

Diptford Parish Council
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News of the Boundary Committee draft proposal for unitary local government in Devon dominated the start of the July Parish Council Meeting. A Devon unitary authority comprising the existing county of Devon, with no changes to Plymouth or Torbay, is proposed. This would make Devon the largest unitary authority in the country, with a population of 735,000 over 2,500 sq miles and District Councillor Steer queried the representative nature of the proposed 28 Community Boards. More details are available on the Boundary Committee website, www.boundarycommittee.org.uk and views on the proposals must be submitted by the 26th September.

County Councillor Geoff Date confirmed that grant funding was available for local projects, including a £10,000 Locality Budget and £25,000 from the sale of Exeter Airport. If your group needs grant funding, contact Cllr Geoff Date direct at Unit E The Scope Complex, Wills Road, Totnes TQ0 5XN (Tel 01803 865183, email geoff.date@devon.gov.uk). The funds are available for this financial year only, so an early application is recommended!

The Police report itemised 6 crimes within the parish over the previous month, including theft of motorcycles and damage to a diesel tank. In view of the spate of diesel thefts and thefts of metal, parishioners are asked to be vigilant and report any suspicious activity to the police.

There was just one planning application to consider at the meeting – the ‘Retrospective application for engineering works to culvert stream and make safe access between OS6433 and 6119 at Field southwest of Craxon at SX736561, Holsome Park, Diptford’. The Parish Council’s observations to SHDC were: ‘Further to the Parish Council’s objections to the original planning application, the retrospective application will create a detrimental effect on the environment and landscape, which requires investigation by the Environment Agency and all interested parties; suitable alternative access is already available; and it is understood that non-inert material has already been dumped on the site, contrary to the previous planning approval, and proposals are needed to remove all non-inert material, including those below the surface’.

The Parish Council adopted Financial Regulations at the Meeting – these are the rules by which the Parish Council administers its finance. It also revisited its 2008/9 Budget - spending will be tight over the next financial year in order to ensure that overall expenditure does not exceed the £4,500 precept, or income from Council Tax.

Finally, news has reached the Parish Council that BT intends to remove the phone box outside the school. Although the Parish Council has not been formally consulted, if you are unhappy about the proposal please let me know.

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Tuesday 19th August, when essential planning application and financial items only will be discussed. You are welcome to attend.