

Exford Parish Council
Draft Minutes of Parish Council meeting

Held on: 28th March 2017 at Exford Memorial Hall 7.30pm

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

Members of Public: None

Apologies for Absence: Brian Martin

Declarations of Interest: None

Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 31st January 2017

Minutes were signed off as a true record.

Matters Arising

Actions from minutes of meeting held on 31st January:

1. Leat Wall. FN stated that she was not convinced that continued arguing with Highways would produce the required result. She suggested that she may be able to put in a request under the small improvements scheme should she be re-elected in the May elections.
2. Raised Path. County have accepted responsibility however they consider this a repair and maintenance issue not requiring any immediate action. FN also mentioned the possibility of utilising the small improvements scheme in this respect. She requested that we reiterate both issues at the next PC meeting.
Action 1. Clerk to ensure both issues are raised at next meeting.
3. School Warning Sign. After much correspondence, it appears that SCC are only prepared to do so much. FN suggested that we accept this.
4. Highways Issues. No response yet received from SCC regarding the apparent poor quality of white paint used for road markings. Councillors commented that the white lining by the bus stop and at the bottom of Coombe Lane which was done in November 2016 already needs redoing. JH agreed to check the condition of the other markings around the village and report back to FN.
Action 2. JH to progress.
5. Exford Bridge Parking. Article placed in Across Exmoor.
6. New Council Proposal. Letter of support written to WSDC. SP confirmed that the proposal is now in the hands of the Secretary of State.
7. Village Green Entrance. John Atkins has inspected the area and suggested that the driveway should be dug up and hardcore put down and rolled in.
Action 3. ME to contact Highways re obtaining scalplings.
8. Village Green Drains. ME and Chris North have dug out the pits and back filled them with hardcore (given by the ENPA depot) and the grass was then rolled back down. Councillors commented that the area now looks much better and the problem has hopefully now been resolved.
Action 4. Clerk to write letter of thanks to Chris North for his help.

9. Village Litter Pick. Successfully completed. See 'Highways' below.
10. Coombe Lane. Magna Housing confirm that following an inspection, all vegetation which they are responsible for has been cut back. Any other vegetation would be the responsibility of individual tenants.
11. Westcott Mead Bank. Now repaired.
12. Airband Coverage. See report from BM under Public Forum.

Highways

JH reported that the village litter pick on 12th March was very successful and the village now looks very tidy although litter continues to be apparently thrown from cars. He thanked all the participants, including those who pick up litter on a regular basis, and apologised for omitted some names from the article submitted to the West Somerset Free Press. JH commented that it is unfortunate that other parishes do not litter pick right up to the parish boundaries.

Following the meeting with Karin Harwood, a lot of drains in the village have been cleared.

Highways are currently doing work on the drains on the road up to Chibbet Post. JH stated that it is hoped that the completion of this work will resolve the ongoing problem with the Openreach manhole above Court. If not, he will continue to pursue this matter with Openreach.

The issue of the drain at the edge of the field on the Chibbet junction was raised. This blocks with silt and causes water problems at the road junction.

Action 5. Clerk to write to landowner requesting assistance.

JH confirmed that Idverde will be sweeping the village again next week.

Community Hospital Car Service

ME reported on this service which he has been running as coordinator for a number of years. It covers Exford and the immediate surrounding area and is registered with the local hospital and doctors. The service is much appreciated by users and provides a lifeline in such a rural area however at present it is run on an unofficial basis. ME stated that it is appropriate that this is now put on an official basis and there are funds available to do this.

ME confirmed that he would be happy to continue as coordinator, however there should be a committee in place to ensure continuity. Obtaining a grant would enable a pay as you go mobile phone to be purchased. There are 5 volunteer drivers at present but more are needed. Drivers are paid mileage by the person being transported. FN asked if placing the service on an official basis would imply that bus passes may be useable. ME stated that he had no evidence that people were unable to attend appointments due to lack of money.

Councillors voted unanimously that the Community Hospital Car Service should be set up on an official basis.

Action 6. ME to progress.

Village Green/Play Area

Village Green

ME confirmed that he has personally trimmed back the new growth on the trees on the village green. Martyn Atkins also assisted by loading up his trailer and disposing of the cuttings.

JH thanked ME and stated that it looks very good.

Action 7. Clerk to send a letter of thanks to Martyn for his help.

JH commented that the framework around the new trees is looking messy. DL offered to help with this so that the area can be cut back by the mowers. JH suggested that the base of the trees should still be protected from strimmer damage. He will speak to Exmoor Trees.

Action 8. JH and DL to progress.

Play Area

Report from BM:

Plans to replace the existing wood chip under the play equipment with granulated rubber fill are progressing. An order has been placed for 10 tonnes from Eco Chippings at a cost of £2333 (net of VAT) including delivery. Of this cost, the majority of the funds were raised from voluntary contributions. Delivery will be arranged shortly when the ground has dried out.

QE II Field

Report from BM:

There was a Youth Club working weekend maintenance session on March 4th and 5th. During the session volunteers did a deep clean of the large pavilion and painted the walls and woodwork and made good where required in the small pavilion. Brian offered a big thank you to all who took part.

Finance

The bank reconciliation for 28th March was produced showing current account funds available of £8811.14. £7588.22 is held in reserves. The toilet block maintenance account is £11908.07. List of cheques issued for payment 31/01/17-27/03/17 produced.

Planning

KT reported on the following planning applications and decisions:

Planning meeting 20 February 2017

6/13/17/101 Flat 3 Yealscombe Farm, Exford. Proposed conversion of existing stable to provide living room and bedroom accommodation. Resubmission of approved application 6/13/16/110. Exford Parish Council voted in favour of the application but expressed concerns that as these were resubmitted plans, it is not at all clear what the variations were from the original plan.

6/13/17/102LB Flat 3 Yealscombe Farm, Exford. Listed Building Consent for conversion of existing stable to provide living room and bedroom accommodation. Resubmission of approved application 6/13/16/111LB. Exford Parish Council voted to support the application but the comments were again as those mentioned above.

Thornmead, Simonsbath. Proposed change of use of small area of land to part of residential curtilage and erection of private (non commercial) dog kennels. Retrospective. Exford Parish Council voted to support the application and felt the kennels were well hidden.

Clerk's Report

List of email correspondence received to date provided.

Clerk reported that a letter has been received from Exmoor Rural Housing Network advising that the new local housing contact for Exford is Anna Fraser. She can be contacted on:

annafraserartist@googlemail.com

DL commented on the recent Public Spaces Protection Order email from WSDC and queried who would have to pay for new notices for the village green.

Public Forum

Henry Leigh Withypool Educational Trust

ME gave a brief summary of the work of this organisation for which he is Exford Parish Council's nominated trustee. The trust provides educational grants for the young people from the parish of Exford however often has a shortage of applications to consider.

ME confirmed he is happy to stand for re-election and his nomination was agreed unanimously by Councillors.

JH suggested that the Trust should be promoted on social media as a more effective way of reaching young people. ME agreed to put this forward at the next trustee meeting.

Action 9. Clerk to write to confirm ME's nomination.

Airband

BM reported that some parts of the parish not reached by the BT Openreach fibre optic network are now covered by Airband's microwave radio transmitted broadband network. This does not require a landline. As part of Airband's initiative 'Connecting the Great British Village Hall' the new superfast broadband service was installed at Exford Memorial Hall on 1st March. The installation and service are completely free and this means that the running costs of the hall have now been reduced by some £380 pa which can be invested in the ongoing maintenance of the hall. BM thanked Airband for this free community service and the Village Hall Committee hopes it will encourage more hall bookings. ME asked if Airband would extend to the QEII pavilion.

Action 10. BM to follow up with Airband.

Historic Signposts

There is now a project coordinator in place at ENPA. Discussion followed regarding the intended use of volunteers to renovate the signposts. SP stated that it is a condition of the funding package that there is community participation and also that there is research into the heritage of the signposts. It was suggested that a request is made for the coordinator to attend the next PC meeting.

Action 11. Clerk to contact ENPA.

Exford Emergency Plan

DL raised the issue of whether a plan was in place and offered to update it.

Action 12. Clerk to pass plan to DL.

Meeting closed 9.15pm.

ACTION POINT SUMMARY

- 1. Leat Wall and Raised Path.** Clerk to place on agenda at next meeting.
- 2. Highways Issues.** JH to progress.
- 3. Village Green Entrance.** ME to contact Highways re: scalplings.
- 4. Village Green Drains.** Clerk to write letter of thanks.
- 5. Chibbet Drain.** Clerk to write to landowner.
- 6. Community Hospital Car Service.** ME to progress.
- 7. Village Green.** Clerk to write letter of thanks.
- 8. Village Green Tree Framework.** JH and DL to progress.
- 9. Henry Leigh Withypool Educational Trust.** Clerk to confirm nomination.
- 10. Airband Coverage.** BM to follow up.
- 11. Historic Signposts Coordinator.** Clerk to contact ENPA.
- 12. Exford Emergency Plan.** Clerk to pass to DL.

THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING WILL BE HELD ON TUESDAY 23RD MAY 2017 AT EXFORD MEMORIAL HALL, 7PM FOLLOWED BY THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING AT 7.30PM.

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

