

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Exford Parish Council held on Tuesday 28 September 2021 at 7.30pm at Exford Memorial Hall

Attendance: Councillors Mike Ellicott (Chair), Simon Brown, Serena Colwill, Kathryn Tucker, Jenremy Hickman, SCC Cllr Frances Nicholson, SWaT Cllr Steven Pugsley, and Parish Clerk Jennifer Yates

ME opened the meeting at 7.34pm, and advised all that the meeting was recorded for the benefit of the Clerk

14.1 Apologies for Absence – Oliver Edwards (OE), Joan Atkins (JA)

14.2 Declarations of Interest – none declared

14.3 To approve the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 27th July 2021, and address any Outstanding Actions – minutes approved – proposed SB seconded KT.

Outstanding Actions;

- 1 Clerk to chase details/contact for relevant training, and Cutcombe's financial expectation for SIDS** – Clerk reported contact with Cutcombe, they are happy to lend the equipment but cannot help with training. FN advised the training needed is likely to be Chapter 8 (insurance) along with needing training using the equipment.
- 2 ME to follow up repair of weather vane** – the correct materials are still unavailable. JH suggested using a supplier in Barnstaple.
- 3 Clerk to report overgrown footpath to FN, and also check with ENPA whether they can support with clearance.** – Clerk had done so, with no response from ENPA.
- 4 Clerk to report highways safety concerns to FN and request attendance from the Highways team to address these safety issues** – Clerk had emailed the local highway department with no response received. FN requested the clerk resend the email and is aware of the delays.
- 5 ME/JY to discuss the next steps re ordering of materials for the play surface** – clerk to action
- 6 Clerk to contact Exford Facebook team re posting of relevant material** – clerk had done so and the response was that they are happy to put material up if we wish. SC will take the lead on this.
Nothing further raised re the minutes of 27th July 2021.

14.4 To receive update reports from County and District Councillors – SP reported on the Panel meeting held on 21st September. Planning for the Local Community Networks is underway in readiness for the change in council governance, particularly in relation to Highways. There is some doubt over the next steps in elections arrangements due to the short time frame. However, if unification goes ahead Parish Council and Council elections may go ahead in 2022. There needs to be a boundary review first and this could delay the process. It was suggested a precept of £1500 would be needed to cover the cost if elections do take place. Recycling collections have been disrupted due to illness within the team. SP would like to be informed should problems arise. The District Council are offering free trees, look on their website for further information.
FN reported that following on from the recent meeting in the village between representatives of the Council and the SCC Highways Team there will be further listening days arranged. She mentioned that re the unification process amendments to the unitary agreement are already proposed, particularly in the matter of boundaries, and this may delay the process. She is hoping more time may be taken to complete the review properly which would take the elections into 2023 potentially.

(SP added that this has to go to Parliament and if challenged the delay will make 2022 elections uncertain, which affects Parish Council elections).

14.5 To consider Highways Matters, and any actions required – JH reported that IDVerde have swept the streets and this had improved the presentation of the village. He felt that the meeting held with the Highways team had been very productive. He had followed up by completing the required return re Salt Bins in the parish. The drains are clear and working effectively. ME mentioned the Openreach drain is always wet and causing damage. JH has been in touch with Mr Woolcott to request his bill and this will be sent to the clerk for payment at the next meeting. JH has contacted SCC for information re access to counter readings which measure the volume of traffic and felt this would be very useful, particularly on Market day, for providing information to both the PC and SCC. SCC had responded that this could be costly, so JH proposed that someone could volunteer to physically count traffic on a market day, and FN said that this would be very useful information. Arrangements were not confirmed but JH will follow up with SCC. He has been in contact with the Market who confirmed that up to 73 sellers had attended the last market, many of whom would have arrived via Exford. Some members of the village have concerns about the debris under the bridge, and would be willing to help remove it but there are health and safety reasons why they cannot, which can result in a fine. The environment agency need to become involved. JH is concerned that flooding and damage will result if no action is taken. FN agreed that flooding ‘flashes’ take place here and a scheme needs to be in place. She is willing to take this forward. ME supported her involvement, and FN suggested that all interested parties will need to work together going forward.

14.6 Finance

- 1. To receive financial report and agree to pay amounts due** – this was approved unanimously ME proposed SC seconded.
- 2. To receive information on the AGAR report prior to publication** – ME to support clerk with this in the absence of JA.

14.7 To receive update on QEII Field and consider any actions

SB mentioned the need for the separate bank account. Clerk has started the process but the forms need charity status and details which are causing confusion. SB, KA and ME to support with this. A large funeral is to be held in the village and the QE11 will be providing overflow for this. The usage remains mainly the three user groups and the Youth Club which is well attended, now largely by younger children from both within and outside of the parish. SC is now on the Youth Club committee.

14.8 Village Green update – ME is still inspecting this on a regular basis. Again, waiting for some parts for repairs and he will recommend that the builder explores the recommended Barnstaple supplier. The triangle bench needs repairs, and ENPA are due to look at this. Dogs are an ongoing issue. SC will mention this via the village Facebook page. It can become an aggressive situation and Councillors have reported abusive situations. SB suggested signage by the play area stating that there are ‘Children at Play’ and ME has further ‘no dogs’ signs he could put up on that area.

14.9 Village Hall Donations – The PC usually makes a donation to the village hall on top of the fees for using the hall. The Hall committee are seeking to make repairs to the village hall floor, steps and boiler. The PC recognise that the Village Hall is an asset to the village. JH proposed, SC seconded and all were in favour of a donation of £1000 to be seen as a one-off payment.

14.10 Planning Report – This was accepted and signed.

14.11 To receive Clerk’s Report and consider any required actions – this was accepted

14.12 To consider emails/communications to Councillors – OE had expressed concern re the number of emails received from the clerk. The clerk assured councillors that

she only forwards what is meant to be seen by the whole council and ME suggested that Councillors use their own discretion re what they decide to read. KT is no longer receiving the weekly planning list. Clerk to contact ENPA to see if this can be arranged.

- 14.13 To discuss the Reconnecting Communities Fund opportunity** – SC is keen to access this fund and has done some research into the criteria for applications. She suggested applying under the 'be active' section which is one of the wellbeing options. She suggested applying for bike racks. She identified an area where a base is already in place where this could be sited, or alternatively near the bus shelter which may provide more security. ME suggested that the cost of a base be included in the application giving options for siting. SC will prepare the application and the clerk will submit. JH proposed that we put the Jubilee arrangements onto the next agenda.
- 14.14 To consider the Exmoor Stores Licencing Application** – this was approved unanimously
- 14.15 To consider the proposed new arrangements for local council elections** – covered in item 4 above, this item was superceded by an announcement by the government.
- 14.16 Public Forum** – JH is keen to arrange a litter pick one Sunday afternoon. SC proposed 17th October at 2pm. JH to contact IDVerde about collecting the rubbish. SC to contact B.Champion re advertising this on Facebook.
- 14.17 Items for Next Agenda** – Platinum Jubilee
- 14.18 Date and time of Next Meeting – Tuesday 25th January 2022 – 7.30pm in Exford Memorial Hall**

Action List:

- 1. Clerk to explore access to relevant training for SIDs and Chapter 8.**
- 2. Clerk to proceed with ordering of materials for the play surface.**
- 3. SC and Clerk to submit application for Reconnecting Communities Fund.**
- 4. Clerk to request weekly planning list for KT.**
- 5. ME/KA/SB/JY to complete set up of new bank account for QE11.**
- 6. Clerk to contact village hall committee to set up donation.**
- 7. JH/SC to organise litter pick.**