

EXTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 9th May 2022 in Bridgetown Village Hall at 7:30pm.

Present: Mr Robert Takle (acting chair), Mr Doug Sherring, Mr Steve Rowe, Mr Colin Rawle, Ms Janette Webber, Ms Tonia Matthews, PCSO Michelle Haines and Mr Andrew Moore (Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer).

Apologies: Mr Guy Thomas-Everard

Minutes of the Parish Meeting of 7th June 2021: Having been posted on the Notice Boards and the website after the meeting, all present agreed that they did not need to be read out and were unanimously approved.

Matters Arising: There were no matters arising not otherwise covered in the Chairman's Report.

Chairman's Report: In the absence of Mr Guy Thomas-Everard, Mr Robert Takle reported on his behalf.

After the difficulties of 2020 and 2021 I am pleased to report that the Parish Council met five times. Three Planning Applications were reviewed and all were supported.

As in previous years speeding continued to be an issue but due to restrictions less monitoring could take place. However, due to a lack of volunteers the monitoring has recently been suspended. The Parish Council had supported a successful bid by the Village Hall Committee to the Somerset Climate Emergency Fund for the funding of solar panels. However, after a further review by the Village Hall Committee it was decided that the grant would not be taken up because installation and running costs would not prove a sufficient saving.

The Parish Council website became operational in March 2021 and Minutes and Agendas are placed on it as well as on the two Village Notice Boards

The Parish Council has continued to be kept informed on the progress of the Bomber Memorial on the hill above the Badgers Holt by David Lungley who is managing the project. The Parish Council received a donation of £500 towards the Memorial from relatives of the deceased crew in 2020 and passed this through to the stone mason in 2021. A further donation of £130 has been received in 2021 which will be paid over this year. The track to the Memorial site has been cleared back by the Park Ranger. It had been hoped to dedicate the Memorial in January but this has had to be delayed due to the availability of senior RAF personnel.

The Bridgetown Sewage Works was a matter of concern to residents throughout the year with regard to smells and heavy lorry movements in the early hours of the morning. It has proved difficult to get any response from South West Water and this has now been taken forward by District Councillor Steven Pugsley and the local MP.

The Parish Council has been kept informed of the changes that will be made as Somerset moves to a single Authority but remains concerned that such an Authority will be too remote in terms of day-to-day contact. However, the proposal for Exmoor to have more direct involvement with Highways via a Local Community Network may prove a benefit.

I would like to close by thanking the Parish Councillors for their work on your behalf over the last year. Three of whom Valerie Carveth Doug Sherring and Joshua Thorne have not sought re-election. The Parish Council hopes that they can still rely on their advice and knowledge of the Parish in the future.

Responsible Financial Officer Report:

Mr Moore reported that the Parish Precept had been unchanged at £4064 since April 2019. The Parish received £130 as a donation to the costs of the Stirling Bomber Memorial and a further £247 VAT Refund relating to monies spent in the previous year for the Website Design and Production. Overall the total funds available were £4441. The Parish Council spent £4348 resulting in a surplus of £93 of which £130 was represented by the donation for the Bomber Memorial which would be spent this year. The Parish Council used the donation of £500 in March 2020 as a contribution to the stone mason's costs of the Memorial. Both the Clerk's salary and the cost of Parish Lengthsman remained unchanged at £1622 and £964 respectively. There was a full year cost of £442 for maintenance and security of the Website and this will be a recurrent charge.

Question and Answer Session with PCSO Michelle Haines:

Michelle explained that she had been transferred to Exmoor in January of this year and would be taking over from Brian Stevens on his retirement in July. She noted the concerns about speeding through Bridgetown and would contact the Road Safety Officer and the Speed Enforcement Office to see if they could offer any help. Michelle explained that she worked closely with the Exmoor Rangers and the Exmoor Crime Panel and was organising signs for footpaths warning about sheep worrying and poaching. Monthly neighbourhood meetings were being held at Brompton Regis, Cutcombe and Dulverton where security advice was available along with cycle marking and offered to do something similar for the Parish. The Chairman thanked Michelle for attending the meeting.

Any Other Business:

There was none.

The meeting closed at 7:45pm