



SLAPTON PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Council meeting
held at Slapton Village Hall
on Monday 8th April 2024 at 7pm

IN THE COLERIDGE HUNDRED OF THE SOUTH HAMS OF DEVON

Those in attendance:

Cllr J. Abbey, Cllr J. Waters, Cllr I. Mitchelmore, Cllr S. Lange, Cllr M. Crowson, Cllr L. Lawford (arrived 7.00 pm & left 7.29 pm).and Cllr J. Brazil (arrived 8.30 pm & left 9.03 pm).

Two members of the public attended. One left at 7.29 pm.

1:24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Cllr P. Osborne – holiday, Cllr C. Staines – unwell, Cllr I. Luscombe – unknown.

2:24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: Cllr Mitchelmore advised that his property is adjacent to the possible landowner of the unstable bank on Brook Street (see 8:24 d i below). The Clerk advised that Cllr Mitchelmore's interest was not material and it was resolved that Cllr Mitchelmore could be involved in discussions and voting on any resolutions related to this matter. Cllr Abbey advised that her property is adjacent to Prospect (see 7:24 a ii and iii). It was also resolved, that because Cllr Abbey is a neighbour of Prospect, she would participate in discussions about the planning application but would not vote on the matter.

Meeting paused at 7.06

3:24 PUBLIC COMMENT

- a. A member of the public/parishioner provided the following information about the road from Start to Deerbridge, which they felt had not been dealt with for some time, and requested that Cllrs walk it to look at the issues firsthand.
 - i. 18 potholes were identified by DCC Highways and had white marks around them but only 10 were filled. The other 8 meet the DCC Highways criteria for repair because all are 3 or more inches deep (some up to 6 inches deep) and some are extremely long/wide too.
 - ii. Some of the road is still waterlogged, which is caused by silt building up under bridge. This needs removing to improve the flow of water – probably by the Environment Agency.
 - iii. It is likely there will be several other potholes evident when the water recedes.
 - iv. There are 5 dead Ash trees along the route, which pose a risk to safety, and a fallen wall/bank.
 - v. Laurel has been planted and they felt this should be removed if within the National Nature Reserve.
 - vi. Due to a recent landslide at Langdown Cottage, residents of Start were unable to access or egress for more than 6 hours because the road from Start to Deerbridge is currently unnavigable for most vehicles.

Cllr Abbey thanked them for the information and confirmed, that once the matter has been considered further, the Clerk would be in touch.

- b. A member of the public/parishioner noted that the PC were developing a logo and this was on the action plan of this meeting for an update. They had a suggestion that they shared. When their grandson visits and sees the 'bendy' tree along Five-Mile Lane, he says we're nearly there and many residents also associate the 'bendy' tree or 'nearly there' tree with their arrival in the Parish of Slapton. They recognise that the tree is not in our Parish but it is a landmark that signifies you are on the way to Slapton. They wondered whether the PC might consider the bendy tree as the logo.

Cllr Abbey confirmed that discussions were still ongoing about the logo and thanked them for their ideas.

Meeting restarted at 7.10

4:24 POLICE REPORT: None

5:24 COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORTS

a. Cllr J. Brazil

- i. DCC Highways: Cllr Brazil arrived as the PC were discussing some of the most significant issues concerning roads, drains and banks. There was a discussion about the fact that there will be a need to seek support and advice from DCC's Neighbourhood Highways Officer. Cllrs expressed their concern about the lack of engagement from the Neighbourhood Highways Officer to date and how they are still keen to reset the relationship so that the PC can access the support, advice and resources it needs.
- ii. Inland roads: A reminder that it would be a good idea to share maps of the proposed alternative inland routes at the Annual Parish Meeting and to ask parishioners for their thoughts/comments. *Clerk to action.*
- iii. Slapton Line Partnership: No date confirmed yet for the next SLP meeting.
- iv. Roads: The A379 is now open at Stoke Flemming.
- v. Operation Safety Valve: This has now been enacted by DCC and has been necessary due to an overspend on children's special education needs and disabilities (SEND). The Government will give £95m and DCC will need to find additional funds/make significant savings.
- vi. Devolution: Given the impending general election, Cllr Brazil is not sure whether it will happen or not – it is likely to be last law passed before a general election. Cllr Lange had joined an online consultation about the Devolution Deal and shared some insights and concerns.

b. Cllr L. Lawford

- i. Community Composting: A reminder that SHDC are promoting and supporting community composting schemes.
- ii. Sustainable South Hams: A reminder that Sustainable South Hams have an event at Kingsbridge at the weekend. The Clerk confirmed that information about this event had been circulated to Cllrs just before the meeting. Cllr Waters explained that went last year and found it interesting.
- iii. Defra VH grants: A reminder that DEFRA are offering small grants for VHs. Cllr Abbey confirmed that this had already been shared with the Village Hall Committee.
- iv. PCC elections: A reminder that Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) elections are taking place in England and Wales on 2nd May 2024. There was a discussion about who can vote. The Clerk has confirmed that it was open to all parishioners on the electoral register.
- v. Local Pubs: SHDC Cllrs will be finding out more about local pubs to better understand which are thriving and which are challenged. Cllr Lawford understands that Slapton's pubs are thriving – the Clerk reminded that they won't be if the A379 Slapton Line closes.
- vi. Devolution: A vote on the deal has taken place and Cllr Lawford voted to wait before moving forward this. Cllr Lange had joined an online consultation about the Devolution Deal and shared some insights and concerns.
- vii. Roads: Cllrs briefly discussed the A379 Slapton Line and Slapton Line Partnership with Cllr Lawford as well as the poor condition of the inland roads. Cllr Crowson expressed his concerns that the Slapton Line Partnership is making slow progress.
- viii. Planning: The Clerk ask Cllr Lawford to follow up an enforcement issue with the relevant Planning Officer as it has been ongoing for several years and there is still no closure of the issue. *Cllr Lawford to action.*
- ix. Cllr Lawford confirmed that she would be happy to attend a meeting with the Planning Dept concerning a separate planning issue together with Cllr Abbey. *Cllr Abbey to confirm date and time.*

6:24 MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 4th March 2024 were agreed unanimously and signed by the Chair as a true and correct record.

7:24 PLANNING

a. Applications (for resolution)

- i. 0688/24/PDM Land At Sx 804 470, Slapton
Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed change of use of agricultural buildings/barns to 2 No dwelling house (class 3) & for associated development (class Q (a+b))
Comment submitted 27th March 2024: Support. There was discussion about the Clerk's submission of support. Cllr Abbey proposed, Cllr Crowson seconded and it was resolved unanimously that the PC do agree to support the application.
- ii. 0581/24/VAR Meadow Court, Slapton, TQ7 2PR
Application for variation of condition 2 (approved drawings) of planning consent 1436/23/HHO
Comment by 4th April 2024. Cllr Abbey proposed, Cllr Waters seconded and it was resolved unanimously to submit no comment. *Clerk to action.*
- iii. 0738/24/HHO Prospect, Prospect Hill, Slapton, TQ7 2PT
Householder Application for internal & external alterations to a grade II listed property including the replacement of modern windows & the reinstating of historic features
Comment by 11th April 2024. Cllr Mitchelmore proposed, Cllr Lange seconded and it was resolved unanimously submit a no comment. Cllr Abbey did not vote as she is a neighbour. *Clerk to action.*
- iv. 0737/24/LBC Prospect, Prospect Hill, Slapton, TQ7 2PT
Listed building consent for internal & external alterations to a grade II listed property including the replacement of modern windows & the reinstating of historic features
Comment by 11th April 2024. Cllr Mitchelmore proposed, Cllr Lange seconded and it was resolved unanimously to submit no comment. Cllr Abbey did not vote as she is a neighbour. *Clerk to action.*
- v. 0875/24/ARC The Round House, Slapton, TQ7 2PN
Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 4 (Slates) and 5 (Doors/Windows) of planning consent 2489/23/LBC
Comment by 18th April 2024. Cllr Abbey proposed, Cllr Waters seconded and it was resolved unanimously to submit no comment. *Clerk to action.*

b. **Decisions (for information only):** None

c. **Trees Works (for information only – Tree Wardens will assess and comment):** None

d. **Withdrawn (for information only):** None

8:24 PROPOSALS FOR DISCUSSION

a. Annual Parish Meeting:

- i. Which Cllrs will be in attendance? Cllr Abbey, Cllr Mitchelmore and Cllr Crowson confirmed their attendance. Cllr Lange gave his apologies as he will be away on holiday.
- ii. Will Cllrs report on the areas of governance that they lead on? It was resolved unanimously that Cllr Crowson will provide an update on the Slapton Line Partnership, Cllr Mitchelmore will provide an overview of planning matters, Cllr Osborne will provide an update on the OPPC, the Clerk will provide an update on accounting and financial governance together with Cllr Osborne and Cllr Abbey will provide an update on all other PC matters, perhaps with support from Cllr Luscombe on Village Maintenance and PROW work. Cllr Lange proposed, Cllr Mitchelmore seconded and it was resolved unanimously to consult parishioners on how the PC could improve communication. *Cllrs to action.*
- iii. What information would Cllrs like the Clerk to prepare for them? There was discussion about the information that Cllrs would like the Clerk to provide. *Clerk to action.*

- iv. How would Cllrs like to publicise the APM? Cllr Lange proposed, Cllr Mitchelmore seconded and it was resolved unanimously that posters would be sufficient and that a mail drop to all houses would not be necessary. *Clerk to action.*
- v. There was discussion about the provision of drinks and nibbles. It was agreed that the PC would fund drinks if payments were made from the correct cost centre and that Cllrs would approach some parishioners to support Cllr Abbey and Clerk to provide nibbles. *Cllrs to action. Clerk to discuss sale return of drinks with shop and make nibbles along with Cllr Abbey and others.*
- b. Concerns and information received from parishioners since last PC meeting:
- i. Banks and hedges
- Collapsed banks from Deerbridge to Start – there was discussion about the information provided by a member of the public during the Public Comments (see 3:24 a) earlier in the meeting and agreement that there was a need for Cllrs to visit. Cllr Abbey proposed, Cllr Lange seconded and it was resolved unanimously that a site visit should take place and photographs taken. The PC could then: Contact landowners regarding the collapsed banks and removal of the dead Ash trees; contact the Environment Agency regarding silting up under the bridge itself; and contact DCC's Neighbourhood Highways Officer about the condition of the roads and drains requesting their support and expertise. Cllr Abbey suggested that the Parish Tree Wardens should be contacted to inspect the Ash trees and discuss the Laurel. *Clerk and Cllr Abbey to action.*
 - Slapton to Deerbridge – there was discussion about who the landowner is and this remains uncertain. Cllr Abbey proposed, Cllr Waters seconded and it was resolved unanimously that the Clerk, Cllr Mitchelmore and Cllr Waters would continue to try to find out who owns the land so that the landowner could be notified. *Clerk, Cllr Mitchelmore and Cllr Waters to action.*
 - Unstable bank and unruly vegetation on Brook Street – there was discussion about how to confirm land ownership. Cllr Lange proposed, Cllr Waters seconded and it was resolved unanimously that a land registry search should be conducted so that the landowner can be identified formally and then contacted by the PC. *Clerk to action.*
 - Hedges overhanging yellow line on Sands Road opposite the Park and Walk – Cllr Abbey proposed, Cllr Waters seconded and it was resolved unanimously that the Clerk could contact the Campsite to discuss cutting the hedge (following the nesting season) as it is inhibiting two way traffic. *Clerk to action.*
- ii. Roads and drains:
- Damage of verge opposite FSC – there was discussion about how best to restore the verge. Cllr Mitchelmore proposed, Cllr Abbey seconded and it was resolved unanimously to wait until the weather was drier before restoring the verge and to temporarily fence it off whilst the grass seed establishes itself. *Clerk to add to June agenda.*
 - Permanently blocked drain at Townsend Cross – there was discussion about the fact that it couldn't be unblocked by power flushing and is causing fast running water to undercut the bank on Brook Street, the road to erode and large amounts of silt to accumulate in drains at the bottom of Brook Street. This was also mentioned to Cllr Brazil, who explained that DCC Highways would need to plan for any spending and add it to the Capital Expenditure projects. Cllr Lange proposed, Cllr Abbey seconded and it was unanimously agreed that the Clerk should contact DCC's Neighbourhood Highways Officer and request their expertise, support and resources. *Clerk to action.*
 - Permanently blocked drains from Deerbridge to Start – see d i, first bullet point.
- iii. Park and Walk:

- Mud at end where bottle bank was located – there was discussion about the extremely wet weather and that this would dry out. Cllr Mitchelmore proposed, Cllr Waters seconded and it was resolved unanimously that the situation would be monitored and no further action would be taken at this time.
- Missing 'No Overnight Sleeping' signs – Cllr Abbey proposed, Cllr Mitchelmore seconded and it was resolved unanimously to ask Cllr Luscombe if he would be happy to reinstall the posts on behalf of the PC and for the Clerk to redo the signs. *Clerk and Cllr Luscombe to action.*
- Footpaths: Mud on footpath between bus stop and Park and Walk – there was discussion about the extremely wet weather and that this would dry out. Cllr Lange proposed, Cllr Waters seconded and it was resolved unanimously that the situation would be monitored and no further action would be taken at this time.

9:24 PROPOSALS FOR RESOLUTION

- a. Year-end: The PC discussed and resolved how to answer each of the statements on Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 23-24 – see separate document 9a. Cllr Abbey proposed, Cllr Lange seconded and it was resolved unanimously to answer yes to all questions. *Chair to sign. Clerk to action next steps for internal and external audits.*
- b. Does the PC approve the Asset Register? – see separate document 9b. There was discussion about the changes to the Asset Register to remove VAT from original values as per NALC's Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance Practitioner's Guide, March 2024. Cllr Abbey proposed, Cllr Waters seconded and it was resolved unanimously to approve the revised Asset Register. *Clerk to action next steps for internal and external audits.*
- c. Year end: Does the PC approve the year end Bank Reconciliation 23-24? Chair to sign – see separate documents 9c 1, 9c 2 and 9c 3. Cllr Lange proposed, Cllr Waters seconded and it was resolved unanimously to approve. *Chair to sign. Clerk to action next steps for internal and external audits.*
- d. Year end: Does the PC approve the year end 23-24 Accounts Statement (Receipts and Payments) Summary? – see separate document 9d. Cllr Lange proposed, Cllr Crowson seconded and it was resolved unanimously to approve. *Clerk to action next steps for internal and external audits.*
- e. Year end: Does the PC approve Section 1 - Annual Accounting Statement 23-24? – see separate documents 9e 1, 9e 2 and 9e 3. Cllr Lange proposed, Cllr Abbey seconded and it was resolved unanimously to approve. *Chair to sign. Clerk to action next steps for internal and external audits.*
- f. Year end: Does the PC approve the explanation of variances 23-24? - see separate documents 9f 1 and 9f 2. Cllr Lange proposed, Cllr Waters seconded and it was resolved unanimously to approve. *Clerk to action next steps for internal and external audits.*
- g. Year end: Does the PC approve the confirmation of the dates of the period for the exercise of public rights? – see separate document 9g. Cllr Crowson queried this document and requested that the Clerk make it clearer for Cllrs what the purpose of the document is. The Clerk explained that PC's are legally required to give members of the public access to accounts, which can be viewed at the Clerk's place of work (her home) and that there are specified times and dates these need to be made available, which have to be approved by the PC. Cllr Lange proposed, Cllr Waters seconded and it was resolved unanimously to approve the dates. *Chair to sign. Clerk to action next steps for internal and external audits.*
- h. Does the PC approve these payments to be made by direct debit in year end 24-25: VC Warehouse, Information Commissioners Office (ICO) and Cinema 4 All annual membership? Cllr Lange proposed, Cllr Abbey seconded and it was resolved unanimously to approve these direct debit payments.

10:24 MATTERS IN ABEYANCE

- a. Village map – pending beach monument relocation

11:24 CLERK'S REPORT

- a. Verbal update from Clerk on any matters arising since the March PC meeting. The Clerk summarised the written report, which will be circulated to Cllrs with the minutes.

12:24 CHAIR'S REPORT

- a. Verbal update from Chair on any matters arising since the March PC meeting.
 - i. Slapton Line Partnership: Highways are coming to PC meeting in June to consult on the use of the inland roads in the event of partial closure or loss of the A379 Slapton Line and felt it was a good idea if Cllrs jointly travelled the proposed alternative routes beforehand.
 - ii. Community Support Group: James Curtis has stepped down as a member of the CSG Committee and Cllr Abbey confirmed that she has suggested he may like to join the Parish Council. Maria Garbicz has confirmed that she would like to join the CSG Committee.
 - iii. Newton Cross to Thorn Cross: A parishioner has reported that the condition of the road is so poor that an ambulance struggled to access Newton in an emergency. Cllr Abbey has agreed to conduct a site visit and to take photograph so that the Clerk can report to DCC Highways. *Cllr Abbey to action.*

13:24 COUNCILLOR UPDATES

- a. Verbal update from Cllr P. Osborne on OPCC: None as Cllr Osborne away and sent apologies.

14:24 REVIEW OF ACTION LOG

- a. Cllr updates on any pending actions/actions requiring a status update in the action log – see separate document (14a). Cllr Abbey proposed, Cllr Mitchelmore seconded and it was resolved unanimously that due to the length of the meeting, the action log review would be rescheduled to the next PC meeting.

15:24 FINANCIAL MATTERS

- a. **Payments to approve:** Does the PC approve the payments below? – see separate document (15a). Cllr Abbey proposed, Cllr Lange seconded and it was resolved unanimously to approve. *Clerk to action payments.*

No	Payment Details	Amount	Paid for noting
Visa 153/23	Gardentime Ltd - HTA Voucher, string dispenser and sharpening stone: Community Café, receipt dated 17/03/24	61.48	28-Mar
Visa 154/23	Amazon EU S.a.r.L. HP 6ZC69AE 953 Original Ink Cartridges, Black/Cyan/Magenta/Yellow, Multipack, HP. Invoice no: GB422E41VAEUI, dated 27/03/24	88.89 74.07 + 14.82 VAT	28-Mar
1/24	Tomlinson Solutions: Annual subscription - Microsoft 365 Business Basic License 10x emails and annual Barracuda Cloud Backup - 2x user licences. Invoice no: INV-9527, dated 08.02.24	838.08 698.40 + 139.68 VAT	
2/24	Slapton Lines: 35x copies of Slapton Lines village magazine for Community Café, dated 12.03.24	17.50	
3/24	DALC: 2 x course 1 of Being a Good Cllr. Invoice no: 5114 and Isaac's Public Life and Equality, Diversity & Inclusion courses. Invoice no 5364 plus credit of £18	54.00 48.00 + 6.00 VAT	
4/24	DALC Year end and audit courses. Invoice no: 5407, dated 25.03.24	72.00 60.00 + VAT	
5/24	Nick Mathias March mowing. Invoice no: 1781/24, dated 26.03.24	390.94	

No	Payment Details	Amount	Paid for noting
6/24	The British Federation of Film Societies (Cinema for All) equipment hire for 29th April 2024	50.00	
7/24	Clerk's salary March plus £24 WFH allowance	783.20	
8/24	HMRC tax and NI for March	62.00	
9/24	Woolston Accounts March payroll. Invoice no: 0315, dated 02.04.24	20.00	

- b. The Clerk requested that the following additional invoices be approved for payment. The chair signed to confirm sight of the invoices. Cllr Abbey proposed, Cllr Lange seconded and it was resolved unanimously to approve. *Clerk to action payments.*

No	Payment Details	Amount	Paid for noting
10/24	VC Warehouse - April phone. Invoice no: 1013688, dated 01.04.24	11.94 9.95 + 1.99 VAT	DD
11/24	DALC annual subscription/membership. Invoice no: 5705, dated 04.04.24	200.24 174 +26.24 VAT	
12/24	Village Hall February. Café 5th, 12th, 19th & 26th, meetings 5th, 12th and 15th Feb and Community Cinema Invoice no: C03812/24, dated 05.03.24	251.00	
13/24	Village Hall March. Café 4th, 11th, 18th & 25th and meeting 4th. Invoice no: C04828/24, dated 03.04.24	140.00	
14/24	Nick Mathias March Road Warden. Invoice no: 1783/24, dated 08.04.24	333.79	

c. **Balance at Bank**

Balance as per bank statements on 31.03.24	Amount GBP
Events Treasurers Account	0
Treasurers Account	4,171.52
Instant Access Savings Account	11,294.15
Total	15,465.67

d. **Receipts summary**

Receipts as per bank statements on 31.03.24	Amount GBP
Events Treasurers Account	0
Treasurers Account	0
Instant Access Savings Account	11.90
Total	11.90

e. **Updates to cost centres and ringfenced reserves**

- i. Confirmation that c/f of £552.91 from 23-24 added to Training cost centre for 24-25 as there are some outstanding invoices from 23-24 and the Clerk has not yet booked ILCA course.
- ii. Clerk confirmed that the c/f from the Community Café has now been calculated and is £365.68.
- iii. Current ringfenced reserves are as follows:

RESERVES: MONEY HELD IN SAVINGS ACCOUNT	Ringfenced funds
Un-ringfenced operational reserves c/f from 23-24 £5,600.00	5,620.00
Ringfenced c/f from 23-24 £450: Clerk's CILCA exam fees	450.00
Ringfenced c/f from 23-24 £2,000.00: Election costs	2,000.00
Ringfenced c/f from 23-24 £356.13: P3/PROW	356.13
S145: Ringfenced DCC Growing Communities Development Grant £1,200.00 received 23/02/24: Community Café	1,200.00
Ringfenced c/f from 23-24 £92.00: CSG: Children, young people and families	92.00
Ringfenced c/f from 23-24 £522.47: SHDC eco/biodiversity grant (see separate spreadsheet)	522.47
Ringfenced c/f from 23-24 £500.00: SHDC basketball hoop grant	500.00
Ringfenced c/f from 23-24 £377.00: DCC grant for traffic calming (signage, VAS Installation)	377.00
Ringfenced c/f from 23-24 £30.00: Coronation plaque for trees grant	30.00
Total ringfenced funds in Savings Acct	11,147.60

Note that the difference between ringfenced funds in the Savings Acct and actual amount in the Savings Acct is because £146.55 in interest has been accrued. Thus £11,147.60 + £146.55 = £11,294.15, which is the amount noted above in c. **Balance at bank**

RESERVES: MONEY HELD IN TREASURERS ACCOUNT	Ringfenced funds
Ringfenced c/f from 23-24 £250.00: Community grants	250.00
S145: Ringfenced c/f from 23-24 £365.68: Community Café	365.68
S145: Ringfenced c/f from 23-24: CSG - Community Cinema (see separate spreadsheet)	199.50
Ringfenced c/f from 23-24: Defibrillator renewal in 3 years' time (Oct 2026)	108.64
Total ringfenced funds in Treasurers Acct	923.82

16:24 AOB

- a. Cllr Crowson reported that a large tree had come down on Friday night (29th March) in the storm and had fallen across Sands Road on the bend. He, his wife and one other went out in the dark to move it. He explained that there are several more trees that are likely to come down in high winds (especially the dead Elm trees) because the heavy rains have washed out the soil in the bank. If the wind is westerly, the trees fall across Sands Road. As such, Cllr Crowson believes that the trees need managed now and that it is unavoidable for road safety reasons. He has consulted the NFU for their advice about cutting trees at this time of year and they have provided written confirmation that the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 makes exceptions to cutting trees and hedges during the nesting season for specific reasons. The Clerk checked the DCC website and it states, 'We recommend trimming hedges in January and February to ensure that nuts and berries are available for birds and other wildlife. Trimming should not take place during the main bird breeding season of March to July unless it's unavoidable for road safety.' The Clerk also contacted one of the Parish Tree Wardens, who confirmed that the trees are located outside of the conservation area so the landowner would not need to submit a Tree Application. They advised that trees should be visually inspected to ensure there are no nests in them before they are felled and should not be felled if

there are. Cllrs discussed concerns about the timing and acknowledged that the work was necessary for road safety reasons.

**Next Parish Council meeting will be held on
Monday 13th May at 7.00 pm at Slapton Village Main Hall.**

Signed:

Date:

**All agendas, supporting documents and minutes can be viewed at
<https://slaptonparishcouncil-devon.gov.uk/>**