

**Exford Parish Council**  
**Draft Minutes of Parish Council meeting**

**Held on: 29th November 2016 at Exford Memorial Hall 7.30pm**

**Attendance:** Mike Ellicott, Kathryn Tucker, Jeremy Hickman, Derek Lloyd, Brian Martin, Judy Skinner, Cllr Frances Nicholson, Cllr. Steven Pugsley. Clerk: Jane Laycock.

**Members of Public:** None

**Apologies for Absence:** Joan Atkins

**Declarations of Interest:** None

**Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 27th September 2016**

Minutes were signed off as a true record.

**Matters Arising**

Actions from minutes of meeting held on 27th September:

1. Leat Wall Damage. The relevant information has now been passed to CH who will be taking action in due course. Suggestion has been made that the wall is removed and replaced with a rail fence which would slightly widen the road. DL commented that this would also assist with draining the road surface. ME mentioned that there is concern from local residents regarding the apparent increasing size of lorries which are using the road. He stated that the final decision on the repairs will be up to CH engineers.  
**Action 1.** FN to follow up.
2. Horse Warning Sign. Clerk reported that CH have agreed to put up a notice.  
**Action 2.** Clerk to follow up.
3. Village Green Entrance. Due to the recent rainfall this needs to be dried out before progress can be made. Realistically this will now not take place until Spring.
4. Raised Path. The hedges have now been trimmed back. ME has made enquiries and a mini digger should be able dig out the slippage. He is obtaining quotes to do the work. Some of the edging also needs replacing. FN confirmed that this is CH responsibility. It was suggested that trimming the path needs to be done earlier in the year with an additional cut if required, later. FN stated that CH were unlikely to do this.  
**Action 3.** ME to progress mini digger quote. FN to follow up repairs with CH.
5. Overhanging Branches. Letters have been sent out to landowners and progress is being made with cutting back.
6. Exford Toilets. Notices have been placed in cubicles and seem to be working.
7. Highways Course. Clerk reported that a commercially operated course is available. Cost approx. £100 per head. However, FN mentioned that SCC may start operating courses and she will investigate this.  
**Action 4.** FN to investigate and report back.
8. Village Green. Work to fill the depressions will take place when weather permits.

9. Airband Coverage. Issue was raised at Exmoor Forum. Airband state that Exford is due to go live imminently and that the proposed coverage of the disputed areas should be satisfactory. Councillors raised doubts about this but agreed to wait and raise with Airband if necessary. BM confirmed that Airband has agreed to supply superfast wireless broadband to Exford Memorial Hall completely free of charge and with no future costs as part of their 'Connecting the Great British Village Hall' scheme.
10. School Signs. JH reported that he has contacted CH regarding repainting the 'slow' road markings in the vicinity of the school. They advise that the contractor has until 15 December to complete repainting of road markings. However, warning markings which are not adjacent to a roadside warning sign will not be replaced. It was agreed that it is critical that markings near the school are done. FN agreed to take this forward.  
**Action 5.** FN to take forward with CH.
11. Parish DIY Booklet (historic signposts). ME confirmed the good news that ENPA have now obtained grant funding for renovation of Exmoor's historic signposts. Parish Councils are likely to also need to make a contribution to this work however Exford PC are fortunate to have funds in reserve to do this. Councillors agreed that we would wish to use a local contractor if possible and also have some control over how our allocation of funds are utilized. ME will follow up in the Spring to ensure that this project is completed in the good weather next year.

## **Highways**

JH reported that Veolia came to sweep the village the Monday after the heavy rains and did an excellent job.

The recent floods which affected several routes into the village have highlighted the problems with blocked drains. JH is continuing to attempt to get CH to satisfactorily clear various drains including those at Upper Riscombe and White Post. Frustration was expressed that this issue is regularly causing problems in keeping the main routes across Exmoor open.

It was also noted that the quality of the materials used for road markings appears to have deteriorated, leading to white lines needing to be repainted every couple of years. Councillors were concerned that this was an inefficient use of resources. JH stated that the white lines on the road up to Chibbet Post are worn and he has requested repainting.

BM commented on the length of time which it took to complete the work on Muddicombe Lane and the short period that the contractors were actually on site each day.

After discussion, Councillors agreed that the Clerk should write to SCC (Alyn Jones) with a copy to the Chief Executive concerning these issues.

**Action 6.** Clerk to write to SCC.

Water is once again flowing out of the Openreach manhole cover above Court. This is causing problems for the residents especially with ice in the winter. JH agreed to follow up and it was also suggested that the residents of Court approach Openreach collectively.

## **Village Green/Play Area**

### Village Green

ME has received a quote of £1730.40 (excluding VAT) from Countrywide Grounds Maintenance for cutting and strimming the grass for 2017/18. This is an increase of £1.92 per cut and also incorporates increasing the number of cuts from 25 to 28 to alleviate the problem of excess grass being left on the green during peak growing season. Councillors agreed that they were very happy with the service and unanimously accepted the quote.

**Action 7.** Clerk to accept quote.

BM stated that the bench located at the eastern end of the green nearest to the Farmer's Den is in a poor state. It is commemorated to Peter Bindon. It was agreed that DL and BM would inspect the bench to assess its safety and whether it should be repaired or replaced. If it is replaced, the plaque can be transferred to the new bench. DL offered to approach the family.

**Action 8.** BM and DL to progress.

JH stated that the Air Ambulance is looking for sites which would facilitate possible night landings (up to midnight) if necessary. It was agreed that JH would approach them to discuss suitability of the village green.

JH raised issue of dogs fouling the village green. This appears to be an ongoing problem mainly from dog owners staying in holiday accommodation. Both hotels have advisory notices for their guests but it remains difficult to stop.

#### Play Area

BM reported that fund raising is continuing to purchase loose granulated rubber fill for those areas that currently have woodchip. This will provide a longer term, cost effective solution. The quantity needed is between 6 and 7 tonnes costing £2500-£2800 (excluding VAT). To date £2000 has been raised towards the cost, which now includes £100 from Mr Geoff Scions (a former parishioner) and a donation of £100 from last month's 30:30 event, which Councillors agreed unanimously should be put towards this.

ME proposed that the PC contributes the difference required to purchase the rubber fill to enable this project to be completed. This was agreed unanimously.

#### **QE II Field**

BM reported that everything is running well. The non-slip wire on the floor of the main pavilion terrace is getting worn out and is a potential hazard in places. This is being repaired and replaced as necessary.

There was also discussion on a possible proposal to enclose the shipping container inside a wooden structure as a long-term solution. No details are available yet and this will be discussed at the next QEII Management Committee meeting.

#### **Finance**

The bank reconciliation for 29th November was produced showing current account funds available of £13396.81 (this figure now includes £2500 play area funds, £1000 towards historic signpost repairs and residual precept funds required for expenditure until end April). £7586.77 held in reserves. The toilet block maintenance account is £12325.27. List of cheques issued for payment 27/09/16-28/11/16 produced.

#### Precept 2017/18

The budget estimate for the coming financial year was discussed. It was agreed that any increase should be kept as low as possible, however costs are increasing and with the continuing impact of budget cuts at County and District level additional maintenance tasks have to be undertaken by the parish. After discussion, Councillors unanimously agreed a 5% increase to cover the budget requirement giving a precept of £10830. This is an increase of £1.53 per band D equivalent household.

## **Planning**

KT reported on the following planning applications and decisions:

### Planning meeting 27 September 2016

6/13/16/106 Land at Mill Lane House, Ornott Farm, Exford. Proposed installation of a telecommunications pole and ancillary equipment as per amended plans and additional information. EPC appreciate Airband's efforts. It is refreshing to see the PC's concerns taken into account and all Councillors present supported the application. ENP approved 29/09/16.

6/13/16/110 Flat 3 Yealscombe, Yealscombe Lane, Exford. Proposed conversion of existing stable to provide living room and bedroom accommodation. The PC support this application.

ENP approved 26/10/16.

6/13/16/111B Flat 3 Yealscombe, Yealscombe Lane, Exford. The PC support this application.

ENP approved 26/10/16.

### Planning meeting 26 October 2016

6/13/16/112 Higher Thorne, Exford. Proposed agricultural building (348 sq mtrs). All Councillors present voted in favour of the application. ENP approved 17/11/16.

### Planning meeting 15 November 2016

6/13/16/113 Heather Lodge, Exford. Proposed erection of a wooden shed in existing garden to stand upon a stone slabbed patio. All Councillors present supported the application.

## Decisions

6/13/16/109. The shop known as The Farmers Den, Exford. Proposed like-for-like replacement. ENP approved 07/10/16.

6/13/16/102. White Horse Stables, Exford. Proposed conversion of first floor storage area into affordable home for local person. ENP approved 26/10/16.

## Planning Procedures

Discussion took place regarding the issues which may be considered when discussing planning applications. ME commented that it is always beneficial for applicants to attend planning meetings in order that any concerns can be addressed. It was suggested that applicants could be prompted about the planning meeting date. FN stated that this is not currently common practice among parishes however it is worth a trial. Councillors agreed unanimously to try this for a trial period of 6 months. It was also agreed unanimously that audio recording of planning meetings is not necessary as all comments made are substantiated and sent on in writing to ENPA.

## **Clerk's Report**

List of email correspondence received to date provided.

JS confirmed that she would be willing to once again arrange collection of the bags of gritting material from the depot on behalf of the village. ME thanked her and stated that these could be stored at Stockleigh Lodge until needed.

## **Public Forum**

JS raised an issue on behalf of a parishioner regarding the indiscriminate parking of vehicles on White Horse bridge and also on the pavement along there. This obstruction causes a dangerous loss of visibility on a road junction and there have been a number of complaints. It was agreed that Clerk should write to Peter and Linda Hendrie asking them to remind their customers to park safely.

**Action 9.** Clerk to send letter.

KT would like to remind parishioners that Exford School Christingle service takes place on Tuesday 13 December at 2pm. All support is welcomed.

**Meeting closed 9.55pm.**

## **ACTION POINT SUMMARY**

- 1. Leat Wall.** FN to follow up with CH.
- 2. Horse Warning Sign.** Clerk to follow up.
- 3. Raised Path.** ME to progress mini digger quote. FN to follow up repairs with CH.
- 4. Highways Course.** FN to investigate with SCC.
- 5. School Warning Sign.** FN to take forward with CH.
- 6. Highways Issues.** Clerk to write to SCC.
- 7. Village Green Maintenance.** Clerk to accept quote.
- 8. Village Green Bench.** BM and DL to progress.
- 9. White Horse Bridge Parking.** Clerk to write letter.

**Next meeting will be held on Tuesday 31st January 2017 at Exford Memorial Hall. 7.30pm (please note change of date).**

**FURTHER COPIES OF THESE MINUTES ARE AVAILABLE TO VIEW AT EXMOOR STORES AND ONLINE AT [www.exfordparishcouncil.org](http://www.exfordparishcouncil.org)**

