

**SEAVINGTON ST MARY/MICHAEL PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE 437th PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT THE SEAVINGTON MILLENNIUM HALL
On Tuesday 22nd March 2016 at 7.00 pm [followed AGM]**

2363.ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

PRESENT

Mr N Loxton - Chair

Mr D Smith – Vice Chair

Mr N England

Mrs P Parsons

Mr C Reyland

Mr C Turner

APOLOGIES

Mrs E Edwards

Christopher Le Hardy - County Councillor

Crispin Raikes – District Councillor

Adam Dance – District Councillor

2364.PUBLIC QUESTION TIME – No members of the public present

2365.REPORT FROM POLICE – See AGM – same date

2366. REPORT FROM COUNTY/DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S – See County Councillor's Report previously forwarded.

As apologies had been received from both District Councillors the following report was circulated.

Council Tax 2016 - Council has agreed a 1.95% rise for 2016/17(**£2.88p per annum** for a Band D property) with an additional 1.25% (**£1.85p per annum**) new burden for our share of the Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) giving a total rise of £4.73p per annum on our share of the Council Tax (CT). The County Council has raised its share by 5.5% (2% + 2% extra for Adult Social Care + 1.25% SRA) and additionally both the Police and Fire Authorities have raised their share by just under 2%. The Council tax freeze days are regrettably at an end and Government now **expects** Local Authorities to raise CT by 2% per annum and this has been factored into the year on year grant reductions that we continue to experience. In early February the Government announced that all shire districts could raise additional CT by a rise of 2% **or** £5 (band D property) whichever is the greater. SSDC therefore had the ability to raise our CT from £2.88 per annum to £5 per annum. The decision we took was to stick to the £2.88 pa on the basis that whilst the going is set to get much tougher, this year we could manage with the lower figure. The biggest share of the Council Tax is the County Council precept. Overall, when all the precepts are included the rise in CT on a Band D property (including the Parish share) will average **£68 per annum** of which **£4.73p** is SSDC's share.

Westland project - Negotiations with Augusta Westland (AW) are now in the final stages and there is an expectation that the lease will be signed, giving SSDC control of the site, immediately after the final decision is taken at April's Executive meeting [on April 7th](#). A Project timetable will then be issued giving the dates that each element of the facility will reopen including the main Conference facility following major refurbishment and the fitting of automatic retractable seating for around 800.

Devolution - A prospectus signed by all the Council Leaders in Devon and Somerset and which lists all the "asks" of central Government in terms of devolved powers and finance and all the "offers" a new combined authority would deliver for Government has been sent to Ministers. The aim would be to create a new Combined Authority (CA) of the 17 Councils and the 2 National parks to tackle the really big issues should Government be minded to devolve power and authority to us. This is on the basis that Government at a local regional level could deliver more growth and better tackle some key issues such as skills training and integrated health and social care than central Government can. At this stage we have only asked to start a conversation with Ministers and nothing has been agreed.

There are those who are strongly in favour, those who are not persuaded that this is the right way ahead and a majority, like SSDC who have doubts, but are continuing to sit at the table in order to maintain a watching brief and also to be able to influence on behalf of our residents. The most contentious issue is that of a "devo" Mayor who would preside over the CA covering the whole of

Devon and Somerset from Plymouth to Frome and Barnstaple to Wincanton. Government attitude is hardening that unless a devolution deal commits the CA to having a Mayor then the bid would be put to the back of the queue. The public would be given a vote as to who they wanted as a mayor but at present it looks unlikely that they will be asked **if** they want an elected Mayor in first place. For Somerset the risk in a new CA would be whether the influence of Devon (747,900 population) with two cities, two Universities and two Unitary Councils (Plymouth and Torbay) would totally dominate the agenda when considered against the size of Somerset (531,600) without any large centre of population. There are also fears around creating yet another layer of Government with its associated costs. For now South Somerset remains at the table where I continue to argue for the interests of South Somerset in particular and the rural areas in general.

2367. MINUTES OF THE 436th ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 23rd February 2016 were agreed as correct and signed

2368. UP-DATE ON LIFT WEST PLANNING – Creation of CLT – Open Parish Meeting to be held on 4th April to obtain a decision from residents as to the way forward.

2369.REPORT REGARDING HIGHWAY/SPEEDING ISSUES – See AGM of same date

2370.REPORT RE RANGER SCHEME – See AGM of same date

2371. UP-DATE ON LITTER PICKING IN VILLAGE – Approximately 14 residents turned out for the litter pick and some 36 bags of rubbish were collected and some areas identified where SSDC need to be contacted re fly-tipping. A very welcome lunch was provided by The Volunteer Inn for those taking part. Parish Councillors thanked District Councillor Dance for his help in obtaining the necessary equipment from SSDC.

2372.REPORT ON VILLAGE FOOTPATHS – See AGM of same date

2373.UP-DATE ON VILLAGE CAR PARK/PARKING IN GENERAL IN VILLAGE – See AGM

2374. UP-DATE ON ENHANCEMENT OF LAND BEHIND ST MARY’S CLOSE – Councillor England thanked those who had helped with the planting and Karen Sutton in particular for arranging not only the trees but the funding as well. Councillor England also indicated that he would like to provide a bench for the area. Councillor Loxton confirmed that there could be money available for a specimen tree to be planted. Councillor England to contact Mrs Sutton. The cheque from Wessex Water Board in the sum of £1,000 has been received and paid into Parish Council account.

2375. REPORT ON SPFA – See AGM

Request for Named Trustee from Parish Council – Agreed that at present no-one person would be named as Parish Council responsibilities will change in May 2016. A Parish Councillor will be nominated to attend a meeting of SPFA but will have no voting rights.

2376.REPORT FROM COMMUNITY SHOP – See AGM

2377.SUNDRY MATTERS OF REPORT

- **Village Notice Boards –** Still to be sorted
- **Entrance Stones –** in hand waiting for improvement in weather

2378. UP-DATE ON PROGRESS RE PARISH/NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN - in hand

2379. QUEEN’S 90TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS – See AGM

2380. UP-DATE ON VILLAGE WEB-SITE – See AGM

2381. PLANNING APPLICATIONS – Nothing new to be discussed

2382. ACCOUNTS

(a) Balances Current A/c 679.19 credit Business Reserve - £17,797.91

(b) Payment requests SSDC £1,869.84 – grass cutting of playing field, £150.95 SSDC re Ranger, £1299.76 Tom Nancarrow re Orchard project – All agreed

(c) Request from SPFA re hedge maintenance programme – deferred until April meeting.

2383. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Tuesday 26th April 2016

Meeting closed at 9.20pm.

Signed

Date