

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF KINGSBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN  
THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, QUAY HOUSE AT 7.00 p.m. ON TUESDAY  
10 FEBRUARY 2015**

**Present:** Cllr Wayne Grills (Chairman)  
Cllr Anne Balkwill  
Cllr Amanda Bloomer  
Cllr Tom Coulthard  
Cllr Matt Farrand  
Cllr Rufus Gilbert  
Cllr Robin Griffin  
Cllr Irene Jeeninga  
Cllr Graham Price  
Cllr Steve Sidney  
Cllr Jax Williams  
Cllr Keith Wingate  
Cllr Philip Yates

**In Attendance:** County Cllr Julian Brazil  
District Cllr Simon Wright  
Tony Hogg, Police & Crime Commissioner  
Sgt David Green  
PCSO Paul O'Dwyer  
Two Police Cadets  
Cassandra Harrison, SHDC Affordable Housing Officer  
Zoe Butcher, SHDC Housing Advisor  
Sam Acourt, Kingsbridge & Salcombe Gazette  
Four Members of Public  
Martin Johnson, Town Clerk

**14/129 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

Public Open Forum

Police Cadet Andrew Keeler made the statement at Annex A.

**14/130 SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS**

It was **RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders for the duration of agenda items 14/131 (Police report only) and 14/134 in order to receive presentations and for questions/answers.

**REPORTS FROM POLICE, DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL  
AND SOUTH HAMS DISTRICT COUNCIL  
REPRESENTATIVES**

**131.1** Sgt Green reported on crime for January 2015; a total of 22 crimes had been committed compared to 21 crimes during the same period in 2014; this was only the 2<sup>nd</sup> time in 15 months that there had been a rise in crime. Eight people had been arrested and to date 5 had been charged. Three crimes had been dealt with via restorative justice and others were still under investigation. Crimes had included 4 assaults: 1 common assault dealt with via restorative justice), 2 actual bodily harm with a male interviewed, and an assault on a police officer with a male arrested and charged. There had been 3 burglaries; 1 dwelling and 2 commercial premises. Two incidents of criminal damage related to parked cars and one shoplifting had been dealt with via restorative justice. Finally, there had been 3 drugs offences: possession with intent to supply with a male arrested and on bail, possession of cannabis with a male arrested and charged, and possession of cocaine with another male arrested and charged. February's road safety theme was Older Drivers aiming to keep people driving safer for longer. The Police recognised the importance of transport independence for older people and were keen to encourage driver reviews and refreshers. Proactive drug work had resulted in generating some of the above crimes. There were current warnings about telephone fraud with vulnerable people often targeted and commodity thefts especially of metal and power tools.

Cllr Price commented that Kingsbridge Estuary Boat Club would commence full boat watch routines from March; volunteers were keen and appreciated their liaison with Police officers. All members recorded their thanks to Sgt Green and the Neighbourhood Team for their professionalism.

**131.2** Tony Hogg, Police & Crime Commissioner, made a comprehensive report on his business. The salient points were:

- He had been appointed in November 2012 and the next PCC elections were May 2016.
- The gut of his role was to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of the Police and to protect the public interest.
- He considered that the concept of PCCs was working.
- The PCC team of 25 persons was cheaper than the former Police Authority which had employed 35.
- Statistics evidenced that Devon & Cornwall was a safe place to live and work.
- It was the largest force in England and Wales with committed officers and a 'can do' attitude.
- He fully supported PCSOs.
- The area was complex containing cities, coastal and rural communities.
- There had been successive budgetary cuts since 2010 which had affected manpower resources.
- There had been an 11% drop in crime in 2014 over the 3 summer months however, the force was 7<sup>th</sup> worst out of 43 for low level crime.

- Domestic abuse/violence was rising.
- He had applied for a 1.99% Precept rise which would add circa £3.31 per annum to Band D council tax. A 1% rise was roughly equivalent to £1m.
- The next 2 financial years' expenditure could be controlled however, years 3 and 4 would be difficult.
- The challenge ahead was further austerity: £52m savings had been made in the last 4 years with £41m to be saved in the next 4; £10m had not been identified to date and monies were likely to be required from reserves held at £61m.
- He was lobbying MPs as force was disadvantaged in the summer months due to visitors.
- The load on policing was increasing and cybercrime was growing.
- An alliance with the Dorset force was likely to be researched.
- He had asked what the public wanted and parking enforcement had been the top priority so it had been incorporated into the Police plan.
- He had started to ask people if they would support a larger increase in Precept/council tax to maintain current services e.g. at 20%.
- Townspeople could assist by volunteering to help the Police and via active citizenship.

Sgt Green added that force morale was probably satisfactory but under pressure and good leadership was required. Locally morale was good and the South Hams was a rewarding place to work.

**131.3** County Cllr Brazil reported that Devon County Council (DCC) would be making service cuts however, the public did not like hikes in council tax. The Public Transport Review proposed no Sunday bus service for Kingsbridge which was not acceptable. The Gazette had highlighted the issues and a petition halt the proposals. This was a massive issue for the town and he urged the Town Council (KTC) to lobby DCC to protect current services. School crossing patrols were under threat however, it would not affect Kingsbridge. Although proposed it was likely that DCC would continue to fill grit bins for an extra year. Cllr Grills noted that KTC had to agree its budget before principal councils therefore it was difficult to manage any cuts made by the latter.

**131.4** County Cllr Gilbert reported that the proposed bus service cuts related to subsidy levels and it was important to lobby DCC to retain services such as the 162 and 164.

**131.5** District Cllr Wright reported that he acknowledged the comments made by Cllr Grills (131.3 above) however, South Hams District Council (SHDC) was only informed of its central government settlement on 17 December. Disability grants at £650k had been made by the authority during the current financial year.

**131.6** District Cllr Wingate supported earlier comments that buses were about critical mass i.e. they were not used to full capacity at present due to the poor service. Unless you drove in the South Hams effectively you cannot get anywhere. He had attended a worthwhile Harbour Board meeting the previous

day in Quay House. The proposal for the re-introduction of a miniature railway was progressing well and alongside Steve Mammatt he had met recently with SHDC officers.

*County Cllr Brazil, Police & Members of Public left the Chamber*

**14/132 URGENT BUSINESS**

The Chairman agreed to receive a Grant Aid application at agenda item 14/139.

**14/133 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Griffin declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 14/138 "Property Committee"; sub agenda item 14/37.4 "New lease for Rear Hall".

**14/134 LOCAL HOMES FOR LOCAL PEOPLE**

Cassandra Harrison (SHDC Affordable Housing & Enabling Officer) and Zoe Butcher (SHDC Housing Advisor) gave a presentation on "Affordable Homes for Local People". The salient points were:

- The role of the Affordable Housing Team was to help balance the housing market including an understanding of the range of housing needs in the district and enabling a supply of affordable homes.
- National issues included welfare reform, localism and changes to the National Planning Policy Framework.
- Local issues included house prices/wage ratio in the South Hams was 16 to 1. Average earnings were £17.4k and the average house price was £293k. Second homes accounted for 10% of entire housing stock.
- The target for allocated development sites in towns was 55%.
- Progress had included: 206 affordable homes had been built over the past 3 years, introduction of the Village Housing Initiative, securing funding for extra care housing schemes in Kingsbridge and Totnes, and a new local allocations policy.
- There were a number of key challenges ahead including significant reform of social housing, demand for advice and less funding.
- However, there were also initiatives/projects including an empty homes policy and tenants incentive scheme.
- Recent schemes included: Slapton 7 homes, Thurlestone 4 homes and Malborough 8 homes.

Discussions between members/SHDC officers revealed:

- Youth homelessness/sofa surfing was an issue and a dedicated youth housing officer was aware of such problems.
- An acute need for affordable housing in the town.
- SHDC can challenge a developer's viability statement.
- Cllr Farrand had attended a recent Future Homes Conference at Dartington.
- Shared ownership provided a 'staircase' for purchase greater

- percentages of the property.
- SHDC had conducted an asset review of all its own land ownership.
  - Devon Home Choice's housing needs banding A to E was complex. A family with local connections appeared to have been disadvantaged recently; details to be forwarded to SHDC.
  - Negotiations regarding Allocated Site K1 were ongoing between SHDC and the landowner.

*District Cllr Wright & SHDC officers left the Chamber*

**14/135 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the full council meeting held on 13 January 2015 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**14/136 PLANNING COMMITTEE**

It was **RESOLVED** to receive and adopt the Resolutions in the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 3 February 2015.

**14/137 POLICY COMMITTEE**

It was **RESOLVED** to receive and accept the Recommendations in the minutes of the Policy Committee held on 20 January 2015.

**14/138 PROPERTY COMMITTEE**

It was **RESOLVED** to receive and accept the Recommendations in the minutes of the Property Committee held on 27 January 2015; and to support a revised recommendation for agenda item 14/37.4 to investigate a further option for car parking adjacent to the Rear Hall.

**14/139 PARKS & GREEN SPACES COMMITTEE**

It was **RESOLVED** to receive and accept the Recommendations in the minutes of the Parks & Green Spaces Committee held on 6 February 2015.

It was further **RESOLVED** to forward several items of priority business related to the Recreation Ground and Duncombe Park to District Cllrs Gilbert and Wingate and to request early action.

Members then received a Grant aid application from Kingsbridge Playspaces Group & Café Decks to run a children's Easter Fun Day at the Recreation Ground on Good Friday 3 April to include Punch & Judy, egg hunt, bouncy castle and sports. It was noted that the application had been received early out-of-turn. It was **RESOLVED** to make a grant of £225 to Kingsbridge Playspaces Group.

Members noted that Kingsbridge Playspaces Group was likely to be mothballed at its annual general meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> April.

## **14/140 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS & POLICIES**

It was **RESOLVED** to receive and adopt new Financial Regulations and revised policies for: Investment Strategy, Risk Assessment Management and Statement of Internal Control.

## **14/141 CIVIC EVENT**

It was **RESOLVED** to support a Quiz Night in aid of the town mayor's charity. Format, venue and date to be worked up for late March or April.

## **14/142 TOWN CLERK'S REPORT**

**142.1 Revised Car Parking Charges.** SHDC Legal Team was updating the Off-Street Parking Places Order to incorporate several amendments issued over the years. A public consultation period had ended recently and representations needed to be considered before issuing the final Order. Once in place the new Order would be amended immediately to include new tariffs in Kingsbridge (and other towns) to include a further 21 day consultation period.

**142.2 Mayor's Civic Service.** The Civic Service had been arranged at 10.45 for 11.00 a.m. on Sunday 8 March at St Edmunds Church.

**142.3 Devon Association for Renewable Energy – Presentation.** Ben Eardley (DARE) postponed for the current meeting would make a presentation to members at the next full council meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> March.

**142.4 Public Transport Review.** DCC's consultation on its proposals to cut elements of the 93, 162, 164, X64 & F17 Fare Car services to/from Kingsbridge would feature as an agenda item at the next full council meeting on 10 March. All information including DCC Cabinet minutes and background reports had been placed on boards in Quay House and advertised to local residents. Deadline for comments was 20 April.

**142.5 Car Boot Sales.** Kingsbridge Information Centre had requested to manage car boot fairs from May to September in Quay Car Park; the application had been fully supported by SHDC Ward Members.

**142.6 Electronic Communications Order 2015.** The Local Government Act 1972 had been amended with effect from 30 January 2015 to allow agendas (the summons) for meetings to be emailed to members if they give their consent. Paper copies would still be placed in members' in-trays at Quay House or provided to actual meetings.

**142.7 Churchstow Road Closure.** Members received DCC's reply to KTC's letter regarding the road closure 5-8 January) which was noted by members.

**142.8 Repairs to Pedestrian Courtesy Crossings in Fore Street/Evening Road Closure.** Members received information regarding DCC's suggestion for

using pattern imprinted concrete instead of individual blocks for the repairs in order to prevent ongoing maintenance. Moreover, a road closure (temporary restriction order) for the footway works had been scheduled from Monday 30 March to Friday 10 April between 7.00 p.m. and 7.00 a.m. It was agreed to respond to DCC that:

- that subsidence issues be investigated/addressed and block paving be re-introduced rather than concrete, and
- the earmarked road closure covered the entire 2 week school holiday period and Easter bank holiday weekend and to request for works to be re-scheduled for either a period beforehand or afterwards.

**142.9 Flood Warden Training.** Several members, flood wardens and Town Clerk had received training on 17 January. Cllrs Grills and Price and the Town Clerk had received rain and river gauge training that day from Martin Dibley (Hydro Logic Services) and Kate Taylor (Environment Agency).

#### **14/143                      REPORTS ON MEETINGS OF OUTSIDE BODIES AND AUTHORITIES**

**143.1** Cllrs Jeeninga and Bloomer had attended a recent meeting of Dodbrook Feoffees; a property had been sold and a new one purchased.

**143.2** Cllr Balkwill had attended a recent meeting of Kingsbridge Feoffees; it was a huge bonus to have a housing professional within the organisation.

**143.3** Cllr Bloomer was due to attend an Age Concern meeting the following Week. She had met DCC Library officers alongside Cllrs Gilbert and Williams to discuss future service provision; it had been agreed to form a steering group to develop a business plan.

**143.4** Cllr Griffin had attended several meetings of Kingsbridge In Bloom.

**143.5** Cllr Price provided a situation report on Kingsbridge In Bloom business. The group had been invited as the only small town in the South West to take part in the national Britain In Bloom competition 2015. This was prestigious, would provide real exposure and was a one-off opportunity. Judging dates were mid-July (to incorporate South West In Bloom competition) and then the week following Fair Week. It would be a challenge!

#### **14/144                      FINANCE – PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

Members received a schedule of payments due to date 10 February 2015. It was **RESOLVED** that the payments amounting to £11,477.18 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

#### **14/145                      BUSINESS BROUGHT FORWARD BY THE CHAIRMAN**

The business brought forward had been received at agenda item 14/139.

14/128

**QUESTIONS TO THE CHAIRMAN**

There were no questions to the Chairman.

*The meeting closed at 9.40 p.m.*

..... Presiding Chairman                      .....Date

Annex:

A. Public Open Forum.

Annex A to Kingsbridge Town Council meeting minutes dated 10 February 2015

**Public Open Forum**

Cllr Griffin introduced Police Cadet Andrew Keeler. Andrew had taken part in the south west swimming championships on 24 January achieving 2 individual 1<sup>st</sup> places and 2<sup>nd</sup> place in a relay. He wished to thank his fellow Cadets and town councillors for all their support.

Members congratulated Andrew on his achievements.