

EXMOOR PARISH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
Thursday 25th November 2021 7.30pm at The Old School,
Simonsbath

Present: Parish Councillors – F Schott (Chair) FS, T Gowlland TG, A Chapman AC, County Cllr: F Nicholson FN, District Cllr: S Pugsley SP, Clerk C Hornsby, Members of the public: 2 (J Wright co-opted cllr and B Tomalin new clerk)

73/21 Questions from the public: None

74/21 Apologies of Absence: none

75/21 Declarations of notifiable interest: TG - planning site notice

76/21 Approval of the Minutes of the last meeting held on 29/07/2021 These were proposed by FS and seconded by AC as a true and correct record of what took place and all agreed and the Chair signed.

77/21 Matters arising from the minutes of 29/07/2021 - none

78/21 District and County council reports

SP for District: (i) The new Somerset authority has progressed, with confirmation that SCC will be the continuing authority and the powers of the districts will be drawn in to it. If the election is in 2022 so will the parish election and the posts will be held for 5 years till 2027. It will revert back to 4 year held post at the 2027 election. If, however the election is in 2023 the parish election will be at the same time with posts being held for 4 years till 2027. SP advised the council to make sure that they have factored in possible election costs if more than five parish members wish to be councillors. He has been informed that this could cost up to £1500.00. (ii) Local community network is being set up and the pilot for Highways is being run in West Somerset. The January Exmoor Panel Meeting will talk about the initial operating model and SP said it would be helpful if a representative from Exmoor PC could attend. FN also commented on the Highways pilot scheme and is very keen for Highways to fully understand the issues that we have here on Exmoor. It will be a task to get all of the workforce working together from the same system but she has every confidence that it will be achieved. (iii) National Park Glover review's proposal of a national landscape service has been scrapped but the governance of the parks may still change which would affect Exmoor National Park. (iv) SP noted that there was a stake holder meeting on the 2nd Dec to review whether there should be a review of the Plan. Clerk to check emails to see if an invite had been sent as she was unsure if one had been received (after the meeting the clerk discovered that in fact the email had been received and had already been sent to all councillors 3 weeks earlier). FN stressed that everyone should be joining in on the review as the present system fails a lot of young people in the area who are looking to have families. It also penalised any form of 'aspiration' for families wishing to improve their lot financially. (v) Beginning of 2022 there will be the new rubbish collection with land fill being collected once every 3 weeks but lots more recycling happening every week. The rollouts in Taunton have been well received with no major concerns or problems.

79/21 Councillor Vacancy – The council had received interest from a member of the parish when the vacancy had become available but they had not been able to get two councillors to propose and 2nd them. Jill Wright was proposed at the meeting by FS, 2nd AC – all agreed. Jill duly signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and is now the 5th Councillor for Exmoor Parish Council. Jill has all the paper work and will fill in the Register of Interest form within the next 28 days. The Parish Council welcomed Jill.

80/21 Clerk Vacancy - Charlotte Hornsby had been clerk for over 5 years and had sadly handed in her notice to the Chairman on the 25th October. Notice had been posted in the parish noticeboard and the website and Beccy (Rebecca) Tomalin – present clerk of Withypool & Hawkridge PC - was the successful candidate. Hand over will be held on Monday 29th November and so this was the last meeting that Charlotte would attend as Clerk. The Chairman said he was very sorry to see her leave as she had been a great support for the chairman's role and she will be missed. He then welcomed Beccy to the council. It was agreed by the council that Beccy will be added to the parish council bank account and also it was agreed that Cllr JC should also be added. Charlotte said she had loved working with the parish council over the last 5 years and was sorry that her full-time role meant it was now difficult to fulfil her duties as clerk as she had hoped she could continue.

81/21 Planning – notification from ENPA planning department about a site visit to planning number 6/14/21/103 The Old Vicarage, on Friday, 3 December – AS to attend and clerk to notify the ENPA planning dept.

There will then follow an Authority Meeting about the planning application on Tuesday, 7 December

82/21 Finance to include: (i) Bank reconciliation £6574.06 as of 5th November (ii) Invoices authorised due to postponement of Sept Meeting: clerks pay and exp and reimbursement for gifts purchased; July, Aug and Sept 2021, £317.32 (of which £93.60 goes to HMRC) A Vigars and Partners for stone moving £84.00 (iii) Invoices for Nov meeting: None (iv) Budget for 2022 – previously circulated. It was agreed by the council that the only thing that may be an addition to the budget is the possibility of an election. There were no other factors to consider. It was agreed that the parking on the bend in the road should not incur any major expenses. (v) Precept for April 2022 – the decision was made to increase by £1000 in case the need for an election happened. It was also agreed that if this was not required then the precept would be reduced at the next budget meeting in 2022. The chairman and Clerk signed the paperwork with the precept being set at £4025.00 and the clerk will send this to SW&T DC. (vi) As mentioned in 80/21, the new clerk and also Cllr JC will be added to the banking signatory list once the November minutes have been signed at the next meeting. TG can now be added as the minutes where she was agreed to go on to the banking has now been signed and can be sent to Nat West Bank.

83/21 Highways - pot holes, road works –(i) AC has cleaned out the drain up by the Beech Park cottages on the Exford side of the village and these should now run clear.

84/21 Village parking Updates on parking in the village – meeting on 10th December at 1.30pm. Highways, ENPA, parish cllrs, county cllr, district cllr and members of the public who have raised concerns have been invited. FS noted that he may not be able to attend as he may be having an operation but will keep everyone informed. Signs for no parking had been put up on the fence by the bend by the ENPA but sadly not enough to cover the main area that keeps being parked in. People have actually moved the boulders to park there. Even families are parking on the bend and getting small children in to and out of their cars on the blind bend but when approached said it was their right to park there. Other ways of slowing traffic down were raised with a ‘solid wall’ effect being put in place at each entrance to the village, with 30 mile an hour signs in place. Double yellow lines were mentioned and 30 in white paint on the actual road. Offers of more boulders have come from a local resident to fill in the gaps that have been created. A bank and the boulders sunk in was another option that was mentioned. The council will meet again once the Highways meeting of the 10th Dec has happened.

85/21 Parish Maintenance - (i) the tree that has fallen down by West Cottages and has taken the road with it, has barriers around it which were assumed was an action by highways. FS to talk to local land owner to see if they own the tree. (ii) AC also noted that damage had been caused to the pavement where ENPA had been removing the large tree trunks just down from the Beech Park cottages. The equipment that was secured to the road by jacks had actually caused deep holes to be created due to the weight of the trees. The clerk will notify the park and ask them to put it right.

86/21 Correspondence - none

87/21 Report from Simonsbath & Exmoor Heritage Trust - The hand over from ENPA to the S&EHT was a lovely event and now the trust is taking several bookings for the venue. Plans are underway to raise money for the kitchen and toilet to be added. SP thanked FS for his hard work on getting the running of the venue underway by taking bookings and organising policies.

88/21 Chairman’s Notices - A leaving doo for the clerk and also ex cllr Alan Vigars, who left in July, to be arranged.

89/21 Items for next Agenda

90/21 Date and time of next meeting: TBC for 27th Jan 2022