

AXMOUTH PARISH COUNCIL

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The Annual Parish Meeting of Axmouth Parish Council was held on Wednesday 25th April, 2012 at 7.00pm in Axmouth Village Hall

Minutes

Those present

Cllr Carol Rapley (Chairman)	Cllr Paul Britton	Cllr Crescy Cannan
Cllr Alan Harrison	Cllr Irene Harrison	Cllr Keith Lawes
Cllr Emily McIvor	Cllr Ken Steven	Cllr Morag Steven
Carol Miltenburg (Clerk & secretary)		3 members of the public

The Councillors were summoned to discuss the following items.

1. Apologies were received from Cllr Knight (DCC), Cllr Thomas (EDDC) and PC Speariett
2. The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 13th April 2011 were confirmed and signed.
3. Matters arising from 2011 meeting.
No matters were raised.
4. Chairmans Report – Cllr Carol Rapley presented her report.

The year from April 2011 to March 2012 has been exceptionally busy for the Parish Council, not only with the increase in matters directly affecting the village but also the greater workload being passed down to us from national, county and district government level. This has inevitably created much extra work for the Clerk and for the individual Councillors who voluntarily give up their time to attend numerous meetings to represent the village and co-ordinate the projects presently going on. As a result, Carol Miltenburg, our Clerk has decided to resign and we would like to thank her for her hard work over the past 6 years.

Local Plan Consultation

Parish councillors have attended meetings and responded to consultation from EDDC on the Local Plan, throughout the last year to ensure that Axmouth Parish is fairly represented with regard to affordable housing needs and transport improvements in the forthcoming years. Currently EDDC's programme leads to the Local Plan being adopted in early 2013.

Neighbourhood Plan - The parish council have registered their wish to produce a neighbourhood plan which will help ensure that proposals for our parish are considered in the future. Currently, funding for these plans is limited and the best way forward for a small parish like Axmouth may be to produce a collective plan with neighbouring parishes, although this has yet to be agreed.

Traffic issues

The early part of the year was spent dealing with the implications of the new supermarket in Seaton. Councillors liaised with the building contractors, EDDC planning officers and DCC highways concerning the over sized loads of building equipment going to and from the

construction site. Agreement was reached that HGV's avoided busy times in the village; abnormal loads were programmed and escorted and a daily list of loads and times were provided for our notice boards around the Village and our website. As a result, very few problems were incurred with abnormal loads as they passed through the village. The scheme was so successful it is now being used as the template by the contractors for other communities.

Several schemes to control traffic through the village have been designed and discussed over the past years and for various reasons rejected by DCC's HATOC committee. Funding from Cllr Knight's locality budget over the past 2 years enabled the parish council to fund a traffic study for the village. The item was reported to HATOC at their meeting in March 2012. Although the scheme details have yet to be agreed, a pot of funding for 2012/13 has been set aside to implement a scheme in the village when it has received approval. Many thanks are due to those residents who participated in counting traffic in November 2011 and March 2012. This data has been given to DCC highways who have found it very useful.

Viewing Platform

The Council has designed a walkway leading to a new viewing platform to be located adjacent to Coronation Corner at the estuary end of the SWW plant. This will provide greater public access to the stunning views over the Axe Estuary. Funding has been secured from the 'Investing in Devon (airport money)' Devon County Council and from the Davis family as a memorial to their parents, Audrey and Graham Davis who lived in Axmouth for many years. Further grants have been secured from Axe Vale & District Conservation Society and Devon Bird watching and Preservation Society of £600 and £800 respectively. This funding has been ring fenced for an interpretation panel for the platform. It is planned for work to commence in May 2012 and the platform should hopefully be complete by Jubilee day. We hope that it will become an attraction to encourage visitors to the village and benefit all the residents.

Burial ground

Sites for a new burial ground are still being considered by the Council. It is hoped to finalise this over the next year. Funds are allocated annually towards the purchase and enclosing of a new site, currently £8300. Fundraising by Carol Smith and the PCC has also been placed in this fund for landscaping.

Telephone Box

The Council has procured the redundant village telephone box from BT. With help from suggestions from residents we are now considering the various uses it can be put to good use.

Parish Plan

Following the completion of the Parish Plan, the Council are actively involved with the various committees that were established to help achieve the numerous objectives listed in the Plan. The Council continues to work with outside organisations to look for funding to allow us to reach these village objectives. Some of the plans are very ambitious but are achievable in the long term.

The Walking Group

The walking group has produced a new visitor information leaflet with grants from the East Devon AONB and our County Councillor. The leaflet has been distributed locally and has received excellent feedback.

A proposal for a number of circular walks is being developed by this group. With the help and support of a DCC rights of way officer, it is hoped that a new circular estuary walk can be put in place. The first stage will be to link Coronation Corner to the existing footpath across the field at Boshill and on to Cownhayne Lane.

Playground Committee

The parish council thank the previous playground committee who have done an excellent job maintaining and improving the playground equipment through fundraising. The new committee, led by Judith Simpson, is currently being established and we wish them well and will continue to support them financially.

Grants

The Council has continued to support Village organisations by providing grants to maintain the churchyard and burial ground, the cost of electricity for the nativity and Christmas tree and funding towards clearing the brook for the annual duck race.

Dog mess

The Council are working with the local Dog Warden to reduce the problem of mess on the outlying footpaths.

Best Kept Village

The village came second in the new entrant section of the MVF/CPRE Best Kept Village in Devon competition. This year the competition will be stiffer as we are against previous winners.

Precept

Regrettably, the precept has had to be increased by £400 this year to £6,700. This has been forced upon us as the Parish Council must pay for the maintenance of the brook, which the County Council has previously funded. However the Council's finances are on a sound footing with a forecast reserve of about £2,400.

We are proud to represent our small, vibrant village and look forward to serving the residents through the next year including supporting the Jubilee Celebration Day in June.

5. Ward Officer's Report – PC Steve Speariett

Due to stricter shift patterns PC Speariett was unable to attend. He had, however, given a report at the Council's previous meeting. Cllr Rapley read a summary of this report where he noted there has been a downward trend in crime over the past few years, with no offences at all recorded to date in 2012. Last year there were 5 thefts (including from motor vehicles), 1 caravan theft (on-going enquiry), 1 vehicle theft (vehicle not recovered) and 1 vehicle theft (later found burnt out).

6. District Councillor's Report – Cllr Ian Thomas

Cllr Thomas was unable to attend as he was at another meeting out of the area. Cllr Rapley gave an update on some of the main issues he has been dealing with over the past year, such as the campaign to improve broadband in the area and the positive impact this will have on the local economy. On behalf of the Parish Council Cllr Rapley thanked him for his help over the past year especially with the traffic implications of the Tesco project in Seaton.

7. County Councillor's report – Cllr Jim Knight

Cllr Knight was also unable to attend as he was at another meeting on Council business. Cllr Rapley also thanked him for all the help he has given in obtaining grants and funding for various projects within Axmouth such as the viewing platform and traffic schemes. She gave a brief outline of the issues Devon County Council have been facing which he advised at our April meeting.

Cllr Knight noted that the County Council is starting its final year with elections due in 2013. He confirmed that the Axmouth traffic mitigation scheme has had money set aside for it by DCC and that Stepps Lane would have a new surface (tar & chips) from Stepps Cross to Dowlands. The surplus from the Local Project scheme would be rolled forward to 2012/3 and he asked that the Parishes that had schemes accepted this year did not apply in the new year as he wanted all his parishes to benefit from the scheme. The Council unanimously agreed. The Council will again have £1000 to spend from his Locality Budget. He advised that the Council about the new funding scheme whereby £1.10 per elector is supplied by DCC & EDDC. This will be administered by EDDC but schemes must benefit more than one Council, have match funding and the money must be spent by December 2012.

8. Questions and comments from the public
A question was asked about the incoming Neighbourhood Plans and how they differed from the Parish Plan recently undertaken. Cllr Rapley gave a brief outline that they are likely to be much more expensive than Parish Plans, due to this we will have to work with other local Parishes to produce one and at present there is little or no funding available.
A further question was asked concerning the traffic surveys being undertaken. Cllr Rapley outlined the traffic counting that has been undertaken and how the data from this will be used by DCC Highways. She also explained the proposed traffic scheme that in Church St DCC Highways are designing. Further speed checks in the area will take place shortly.
9. Date of Next Annual Parish Meeting – April 2013 - TBA

The meeting finished at 7.35pm