



AXMOUTH PARISH COUNCIL

CLERK:
ANDY COMERFORD
EYRE COURT HOTEL
2 QUEENS STREET
EX12 2NY
Tel no: 07895 910543

A meeting of Axmouth Parish Council was held on Wednesday 22nd May 2024, at 7pm at Axmouth Village Hall.

Those present:

Cllr Daniel, Cllr Drown, Cllr Condron, Cllr McBride, Cllr Garrett.

In attendance:

Andy Comerford (Clerk), Cllr Hall, Cllr Wiseman and Mr Loveridge.

1. Election of Chairman

- a) Cllr Daniel elected as Chairman.
- b) To receive the Declaration of Acceptance of Office by the Chairman. Signed and received.

2. Election of Vice Chairman

- c) Cllr Condron elected as Vice-Chairman.

3. To receive and acknowledge apologies.

Cllr Zisman (prior commitment), Cllr Staff (unwell).

The Clerk declared the meeting to be quorate.

4 Declaration of Interests: In accordance with the Code of Conduct, members are invited to declare any personal or disclosable pecuniary interests, including the nature and extent of such interests they may have, in items to be considered at this meeting. Members are also reminded that any change to their Declaration of Interests must be notified to the Monitoring Officer at East Devon District Council within 28 days of the change

No declarations.

5 Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 17th April 2024 to be approved. (circulated).

Approved and signed by Cllr Daniel.



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6 To agree any items to be discussed after the public, including the press have, been excluded:

None present.

7. Public Forum

Mr G Loveridge had some questions but they were included on the agenda.

8. Highway Matters:

a) Hedge cutting Kemps Lane and general.

Cllr Daniel brought to Cllr Hall's attention a number of potholes in Kemps Lane that seemed to fall short of the current criteria for repair and confirmed that Mr Loveridge had taken them up with Highways. Mr Loveridge asked if Cllr Hall could comment on when the definition of a pothole had been changed. Mr Loveridge added that 2 inspectors had been to look at the damage and they did not agree on what defines a pothole and DCC seemed to have different definitions to most of the country. Cllr Hall replied that he could not disagree with Mr Loveridge over the change of criteria and definitions. He further commented that it was very frustrating and that he was continually challenging Highways as to why it was becoming more difficult to report and resolve potholes. Cllr Hall said that there had been some success with the development of a recycled tyre mix that is cheaper and more effective than the current repair method and additional funding was due. Cllr Hall will speak with the Highways officer to inspect Kemps Lane. Cllr Condron asked why Devon had different criteria for potholes than the rest of the UK. Cllr Hall replied that it was, in part, due to Devon having the largest road network in the country.

b) HGV traffic through the village.

The Clerk had been in contact with Dave Ashford from Highways to ask when the B3172 from Axmouth Bridge to Boshill junction was last inspected, what was the result of the inspection and when the next inspection was due. Mr Ashford responded:

"Hi Andy

I've had a reply already and that is as shown below:

1. Last inspected on the 9th of May 2024 – started at Axminster Bridge (Seaton) and concluded at Boshill.
2. One defect was recorded. This was D243858381. It's a 300mm x 100mm pothole that was risked 3/3 and therefore will be repaired within 28 days.
3. The route is on 1 monthly regime so will next be checked in June.

The system will only show if defects are present or not and reports can only be generated where there are defects. In this case the report shows that one single defect.

Regards

Dave"



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The Clerk also asked Mr Ashford specifically about the manhole cover outside the Harbour Inn and The culvert by the Entrance to Stedcombe House. Mr Ashford responded:

“ This was raised at the beginning of the year and was inspected by myself, with no issue being identified where action would be taken by the LHA.

I attach the email traffic FYI between myself and Ian Hall which I’m sure was relayed to the parish.

The area around Stedcombe House has also been investigated in the past. If there was an issue, the Safety Inspectors would pick this up.

Best Regards

Dave Ashford”

Cllr Drown raised the Parish Councils concerns of the unsuitability of the road for HGV traffic. Cllr Hall replied that, unfortunately, in the Councils view there was not a more suitable route that could be used with all other routes in to Seaton effecting many more households than the B3712. Cllr Hall agreed to take this back again to Highways, asking for an inspection of the inside of the manhole rather than a visual surface check and to mention that the Parish Council were considering have their own survey undertaken.

c) Damage sustained to kerb side steel posts alongside the brook in Chapel St.

Cllr Daniel reported that a high level of agricultural traffic squeezing past parked cars had caused damage to the brookside posts in Chapel St. This has happened before and the posts had been reinstated. Mr Loveridge said that the posts had been inspected but the Inspectors view was that they were still fixed in the ground and continued to do the job they were put in for. The Inspector also commented that he could not take any action unless there was some photographic evidence as to the culprit. Cllr Hall agreed that without evidence it would not be pursued. For the same reasons Cllr Daniel said it would not be correct for the PC to pursue an individual. There was discussion about a blanket letter to all residents through the Parish News.

9. To set future meeting dates until the next Annual Council Meeting:

The Clerk proposal to continue with the 3rd Wednesday of each month excluding August and December. This was agreed. Dates would be booked and published to the web site.

10. To agree outside body representation:

The Following representatives were agreed:

Footpath Warden (P3 Co-ordinator)	Cllr Daniels
Highways Group	Cllr McBride,
Jurassic Coast Champion	Cllr Drown,
Community Safety Group	Cllr Garrett,
Seaton Beach Management Plan Group	Cllr Daniel.

Clerk to inform Cllrs’ McBride, Drown and Garrett on the respective responsibilities.



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11. Review of Internal Control and GDPR procedures:

- a) Standing Orders
- b) Financial Regulations
- c) Fixed Asset Register
- d) Risk Register
- e) Statement of Internal Controls
- f) Policy on Filming & Recording Parish Council Meetings
- g) Privacy Notice
- h) Councillor Privacy Policy
- i) Information & Data Protection Policy
- j) Management of Transferable Data Policy
- k) Press & Media Policy
- l) Social Media Policy
- m) Document Retention & Disposal Policy
- n) Disciplinary Policy
- o) Grievance Policy
- p) Complaints Procedure
- q) Publication Scheme
- r) Training Policy
- s) Grant Awarding Policy.

All re-adopted for the next term.

12. Review Fixed Assets Responsibilities:

The Asset list was reviewed and responsibilities re allocated as appropriate. It was unclear as to whether the mower, stored in Cllr Drown's barn, was working. Mr Loveridge agreed to investigate. It was agreed that the Strimmer should be removed from the list as this was shared and located with Seaton Town Council. New list to be circulated to responsible Councillors.

Cllr Drown said she had agreed to investigate a new Notice board but on reflection she now believed that the existing one could be repaired. Cllr Daniel agreed to look at the Notice Board with Mr Loveridge to decide if repairing was the best option. Cllr Condon reported that the bus stop roof adjacent to the Notice Board needed repairing and that he would approach a contact to cost the project and see if he would effect a repair to the Notice Board free of charge.



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13. Financial Matters:

- a) To approve the financial statements to the end April 2024. (Circulated). Approved.
- b) To agree the subscriptions, DD's and SO's for the next year

Direct Debit	ICO	Data Protection Fee	35.00*	Annual
Debit Card		Microsoft Office 365 Subscription	79.99*	Annual
BACS	DALC	Membership	142.26*	Annual
BACS	SLCC	Membership	120.00*	Annual
BACS		Parish Online Membership	30.00*	Annual
STO		A Comerford Salary	431.74*	Monthly
BACS		McFee Membership	199.99*	Next due 2026

All approved

- c) To approve the following payments:
 - 1) Blaze Concepts, £121.68. approved.

14. Planning.

None received.

15. Playground.

- a) Update,
The Clerk was pleased to report that Cllr Garrett had been successful in closing the Associations bank account at Lloyds and the funds had been received into the Councils Earmarked Account.
Cllr Condron said that it had been difficult to co-ordinate a meeting but the next meeting had been arranged for 12th June 24.
The Clerk reported that the Playground Committee information was now available on the Council website. As was the Village Hall Committee.
- b) To agree Terms of Reference of the Playground Committee. Approved.

16. Street Lighting.

The Clerk reported that he had tried to contact Andy Ware form the Street Lighting team but he was away on vacation until the 28th May.



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17. Ownership of Estuary Bank.

The Clerk reported that he had spoken with The Land Registry Office and an ownership enquiry would cost £38. This was approved.

18. Poster on Estuary Corner

A request from Mr Shaun Cassidy Harbour Inn, requesting permission for a small advertising board on Coronation Corner circulated to all Councillors.

After some discussion it was agreed that The Council did not think this was an appropriate use of the area, they didn't want to set a precedent for the future and by granting permission for this one it would then be difficult to refuse other requests. There was also an issue over road safety with drivers possibly being distracted on a difficult part of the road. The Clerk will e-mail Mr Cassidy to let him know the decision.

19. Reports:

- i. District Councillor. Cllr Sue Westerman reported that a new Chief Executive Officer had been appointed and had been very impressive in her first 6 months. The District Council had been working with SWW and it had been agreed that there would be much more joint consultation particularly over new building developments.
- ii. County Councillor Report:

A few 'big ticket' items in this month's report which might not obviously be related have a common theme of Devon County Council working with many other stake holders to provide the best services and best value it can deliver to all residents in Devon

DCC to receive additional funds to support households struggling with higher energy and food costs
Citizens Advice is reporting that average energy costs are as high as last winter for many households, and that despite energy prices falling this month, around 5.3 million people are currently living in households in debt to their energy supplier.

So, it is welcome news that we are able to confirm that Devon County Council have been allocated a little over £5 million from the government to help households struggling to pay higher bills for energy, food, water, and other essential items.

This will be the fifth round of Household Support Funding received from the Department for Work and Pensions, to run between April and September 2024. It will take Devon's total level of Household Support Funding received so far to just over £30 million.

The funding is to support households in most need, but specifically those that may not be eligible for other support that is already available from the government.



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Plans must be submitted by mid-May to the Department of Work and Pensions, setting out how DCC, with Devon's District, City and Borough councils and other voluntary and community partners, will make the latest funding available.

Plans are likely to include:

- A specific funding allocation to support families in receipt of Free School Meals, to provide food vouchers that can be exchanged at supermarkets to buy food during school holidays. 21,700 children in Devon were eligible for free school meal vouchers during the last holidays
- Some funding will also go to provide financial support for food, energy and other essentials to eligible low-income households with children and young people, through the County Council's Early Help service
- Team Devon's District/City/Borough councils will plan to continue helping households that are in greatest financial need and struggling to pay for food, energy and other related essentials. They will publicise further details soon, once plans have been finalised
- Citizens Advice Devon will continue to receive funding to support households that are using pre-payment and credit meters, to help with energy costs
- Devon Community Foundation will deploy funds to voluntary and community organisations that support specific groups who may struggle to access the help and support they need

Devon and Torbay Devolution Deal – Combined County Authority

The proposed deal will transfer significant decision-making powers and funding from Whitehall to Devon and Torbay, so that important decisions on local priorities, such as jobs and skills, housing, and the environment, can be made locally.

Following a wide-ranging consultation, the proposal itself was met with a wide range of views both for and against, although unanimous support is not a prerequisite to moving forward.

One thing is clear; The 'deal' may have Devon County and Torbay Councils' signatures on the paperwork, but for devolution to work well for the one million or so residents across Devon and Torbay, the task in hand will require all levels of local government across the two areas – County and Unitary, City, District and Borough, and Town and Parish councils – to work much more closely together.

It will also need the strong influence of advisory groups comprising experts in local industry and the voluntary sector, and geographically representing all parts of Devon and Torbay, working with the Devon and Torbay CCA.



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The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act as passed by Parliament makes county and unitary councils responsible for leading Combined County Authorities. The responsibility for leading this CCA therefore falls to democratically led representatives from Devon County Council and Torbay Council.

However, it is 'critically important' that Devon's District councils have a voice in the Devon and Torbay CCA, and the ability to influence its work.

It is proposed that Devon's City, District and Borough councils, the Devon Association of Local Councils representing Devon's Town and Parish Councils, the County Council and the two National Park Authorities, will all sit as part of a formal 'Team Devon' Joint Committee to offer its collective voice in the CCA.

District councils and housing associations will also work with Torbay Council's housing function and the CCA to accelerate delivery of more housing across Devon and Torbay.

District councils will also be involved in the formation of a joint strategic transport plan for Devon and Torbay so that land-use and housing plan areas align to transport plans and sustainable transport options.

In addition, advisory groups comprising representatives with experience and expertise in given fields, e.g. health, housing or climate change, will have a role in providing formal advice to the CCA. As will the voluntary sector and social enterprise organisations, that will need to work closely with the CCA, making sure that decision-makers are responding to local interests and addressing local priorities.

Through Local Skills Improvement Plans, the proposed CCA will work with business and education leaders to create a stronger, joined-up relationship between employers and schools, colleges and universities to provide the skilled workforce the local economy needs for the future.

iii. Parish Councillors report:

Cllr Condron raised an issue with the bus shelter by the notice board and suggested that he would get some quotes for repair. This was agreed that this should go ahead as quickly as possible as it did pose some risk if not properly repaired.

Cllr Drown asked if there had been any progress with the power supply. The Clerk responded that he had now written twice without response and had now sent an e-mail to follow up.

iv. Clerks report: No report.

Date of the next Parish Council Meeting: 19.06.2024

Signed *N Daniel* Date 19/6/2024

Meeting closed 8.30pm.