



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 21st May 2025 at 6.30pm in Axmouth Village Hall.

Those present:

Cllr Daniel, Cllr Condon, Cllr Zisman and Cllr McBride.

In attendance:

Andy Comerford (Clerk), Cllr Westerman (EDDC), Cllr Hayward (DDC), Mr W. Lucas.
Mr G Loveridge (arrived at 7pm).

The Clerk declared the meeting to be quorate.

1. Election of Chairman:

Cllr N Daniel, proposed by Cllr Zisman, seconded by Cllr Condon. All in favour.

2. Election of Vice Chairman:

Cllr Condon, proposed by Cllr Zisman, seconded by Cllr Daniel. All in favour.

3. Co-option of new council member:

3 members of the Parish had been put forward as prospective council members. Mr W Lucas, Mrs K Preston and Mr S Prosser. Mrs Preston and Mr Prosser were unavailable for this meeting and would attend the next one.

The co-option of Mr W Lucas to Axmouth Parish Council was proposed by Cllr Daniel and seconded by Cllr Condon. All in favour.

Commencement of Ordinary Council Meeting:

4. To receive and acknowledge apologies:

Cllr Drown (Vacation) and Cllr Staff (Work commitment).

Email: clerk@axmouth.eastdevon.gov.uk



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5. Declaration of Interests:

None received.

6. Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on the 16th April 2025 to be approved:

Approved and signed by Cllr Daniel

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

No exclusions.

8. Public Forum.

None in attendance.

9. Highway matters.

a) Traffic signage in the village.

The clerk reported that the response had only just been sent and no response had been received. Cllr Condron clarified that Mr Ashford had been contacted again to clarify his response to this councils enquiry and asking if there was anything that specifically precludes Highways from providing signage to indicate traffic calming or change in road conditions ahead. Cllr Haywood reported that he had recently held an introductory meeting with Mr Ashford to discuss, in general terms, issues that were being put forward to him. He explained that a new cabinet member for highways would be in place from tomorrow. Cllr Hayward will meet with the new cabinet member to discuss all the outstanding issues presented to him from the Parish Councils he represents and ask how they could be fixed. Mr Ashford told Cllr Hayward that Highways were concerned with signage proliferation. Cllr Hayward also thought that budgets were very tight and questioned whether it was permissible for the Parish to fund its own signage. Mr Ashford said this would be considered on a case by case basis. Cllr Howard will keep pressing for signage.

b) Aldi HGV transport.

Concerning the HGV issues in Axmouth Cllr Hayward said he had written to the Traffic Commissioner in Bristol and asked for copies of correspondence with Aldi to help pursue the case for Axmouth. Mr Ashford had commented to Cllr Hayward that HGV traffic impacted fewer residents than if it were to use Harepath Road for access to Seaton. Cllr Hayward asked what the policy decision was for this issue and will continue to take this forward as well. Cllr Zisman commented that the prevailing conditions in Axmouth, no pavements, residents having to step out onto the road and proximity of housing to road edge with no pavements made this a dangerous option where Harepath Road was wide enough for 2 HGV's to pass in opposite directions and a pavement running the full length of the road.



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Cllr Hayward said he was in agreement but wondered if Axmouth received deliveries from HGVs and questioned the weight limit on the road and sign location could be an issue as HGV drivers needed to have to be able to take corrective action after they had seen the sign. Cllr Hayward suggested that the Parish consider adopting the "20 is plenty" initiative as a policy. Cllr Zisman thanked Cllr Hayward for his support. There was discussion on types and placement of signage and which direction of travel would be prioritised.

c) Dip in Road midway in Stepps Lane

Cllr Drown reported (via e-mail) that there was a substantial dip in the road that had appeared quite suddenly that could have been caused by erosion and or heavy agricultural traffic. The clerk said he did not have enough information to report it to Highways, Cllr Condron agreed to take some photographs and forward them with a location to the clerk. Cllr Daniel reported that there was a similar situation at the top of the lane which he was monitoring and would report if it became necessary.

10 To set future meeting dates until the next Annual Meeting.

The Clerk proposed continuing with meetings to be held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month with the exclusion of August and December. Agreed.

The Clerk proposed changing the start time from 7pm to 6.30pm. Agreed

11. To agree outside body representation:

Current representatives

Footpath Warden (P3 Co-ordinator)	Cllr Daniel
Seaton Beach Management Plan Group	Cllr Daniel
Axmouth Playground.	Cllr Condron & Cllr Drown
Emergency Planning	Cllr Daniel
Village Hall Committee	

All agreed to continue with representation. Village Hall representative to be considered at the next meeting.

12. 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



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- 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 adopted without change. All policies would be reviewed by the Clerk over the next year.

13. Review of fixed assets responsibilities.

No changes to responsibilities.

14. Financial Matters:

- a) To approve the financial statements to the end April 2025. Agreed.
- b) To agree the subscriptions, DD's and SO's for the next year. Agreed
- c) To consider grant application from Axmouth PCC for support for magazine production. Agreed.
- d) To consider grant application from Axmouth PCC for support for graveyard maintenance. Agreed.
- e) To approve the following payments:
 - i. Bradfords £33.25. Agreed.

Additional payments may arise for payment at the meeting

15. Planning Applications

- a) 25/1024/FUL 3 Brook Terrace. No objections.

Cllr Zisman commented that he was concerned that planning for a large housing development had been passed for what he understood to be protected lane between Seaton and Colyford and thought comments from Axmouth should have been invited. The clerk said it had been under consideration for some time and public meetings had been held to discuss the project. Cllr Zisman thought there should be a system to inform the Parish Council about applications that may have an effect on the parish. Cllr Daniel suggested that the clerk could monitor planning meeting agendas and notify councillors should anything that may effect he Parish is listed.



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Cllr Zisman also commented that we didn't receive notification of the results of applications from the Axmouth Parish and wondered if there was any mechanism that could be put into place to rectify this. Cllr Hayward said there was a tagging system that would inform the Clerk of any progress with a plan. The clerk agreed to tag future applications and report any notifications to the councillors.

Cllr Zisman raised a further issue with a recent application (2/0742FUL) that had been considered by The Council and a decision of "No objections" had been submitted with no adverse comments having been registered by any other party. A late objection was then registered by a neighbour but there was no opportunity for reconsideration by the council. Cllr Zisman was concerned that there was no mechanism for the Council to pick up on a very well considered and presented objection and review its decision in the light of changing information. Cllr Hayward commented that this was a situation of pre-determination, the Council had considered the application on the merits that were available at that time. If the application had been tagged notification of the new information would have been sent and the Council could convene an EGM to reconsider the application if it was considered necessary. The Council could then rescind its original comment and submit a new one on the basis of the new information. Cllr Hayward added that the Council could still submit a comment if a decision had not been made and the deadline had been passed.

No further progress.

16. Graveyard. Nothing to report.

17. Footpath

- a) Cllr Daniel reported that there had been no development with the new footpath proposal. Cllr Zisman said, as a neighbouring land owner he would approach the new owners to see if it was still a viable project. Cllr Daniel and Cllr Zisman briefly described the project to the new Councillors.
- b) Cllr Drown reported (via e-mail) that the footpath from Stepps Lane, across the field to the coast path was currently unusable as the land owner had planted rape seed across it. Cllr Daniel reported that it had subsequently been sprayed with weedkiller and this was a usual occurrence with this path.

18. Dog Bin.

Cllr Condon reported that the current thinking was to supply a single bin with a lid for bagged dog waste. It had been a fruitless search to find a suitable bin. Currently the bin in Chapel Street is completely full and dog waste bags are hanging over the sides of the bin. **Action:** Clerk to confirm costs for supplying and emptying a bespoke dog waste bin from EDDC.

Cllr Daniel also reported that footpath 4 may not be owned by the PC as was understood. This will need investigating.



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19. Grit Bin

On order, nothing further to report.

20. Bus Stop

Cllr Daniel reported that only one contractor was now willing to give a quote as Mr Morgan had declined and that the Council should confirm the task with Mr S Bolt as the remaining contractor. Cllr Condon reported that Mr Bolt would not be available until the autumn and material costs could have increased by then. It was agreed that a budget should be set based on the original quotation with an additional allowance for price increases. Cllr Daniel and Cllr Condon agreed to carry out some temporary repair work to keep the shelter as functional as possible until then. Cllr Condon agreed to get a written quotation from Mr Bond. The decision to go ahead will be taken at the next meeting.

21. Reports

a) District Councillor report:

Cllr Hayward said that he has been asking all his Parish and Town Councils to move the County Councillor reports to the beginning of the Public Forum in the future.

In terms of the New Council Cllr Hayward said that the first meeting was tomorrow and 80% of the attendees would be new to the role and many had never served on any councils before and the learning curve would be huge including getting to grips with all the procedural information. There are 2 main parties within the council so the constitution for the Council is out of date having been written with a Conservative party and a Labour Party in view and neither are now not as well represented. There is now a core but not majority of Liberal Democrats along with an Independent group and a Reform group. A challenge to all the parties would be the allocating members to over 100 committees. Cllr Hayward further reported that he had been asked to sit on the footpath committee, and could help with the parish footpath project, The Child Scrutiny Comm, Audit Comm, Highways and Traffic Orders committee. Cllr Hayward was going to have to start from scratch as it was unlikely that he would be able to have a handover with Mr I Hall and if any help or guidance was required Cllr Hayward would be pleased to help and can be e-mailed directly.

The locality grant had re-opened in May. Cllr Hayward had reviewed the last 8 years of allocations to try and make sure that, going forward, every community has a fair share and can access the various schemes.



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The Finance presentation had just been given. Devon had avoided borrowing to fund its capital programme by using its reserves but the reserves had now, effectively, run out. This resulted in a lessening of earned interest, effectively the funds are borrowed and paid back over 50 years. It is currently costing Devon £60,000 per week to service its debts and does not include the Social Care debt which is separately ring fenced. The devolution of Devon County may change everything that has gone before and has basically been thrown in the air. On the 15th of May Jim McMahon MP, in response to Devons rather disjointed approach to devolution with 9 different options put forward, stated that by the time it got to November he wanted one option that was agreed by all. At the moment no one agrees, Plymouth want to go it alone by stealing some of the South Hams, Exeter wants to include some of Newton Abbot, some of Tiverton, all of Exmouth and Cranbrook and the Airport. Effectively all the areas that made money. This would leave the rural Community, some seaside and Market towns that would be unable to afford supply the services that would need to be supplied by a unitary authority. The cat is really amongst the pigeons in terms of devolution and now is the time for the Town and Parish Councils to consider what the effect will be on their budgets in 3 years and the effects of a new super authority that won't be interested in what happens to the local services. Cllr Zisman thanked Cllr Hayward for his presentation being a breath of fresh air and that he was looking forward to working with him.

b) County Councillor report:

Cllr Westerman reported that Parishes have the opportunity to report on any broadband issues they may have that will then be taken into consideration when the plan going forward was considered. Cllr Lucas reported that he had seen an e-mail requesting information from the public concerning broadband and the lack of quality generally to the service into the parish. After some discussion it was agreed that Cllr Condron would collate and submit responses from the parish. Cllr Hayward added that it was important that this survey was well responded to as it would form the evidential argument for an improved service being supplied to Devon. The deadline for submitting was the 6th June 25 2025. Cllr Westerman reported that the AGM for the Council was held last week. Cllr Arnott remained as Council Leader Cllr Rynance was Chair.

Cllr Hayward further reported that the East Devon had received £250,000 and it had been decided to use this as another Carbon Action Fund and the Village Hall Committee should look into applying to that for quite large capital sums such as solar panels, heat pumps and battery storage which were being considered to make the building more energy efficient and less reliant on carbon rich fuels.



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c) Parish Councillor reports.

Cllr Daniel reported tha the village clean up had been highly successful in no small art due to Cllr Condrons organisational skill. It produced a record number of helpers. We are also very grateful to the Ship for providing the helpers with lunch,.

d) Clerks Report. None given

22. To accept any relevant correspondence. None received.

Date of the next Parish Council Meeting: 6.30pm on Wednesday 18th June 2025

Signed _____ Date _____

Meeting closed 8.05pm.