals. MH felt that this was going to be a long-term, and expensive project, but worthwhile if significant safety improvements and improved walking routes could be achieved.</p> <p>A member of the public asked: Is there any news on the McColls redevelopment? MH understood that it may be over a year before re-development begins however some refurbishment may start in May.</p>
<p>APM19/4</p>	<p>Awarding of Grants for 2019/20</p> <p>1. St Michael’s Craft and Flower Festival: WHPC was pleased to award a grant of £200 towards set up costs plus WHPC will sponsor the children’s competition and award £50 in prize money.</p> <p>Richard Bonnie accept the grant on behalf of St Michael’s. The festival will take place from Friday 21st June to Sunday 23rd and will showcase the work of West Hill residents. A café will offer refreshments. A Children’s Art Competition is open to children living in the village. More information can be found on the website https://stmichaelatwesthill.weebly.com/craft-flower-festival.html</p>
<p>APM19/5</p>	<p>Reports from County Councillor and District Councillors Devon County Councillor Claire Wright reported on some of the motions that she had proposed during the year, including post Brexit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to maintain EU regulations on animal sentience • to maintain EU environmental regulations which currently offer high levels of protection to many local areas. <p>Claire reported her ongoing campaigns regarding NHS, Ottery St Mary Hospital, Foster Care Allowances and “Care at Home” initiative. She reported on the Devon County Budget and noted that this was the last to receive Central Government Funding.</p> <p>A member of the public asked a question: What is the latest news on OSM Hospital? Claire reported that issue was still ongoing with no resolution.</p>
<p>APM19/6</p>	<p>Reports from West Hill Groups and Organisations</p> <p>PCSO Jonathan Sims Jonathan reported that he had been based in Ottery St Mary for over a year now. The neighbourhood team consists of 2 constables and 2 PCSOs and can be contacted by ringing 101 and leave a message. The neighbourhood make use of Facebook and Twitter to provide information and to seek help from the community. He encouraged residents to sign up to the successful “Devon and Cornwall Alerts” system that contacts users by e-mail, text or</p>

answerphone message giving early warnings, crime news, missing persons etc. To enrol <https://alerts.dc.police.uk/>

The team are making efforts to meet the local community and have started regular sessions to Sainsburys in OSM and are exploring the possibility of doing something similar at McColls in West Hill.

Jonathon thanked West Hill's Community Speedwatch volunteers who he said did an excellent job and were making a real difference. He then paid tribute to the late Peter Lonsdale and his work to make the village a safer place to live.

He then presented an overview of crime statistics for West Hill and wider area including Wiggaton and Tipton St John and that the figures for West Hill remain very low. Jonathan reminded the meeting that crime statistics for West Hill and any area are available on www.police.co.uk

West Hill Village Hall

Ian Heard reported that the Village Hall was in good shape; the buildings and financially. The Hall has 26 groups using the hall each week, with the school and pre-school accounting for 40% of usage. These groups cover a wide range of interests and age groups. Last June the Village Hall's Hallmark 3 award was renewed for another 3 years with a positive report which referred to the substantial upgrading of the Hall and professionalism of the Trustees. The Trustees are continuing to invest in the Hall and have recently implemented a new £7,000 Public Address system.

Current issues include child safety concerns in the turning circle outside the school and hall. Also, in principle, the Trustees support the WHPC proposal for a public footpath access from West Hill Road into the Village Hall grounds.

Ian concluded by thanking, Mike Hemming, Sarah Woolfries and the Trustees

West Hill Primary School

Due to the school holidays Headteacher Cheryl Boulton was unable to attend the meeting. Rowan Ross, representing the school gave an overview of the many activities undertaken by pupils at the school:

- charity: £400 raised for the Poppy Appeal, £300 for Children in Need, 3 class 6 members held a cake sale and raised nearly £400 for the Alzheimer's Society and many more!
- cultural: Japanese and African Drumming workshops, Teachers Rock Youth Choir at Exeter Cathedral, winning Radio Devon's "Star for Christmas" competition, working with members of the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and many more!
- curriculum: European Day of Languages, joint 2nd in Wellington Primary School Maths Challenge against 44 other schools, Class 4's letter writing project on hedgehogs was covered on TV, World Book Day and many more!
- Sport: children take part in a wide variety of extra-curricular clubs such as tag-rugby, football, multi-sports, hockey and run-a-mile. They competed in many events including East Devon Cross Country and the East Devon Winter Games.

Rowan concluded by thanking the PTFA for their ongoing support and stated that without their help and fundraising many of the activities listed above would not be possible.

West Hill Primary School PTFA

Scott Massie stated that the aim of the PTFA was to provide additional funding for the school. During the last two years nearly £20,000 had been donated to the school including

- £4,000 for books

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £5,000 for classroom whiteboards and other equipment • many other initiatives including £175 for a Roman Centurion! <p>Fundraising continues through the year including activities such as raffles, cake sales and a “Sponsored Bounce”. Last years Summer Fete, organised by Amanda Townsend, raised £4,000. Planning for this year’s fete is underway and any volunteers would be greatly appreciated.</p> <p>Women’s Group Tricia Heard reported that the Women’s Group is in its 4th year and had continued to be very popular. Membership has grown from 32 to 97 and now has a waiting list. They have a busy schedule of meetings, trips, speakers and sub-groups. The group meet in the Royal British Legion clubhouse and thanked the RBL for their ongoing support. The Women’s Group’s fundraising activities have raised £1,500 which was recently presented to the RBL.</p> <p>West Hill Royal British Legion Dave Underwood noted that in comparison to the “newly formed” Women’s Group the RBL was established in 1927. They continue to have regular events and have recently hosted a “pop-up” restaurant which proved very popular. The RBL have undertaken a programme of major improvement works on the clubhouse. Over recent years the roof has been replaced, new toilet facilities provided and more recently the car park work was completed. The next major project is to enlarge and install a new kitchen which will create a full catering facility.</p> <p>Community Speedwatch Richard Bonnie reminded the meeting that their aim was to educate and inform the community. They run speedwatch checks at various location across the village each month. The team now has only 6 members and need more volunteers. The commitment is one hour per month.</p> <p>West Hill Footpaths Eileen Perkins, West Hill’s Footpath Volunteer, reported that there are no major issues at the moment. Each year the footpaths are inspected and required maintenance reported. For the second year WHPC has received a Grant towards this work. Eileen reported that waymarking has been improved and reminded dog-walkers that they should keep to the paths.</p> <p>West Hill Garden Club Monica Highnam reported on a busy year of speakers and visits. The Garden Club plant and maintain the planters outside McColl’s and are busy preparing for their stall at the Village Fete. Next year will be the 50th anniversary of the Garden Club. To mark the occasion the club has applied to Gardener’s Question Time to be broadcast from the village (June 2020).</p>
<p>APM 19/9</p>	<p>Open Session for Residents’ Questions and Comments</p> <p>There were no questions from the public. MH asked whether the attendees supported the idea of a “West Hill Citizen of the Year”. The attendees supported the idea and MH agreed to look to implement it for 2019/20.</p> <p>MH closed the meeting and invited people to stay for refreshments.</p> <p>Meeting closed at 8.40pm</p>
	<p>Refreshments served</p>