

ST MEWAN PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Clerk: Wendy Yelland (CiLCA)
The Garage
The Chase, Sticker
St Austell PL26 7HL
Tele: 07464 350837

E: clerk@stmewanparishcouncil.gov.uk

W: www.stmewanparishcouncil.gov.uk

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Virtual Annual Parish Assembly Meeting Minutes – 28th April 2021 held Remotely via ZOOM at 18.00pm

1. Welcome by The Chairman

Cllr Kneller Chairman of St Mewan Parish Council welcomes all Cllrs, members of the public and two officers PCSO Wendy Christophers and PCSO Julie Carpenter from Devon and Cornwall Police

2. Persons Present

Cllr Kneller (Chair), Cllr Mrs Tarbox (Vice-Chair), Cllr Mrs Heyward, Cllr Mrs Mitchell, Cllr Mrs Padley, Cllr Mrs Ringrose, Cllr Holman, Cllr Jannaway, Cllr Wallis, Cllr Passmore

Apologies: Cllr Spencer. Received and duly accepted.

In attendance: Wendy Yelland – Parish Clerk

Public Present: Mr Michael Bunney, Mr John Richards, Mr Tom Maguire, Mr Chris Davis

3. Annual Parish Assembly Meeting: Minutes: 10th April 2019

It was

RESOLVED that the above Minutes of the Meeting of St Mewan Parish Council having been previously circulated, be taken as read, approved, and signed at the next physical meeting.
Prop Cllr Mrs Mitchell, sec Cllr Padley.

4. Annual Police Report 2020/2021

Neighbourhood Police Team

➤ **Neighbourhood Team Leader**

Sergeant 4794 Dave Mitchell

➤ **Neighbourhood Beat Manager**

PC 4886 Andrew Barnicoat

PC 5929 Gareth Hawken

PC 6170 Colin Sheppard

PC 7177 Will Chesterfield

PC 7069 Yasmin Vokes

➤ **Police Community Support Officers**

30499 Julie Carpenter

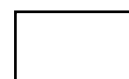
30047 Wendy Christophers

30528 Natalie Merrikin

30004 Ally Relf

30262 Steve Tibbles

30055 Graham Wade



30449 Jamie Ward
30740 Yasmin Barrott

Overall Crime

Really positive news, roughly a 10% reduction in all crime over the last 12 months. Almost all crime types are down with significant reductions in dwelling burglary, vehicle offences and shoplifting. The main increase has been in violence without injury and this is largely due to changes in the crime recording rules and the classification of offences, all harassment/stalking/mal comms offences for example are categorised as violence without injury which inflates the numbers considerably. Other areas which have increased include possession and trafficking of drugs, and weapons offences which should be seen as a positive thing as these offences only get recorded when they are detected by officers and demonstrates our proactive work to tackle drugs and weapon crime. Despite the numbers being up in these crime categories they are still low by national standards. Individual crime figures can be found on our website.

Priorities over the last 12 months

Safeguarding of vulnerable people particularly with Covid and significant partnership work undertaken. Domestic abuse has been a national priority due to the concerns around increases particularly during periods of lockdown. We have seen some rises at various times but overall, our sector hasn't seen the increases that other sectors have.

Anti-Social Behaviour has been an issue from time to time and has been tackled with partner agencies such as Helen Toms ASB Officer.

County Lines has been a real priority which as a sector we have tackled very well in terms of executing warrants, charging, and remanding several key individuals and seizures of drugs. The perpetrators of county lines have continued their 'business' but using different tactics, as a sector we have carried out more drugs warrants than anyone else.

We must stress the importance of community intelligence and encourage communities to report things to us. Information relating to vulnerable persons being exploited is particularly important right now. Covid legislation has been introduced and it has been a priority for some time to deal with reports of breaches. We have utilised the 4 E's approach, Engage, Explain, Encourage and Enforce. There have been a significant number of reports to us placing real pressure to respond and at times we have been unable to due to other more pressing issues around Threat, Risk and Harm.

Moving forward

Last year was unprecedented for us in terms of demand. There was approximately a 20-30% increase on our demand and we anticipate the same this year due to the number of visitors coming down as opposed to going abroad. We are planning for the easing of lockdown and anticipate real challenges. G7 is taking place but the impact on local resourcing for this will be minimal.

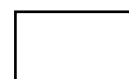
An increase in neighbourhood officers over the last 12-18 months has been a real positive for the team. There is talk that we may see more staff, but this is not yet confirmed. We have operated as 'one team' for some time now and the system is working well. There is currently no thought that we will return to dedicated officers for each area. The national uplift of 20,000 officers has also meant that response staff have seen the benefits so in terms of staffing we are in a better place than we were a few years ago.

5.Chairman of Committees Annual Report

Finance – Chair Cllr Kneller

We continue to budget, spend and monitor our use of public money and protection of our assets very carefully.

I would like to thank the Clerk for her continued hard work and diligence in this regards and Councillors who have helped to monitor and audit our accounts.



Special thanks on her last meeting to Cllr Mrs Josie Ringrose for her wise council over the years and for her support to both the Clerk and the Council regarding monthly checks and monitoring our accounting.

We have set the Parish Precept this year with no increase recognising the difficult year many of our residents and communities have endured (it has changes slightly due a small change in the base rate at Cornwall Council)

We look after a wide range of facilities including: 4 Playing Fields, Play equipment, The pump track at Polgooth, Land at Sticker, Bus Shelters, A car park, Notice Boards, Benches, picnic tables and seating, Waste bins, Speed monitoring devices and Allotments

We have a range of Policies and Procedures in place (currently 32) all of which are available on our website for public scrutiny.

Our Audit has returned from Hudson Accounting dated 13th April 2021 in a very satisfactory position, and we continue to ensure that we are compliant with others important requirements such as GDPR.

Playing Fields and Polgooth Playing Field Trust – Chair Cllr Spencer

Due to the pandemic the playing fields were closed for several months at the beginning of the year. Personally I found this difficult, never more was outdoor space needed and for our green areas to be cordoned off seemed such a shame but needs must. Over the period of closure basic maintenance continued on an ad hoc basis.

During the summer the playing fields re-opened and on the occasions I visited they were being well used and I really appreciated what an asset to our communities they are. It was particularly nice to see families using the picnic benches; this inspired us to procure and arrange for another 10 benches to be positioned around the parish.

Over the course of the next 12 months I wish to continue with the general maintenance and look to continually improve the playing fields.

I would like to thank the playing field committee and all members of the Parish Council for their support and also thank those volunteers who empty bins in the various playing fields. I would also like to add particular thanks to Andrew Inglefield for inspections and general maintenance. I would also like to thank the Clerk for her hard work and guidance over the last year.

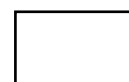
Planning – Chair Cllr Mrs Tarbox

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic we did not have an annual parish meeting in 2020 so this report aims to bridge the gap between the previous one in 2019 and where we are now in 2021.

There have been quite a lot of planning applications during the last two years, mostly for extensions, annexes, and one off builds. The Parish Council has looked closely at every one and then either supported or objected based on our Neighbourhood Development Plan which was produced with a lot of hard work by residents of the Parish.

A notable application during this period was from Gilbert & Goode for affordable dwellings in St Mewan Lane, Trewoon. There was a lot of public opposition to this development for various reasons. Gilbert & Goode had already developed land opposite the proposed site and we were informed by a reliable source that not all of the affordable housing on that site was taken by people with a link to the Parish.

The main objection however, was because it did not comply with the St Mewan Neighbourhood Development Plan. The Parish Council objected, but despite the fact that because so many dwellings were being crammed onto the site it was not possible to provide enough parking spaces for residents let alone any visitors, the Planning Officer recommended that it be given permission on the grounds that the benefits outweighed any harm. The Parish Council contacted the Cornwall Councillor for our ward, Cheryl MacKrory, who had just been elected as Conservative MP for Falmouth and Truro, and the application was called in. Unfortunately, she was unable to be present and speak against the



development on our behalf. She nominated a colleague to speak on her behalf which also caused controversy at the meeting and might have prejudiced our case.

The meeting of the Cornwall Council Planning Committee took place in February 2020 and despite the Parish Council's best efforts the committee voted in favour of the development. Despite this St Mewan Parish Council had serious concerns about how the application had been handled and lodged a formal complaint with Cornwall Council. This was investigated and Cornwall Council took the highly unusual step of deciding that the application would go before the Planning Committee again and that the Parish Council would, once more, have the chance to speak at the forthcoming meeting. St Mewan Parish Council wanted this to be heard by a different planning committee which would ensure that there was no bias involved but at this point COVID 19 intervened and a lockdown was imposed.

Before remote meetings were introduced for planning issues and despite St Mewan Parish Council asking for a postponement in order to allow us to have the promised opportunity to speak, Cornwall Council used existing rules, introduced to cover the COVID 19 pandemic, to have a private discussion between the Service Director for Planning and members of the Planning Committee who had voted in favour of the application. This resulted in another decision in favour of the development.

St Mewan Parish Council again formally complained about the procedure used, particularly as within a week or so remote meetings were scheduled to start, but we were told that a proper process under COVID 19 rules had been used.

The Parish Council considered all the information, decided to take advice regarding a Judicial Review and consulted a solicitor out of county to ensure that there was no prejudice. We decided that in order to even consider taking it further the odds in favour of us winning had to be at least 75% or higher. Sadly the solicitor concluded that we had less than a 50% chance. A Judicial Review is a very expensive process and the Parish Council takes its responsibility regarding the use of tax payers money very seriously, we therefore decided that we were unable to take the matter any further.

There has been one other major application which was controversial and this was for a development on land at Hembal Lane Farm. There were a lot of objections to the development, which again, does not comply with the St Mewan Neighbourhood Development Plan. The proposed access was off a byway which is narrow and prone to flooding. The Parish Council objected and so did a lot of residents although the application had some supporters. Highways also objected because the access to the site was inadequate and permission was refused.

The Planning Committee of St Mewan Parish Council prides itself on being fair and objective and works hard to uphold the best interests of the residents of the Parish and the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

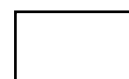
I would like to thank all the members of the Parish Council and our Clerk, Wendy Yelland, for their hard work and the time they give freely as Councillors and Volunteers, particularly during the COVID pandemic which has been a testing time for everyone.

I would also like to give special thanks to Councillor Dick Cole, who despite his existing heavy workload, has supported us during the twelve months that we have been without a Ward Councillor and never wavered in that support.

Rights of Way – Chair Cllr David Holman

We are not the busiest of the Committees on our Council but even so we still get our fair share of issues to deal with. One of the issues we hear about most is keeping our paths clear of growth.

Our paths have different levels for maintenance and at the highest level the paths are strimmed, and overgrowth removed several times during the year. Despite the Pandemic, we have been able to achieve most of these, but it has been a challenge.



We have people who walk all of our paths but with COVID-19 Restrictions and the need to stay at home this has been reduced, at last we are now able to increase these checks.

Many of our parishioners still walk some sections of their 'local' paths and where problems are found they are very good at letting us know. Please can we ask you all to report any fallen trees or branches, overgrowth or any other problems.

Another occasionally reported problem is damage to pathway signs and even missing signs; we have an ongoing project to deal with this across the whole parish and some keen volunteers have helped in checking and reporting problems. If anyone is willing to help with local paths, we can send you a local electronic map of your area. If you are interested, please email me.

Some paths have a poor surface area beneath them, and this is particularly noticeable during the wetter winter months. We have addressed the worst of these, but we must ask you not to take action to resolve this problem yourselves. That is the role of the Parish Council.

Litter is not a major problem for us, but it does exist and if you can help by safely removing any you find, it would be appreciated.

All public Rights of way are broken down into 4 types:

- Public Footpaths – Only open to walkers.
- Public Bridleway – Only open to walkers and horse riders.
- Byway Open to All Traffic – Open to all the above, plus cyclists, horse-drawn vehicles and motorised vehicles.
- Restricted Byways – Open to all the above **EXCEPT** motorised vehicles.

We mainly have paths in the first two categories, and we are pleased that by-and-large these are respected.

If you experience misuse of a path, again please let me know.

Unfortunately, there are paths in the parish that are not actually 'Rights of Way' and are not the responsibility of the Parish Council, we do get reports of problems with these paths, but we are usually unable to help.

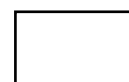
Finally, we are in the process of getting all our paths online as an 'Interactive Map', we are almost there and just trying to resolve some issues with displaying the maps on a mobile phone, probably the most important element, as we are unlikely to be walking with larger devices, except perhaps an IPAD. I would like to express my thanks to the committee, Wendy Yelland our clerk, the parish council, volunteers who have been helping and of course the public in the parish and visitors to the parish.

6.Chairman's Annual Summary

Firstly, I would like to thank all of the St Mewan Parish Councillors who continue to give their time on a voluntary basis for the benefit of the communities within the Parish.

I would particularly like to thank Cllr Mrs Tarbox for her dedication and support in the position of Vice Chair whilst also chairing our busy Planning Committee.

Thankyou also to all of the Cllrs who have chaired a committee during the year and for their reports earlier this evening.



Also, thanks to all of our contractors and suppliers.

Its now 5 years since we welcomed clerk Wendy Yelland to the Parish and I would like to thank Wendy for her continued hard work, community spirit and support to the whole Council throughout another busy and sometimes difficult year.

Clearly the events of the last year have been unparalleled and I will come on to some of the specific COVID initiatives we have been involved in.

The playing fields and footpaths are all in good stead and getting used well, coupled with our allotments and footpaths this gives good opportunities for local residents to get out and take some exercise bringing the associated health and wellbeing benefits especially during lock downs.

I represented the Parish Council again in November at the Annual Remembrance Day Service at St Mewan Church and laid a wreath of remembrance on behalf of the parish. The remembrance bench continues to both look good and provide some seating for quiet reflection.

This year we have increased the Wild flower planting on roadside verges, having declared a Climate Emergency we are taking increasing actions to improve our natural environment with our open spaces and trees.

We installed solar panels on village halls several years ago and now we are receiving Community Benefit funds from the wind turbines up on Blackpool tip. Having remote meetings has also lowered our carbon footprint accidentally thanks to ZOOM !

During March 2020 when the first lockdown was announced and when we had an EGM in Sticker Car Park to ensure that we had the right protocols in place to manage Council business when meetings at the time would stop nobody imagined what would happen. We quickly had people shielding in the Parish and our 3 groups of volunteers sprang into action to support the most vulnerable. Delivering food, papers and prescriptions on a daily basis. The Parish supported those groups by printing leaflets and helping them get organised, jointly approaching 1000 deliveries were made in the first lockdown a real community approach. Also, thanks to the village shops and pubs for their support and to Probus dispensary.

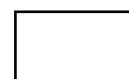
Since then, we have learnt about the joys of ZOOM, and actually I think it has surprised a lot of people in how we can keep going without having a physical meeting.

We have also managed to get through a protracted period of time without a Cornwall Councillor a situation which will correct itself next week!!

Tonight, will be the last of Full Council meetings of this Council group with the new Council kicking off next month and yes we will be going back to physical meetings in May.
Thank You.

7.To receive questions, comments, and recommendations from residents

There were none.



There being no other business to be transacted the Chairman closed the meeting at 18.40pm.

Signed:
Chairman of Full Council

Date:

Full Council Members

- Clr Kneller (Chairman)
- Clr Mrs Tarbox (Vice-Chair)
- Clr Mrs Heyward
- Clr Mrs Mitchell
- Clr Mrs Ringrose
- Clr Mrs Padley
- Clr Jannaway
- Clr Spencer
- Clr Holman
- Clr Wallis
- Clr Passmore

DRAFT

