

Exford Parish Council
Draft Minutes of Parish Council meeting

Held on: 26th September 2017 at Exford Memorial Hall 7.30pm

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

Members of Public: Oliver Edwards, David Garbett-Edwards, Tim Greenland.

Apologies for Absence: Derek Lloyd.

Declarations of Interest: None

Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 25th July 2017

OE commented that under 'Highways' the last paragraph on page 1 should be amended to read 'It was agreed that the actual road width is adequate for the maximum width of an HGV'.

Minutes amended and then signed off.

Matters Arising

Actions from minutes of meeting held on 25th July:

1. Chibbet Drain. No response received from Highways. ME has spoken to the landowner who has agreed to try and resolve the problem when he has time.

2. Higher Mill Farm Lane/Rattle Row. ME stated that a constructive meeting was held between County Highways (CH) and interested parties on 22nd August. Suggestions were made including cutting back of the hedges, altering the camber of the road and new signage. Jo Sharp (CH) has sent illustrations of possible signs and left it to the Parish Council to make a decision in the best interests of all the residents along that road. D G-E commented that he had understood that height and width clearances would be stated on the signage and drivers need to be aware of the restrictions before entering the lane. OE stated that as long as the hedge is kept trimmed back the road is in excess of the legal height and width limits for vehicles therefore clearances are not required on the signs. ME commented that the contractor cutting back the hedges had encountered resistance from one of the landowners however this could be enforced by CH if necessary.
ME read out a letter sent on behalf of the Parish Council to CH setting out the position and including a quote from CJ Lynch to alter the camber of the road. However, the administration fees for the required road closure would be considerable, effectively doubling the cost. ME stated that a special meeting of the Parish Council should be called to discuss and enable Councillors to vote on this issue. This would give all interested parties the opportunity to attend.

Action 1. Clerk to arrange an extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council.

3. Cutting Back Vegetation (Raised Path and Speed Signs). FN commented that as the Parish Council had already had the raised path cut back she has not progressed this with CH. ME stated that it now needs trimming again. The issue of vegetation around speed signs was raised at the recent Panel Meeting, however no clear answer was received. FN has a meeting with CH tomorrow and will pursue this. FN mentioned that she will shortly be able to progress her application for work on the raised path and leat under the Small Improvement Scheme but this could take some time and also there are no guarantees that it will be accepted.
Action 2. FN to follow up vegetation issue with CH.
4. Top 5 Priorities. Confirmed to WSDC.
5. Village Green Entrance. ME reported that CH have agreed to provide and also spread scalpings when they are next working locally. OE stated that he has 2 loads of scalpings which could be used to enable the work to be done before the winter. These could be replaced by CH in due course. JA agreed to check with John Atkins when he could schedule this work.
Action 3. OE and John Atkins to liaise and also agree with Councillors how far the scalpings should be spread.
ME has also spoken to ENPA regarding the small latch gate by the village green entrance. This is frequently open as the spring closure is missing. ENPA will repair this.
6. First Aid Course. This was successfully run with a good turnout on 14th September. All defibrillator operators have attended and are now fully compliant.

Highways

JH reported that IDVerde successfully completed the village sweep last week and did a good job. Only 2 cars were not moved. He noted that the laybys have been missed and will mention this. JA mentioned that following the recent drain clearance, debris has been left piled up around the drains instead of being removed. This appears to be due to contactors not cooperating with each other. FN agreed to raise this at her meeting with CH.

ME asked if JS would once again be willing to collect winter salt bags on behalf of the village. JS agreed. Clerk will advise when the collection date is announced.

JS reported that water is again running out of the Openreach manhole cover above Court. ME noted that water appears to be draining into an Openreach manhole near Chibbet and suggested that this could be the source of the problem. JH agreed to contact Openreach again.

Village Green/Play Area

BM reported that at the end of August someone was spotted using a metal detector on the village green-digging up and replacing the turf in places. Leone Martin spoke to him clearly stating that this must not be done. By the time BM arrived he had gone.

The annual inspection of the play equipment was finally carried out, after much prompting, by Playdale on 26th September. BM met with the inspector and discussed various minor items that needed attention. The inspection report is awaited.

TG (Exmoor Trees) commented on progress of the new beech hedge. He stated that the hedge is challenged by being in a poor position. The Parish Council has recently paid a maintenance bill for the hedge which included replacing 6 beech trees and a number of spirals and missing canes. ME stated that although the Council had agreed to pay for the upkeep of the hedge, in future any replacement trees should be the responsibility of Charlotte Noel (as agreed at PC meeting 28th July 2015). BM asked that the contractors are requested to give the trees a wide berth when mowing and strimming.

Action 4. Clerk to contact Countrywide.

TG also suggested that as the hedge grows, the lower limbs of existing trees are removed to assist the hedge to thrive. ME asked TG to keep the PC advised.

JA mentioned that both the metal and wooden signs on the green at the bottom of Coombe Lane have been turned around. JH agreed to look at this.

Village Green Benches

ME commented that DL had recently very successfully arranged the replacement of a memorial bench on the village green. Unfortunately, 2 further benches both with dedication plaques are now in a poor state. Councillors agreed that when DL returns he should be asked to investigate.

QE II Field

BM reported that various members of the PC and QEII Management Committee met with Kieran Reeves (ENPA Planning Officer) on 14th August at the QEII field to discuss a long-term solution for the shipping container. TG, owner of the immediately adjacent land, was also in attendance. The proposed option is to enclose it in a wooden structure with a larger footprint to give additional storage space, as well as hiding the container. Design options and materials were discussed. There was unanimous agreement that the container can stay in position, maybe lowering it slightly so that any enclosing structure would not add significantly to the height.

BM has circulated a record of the meeting to all concerned. The key action is for Paul Jones and Will Lock (Exford Cricket Club) to produce some design proposals for the enclosing structure before the end of October. These can then be discussed and agreed ahead of submitting a planning application. TG commented on how good the QEII field is looking. BM confirmed that this is due to much continuing hard work.

Finance

The bank reconciliation for 26th September was produced showing current account funds available of £9619.82. £7588.60 is held in reserves. The toilet block maintenance account is £13521.43. List of cheques issued for payment 25/07/17-25/09/17 produced.

Planning

KT stated that there were no planning applications or decisions to report.

Clerk's Report

List of email correspondence received to date provided.

ME commented on the ENPA Partnership Plan 2018-2022 which is out for consultation until 30th October. Clerk has a hard copy for Councillors to borrow and there are open briefing sessions on 4th October at Dulverton and 10th October at Lynton. ME emphasized that this is an important document for the future of Exmoor.

Clerk has received a request from Cutcombe PC for a £25 contribution towards the annual running costs of the CCTV cameras at the Wheddon Cross junction. ME commented that this was a useful asset for the area. Contribution agreed (BM proposed KT seconded) unanimously.

JH asked whether Exford could have a CCTV system, perhaps outside The Crown. ME agreed to investigate.

Action 5. Clerk to send £25 contribution. ME to investigate CCTV.

Public Forum

TG mentioned that he had been requested by a resident of Westcott Mead to raise the issue of the masonry work needing to be repainted. ME stated that this is the responsibility of Falcon Housing and residents should put pressure on their landlords. However, the PC is happy to support the tenants of Westcott Mead as this also has an impact on the appearance of the village.

Action 6. Clerk to write to Falcon Housing.

Meeting closed 8.50 pm.

ACTION POINT SUMMARY

- 1. Extraordinary Meeting.** Clerk to organise.
- 2. Cutting Back Vegetation.** FN to follow up with CH.
- 3. Village Green Entrance.** OE and John Atkins to liaise.
- 4. Beech Hedge.** Clerk to contact Countrywide.
- 5. CCTV.** Clerk to send contribution. ME to investigate.
- 6. Westcott Mead.** Clerk to contact Falcon Housing.

Next meeting will be held on Tuesday 28th November 2017 at Exford Memorial Hall 7.30pm

FURTHER COPIES OF THESE MINUTES ARE AVAILABLE TO VIEW AT EXMOOR STORES AND ONLINE AT www.exfordparishcouncil.org

