Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of the North Molton Parish Council held on Wednesday 7th May 2014 in the Victory Hall North Molton

Present  Councillor Stanley, Councillor Bulled, Councillor Gammon, Councillor Procter, Councillor O’Brien, District Councillor Edgell and County Councillor Yabsley and the Clerk

1. Apologies  Cllr Dunn, unable to attend. Sanctioned, unanimously.

2. Reading of the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 8th May 2013 and approved at the 12th June 2013 Parish Council meeting in accordance with Local Government Administration. The clerk read out the minutes.

3. Matters arising. Comments were invited from members of the public about the Emergency Plan which was due to be discussed at the next Parish Council meeting. The clerk mentioned that no response had been received to a long-standing request on the village website for people willing to assist with specialist equipment in an emergency.

4. Representation of Electors.

Grass areas around Oakford and Jubilee Gardens were not being cut by North Devon Homes. Agreed: that the clerk contact NDH about this.

There was general praise for the design and professionalism of the rebuilt wall in Broad Close: Agreed: that the clerk send a letter of appreciation to the builders. Also, that he investigate who was responsible for grass cutting on the new wall.

There was a complaint that street lighting to the west of the Victory Hall was not switching on and off at the proper times: Agreed: that the clerk contact South West Highways about this, and that the telephone number for complaints be advertised in the village.

5. Chairman’s Report

“The last year has been eventful. In particular the requirement to comply with the North Devon Development Plan which will run until 2031. The principal issue of the Plan is housing. The number of new houses and their location. Guidelines were given with a minimum acceptable level being 10% of existing stock. That being 35 new houses, plus existing approved development.

We held a consultative meeting in this hall last May to discuss possible development and where that should be. The options were, land to the west of the School, land to the west of Oakford Villas and land off Old Road between the Sports Centre and the village. Options 1
and 2 had very little support. Option 3, which met the requirements, was voted for and was included in the draft proposal.

The provision of light industrial units received considerable support and in fact planning permission has already been granted for a small site on land opposite the School. Other issues of concern to the community were noted and included in the draft proposals. These included traffic calming outside the School, capacity of the sewage treatment works and the retention of village facilities and services.

During the January meeting, Mr Peter Stucley asked to be allowed to address the Parish Council on the advantages that would be afforded to the village if development went ahead on land to the west of the School. The Parish Council agreed but considered that any decision should be made by the community rather than themselves. A presentation by the planners and developers of this proposed site was made during the February meeting which had been well advertised and attended by villagers who again voted against any development to the west of the School.

At about this time the owners of land situated to the north of Back Lane gave notice of their intention to apply for planning permission to build houses. A site meeting was called for the 6th March which I attended together with Councillor Bulled. The site had already been identified as potential development land and was within the development boundary.

With this information the North Molton Chapter of the Local Plan was drawn up by the Planning Policy Unit. This document identified two areas for development. 1. At Back Lane, for 25 houses, and 2. at Old Road between the Sports Centre and the village for 25 houses. Requirements for type, size, design and landscaping are listed with specific mention of the Old Road site where a buffer zone of open space and wooded area are desirable between the Sports Centre and the village together with an off road footpath between the two. The Local Plan has been passed by the Executive and was approved by North Devon Council on 30th April.

The Parish Council needs more members. For various reasons our numbers are down to six. Holidays, illness and unavoidable commitments could make it difficult to meet our constitutional requirement. We continue to try and attract more members through word of mouth and advertisement and I would ask anyone who is interested in becoming a parish councillor to contact either myself of the Clerk for further information.

We are still coupled with South Molton under the terms of the TAP fund for weed control. This fund was authorised but for some reason not drawn down last year. But things are in place this year and the work should be completed soon.

The Laurels playground continues to be popular with children in the village with increased use as the weather improves and the days get longer. A set of goal post were installed
recently and mark the completion of the facility. Regular inspections are carried out to ensure the site and equipment are maintained in a safe condition.

As you know, I became chairman in January from Graham White who felt it right to stand down due to a conflict of interests. His knowledge, experience and skills are greatly missed on this council. I look forward to a time when Graham feels he can return”.

6. Presentation of Accounts 2013/2014. Clerk advised that Councillors had before them a copy of the accounts for 2013/2014. Motion proposed to approve these accounts carried unanimously.

7. Short reports from Village Organisations/Representatives.

Sheila Coe reported that she had carried out a survey of all the footpaths in the parish. Most were in good condition with a few badly signed, and some obstructed. One area, although it had a boardwalk, was very boggy. The clerk reported that funds were, perhaps surprisingly, still available from North Devon Council for the upkeep of footpaths and that he and Mrs Coe would be investigating this. A full written copy of Mrs Coe’s report would be presented to the Parish Council. There was also the possibility of providing large scale maps of the Parish, showing the various footpaths, to organisations and buildings in the Parish as a way of stimulating interest in their upkeep and use.

Brenda Savory represented the North Molton Victory Hall and reported that finances were stable. However, the annual grant from the Parish Council was much appreciated especially as funds from North Devon Council had been cut. There was a shortage of members to serve on the management committee but bookings were up on last year, and overall the hall was “doing great”.

She noted that most people did not realise that the public toilets were owned and kept up by the Victory Hall. The possibility of charging for their use had been discussed but it was agreed that they should be kept free.

Mr John Fox, Churchwarden reported on North Molton Church. It had been subject to a five-yearly inspection last August and nothing of importance was highlighted then. However, there was now a need to spend £1500 on a lightning conductor. There were also problems with the upkeep of the organ and various minor issues. He expressed his thanks to the Methodists for their donations towards grass cutting expenses. The church had had forty years of good vicars and the latest was no exception. The Church was optimistic about getting a new churchwarden later that month.

Jack Stanley reported as tree-warden. He made the point that the role was not as valid today as in the past. The role had been designed twenty years ago and now most trees were on private property. There were four trees with preservation orders in North Molton.
The clerk read out a report from Mrs Jacqui Blackmore on Heasley Mill Village Hall for the year ending December 2013. Current Hall Committee was Barry Fenwick (Chair), Michael Tarr (Secretary), Jacqui Blackmore (Treasurer), and Janet Jerrett (Booking Officer). The Hall had managed to generate the following income to help with general running costs: Band Night £1027.51, Hire of Hall, chairs etc. £248.58. Major clearing, repairing and partially redirecting of the stream away from the hall and outbuildings was undertaken last summer. This work was paid for by extra fund-raising and monies from the contingency fund. The Annual Band Night will take place on 14th August. The AGM was to take place later in May and the Parish Council representative would be informed of the date. The Parish Council were thanked for their continued support which was much appreciated.

The clerk read out an email from Jeremy Dunn, as Parish Council representative to the Sports Club. In the past year a new web site had been set up, and new double-glazed windows and modern insulation fitted to the club house. The pitches were all in good condition. Planning permission had been granted for the erection of a phone mast that should give much needed phone coverage to most of the village. Erection was scheduled to begin in the second week in June with completion in mid-July. Although finances remained tight it was good to see the various different sporting interests working well together at committee level and thanks should be given to all who gave their time to make the facility what it was today. The Sports Club was something the village should be proud to support and one of the best ways to do so was by becoming a member.

Cllr Dunn also reported, via email, that the History Society continued to provide a series of interesting talks and presentations. Membership remained good.

The clerk reported that the North Molton charity had not been contacted this year, as last year it had reported that the charity was in the process of being wound up and that the Charity Commission had stated that it was no longer required to proved reports. It was agreed that the charity should be contacted to see if it was still in existence.

The meeting closed at 9.55pm

Minutes of the AGM of North Molton Parish Council held upon the rising of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 7th May 2014 at 7.30pm in the Victory Hall North Molton

Present Councillor Stanley, Councillor Gammon, Councillor Bulled, Councillor Procter, Councillor O’Brien and the Clerk

1. Apologies Cllr. Dunn
2. Reading of the Minutes of the AGM of North Molton Parish Council held on the 22\textsuperscript{nd} June 2013 and approved at the July 2013 North Molton Parish Council meeting in accordance with local government administration The minutes of the 2013 AGM were read out.

3. Election of Chairman Motion proposed Councillor Stanley to stand as Chairman proposed Councillor Dunn (in absentia, via the Clerk) seconded Councillor Gammon all agreed bar one abstention.

4. Election of Vice Chairman Motion proposed Councillor Dunn to stand as Vice Chairman all agreed bar one abstention. (Cllr Dunn had previously indicated, via the Clerk, that he would be willing to stand, if nominated).


Proposed Councillor O’Brien seconded Councillor Gammon, agreed with three abstentions.

6. To approve bank mandate Motion proposed bank mandate to remain two out of three signatories (Cllrs. Stanley, Procter and Gammon). All agreed bar three abstentions.

The Parish Council thanked Councillor Stanley for his work during his term as Chairman.

Meeting closed 10.20pm.