

EXBOURNE WITH JACOBSTOWE PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 24th September 2019
at 8:00pm in the Village Hall, Exbourne

Councillors Present: Steve Blakeman (Chair), Adam Hedley (Vice Chair), John Guy, Ulrik Lawson, Brian Cobb, Dave Stuart and Borough Councillor Lois Samuel

In Attendance: Zena Tett (Clerk) 2 and members of the public

58. Welcome

Cllr Blakeman, Chairman of the Parish Council welcomed everyone to the meeting.

59. Apologies for Absence

There were none.

60. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 27th August 2019 were agreed and signed as a true record: proposed by Cllr Guy, seconded by Cllr Stuart, all in favour.

Cllr Blakeman announced Peter O'Connor has resigned from the Parish Council and the Clerk was asked to prepare a notice advertising a vacancy and to contact WDBC. **Action Clerk**

61. Declarations of Interest

There were none at this time.

62. Public Speaking Time

62.1 A member of the public asked if she could obtain a key for the notice board to enable her to put up agenda and minutes from the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) meetings. Cllr Hedley said he would arrange for a copy to be made. **Action Cllr Hedley**

63. Borough Councillor Report

Borough Councillor Lois Samuel reported she had recently been asked by the Local Government agency to sit on their Stronger, Safer Communities board for the coming year. She felt it to be an honour to have the opportunity to sit on a national board on behalf of West Devon. She then explained that, in her Council role, she and the Leader have set the Chief Executive some objectives that they believe need to be concentrated on in the coming year. Some of these areas are :-

Improving customer experience

Increased focus on community, place and climate

Delivering a balanced budget

They will be meeting with the Chief Executive every quarter to see how she is getting on with the targets they have set.

Last week the Chief Executive appointed a new Senior Leadership Team which comprises the Chief Executive and four directors. The directors will cover customer service and delivery, place and enterprise, finance, governance and assurance.

The Council last week reviewed the medium-term financial strategy. They are currently showing a budget gap over the next year of £380,000 and over the next 5 years a budget gap of £1.24m. They are continually looking at how they can close the budget gap, including looking at their assets and how they can maximise these and increase their income via their commercial property. The Government have announced that the negative revenue support grant for 19/20 of £293,000 was eliminated but there has been no further news. WDBC will lobby the Government about this.

New homes bonus is still unknown after 19/20, but any news on this will be reported.

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Cllr Lois Samuel reported that both she and Cllr Ratcliffe have been asked if they can assist the Exbourne Neighbourhood Plan by chairing their meetings, which they have agreed to do until Christmas. She is looking forward to chairing this meeting tomorrow.

64. **Matters Arising**

64.1 Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Hedley explained that the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) Group had decided it would be beneficial to find someone neutral to chair meetings and thanked Cllrs Samuel and Ratcliffe for agreeing to take on the role. He reported that the NP Group have now reviewed policy intents for the NP and they are now in a position to start drafting policies. There are two big outstanding areas: housing and natural environment. In respect of housing, the Group is seeking technical support in connection with site assessments and an objective assessment of need. They have made an application to Locality and are waiting to find whether it has been successful. To support natural environment policies, the Group are looking into the possibility of carrying out a local landscape character assessment. They have asked consultants to quote for this and their preferred consultant is a Devon firm who gave a £3,000 quote. The two questions the NP Group need to answer at their next meeting is whether a local character assessment is worthwhile and how they are going to fund it.

64.2 Maintenance of Parish Assets

Cllr Blakeman reported no change, deferred to the next meeting.

64.3 Devon Air Ambulance

Cllr Blakeman reported that costings still need to be obtained for electrics and that he is still awaiting soak away tests, however, the planning application is close to being submitted and he hopes to have figures for the next meeting of the Parish Council. **Action Cllr Blakeman**

64.4 Projector

The Clerk advised that Sampford Courtney had purchased a standard projector which they felt was only adequate for their needs. The Clerk is looking for other Parishes to collaborate on buying a better projector to make it more affordable. She is also looking at opportunities for grants. Councillors discussed this option but unanimously agreed they would prefer to purchase their own projector. The Clerk was asked to find out how much Sampford Courtney paid and what type of projector they have. Cllr Hedley suggested the Council purchases a projector that had been recommended for the task to a previous Councillor at an estimated cost of £250 excluding VAT. Cllr Guy proposed the Parish Council purchase a projector at a cost no more than £250, seconded by Cllr Cobb, all in favour. **Action Clerk and Cllr Hedley**

64.5 Village Hall Funding

The Council again discussed the possibility of helping to fund the Village Hall's insurance each year. Cllr Hedley had re-visited the budget and confirmed there was £1,000 in the budget this year for local grants, however, the Parish Council had already gifted the Village Hall £300 towards electrics earlier this year, leaving £700 for other causes. Parish Councillors decided to put this item on the Agenda for the November meeting and to agree then whether or not the precept should be raised to help fund the future insurance costs of the Village Hall. **Action Clerk**

64.6 Queens Memorial

This item is now closed.

64.7 Road Closure

This item is now closed.

65. **New Items**

65.1 Code of Conduct

At the last meeting, Cllr O'Connor made a statement about a personal planning application before the matter was discussed by the Parish Council but whilst seated at the Parish Council meeting table. Some Councillors at that meeting were uncomfortable with this. It was agreed that any Councillor with a pecuniary interest in a matter being discussed should only have been able to address Council as a member of the public and should be seated with the public when doing this. Cllr Hedley explained that the NP Group has asked for clarification from WDBC legal department as to whether recent guidance they had received meant a Parish Councillor with a pecuniary interest in a matter being discussed should not be able to speak a Parish Council meeting at all. **Action Cllr Hedley**

65.2 Dog Fouling

There have been complaints by residents that dog owners are hanging dog "poo

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bags" from hedges and Cllr Blakeman advised Councillors that on Exmoor the policy was to use the "stick and flick" method. Councillors agreed to adopt this method on roads outside of the 30mph zone and the Clerk was asked to look into producing notices. **Action Clerk.**

66. Planning

66.1 Additional Applications

Cllr Blakeman read out a letter from a parishioner who was concerned about the comments made by the Parish Council on the recent planning application behind the Red Lion (2505/19/PIP). Cllr Hedley declared an interest at this time and left the meeting. Cllr Lawson proposed that the Parish Council should write to WDBC stating the Parish Council had considered the comments made by the parishioner and that they share this view and wish to further object on the basis that the roadway would remove some potential for an extension of the pub in the future should that be needed to make the pub more viable. This comment was seconded by Cllr Cobb, four in favour, one abstention. **Action Clerk**
Cllr Hedley re-joined the meeting.

67. Clerks Report

67.1 Correspondence

The correspondence listed below was reviewed and any comments were noted.

67.1.1 Okehampton District Community Transport Group: newsletter

67.1.2 CPRE Devon: Planning Workshop for Town and Parish Councils

67.1.3 The Mayor of West Devon: invite to the Chairman

67.2 Register of Interests

The Clerk was asked to forward the relevant forms to Cllr Lawson. **Action Clerk**

68. Councillors Reports and Items for Future Agenda

68.1 There were none.

69. Finance

69.1 The following payments were agreed: proposed by Cllr Cobb, seconded by Cllr Hedley, all in favour. **Action Clerk**

69.1.1 Clerks Expenses £30.50

69.1.2 Clerks Salary £634.20

69.1.3 DALC: Councillors Course £36.00

69.2 Bank Balance Review

The balance in the Parish Council Account on 5th September 2019 was £14,298.77. There are outstanding transactions which include the second precept instalment of £2,613.00 and cheques, together with those listed above, which have yet to be presented which amount to £806.70, giving the parish an actual balance of ££16,105.07 once these payments have gone through.

70. Date of Next Meeting: Councillors confirmed the next meeting of the Council will take place on Tuesday 29th October 2019 in the The Vestry, Jacobstowe at 8pm.

With no further business, the meeting closed at 9:30pm

SIGNED AS A TRUE RECORD:  (Chair)

NAME: STEPHEN BLAKEMAN DATE: 29 OCTOBER 2019