

EXTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 22nd May 2023 in Bridgetown Village Hall at 7:00pm.

Present: Mr Guy Thomas-Everard (Chair), Mr Robert Takle, Mr Steve Rowe, Ms Janette Webber, Ms Tonia Matthews, Andrew Moore (Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer), Ms Jennifer Yates and Mr Roger Foxwell.

Apologies: Mr Paul Matthews

Minutes of the Parish Meeting of 9th May 2022: 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: Mr Guy Thomas-Everard welcomed everyone to the meeting. He reported that the newly elected Parish Council had first met on 9th May 2022 and had welcomed Colin Rawle and Tonia Matthews as new councillors. Three councillors Doug Sherring, Joshua Thorne and Val Carveth did not stand for re-election and he thanked them for their efforts over the years. There is still one vacancy and if anyone is interested in taking this up please contact either himself or any councillors.

The Parish Council met a total of six times during the year. Four Planning Applications were considered and no objections were raised.

The Bomber Memorial on the hill above the Badgers Holt has still not received official dedication due to the lack of availability of senior RAF personnel. The Parish Council is now no longer holding any funds in respect of the Memorial but will continue to follow its progress.

The Bridgetown Sewage Works continued to be 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.

The Parish Council has been kept informed of the changes that will be made as Somerset moved to a single Authority by Councillors Frances Nicholson and Steven Pugsley. The Exmoor and Dulverton Local Community Network is being held up as an exemplar of how the Unitary Authority will relate to local concerns. The LCN has particularly focussed on Highways issues and how the Highways Steward relates to the Parish Lengthsman. Janette Webber has agreed to act as the Parish Council representative on the LCN Steering Group which is replacing the Exmoor Panel.

I would like to close by thanking the Parish Councillors and the Clerk for their work on your behalf over the last year.

Responsible Financial Officer Report:

Mr Moore reported that for the first time since April 2019 the Parish Council had requested an increase in its annual Precept from £4,064 to £4,200. This was to reflect the full year costs of the Council website. Overall income for the year was £4,381 comprising the Precept, the refund of VAT incurred in the previous year, interest and a further donation received in respect of the Bomber Memorial. Overall expenditure was £4,342 compared with £4,347 in the previous year. The main items of expenditure were as follows: The Parish Lengthsman £1,017, Clerk £1,622, the website £495

and office expenses of £457. Overall there was a small surplus of £39 compared with £94 in the previous year. Detailed Accounts can be found on the website and will also be on the Notice Board with all the appropriate Statutory Returns. I am pleased to report that the Councillors having considered the forecast costs for 2023-24 have requested that the Precept be unchanged for the current year.

Question and Answer Session:

There were no questions raised.

Any Other Business:

Mr Roger Foxwell asked if Exton would be prepared to nominate him as one of the five Parish representatives from Devon and Somerset to sit on the Exmoor National Park Governing Body. He had attended many meetings as a member of the public in the past and believed he could represent the Exmoor Parishes. The Councillors agreed to consider this at their following Council Meeting and let him know before the deadline of Thursday 25th May.

The meeting closed at 7:28pm