

WEST HILL ANNUAL PARISH MEETING, MONDAY 23RD APRIL 2018 AT 7.30PM IN THE VILLAGE HALL

Present	Cllr Margaret Hall (MH) - Chairman Cllr Jo Talbot (JT) – Vice Chairman Cllr Jill Ingle (JI) Cllr Jessica Bailey (JB) Cllr Christopher Hall (CH) Cllr Alan Cook (AC)
In attendance	Parish Clerk Alison Carr County Cllr Claire Wright PCSO Jonathan Sims Approx 20 members of the public

Item (a)	Discussion and decisions (b)
APM18/1	<p>Welcome and Chairman’s announcements Chairman MH welcomed Councillors, guests and members of the public and started the meeting at 7.30pm. She delivered apologies from Charlotte Ferguson, Chair of the Pre-School committee who was unable to attend as the Parish meeting coincided with an important Pre-School committee meeting. Apologies were also received from Doug Ferguson, due to talk about the “Wasps” grant, who was unavoidably detained at work.</p>
APM18/2	<p>To receive the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 30th May 2017 The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of 30th May 2017 were agreed as a true and accurate record.</p>
APM18/3	<p>Chairman’s report Chairman MH reported on the Parish Council’s achievements in its first year of operation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointed a permanent Clerk, set up policies and systems, set up a bank account and financial procedures. • When the Parish Council began, it started with a zero bank balance and had no reserves. Reserves are a legal requirement and thanks to sound financial management the Parish Council has ended the year with enough reserves to cover 6 months’ operating costs. • The Parish Council precept increased by 2.5% overall but because the tax base (number of households) increased, the amount levied per household went down by 1.4% • A website was set up – www.westhillparishcouncil.gov.uk containing important information such as dates and times of meetings, agendas, minutes, policy documents and links to the wider community. The Parish Council would like it to be the first point of contact for residents looking for information. It is still a work in progress. • The Parish Council Twitter account was established @WestHillPC. This will become an important means of communication with residents and it is hoped more residents will follow. • A popular means of communication is still the notice boards on the wall at McColls shop. The Parish Council has purchased new boards to replace the old ones and intends to put an extra one at the village hall. • The Parish Council continues to meet on the first and third Tuesdays of the month, with the latter meeting being mainly reserved for discussing planning matters. • Regarding planning, the Parish Council is trying to uphold the principles in the Neighbourhood Plan and the Village Design Statement and trying to be consistent. The same consistent approach is aimed for with tree applications. • The East Devon Villages Plan is nearly ready and only awaits the Inspector’s report before it can be adopted • The Neighbourhood Plan for the Parishes of Ottery St Mary and West Hill has passed inspection and is due to be considered at EDDC Cabinet

- Regarding the redevelopment of McColls shop building, the Parish Council has been trying to engage with the planning agents but has had limited success. There has been no formal planning application yet, but one is expected imminently.
- Last year the Parish Council ran a survey of residents to find out what people thought the priorities should be.
- Grants were awarded to village groups, 5 in the new financial year and 1 in the last one to the West Hill Junior FC “Wasps”.
- One of the Parish Council’s aims is to improve the public spaces around the village. To help identify the key issues, a public realm study was commissioned and completed just before the end of March.
- The Parish Council has been having a dialogue with the Woodland Trust about the woodland at Broadoak Plantation to identify ways in which the woodland could be improved for use by residents.
- A Section 106 grant was obtained from EDDC for improvements to the play park. This enabled the Parish Council to install new equipment costing just over £12,000 which is proving very popular with the children. A few other small jobs have been identified to tidy up the play park and this is being addressed.
- The Parish Council was able to work with Ottery St Mary Town Council and Aylesbeare Parish Council to claim funding under the Parishes Together scheme. The funding enabled the 3 Councils to put money towards a project operated by the Ottery Help Scheme which will provide support for a young people’s mental health scheme.
- MH said the Parish Council is looking for ideas for projects for this year’s Parishes Together funding and asked if anyone had any ideas to get in touch.
- 2 new dog waste bins have been installed at both entrances to the woodland at Broadoak Plantation.
- The Parish Council is joining the Parish Paths Partnership (“P3”) which provides extra funding of £30 per mile of footpaths for upkeep and other maintenance. West Hill has 5 miles of footpaths, so potentially £150 of funding.
- A litter pick and sign cleaning afternoon was held just before Christmas – the good news is that there was not masses of litter in the village.
- One Councillor has resigned for personal reasons which has left a casual vacancy. The Clerk has instigated the official procedure and notified EDDC. 10 electors can request an election but if this does not happen, the Parish Council will co-opt.

A member of the public asked:

Will the Parish Council convene another public consultation when the planning application for McColls redevelopment comes through?

MH said that the Parish Council would try as far as possible, but consultees are only given 21 days by EDDC planners in which to lodge their responses, so it might have to be included on the agenda of a Parish Council meeting.

PCSO Jonathan Sims

Jonathan explained that he had recently joined the Neighbourhood Policing Team, operating out of Ottery. He knows the area very well and was in Cullompton for 10 years. He has worked for Devon and Cornwall Police for 23 years. He covers West Hill, Ottery Town, Feniton, Talaton, Tipton St John. His Inspector, Antonia Weekes, is based in Exmouth.

He reported that the crime figures in West Hill were the same as this time last year, 6 recorded crimes. He said that some crimes are not being reported and stressed that it is important that residents report crimes to they can be recorded.

He specifically mentioned burglaries, which people are concerned about. This is a problem throughout East and Mid Devon, and is not specific to West Hill. If anything, these types of crimes are reducing.

He urged people to ring 101 if they see anything suspicious. If they think a crime is about to be committed, they should ring 999.

He said West Hill has very low crime figures, especially given the size of its population. However he cautioned people against being complacent and advised everyone to lock their doors and cars and not to leave valuables on display.

	<p>If anyone needs to contact him, they can ring 101 and leave a message. He ended by thanking West Hill's community speedwatch volunteers who he said did an excellent job and were making a real difference.</p> <p>MH remarked that West Hill gets a lot of cold callers - people knocking on doors. Jonathan said they are not all bad but if they look like they are going to commit a crime, people should ring 101. He did warn people to look out for rogue traders.</p> <p>He said that mental health issues are a massive challenge for policing and dealing with vulnerable people is more time consuming than crime.</p>
<p>APM18/4</p>	<p>Awarding of Grants for 2018/19 and brief reports from West Hill organisations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. West Hill Junior FC "Wasps" (£750 awarded in 2017-18). As Doug Ferguson was unable to attend, MH explained that the grant award was half the money that the Wasps needed to raise to purchase a set of junior-sized goal posts. 2. West Hill Village Hall (£500 awarded for 2018-19) Colin Veale accepted the grant as a trustee of the village hall. He read out a short statement from Ian Heard, Chair of trustees. The village hall houses the Pre-School and the perimeter fence around the Pre-School needed to be replaced. The grant represented a portion of the total cost of £2,300 for a new fence. He went on to say that the village hall is well used by everyone in the community. It hosts an annual pantomime, which is very popular, as well as wedding receptions and other functions. He thanked everyone who uses the hall and whose support sustains its strong financial position and volunteers like the bookings secretary. 3. Royal British Legion West Hill Club (£500 awarded for 2018-19) Frederick Thomas accepted the grant as treasurer. He explained that the RBL club is affiliated with the RBL charity. The club and branch are separate organisations. The Club is a limited company and the branch is a charity. They work well together and the Club is flourishing. It has a bar and hosts functions as well as weekly film nights and skittles. They are trying to increase funds to resurface the car park and refurbish the kitchen. He thanked the Parish Council for the grant which will go towards the cost of resurfacing the car park. 4. West Hill Pre-School (£620 awarded for 2018-19) As explained earlier, Charlotte Ferguson, Chair of the Pre-School, sent apologies. MH explained that the grant was for purchasing a new sand pit and lid. 5. West Hill Short Mat Bowling Club (£500 awarded for 2018-19) Colin Veale accepted the grant as Secretary of the Short Mat Bowling Club. He said that the Club was formed in 1986 by a group of West Hill residents. He said that the Club was one of the first regular users of the village hall. They would like to attract members of all ages but especially younger members. Each mat is 45 feet long and 6 feet wide. Two of the mats are very old and worn out and they specifically need a medium-speed mat. The grant from the Parish Council will enable them to make the purchase. They run an open charity triples tournament in which the winners get a cup. There are 16 teams. It raises funds for their selected charity – the Devon Air Ambulance. The new mat will have its first outing at this event. 6. West Hill Primary School PTFA (£1,000 awarded for 2018-19) The grant was accepted by Scott Massie, Chair of the PTFA and Cheryl Boulton, Head Teacher. Cheryl has been Head Teacher since 2016 and Scott the Chair of the PTFA since September 2017. The grant will make a significant contribution to the forest school and Mediterranean garden – replacement railings, seating, trellis, and new seating in forest school amongst other things. The forest school is used most by reception and class 1 who take part in it once a week. They learn a variety of skills – teamwork and

	<p>cooperation, finding bugs, having fun. The children really come out of their shells. Both the forest school and Mediterranean garden are also for use by the community at weekends. They just ask people to leave it tidy again for the school.</p> <p>Scott explained about the PTFA. It is a registered charity with the aim of advancing the education of the children at the school. He said that funding from the government is tight. The PTFA raises funds to help staff provide resources not normally provided from normal sources. Currently they are purchasing 500 books for reception class at a cost of £2,000. They will also spend £160 for a visiting Roman Centurion. The PTFA raises most of its funding from film nights, cake sales, a school Ball, parties, donations, and the summer fete.</p> <p>MH explained that the Parish Council has agreed to donate £350 towards the cost of the band at the fete.</p>
<p>APM18/5</p>	<p>Reports from County Councillor and District Councillors Devon County Councillor Claire Wright was not in the room at this point, but arrived later to deliver her report. MH said that the report has been posted on the Parish Council website. There were no reports from the East Devon District Councillors.</p> <p>Cllr Claire Wright reported on her work on the Health and Adult Care Scrutiny Committee and concerns about bed closures and other cuts aiming to save money. Her report is available on the West Hill Parish Council website www.westhillparishcouncil.gov.uk</p>
<p>APM18/6</p>	<p>Report from Cllr Jo Talbot, Chair of Ottery St Mary and West Hill Neighbourhood Plan Working Group West Hill Parish Councillor Jo Talbot is Chair of the Ottery St Mary and West Hill Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. JT explained that the Neighbourhood Plan is completed. It has been through examination and is going to Cabinet at EDDC on 2nd May. 6 weeks after that it will go to public referendum. The Plan is on West Hill Parish Council's website and Ottery St Mary's website. A hard copy can be viewed by request to the West Hill Parish Clerk or at Ottery St Mary Town Council offices. The Neighbourhood Plan will help protect the village from unwanted development, though there will always be people wanting to fight it. JT said special thanks were due to MH for her hard work and help and particularly for her great understanding of all things planning.</p>
<p>APM18/7</p>	<p>Report on the Public Realm Study commissioned by West Hill Parish Council West Hill Parish Councillor Alan Cook reported on some of the highlights of the public realm study. He stressed that the projects mentioned ranged from practical ideas to grander long-term aspirations. The report is being considered by Councillors but no decisions have been made and residents would be consulted before any final decisions were made. The study was commissioned because Councillors wanted a plan to enhance the village and make improvements. It started with the community survey done in 2017, then the public realm survey. His presentation will be available on www.westhillparishcouncil.gov.uk. The public realm survey looked at access paths, key features and how the village facilities are used. The objectives were to improve road safety, enhance the village centre and assess open spaces. Everyone agrees West Hill is a unique and desirable place to live. The study looked at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open spaces – currently only 2 open spaces in the village are accessible to the public, of which one is the Woodland Trust land at Broadoak Plantation. • The natural heart of the village is around McColls shop, but the heart is not well defined and is blighted by the busy road. The heart of the village could be enhanced. • The village could be described as a village of cul-de-sacs. This leads to poor connectivity. • There are a limited number of footpaths, making it difficult for people to walk around the village <p>The study has been shared with the developers working on McColls and it is hoped that they will take on board some of the suggestions.</p>

	<p>One of the more aspirational ideas in the report was that West Hill Road could be designated as access only, to cut down on the amount of through-traffic. Traffic calming measures like pinch-points could be used to slow traffic down. It would be good to make the area around the school, village hall and shop more pedestrian friendly to encourage more walking.</p> <p>A member of the public asked: If the village is to be more pedestrian-friendly, will that require more parking? If some parking will be lost by the McColls development, has the Parish Council thought about parking?</p> <p>AC said there are no firm plans at the moment to create more parking, but it is agreed that parking needs to be taken into account.</p> <p>A member of the public asked: Do you mean that West Hill Road will be closed?</p> <p>AC said no, not closing, just possibly restricting access to reduce through-traffic.</p> <p>A member of the public said: An observation is that more people walk down Bendarroch Road rather than West Hill Road, so the proposal might push traffic down Bendarroch Road and towards more pedestrians.</p> <p>A member of the public asked: Would footpaths be installed on Bendarroch Road? Pavements are needed.</p> <p>AC said the idea is to slow traffic down throughout the village and make the centre of the village more pedestrian friendly.</p> <p>AC - there would be a lot of negotiation with residents and other parties to make it work and no decisions would be made without a lot of consultation.</p> <p>A member of the public asked: Has the Parish Council forwarded the information from the public realm study to the McColls developers?</p> <p>AC said the report was made available to the developers but the Parish Council has not heard from them since.</p>
<p>APM18/8</p>	<p>Report on the Woodland Trust Land at Broadoak Plantation West Hill Parish Councillor Christopher Hall reported that the Parish Council had contacted the Woodland Trust about the woodland area to see how it could be made more user friendly. The Woodland Trust Area Manager was positive about some of the ideas, such as making a clearing in the centre of wood for a seating area or place for people to stop. The Parish Council has looked at the cost, which could be quite modest, to clear some undergrowth and minor tree works, plus some ongoing maintenance. He has reported to the Woodland Trust and is waiting for their response.</p> <p>A member of the public asked: There was an old water trough, but it has recently been removed – where has it gone?</p> <p>CH said he did not know. It was full of rubbish and was tipped over and taken away. It could have been removed by the contractor used by the Woodland Trust who was there cutting down a couple of trees.</p> <p>A member of the public asked: What about car parking? If more people use the woodland area, will they walk there or drive, and if they drive, where will they park?</p> <p>CH said that is still being looked at. It is hoped most people will walk but there might be a way of creating a few spaces.</p>

APM18/9	<p>Open Session for Residents' Questions and Comments</p> <p>There was a request for the Parish Council and residents to look at what the village has in the way of broadband. A survey on broadband was done 2 years ago on what companies were used and the best broadband speeds. The village has 3 cabinets. It is not known if speeds have increased since the last survey was done. The survey can be found on the West Hill Village website (NOT THE PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE) if people can be encouraged to fill it in. The results will be used to update a map showing the broadband speeds across the village. The survey is on http://www.westhilldevon.org.uk/broadband.html</p> <p>MH closed the meeting and invited people to stay for refreshments.</p>
	Refreshments served

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