

Draft

**Minutes of the Meeting of Shirwell Parish Council
held on the
14th March 2024 in the Village Hall, Shirwell**

Present

Cllr J Friend Chairman
Cllr J Watts (Vice Chairman)
Cllr E Abretti
Cllr Mrs C Parkhouse
Cllr Mrs S Pine
Cllr S Shortridge

Also present one member of the public

Officer

G Dwyer

Mar24/1 Apologies for Absence

Cllr R Pelling and County Councillor Mrs A Davis

Mar24/2 Public Question Time

A member of the public commented on the overgrown hedges in Sepscott Lane, The Clerk to raise this matter again via the County Council website

Mar24/3 Minutes of the meeting held on the 8th February 2024

RESOLVED that the minutes as previously circulated be approved

Mar24/4 Matters arising from the minutes

Nothing that was not on the agenda

Mar24/5 Inspection of Defibrillator

The defibrillator had been inspected and cleaned

Mar24/6 Report of the County Councillor

County Cllr Mrs Davis had today forwarded a copy of her report which is attached to these minutes

Mar24/7 Questions to the County Councillor

There were no questions

Mar24/8 Report of the District Councillor

There was no report

Mar24/9 Questions to the District Councillor

There were no questions

Mar24/10 Correspondence

The following correspondence had been distributed in advance of the meeting.

Dalc news letter
NDC weekly information sheet
Neighbour mediation service
NHS News sheet
Planning applications 78291, 78423 and 78444

Mar24/11 Planning Applications

- **Planning Application 78291 South Woolley Farm, Shirwell Barnstaple.** Erection of agricultural barn to store agricultural Machinery. Councillors identified inaccuracies in the numbering of the cottages on the plan and the designation of the A39 as a minor country road. It was **RESOLVED** to recommend **Approval**
- **Planning Application 78423 Rockall Shirwell Barnstaple.** Demolition of conservatory & erection of two story side extension
Cllr S Shortridge declared a prejudicial interest in this application left the room and did not speak or vote thereon
It was **RESOLVED** to recommend **APPROVAL**
- **Planning Application 78444 Barn at Poppys View, Shirwell Road Barnstaple.** Prior approval for change of use of agricultural building to a residential dwelling(class Q (A&B). Councillors queried how a Class Q application was available to a building that had been used for equestrian and not farming purposes

Mar24/12 Cheques for Payment

A Cheque for £150 to G Dwyer (Clerks salary) was signed at the meeting

Mar24/13 Reports from Councillors

- Cllr Abretti reported on the Police and Crime Commissioner's meeting. In particular it was noted that level of social crime was increasing

Mar24/14 Matters brought forward by Members of the Public

There were none

Mar24/15 Clerks Report

- **The Clerk had filled out the application form for funding for a 20 mph speed limit but had not forwarded the application as the Parish have no record of accident problems, no speed watch scheme and are middle ranked in areas of deprivation, meaning the chances of obtaining funding in an oversubscribed budget heading are very low. It was **RESOLVED** not to proceed with the application.**
- **It was agreed that Mr Brian Sherwin be asked if he would continue as the Internal Auditor for the Council**

Mar24/16 Public Questions regarding business on this agenda

There was none

Mar24/17 Urgent Business

There was none

The meeting closed at 7.51 pm

Chairman: Dated:.....

**Shirwell Parish Council
County Councillors report
March 2024**

Sorry I'm not with you, I completely forgot I had said I could get to an AGM at Chivenor tonight, and I said I'd pick up the Padre so I'm a bit committed. I came to Shirwell yesterday to check out some road things and visit the yew trees in the churchyard, they are magnificent. The repeated defects by the 30mph signs are being reported and the highway officer has asked for investigation work to be done there. We will come up with a plan then. In the meantime please keep reporting defects online. See you next month, really sorry about this tonight.

Devon County Council Budget 24-25

Devon County Council have agreed a 4.99 per cent increase in council tax for the coming financial year.

It comprises 2.99 per cent for general services with an extra two per cent for adult care.

It means an extra £1.56 a week for the average Band D householder.

There will be increases of 10.4 per cent in spending on children's services, six per cent on adult services and 4.7 per cent on climate change, environment and transport.

Councillors also agreed an extra £1.5 million to boost regular road drainage since the target budget was set last month to tackle the increase in potholes caused by this winter's heavy rainfall.

There will also be £716,000 extra to bring the homelessness budget back up to £1.45 million to support the work of district councils and homeless organisations for another year.

Devon's revenue spending on services will increase from just under £700 million to £743 million in 2024/25. That's an overall rise of 6.3 per cent in spending.

In addition, councillors approved a capital budget of over £155 million for investment in infrastructure such as schools and roads.

The council tax for an average Band D home will rise by £81.54 to £1,715.67 – an extra £1.56 a week.

This budget also recognises the concerns that people have about the increase in potholes caused by the very wet winter.

Public Consultation on Devon and Torbay devolution deal

A six-week public consultation has been launched on Monday 12 February on the **draft** proposal to create a Combined County Authority (CCA) for Devon and Torbay to oversee new powers and funding transferred from Government. The ground-breaking devolution deal [announced by Levelling Up Minister Jacob Young last month](#), proposes to create the CCA, which would be a formal partnership of elected members drawn from the councils of Devon and Torbay, including district councils, together with representatives from business and education.

People are being invited to have their say on how the CCA would work, the powers that it would have and the functions it would be responsible for. These include investment in local economic growth, delivering affordable housing, improving public transport, and meeting net zero ambitions.

Further information about the joint consultation with Torbay Council and details of how to respond are available at www.devontorbaydeal.org.uk

Establishing the CCA would not mean removing or merging local councils and does not require a Mayor for Devon and Torbay. All councils would continue to exist and would still be responsible for public services in their area.

Among the [Devon and Torbay devolution deal proposals](#) are:

- The new body would have direct control of adult education to create up to 50,000 new training and retraining opportunities by 2030. Through Local Skills Improvement Plans, the proposed CCA will work with business and education leaders to create a stronger, joined-up relationship between employers and schools, colleges and universities to provide the skilled workforce the local economy needs for the future.
- Over £16 million of new funding would be invested in new green jobs, homes, skills, and business growth to accelerate Devon and Torbay's transition to a net-zero economy, capitalising on the area's world-leading expertise in green science and technology.

- There would also be a stronger partnership with Homes England, working closely with district councils in Devon to create a joint action plan for affordable housing schemes for local people as well as reducing homelessness. The proposal includes additional land assembly and compulsory purchase powers and would facilitate greater Community Land Trust-led delivery.
- The joined up local transport planning by Devon County Council and Torbay Council will be strengthened to improve the efficiency and co-ordination of public transport. There is also an ambition to introduce a single ticketing system for public transport passengers.
- From 2025 the Government is also offering to transfer responsibility for planning and delivery of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to Devon and Torbay, engaging with Devon's district councils, to support high growth business sectors as well as funding town centre
- The results of the consultation will be considered by both Councils in April. Devon County Council and Torbay Council will consider whether they want to submit the proposal to Government, either with or without amendments, or not at all.
- The Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities would examine any submission and make regulations setting up the CCA.
- A summary leaflet about the consultation will be available in all Devon and Torbay libraries as well as district council offices.
- You can take part in the consultation, which closes at 11:59pm on 24 March 2024, by providing your [feedback via the Devon Torbay Deal website](#), by emailing devontorbaydeal@torbay.gov.uk or by post to: FREEPOST D & T Devolution.

[Highways update](#)

This winter season has been relatively kind to the highway network with only 24 days where the temperature has dipped below zero and a low of minus 7.3°. At the same point in 2023 there had been 38 days and a minimum temperature of minus 9.4°. This has led to a reduction in gritting treatments which has been below the 5-year average for November, December and January.

Following the very difficult winter last year the Asset Management and the Network Response teams have worked very closely together through late summer and autumn to prepare for the winter season. As a result of this hard work and the milder winter, the service has recorded 5,500 safety defect potholes in January, while this is slightly below the 7 year average (5,926) it compares well to the 7,500 in 2023.

The significant reduction in the gritting operations mentioned above in turn frees up resources to continue the planned patching operations, again helping to reduce safety defect potholes across the county.

The gully cleaning operations have slipped behind programme due to the high number of extreme weather events the Service has responded to this year and a series of unexpected equipment breakdowns. Milestone (the contractor) have worked hard to get this workstream back on programme and are confident that all programmed gullies will have been attended by the end of March.

A lot of work has been put into addressing drainage referrals raised by the cleaning gangs. Over 14,000 gully issues have been resolved this financial year, however, the backlog remains high with new issues identified as quickly as the old ones are being tackled.

The joint trial with Devon's Flood team to place gully sensors in selected streets in Devon is now live. The data recorded will provide insight into whether technology can be used to inform policy or reaction for cyclical gully cleaning. The trial intends to run for an 18-month period.

Highway defects

Changes have been made to the front end of the 'report a problem' website. The additional information will help provide data to inform future enhancements and hopes to highlight that members of the public can add themselves to existing reports rather than enter duplicate reports.

[Following the recent cold weather we can expect an increase in potholes, please would you report any you come across at Report a pothole - Devon County Council](#)

Drainage issues; [Report standing water, flooding or blocked drains - Roads and transport \(devon.gov.uk\)](#)

You will see on the website there are other highway categories such as fallen trees etc.

Highway emergency number is :0345 155 1004 (If you are reporting an emergency that is very likely to present an imminent threat to life or serious injury or serious damage to property)

Andrea Davis

County Councillor Combe Martin Rural division

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