



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SOUTH MILTON PARISH COUNCIL
HELD AT SOUTH MILTON VILLAGE HALL,
AT 7.30 P.M. ON MONDAY 27th JANUARY 2025**

Present: Cllr Anne Berryman
Cllr Paul Booker (in the Chair)
Cllr Steve Harding
Cllr Graeme Jinks
Cllr Marion Luscombe
Cllr Nick Townsend

In Attendance: Katharine Harrod – Parish Clerk
SHDC Cllr Samantha Dennis
SHDC Cllr Mark Long
County Cllr Rufus Gilbert
Peter Sandover, Chairman, National Landscapes and 1 Member of Public

510 WELCOME & APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr Halmshaw. Councillors **RESOLVED** to accept the apologies received.

511 PARISHIONERS OPEN FORUM (allocated time not longer than 15 minutes, a member of the public shall not speak for more than 2 minutes as per Standing Orders):

- Peter Sandover, Chairman of South Devon National Landscapes, see **Appendix A**
Peter also confirmed he was fully aware of the management plan for the Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

a) DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL:

Cllr Rufus Gilbert, Email: rufus.gilbert@devon.gov.uk

1. The Minister has now published the Local Communities white paper and asked for Expressions of Interest for Devon becoming single tier authority(s). That would involve the dissolution of existing District/Borough Councils and Devon County Council (not Town/Parish Council's). An expression of support was submitted by the 10th January and the result(s) being seemingly known by end of January. Therefore, it is possible the forthcoming DCC elections being cancelled and new elections in Spring 2026 for the new Authority(s).
2. It is hoped that more details will be available for the February meeting of the Parish Council, in the meantime, the local Gazette has printed a good article on the proposals.
3. It was noted that the vote for a Unitary Authority was passed with 37 votes for the proposal and 12 against. The vote was recorded and parishioners can find out how their representatives voted by looking at the website.
4. Bird Flu has broken out again, information regarding controls is anticipated to be issued on 28th January. Germany has foot & mouth disease,
5. The Government have provided an additional £86m more for roads plus £12m from DCC – predominantly resurfacing work and patching – not potholes.
Query Horswell road, Cllr Gilbert suggests a list of areas for attention is provided by the local parishes.
6. All locality funding has now been used. If elections are delayed it is anticipated that another tranche of localities funding will become available.
7. The Council tax increase from Devon County Council will be 5%.
8. Devon County Council are responsible for recycling centres – 79% of everything taken to the centres is recycled.

Cllr Gilbert left the meeting.

REPORT IT:



Members of the public are requested to report all Highways issues through the Highways Website, enabling faster assessment of problem areas which can then be added to the repair/maintenance schedules. You can report potholes, overgrown vegetation, defective signs/lighting and much more.

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/>

b) DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORTS:

Email Cllr Samantha Dennis: samantha.dennis@swdevon.gov.uk

Email Cllr Mark Long: cllr.mark.long@southhams.gov.uk

1. An extraordinary full council meeting was called to discuss the Devolution White Paper published by the Government prior to Christmas. One of the outlined options was to fast-track plans to a unitary authority which required a proposal to be made from Devon County Council by 10th January. This would potentially result in the postponement of the Devon County Council May elections being postponed.
All district councils have provided the same response – that there is no need to be included in first phase and that these plans require further consideration and consultation prior to proceeding.
2. South Hams District Council agreed a mandate that 1) South Hams District Council does not agree with the abolition of District Councils and 2) South Hams District Council does not agree with the delay of the forthcoming May Elections.
3. The South Hams District Council Chief Executive noted that councils will have to focus on their statutory services and there is an expectation that in time, discretionary services, such as the provision of public toilets, will be managed by the towns and parishes.
4. South Hams District Council are finalising the annual budget, the government has withdrawn the rural services grant, this equates to a reduction in funds of approximately £700k that must be budgeted for by the end of January. Council tax will be increased by the maximum amount allowed – which, in real terms, only covers the increase in the National Insurance payments due.
5. In December changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) were made, changes focus on the provision of housing - the number of houses required annually in the South Hams has essentially doubled and there is still a requirement for a five-year housing plan. There has been an impact on the Joint Local Plan, some of the policies have been rendered out of date. One of the positive points of living in this area are the National Landscape policies – the importance of the protected landscapes is there. There's a possibility of prospective developments – it's positive that have NDP in place in addition to others.
Planning and infrastructure bill coming in approximately March 2025.
6. The Secretary of State Brewery Quay appeal requesting removal of the principal residency condition was refused by the inspector. Another application along a similar line was refused and has also been referred to the Secretary of State. The appeal has been confirmed as valid, following the submission of additional documentation by the applicant it will now be heard on 18th March. By 25th February, SHDC have to submit their case, any interested parties can also submit additional comments until this date. The result of the refused appeal is a material consideration and will have to be considered by the new inspector.
7. Executive Committee – new parking charges were agreed following the closure of the two-tier parking consultation. Please note the payment providers have changed from RINGO to PAY BY PHONE. Ward Councillors have already received feedback that the app is vastly inferior to Ringo and there are a number of issues with connectivity, additional charges of 20p are being made for reminder texts, requests for additional insurance cover appear every time a booking is made, bookings are then shown as South Hams when payment is collected from bank accounts, it could be possible to book only a few minutes instead of hours parking, a significant number of phones are not able to use the app etc. To obtain the cheaper rate, residents need to upload their V5 and pay £5 per vehicle, a link will be provided once available.
It was **RESOLVED** that South Milton Parish Council would write to South Hams District Council to object to the two tier parking system, they will query the agreement re procurement of an application with an appalling



approval rating and will question the intention to use car parks as a 'cash cow' while negatively impacting on employees and causing further detriment to already failing high streets.

8. It was noted that during 2025 there will be a review of all the toilet facilities, including ownership, who contributes to them and the hours they are open. The outcome will be particularly important for the owners of the beach cafe as any changes to the current facilities could directly impact their hours of operation.

REPORT IT: <https://apps.southhams.gov.uk/webreportit>

Missed Bins, Abandoned Vehicle, Damaged/Full Dog Bin, Damaged/Full Litter Bin, Damaged/Full Recycling Bank, Dead Animal, Dirty Beach, Fly Tipping, Litter/Dog Mess, Planning Breach, Stray Dogs, AND MORE...

THE MEETING CONVENED

512 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS PARISH COUNCIL MEETING:

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the minutes of the Parish Council meeting of 25th November 2024, these were then signed by the Chairman as a true record of the meetings.

513 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY/OTHER INTERESTS & Updates to Register of Interests:

No declarations or updates to the register were received.

514 CLERKS REPORT: See Appendix B.

Councillors **RESOLVED** to accept the report as read.

515 PLANNING:

- a. **Applications** received by the Parish Council and under discussion and consideration for the last period. Any recommendation by the Parish Council to the Planning Department is noted after the application details. Those without comment remain under discussion. When providing a response to applications, the South Milton Neighbourhood Plan will be referenced where appropriate.

1. RATIFICATION: 3092/24/HHO, Mole Cottage, South Milton, application for replacement foul drainage tank (retrospective) 2/1.

South Milton Parish Council have viewed the plans, unfortunately the foul drainage assessment is not complete (for example on the drainage field) and appears to contain errors (it states the flow is only 0.9 litres per day).

Without full details being available, the Councillors have no option but to object to this application.

2. Secretary of State Appeal APP/K1128/W/24/3355774 - 2970/24/FUL Brewery Quay, Salcombe, Removal of Condition 1 (restriction of occupancy to a principal home) of planning application reference 0434/20/FUL to allow for unrestricted residential occupancy (C3) of the 4 no. units

NB: Hearing to be held 18th February at Follaton House, Totnes.

Following the submission of additional documents to the Secretary of State by the applicant, South Milton Parish Council RESOLVED to submit further comments to OBJECT to this application. It was felt that the additional documentation is not

relevant to the planning application. Marketing has nothing to do with planning, borrowings are irrelevant – just because someone has a poor business judgement doesn't mean the planning policy should be disregarded.

3. 0102/25/HHO, Ocean Point, South Milton, north west extension & south east extension, 26/2 **Support.**

b. **South Hams District Council Planning Decisions:**

1. 2793/24/FUL, Land At Sx 704 443 Churchstow , 17/10. **No decision yet.**



2. 3228/24/CLE, Beech Hut, St Judes Cottage, South Milton. **No decision yet.**
3. Secretary of State Appeal: 4120/23/VAR, Brewery Quay, Salcombe. **No decision yet.**
4. Non statutory consultation: 4108/24/COM, Opposite The Ley House, Notice of intent to install electronic communication apparatus comprising installation of subtended headend cabinet extension. **Approved.**
5. Non statutory consultation: 4109/24/COM, O/S BT Telephone Exchange, Notice of intent to install electronic communication apparatus comprising installation of subtended headend cabinet extension. **Approved.**

c. Enforcement issues:

Please will all parishioners make a report to SHDC with full details of any violations that do not adhere to the original application for which permission was granted. ALL violations can be reported confidentially to Enforcement via www.southhams.gov.uk/article/3043/Report-a-Planning-Breach. If you would like to submit a report but do not have access to the website, please contact the Parish Clerk.

516 BUSINESS TO BE DISCUSSED:

a. Burial Ground Update:

The Diocese refuse to give any indication of the sale price of the land. The Council will look to speak with other parishes in a similar situation for guidance prior to bringing this back for further discussion at the February meeting.

There have been two burials at the burial ground in the last month with a third burial due to be confirmed. The plots are now being filled in order and as such it was **RESOLVED** to install burial markers in the next 5 plots to ensure there is no confusion regarding the exact location of the next available plots and that plots can be dug in line to ensure maximum capacity can be reached.

b. It was RESOLVED to provide the following feedback to South Hams District Council regarding local letting plans:

- Good behaviour test: Change Householder to ALL Property Occupants.
- ALL lettings to be subject to a local connection to the parish in the first instance.
- ALL lettings to prioritise band E South Milton residents above those with higher identified needs from outside the parish. If properties remain vacant after ALL local need is met (i.e. Band E inclusive) the catchment can then be rolled/cascaded out from South Milton i.e. prioritising those that live in villages/hamlets closest to the Parish of South Milton before opening up the new stock to a wider catchment.

It was further **RESOLVED** to write to Devon Home Choice regarding:

- Adherence to the Local Lettings Plan.
- Time taken to upload documents for those on the register resulting in families missing out on property.
- The intent of the Neighbourhood Plan to prioritise local people above those from outside the parish.

c. It was RESOLVED to send in a response supporting the government consultation on standards (closes 26th February).

Specific proposals being consulted upon for legislative change include:

- the introduction of a mandatory minimum code of conduct for local authorities in England
- a requirement that all principal authorities convene formal standards committees to make decisions on code of conduct breaches, and publish the outcomes of all formal investigations
- the introduction of the power for all local authorities (including combined authorities) to suspend councillors or mayors found in serious breach of their code of conduct and, as appropriate, interim suspension for the most serious and complex cases that may involve police investigations.
- a new category of disqualification for gross misconduct and those subject to a sanction of suspension more than once in a 5-year period and a role for a national body to deal with appeals

d. A free defibrillator unit has been provided to the parish for siting at the beach café, it was RESOLVED to pay for installation, insurance of the unit and replacement pads as/when required.



Once installed, Cllr Booker to organise the Beach Café manager to take responsibility for providing monthly checks, the Parish Clerk will ensure the defibrillator is uploaded to The Circuit.

New signage to prevent Sat Nav users blocking narrow lanes has been received. It was **RESOLVED** to erect them at the earliest opportunity at Huxton Cross, Hillingsdown and Whitlocksworthy, this leaves one sign.

- e. Road Warden, Flood mitigation & Resilience Planning: The problem areas in the parish have not been fully identified. It was agreed that Councillors will meet to create a list of the different sites that require attention. Parishioners are encouraged to provide details for inclusion to the Parish Clerk.

517 FINANCE & GOVERNANCE:

a) Receipts & Purchases Month 9 & 10

Accounts to pay: Parish Magazine Printing £60.75

Monthly Payments: Clerks Salary including HMRC, Monthly bank charge £8, Hall Hire £20, Hugo Fox £11.99, SHEPS £120.

Councillors **RESOLVED** to approve all payments.

b) Governance:

1. It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the following documents: Training & Development Policy, Grievance Policy, GDPR Data Protection Policy, GDPR Data Breach Reporting Form, GDPR Data Retention Policy, GDPR Subject Access Request Policy, Habitual and/or Vexatious Complaints.
2. 2025/26 Budget Agreement and Precept Setting 2025/26 pre-budget overview: Councillors were provided with an overview of year-to-date expenditure and a precept model.
3. The monthly accounts show the Council's spend to date in the financial year. In November/January the Parish Council uses this information to estimate and assess the projected outturn spend for the year. This then gives the Council a likely carry forward figure for the next financial year and informs the precept discussions.
4. The meeting therefore reviewed the year-to-date financial position and worked through the modelling supplied by the Clerk to assure itself of the validity of the projected outturn.
5. The meeting then considered the commitments, inflationary pressures and the likely increase in services needing to be both provided and funded locally.
6. The base band D on which precept calculations are based has increased from 248.53 to 312.62.
7. The meeting noted that the Government has decided to defer the setting of council tax referendum principles to parish councils for 2025/26. However, it has again issued a challenge to those councils to demonstrate restraint when increasing precepts that are not a direct result of taking on additional responsibilities.
8. With proposed annual expenditure reaching £12,581 plus the possibility of further services being devolved to the Parish, the Council concluded that they needed to increase the precept to £11,844 (being an additional £6.12 per annum per band D property) so the average household will pay £37.89 per year (i.e.: £0.73p per week). This will mean our budget increases by £3,948 allowing us to fund the costs of more benefits to the community and any services devolved from County or District etc.
9. It was **RESOLVED** to request a precept level of £11,844 as per the above information.

518 MEETING ENDS 21:16 Hrs

Items for the next agenda: Resilience Planning, Rockbox operations 2025, South West Water, Local Planning updates: Wakeham/Dairy Court

519 FUTURE MEETINGS 2025: 24th Feb, 24th Mar, 7.30pm, South Milton Village Hall.

Signed as a true record: _____

Print Name & Date: _____

Agenda Items and Updates; where possible please could these be submitted to Mrs Katharine Harrod by the 2nd Monday in the month to ensure time for inclusion, circulation and study. If a Council Member is unable to attend a meeting it would be appreciated if they could submit a brief précis of progress on their actions, if applicable, (to Mrs Katharine Harrod for distribution) together with their apologies.

Distribution List: South Milton Parish Council Councillors **For Information:** e-circulation to: County Cllr R Gilbert, South Hams District Council Ward Councillors, National Trust, Riccardo Carrelli, Jenny Brown.