

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

**THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF THE ELECTORATE OF COLYTON
PARISH TOOK PLACE IN THE COLYTON TOWN HALL**

On

Wednesday 19th April 2023 at 7.30 pm

**UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF MR A W H PARR, THE CHAIRMAN OF
THE PARISH COUNCIL.**

Present: Cllrs S Real, K Clifford, J Gardiner, A Jarman, J Hay, A Stenning, A Parr, C Denny, C Pady and R Turner.

Also in attendance: Mr Hurford speak on behalf of the Feoffees, Mr Woodruff, guest speaker, EDDC Cllr H Parr and S Haines (clerk)

Members of public: 2.

APM23/04/01 Introduction by the Chairman. Cllr Parr welcomed everybody and thanked everybody for coming and thanks to the guest speakers for providing their reports.

APM23/04/02 Apologies for Absence. Cllrs Arnott, K Mills, A Mills and DCC M Hartnell. Also the police.

APM23/04/03 Approval of the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 13th April 2022. Cllr Pady proposed these be approved, seconded by Cllr Gardiner and agreed by all.

APM23/04/04 Any matters arising from the minutes. None.

APM23/04/05 Report on local policing matters. Officer Craig Amarilli sent his apologies and submitted the following report which the clerk read out:

Our systems do not allow us to break down the crime statistics per town, but rather by region. Colyton comes under 'Seaton rural', which stretches from Rousdon, to Farway Common, to effectively the Donkey Sanctuary.

Within that region, the crime stats are as follows:

2013 – 36 crimes of which 7 are theft/burglary related.

April 2012-date – 203 crimes, of which 15 were theft burglary related.

A lot of these crimes are domestic related, as well as fraud related crimes due to the demographic of the region.

However, with the theft/burglary stats in mind, can I ask you to request all local individuals remain vigilant, especially those with outbuildings on farms in the more rural areas of Colyton. People are welcome to report any suspicious activity to 101, online, or simply drop a letter through the Seaton police station letter box addressed to me. The more jigsaw pieces we have, the better the picture we can build!

I will also be looking to set up a 'Have your say' similar to the one held in Seaton recently, as well as a DataTag/Machinery marking event for the local farmers. I will update when I have specific dates on these

APM23/04/06 Parish Council:

a) Review of the year ended 31st March 2023 – Cllr A Parr

It has been a busy year. The Parish Council has met twice a month as well as other meetings such as site inspections. Thankfully we have not been affected by any Covid restrictions this year.

The major issues during the past year have been:

- 1) The ongoing Ceram Tec site development. This has taken a lot longer than expected. A final plan has still not been accepted by EDDC. The Parish Council will continue to monitor it carefully to get the best design possible, and insure that the affordable houses and the work units that were promised, are built.
- 2) The Colyford Community Governance Review has gone on for most of the year. It was finally published on 11th January this year.

It has to be said that the Parish Council of Colyton are not happy with the way the process was conducted, or the proposed outcome. The Parish Council were not consulted during the review and no consideration was given to our views or our financial position.

We asked for advice from the Devon Association of Local Councils and from that, it was evident that EDDC had overrun the time limit for completing the review. So in an attempt to get the financial settlement altered, the Parish Council has started legal proceedings asking for a Judicial Review of the process.

Obviously this is a serious step to take, and the Parish Council has not made the decision lightly because there will be legal expenses. However, if we don't do this now, Colyton will lose the capitol asset of the three fields at Stafford Common, with an estimated value of £140,000.00 and also the annual rental income from those fields, currently £3606.00. That revenue is very important in helping maintain our facilities, such as the cemetery, the allotments and the playing fields.

We are, at the moment, awaiting further advice from lawyers.

These two issues are going to take up a lot of the Parish Councils time in the coming year.

Finally, we are coming to the end of our four year term of office. The new Parish Council will be reduced from 13 members to 11 due to the Community Governance Review. Only 9 people have put themselves forward so there is no need for an election.

I would like to thank our clerk, Sasha, for all her hard work during the year. Also thank you to all the Parish Councillors for all their in-put over the last four years. Those retiring, I wish a peaceful retirement, but I hope you will all keep in touch.

And lastly, Colin Pady has decided to retire after 53 years on the Council. He has done an enormous amount for Colyford and Colyton during his time as a Councillor and his knowledge and experience will be greatly missed by all. I know he will continue to be active in local matters, but on behalf of us all I would like to thank him for the past 53 years and wish him a very happy retirement.

b) Committee Reports: Finance – Cllr R Turner

Thanks to Sasha for keeping the accounts clear and up to date and producing reports for me to sign, huge thanks to Cllr Gardiner, vice chair of planning, for her support and chairing any meetings I could not attend.

There have been two main outlays this past year, the first was works on Nunsford Lane which Cllr Pady will discuss during his report, this was mostly funded with a grant from Devon County Council, secondly the new Trim Trail which has been put up at the Playing fields, this was funded using S106 monies, passed to us from East Devon District Council.

This financial year has seen a large increase in the Council tax for residents of Colyton, this is not a decision which was taken lightly and was a necessity as a direct result of the Community Governance Review and Colyton no longer receiving income from Colyford but still being responsible for the vast majority of assets.

If we are successful with the Judicial Review then hopefully this is something which could be reduced next year.

Planning – Cllr C Denny

The number of planning applications received last year (01/04/22 – 31/03/22) was 56 within the parish, plus two which were on adjacent land to the parish.

Types of applications received -

FUL	34	Full application
TRE	9	Application for works to trees with a Tree Preservation Order
TCA	3	Application for works to trees in a Conservation Area
VAR	1	Variation of a planning approval condition

LBC	6	Listed Building Consent
MOUT	1	Major app. – Outline - site in Seaton Parish – Bakers Estates
MFUL	1	Major app. – site in Seaton Parish – Seaton Heights
MRES	1	Major app. – CeramTec site
COU	0	Change of Use
ADV	0	Advertisement application
CPE	0	Certificate of Lawful Use
OUT	0	Outline application
RES	0	Reserved Matters application
Appeal	0	Appeal application

We try to deal with each application on its merits, although this is sometimes hampered due to the quality of the drawings and documentation presented or lack of photographs. Some applications warranted a site visit by at least four councillors when possible.

We hope our comments to EDDC Planning are both helpful, fair and objective.

We are awaiting finalised proposals for the CeramTec site which will be the subject of a Reserved Matters application now under consideration by EDDC. Demolitions on site were completed over two years ago but no construction work has yet commenced.

We were consulted as the adjacent council regarding the Bakers Estates outline proposals for Land adjacent to Harepath Road, Seaton and Seaton Heights, Harepath Road, Seaton. The incoming Colyford Parish Council will now take up any further consultation.

Finally, I would like to express my thanks to the Vice Chair of Planning, Cllr. Alison Stenning, to Cllr. Keith Mills for their assistance over the last year. And thanks to Sasha, the clerk.

Amenities – Cllr C Pady

Meetings have become more normal after two years of being socially distanced and the Amenity committee has met every month for the past year.

The annual Parish inspection last June brought minor repair jobs and tree pruning work to the attention of our handy man.

The planting of two jubilee oaks took place--one at the picnic site and one near the wetlands.

The allotments were all taken up--one plot was left with rubbish which had to be removed. It is hoped that the Allotment Association can be revived to have a closer liaison with allotment holders. The mains water project has been successfully completed with water feeding into header tanks for gravity feed into dipping tanks.

The clearance of brambles from Millfield has taken place and the surface cultivated ready for sowing with Wildflowers and native grasses. The car park has been enlarged and the hedge laid adjoining the allotments. A decision was taken to construct 2 raised beds for disabled gardeners close to the car park. Following the sowing of the Wildflower meadow it is proposed to place a picnic table and plant a small community orchard and a hazel spinney to complete this amenity.

The 18 trees planted by the children of Colyton Primary Academy at Heathayne have been monitored and watered with 5 having to be replaced by saplings kindly donated by Ms Sue Rumney. In February an oak and a horse chestnut were planted at Road Green.

The Parish gardens have been maintained by a contractor. The Council is still appealing for people to donate surplus plants. A grass cutting programme either side of the Colyford Gateways was put into place--the flower beds being looked after by volunteers.

The Parish Play parks continue to be well used and maintained by our handy man with the normal annual safety inspection.

The long awaited Trim Trail was built this March with the fencing yet to be completed.

On the 1st April the Colyford Play Park was handed over to the new emerging Colyford Parish Council --as were the maintenance of Green Lane and Shells Lane.

The Cemetery continues to be kept to a high standard thanks to our Contractor Halcyon. One more additional foot path has been resurfaced. A decision to apply to fell a sycamore tree shading the roof of the Rest house was taken to promote the conversion of the bat roost into a maternity roost for female bats by the insertion of `hot boxes`.

The whole Cemetery has been entered into `The Best Kept Church yard in Devon--a competition run by the Devon CPRE.--A large area of old cemetery prior to 1920 has become an attractive wildflower meadow good for pollinator insects and bats.

Footpaths and Bridle ways continue to be monitored by our three Parish Footpath wardens--for which many thanks to them--but sadly we have to record the death of Phil Bayliss who has been our footpath warden for many years and has given great service--our condolences go to Vikki who is also a footpath warden. The organisers of the Grizzly have offered to donate a sum to have a memorial for Phil--possibly at the allotments.

A major project was undertaken last year in partnership with the Devon County Council and the new Tenant of Nunsford Farm--where much work was done to protect the lower end of Nunsford Lane from flooding by cleaning out the ditches and watercourses and a 2 foot diameter culvert--17 metres long with an eel scrambling rope to channel water flowing out of the Mounthill valley into a watercourse taking it into the Axe--This was paid for by funds from the County Council

Another project in its infancy is the repair of the surface and drainage of the lower end of Downhayne Brake

Finally the Council is mindful and grateful to the many people who help in so many ways to keep our Amenities in good repair.

Particular thanks must go to Arthur Parsons our handy man, ably helped by Nick Weldon for 2 handed jobs. The weekly emptying of bins and the grass cutting especially in the Churchyard. For the repair and treatment of the many benches in the Parish. Always ready to respond to emergencies caused possibly by vandalism--luckily not too many incidences this year.

This concludes my last report as Chairman of the Amenity Committee. I wish my successor well.
COLIN PADY 19TH APRIL 2023.

APM23/04/07 Guest Speakers: Chris Woodruff – AONB Manager.

The AONB was designated in 1963. So it is celebrating its 60th birthday this year. The area runs from Exmouth to Lyme Regis and inland as far as Honiton and has a diverse range of habitats within that area supporting a wide range of species.

The AONB team was set up in 2002 to develop a management plan by the then Countryside Agency. The AONB Management Plan is a statutory plan and is reviewed every 5 years.

The AONB is a small team with three members of staff including a project officer, Pete Youngman and Communications officer Kelly Pritchard. They have two other team members currently on short term contracts covering farming and wildlife.

The (Glover) Landscape Review in 2019, some 70 years after the National Park and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 was completed, was set up by the Government to make our National Parks and AONBs fit for the 21st century and made recommendations on the changes required. This is a very important document and it is expected that the government will make a formal announcement about its response to this in the spring. In summary, the announcement of the review from the Government should strengthen AONBs and will include plans to be re-named to National Landscapes.

The AONB team work in partnership with a wide range of groups and organisations across the AONB including for example, Axe Vale and District Conservation Society

The core funding comes from Defra and EDDC/DCC. A key programme they are currently delivering for Defra is the Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL). This was to be a three year programme, the first two years have proven to be very successful and it has now been extended a further year and will be due to end in 2025. The programme assists farmers with the transition from being in the EU to a post Brexit environment. The programme for East Devon AONB will amount to c£1.2 million in funding and offers grants of up to £40k for projects such as delivering hedgerow restoration, permissive paths, tree planting, habitat improvement and improving bio-diversity.

Between 2022-25 the AONB will also be operating a grants programme for projects helping to improve access to all, including disability access and meeting any sensory needs on behalf of Defra. The programme offers support to make the countryside accessible to all, including for example the installation of disabled toilets, wider smoother paths, style free walks and electric bikes. For example through the Access for all funding this year they support work to resurfaced parts of the East Devon Way as well as National Trust land in Branscombe, produced guidance on enabling educational/school access on farms, worked closely with EDDC streetscene to allow wheel chair users to gain access to Seaton beach, supported a master plan for improved access to Colyford common, provided all ability training for countryside staff and funded did a virtual tour of an RSPB reserve.

The AONB team had been working with the East Devon Catchment Partnership to find ways of addressing the pressing water quality issues in the River Axe catchment, working closely with the Blackdown Hills and the Environmental Agency on this. Members will be aware there are currently nutrient restrictions on development within the catchment until the water quality is improved. It is a huge challenge and as part of the approach, we are looking at securing National Lottery funding to support engaging local communities who wish to try to tackle this issue themselves, support change and work with landowners. There is an increasing interest in water quality and rivers and many local groups springing up wishing to become more engaged with this.

The AONB Partnership has commitments to nature recovery and are able to work with a wide range of organisations and individuals, from tree, butterfly and bat specialists to engage local communities to become involved in helping protect these valued and endangered animals. Their 'Elusive 8' endangered species have been chosen to promote species recovery and includes 3 bats, 3 butterflies, the heath lobelia and Devon Whitebeam.

The team have also been working on a project to remove low voltage powerlines through funding from the National Grid – with powerlines removed from the Lower Otter and plans for further removal at Fire Beacon Hill.

Cllr Denny asked a question regarding the possibility of a new National Park.

Mr Woodruff explained that there are talks of forming a new park, it would be called the Dorset and East Devon National Park, proposals have been sent to Natural England, there is a huge amount of work involved but it is a possibility.

Cllr Pady asked about the 'Exclusion Zones surrounding Colyton and Colyford, offering there areas little protection from development.

Mr Woodruff explained that the boundaries are being revised all the time, the Parish Council could apply to be covered by the AONB but East Devon and Devon County Council would all have to back the proposal before anything is logged in the system.

APM23/04/08 Colyton Chamber of Feoffees – Mr Hurford (Chair)

Thank you for inviting me here tonight to report on the Feoffees activities during the past year. We have had another active year, donating some £16,000.00 to various Colyton organisations and good causes, these include: The Primary School, The Grammar School, The Memorial Social Club, The Playing Fields, Colyton Scouts, Friends of Colyton Library, Promote Colyton Group, the Late Queens Jubilee Celebrations and also supported the Monmouth Rebellion event along with helping with the regular Christmas Lights appeal. We also sent a Loyal Greeting to the Late Queen to mark her Jubilee, also a letter to his Majesty the King on the death of his mother, both on behalf of Colyton. We have also helped fund the warm spaces of Colyton this winter.

Part of our remit is looking after the Town Hall, now nearly 100 years old. This upkeep has cost £4400.00 in the past year, also keeping up with Health and Safety which cost another £2500.00.

At present, we are in the process of refurbishing the Gents cloak room starting in May with further improvements being planned for the bar area and the stage floor.

Since our last report we have welcomed three new Feoffees, Lucy Dack, Ryan Smith and Simon Parsons. I would like to publically thank Mr Bernard Love, Mick Askew and Tony Hibberd having retired with over 90 years distinguished service between them.

We will continue to strive to support and serve Colyton in the coming year.

APM23/04/09 The Reece Strawbridge Centre – District Cllr P Arnott (Chair)

Cllr Arnott sent his apologies and sent a report to the clerk to read on his behalf:

First, my apologies for not being present this evening, which unfortunately clashes with Full Council at EDDC.

The Reece Strawbridge Trustees are pleased to report that we have recently become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, taking the charity onto a much firmer footing than the old 1998 Governance Document which was not fit for purpose in 2023.

The centre has bounced back very strongly from COVID-19. Core provision for the Pre-School and Scout Centre is excellent and we are proud to host them.

To generate income, both the sprung-floored upper hall and the large sound-dampened lower hall are virtually fully booked, activities ranging from exercise and health to theatre and crafts. It is the busiest community building in the lower Axe Valley. We have also housed the local food redistribution operation, Carnival events, and many other special events across the year.

The trustees would like to thank all users for their role in making our centre amongst the most successful and well-respected in the south west. It is worth noting that the Reece Strawbridge Centre stands fully independent of external revenue funding.

In the coming year we will look to make further internal improvements to the building, which has now been open for 13 years. This report must also offer sincere thanks to one trustee in particular, Mark Mann, who from his leading role in constructing the centre beginning 15 years ago to his daily voluntary responses to the building's needs is exemplary. We are pleased that he will also be sitting on this parish council from next month, and we hope this will help further foster understanding.

Due to the sad passing of a former youth worker, and then the pandemic, youth work provision has

been difficult in recent years. However, trustees have now identified under our new CIO a way of providing this, hopefully to start at the October half-term, following consultation with the local young people.

Finally, we would welcome discussions with any local people interested in becoming trustees.

APM 23/04/10 Devon County Council – County Cllr Marcus Hartnell.

Cllr Hartnell sent a report for the clerk to read out:

Annual Report by Cllr Marcus Hartnell
Devon County Councillor for Seaton & Colyton

It is hard to believe that another year has passed and I'm reporting on what I have been doing as your County Councillor.

I spend a great deal of time every month focusing on highways matters, out on the ground across the division inspecting roads and reporting safety defects, empty grit bins, drainage problems and assessing which roads should be patched, surface dressed or fully resurfaced. I regularly meet with the Neighbourhood Highway Officer and accompany him on highway inspections. It is a huge part of the role, and whilst it is frustrating that there simply is not enough money to do everything, I do believe that by working in partnership with the highways team, together we do everything we can to keep our roads safe. Along with other local Conservative Councillors I continue to lobby local MP's to push for more highways funding from government.

Committee work is an important part of being your County Councillor, and I sit on three main committees. Over the past year I have been involved with interesting and varied topics, some of which I have highlighted below:

- *Audit Committee*

- o Oversight of Internal and External audits.
- o Counter fraud initiative especially around Council tax.
- o Risk management.
- o Audit of annual accounts.

- *Corporate Infrastructure and Regulatory Services Committee*

- o Moving Traffic Offences.
- o Climate Change.
- o Customer Service Centre visit.
- o Rural broadband.
- o Budget oversight.
- o Highways dashboard and performance monitoring.
- o Local bus services.
- o Implementation of new financial system for the council.
- o Motorhome parking policy on the highway.
- o Libraries Unlimited.

- *Investment & Pension Fund Committee*

- o Oversight and responsible for £5bn Devon Pension Fund.
- o Attend regular training days.
- o Part of the Brunel Pension Partnership, pooled investments with ten other funds.
- o Taking policy decisions to reach net zero by 2050.
- o Five percent fund Investment in renewable energy infrastructure by 2025.
- o Opportunity to invest in a local impact fund aligned with the levelling up agenda.

I was elected in 2021 having identified four key priorities for Seaton & Colyton. They are listed below with updates and plans for the coming year.

- **Safer Roads**

- o Attended a meeting with Colyton Grammar School to discuss the school coach arrangements on the A3052 at Colyford. Discussions are continuing regarding some new plans from the School.
- o I've supported proposals to introduce 20mph zones on various roads in the division, but they have been unsuccessful. I will continue to argue the case and ask that more money is allocated to provide them for communities where they are requested.
- o At the recent East Devon HATOC meeting I proposed a reduction in the speed limit between Colyford & Colyton on the B3161 (Coly Road), which is now going to Cabinet for consideration. This is because it goes against council policy, however despite this it was supported by the HATOC committee unanimously.
- o I've requested that the yellow zig-zag lines outside Seaton Primary School on both Valley View and Scalwell Lane are formalised with a Traffic Regulation Order and repainted so that the Police can provide enforcement. For some reason these were never formalised and are only advisory, meaning anyone who parks there at present cannot be issued with points on their licence or a fine.
- o Highlighted road safety concerns on the proposed new development at Harepath Road.
- o Asked for improvements to the road layout on Seaton Road where the multi-use trail exits onto the main road.

• **Action on Fraud & Scams**

- o I attended a joint Crime & Safety roadshow held in Seaton on 1 April, where both the Police and Trading Standards were on hand to give advice and assist residents.
- o I will continue to work with Trading Standards to offer specific sessions around online safety and to raise awareness.

• **School improvements**

- o Improvements to Seaton Primary School are planned to take place during the summer.

• **Seaton Hospital**

- o I have had early discussions with a charity interested in renting the vacant space at the hospital. I am unable to disclose any further details at this time, but it is encouraging.

A very busy year, I'm sure you will agree, and there is still lots to do. I'm looking forward to attending the first meeting of the newly formed Colyford Parish Council following elections on 4 May, and also the opening of the missing link of the multi-use path between Seaton & Colyford which is scheduled to be completed in the Summer.

Thanks for all your support. I look forward to working with you all over the coming year.

Cllr Marcus Hartnell

April 2022

APM23/04/11 East Devon District Council - Cllrs P Arnott & H Parr.

Cllr Arnott will submit his report after the upcoming elections.

Annual Report- District Councillor Helen Parr April 2023

The District Council is still being run by the Democratic Alliance of Independents, Liberal Democrats, Labour and Green Councillors, with the largest group, the Conservatives in opposition.

EDDC meetings- until late in 2022 meetings were still being held on Zoom, consultative only, officers making decisions. The Full Council meetings continued to be held at the Ocean in Exmouth until March 23 when an Extraordinary Council meeting was due to take place at Blackdown House. Until recently, The Councils offices in Exmouth and at Blackdown House were not open to the public except by appointment.

Ukrainian Refugees- EDDC has been working with East Devon Citizens Advice and Devon County Council to assist with housing Ukrainian refugees e.g. checking properties and paying out subsistence payments.

Queens Platinum Jubilee- every parish was offered an oak tree to plant to mark Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee.

I am a member of the **Scrutiny Committee**- this committee acts as the Critical Friend of the Council. During the year Scrutiny has looked at a wide range of council work including- **Car Park Charges** Scrutiny looked into the decision to increase charges, to double in the prime coastal car parks

The Learning Review- Scrutiny received a report on the remedial actions the Personnel Cttee recommended to the Council on advice from the East of England Local Government Association Learning Review. This report, costing at least £18,000, was commissioned by the Council to look into serious mismanagement of an employment matter. The findings were confidential, but had been leaked to Radio Exe. The Scrutiny cttee was given an update.

People Data- Scrutiny was concerned re the long term absence figures relating to stress. The welfare of employees is a prime concern.

Water Management- In September Scrutiny considered an item on Water Management, the first in a series of meetings on this topic which is of huge concern to the public, including Beach and River Water Quality. South West Water executives gave virtual briefings to Scrutiny and answered questions.

New Local Plan- Scrutiny considered progress on the new Local Plan, proposed strategic sites for housing across the district and a second new town for East Devon. They also looked at the Consultation on the Draft Local Plan and reported problems with the process.

Quarterly Performance Data- The Scrutiny Cttee was concerned re- the figures for stress related sickness absence, the number of Household in Temporary Accommodation, the no. of days taken to process Housing Benefit Claims and changes to those claims- this is largely down to staff being re assigned to do work related to the Ukraine crisis. Delays in processing stage 2 complaints.

The Budget- the Scrutiny Cttee met to consider the draft budget at 2 all day meetings. The Council must produce a balanced Budget: a £434,000 deficit was to be met by taking money from the Reserves. Thanks to the Government awarding a better than anticipated Local Government Settlement, the amount that had to be taken from Reserves was £85,000. The Council cannot continue to use Reserves to balance the Budget- it is unsustainable.

Full Council meeting February 23 the Ocean in Exmouth

1. Budget- the Council met to approve the Budget. The Conservative Group did not support the Budget on 2 grounds- closing public toilets, and doubling car park charges.

2. Motion re Transgender Visibility- It was proposed the Council review its policies to ensure they were inclusive of Transgender residents' rights. Also that the transgender flag be raised outside the council offices on International Transgender Day of Visibility and International Transgender Day of Remembrance.

It was further proposed the Council agree in principle to sign up to the Stonewall's Diversity Champions Program for Employers, with delegated authority to the Council's HR Manager to bring a report to the Personnel committee on the implications of this.

I could not support the in principle signing up to a Stonewalls program. It has very recently been announced that Police Scotland has left this Stonewalls program, following on from the BBC, The House of Lords, the House of Commons, the Equalities and Human Rights Commission and Ofcom, all of whom have previously left. There are serious concerns about the conflicting rights of Transgender people and Women, problems of women only spaces, women's sports etc. still to be resolved.

Extraordinary Meetings of the Council- Since May 2022 there have been 3 Extraordinary Full Council meetings [and many Extraordinary Cabinet meetings].

Extraordinary meeting Sept 22- to receive the report of the Chief Executive re the former Councillor and Alderman John Humphries.

This person was investigated by the police; charged with very serious offences of sexual abuse; convicted and sent to prison. His Alderman status was removed by the Council at the next Full Council meeting. Despite this, on a narrow majority the Council voted a Budget of £45,000 to fund an investigation into the Council's handling of the matter. There would be no powers to compel

witnesses and the Council was advised that it was unlikely any new information would be forthcoming. Against the advice of the Chief Executive, the Council chose Verita to carry out this work.

An Extraordinary Council Meeting was arranged March 23 to receive the Verita Report, and recommendations. This meeting was postponed at about 24 hrs notice. There is no information as yet about a new date for this meeting, when the report can be debated. The cost of this investigation continues to rise.

Colyford Governance Review

Over the year, a Governance Review has been carried out by the District Council, at the request of the Colyford Village Residents Association. The District Council voted to establish a Colyford Parish Council. Following the May local elections. The first Annual meeting of the new council will take place 15 May,

EDDC also voted to Vest / transfer ownership of 3 fields owned by Colyton Parish Council in Colyford, value c. £140,000, as well as the annual rental income arising from the leasing of these fields, £3500. Also to be vested in Colyford, their village gateways and Colyford Playground, which is on land leased for the play park.

Colyton Parish Council has appealed against this decision and a Judicial Review will take place.

Dolphin Street Public Toilets- These are proposed for closure and disposal unless agreement is reached between Colyton Parish Council and EDDC. The toilets are a vital service for residents and tourists and should be kept open. It is to be hoped that by working together a solution can be found.

APM23/04/12 Any matters raised by members of the public.

No members of public wished to speak.

Cllr Parr thanked everybody for coming and declared the meeting closed.

Meeting closed: 20:35.