

AYLESBEARE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of Aylesbeare Parish Council held at Aylesbeare Village Hall on **Wednesday 1st May 2024** at 7:15pm.

PRESENT

Cllr Nick Warren (Chair)
Cllr Mark Branson (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Tracie Cooke
Cllr Anna Thompson

ABSENT

Cllr Debbie Banks
Cllr Jacky Owen

IN ATTENDANCE:

County & District Cllr Jess Bailey
Jim Roberts (Clerk & RFO),
Eight members of the public

2024 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

1 Reports from the Parish Groups

1.1 Flower & Produce Report

Thanks and well done to everyone who took part in last years show, particularly the judges and the children - hope you enjoyed the auction.

Date for 2024 is Saturday Sept 7th

Watch out for the schedule of classes and entry form, which will as usual be online or on paper.

No charge to enter. Remember there are classes for craft, photography, cookery, flower arrangements, houseplants etc as well as the usual classes for growing flowers, fruit and vegetables. Plus of course classes for children to enter. The group is also organising the annual outing which this year is to Dyrham Park on Friday 14th June and spaces are still available.

The group also enjoyed taking part in the Church window display events for the Coronation and at Christmas.

Thanks to everyone who works so hard to make this event happen, and happy gardening. *[One member of the public left at 6:54pm]*

1.2 Aylesbeare Village Hall

For dull details of the last 12 months and future plans please refer to the Village Hall Trust's AGM on Weds 8th May. A sohort summary was given by a trustee:

- Some interior decoration has taken place in the past year.
- The new storage heaters were used over the winter from November to March which has significantly helped the fabric of the building.
- Private hires have been down recently, as have business hires. The committee is actively seeking ways to increase uses of the hall by all types of hirers.
- EDDC Planning consent for a nursery was granted.
- During 2024 the committee plans to refurbish the toilet wing.

1.3 Sewing Group

- We are still meeting once a fortnight on a Wednesday afternoon.
- As with most of the groups we need more support from the people of the village.
- We have 10 people that come regularly from as far afield as 2 from Exeter, 2 from Ottery, 1 from Farringdon, and then on occasion 4 from Aylesbeare, but most meetings there are only 6 of us.
- We welcome anyone who would like to come and join us, male or female
- We are very informal group, My un-picker is my favourite tool.

1.4 Community Fund

The Aylesbeare Community Fund was created back in 2006. It is completely separate from any other organisation in the Parish

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Chair
Initials

The aim was to have a Bank Account accessible to anyone who was raising money within the Village, to save the rigmarole of opening new accounts and going through the Bank process of I.D etc

Once any money was raised it would be up to the person raising the funds, to say how that money would be distributed.

At the moment there is a balance of £732.95.

Unfortunately the Chairman of the Community Fund (Norman Alison) has recently passed away.

I am asking if the Village is happy for me with the rest of the Community Fund Committee, to find a new Chairman and perhaps find a new committee to take over the running of the Community Fund.

I will need to have all this in place before the 24th of June Otherwise the Bank will close the Account.

1.5 Aylesbeare Community Events

ACE now has a group of 12 volunteers and has supported Easter activities and church events this last 12 months.

The volunteers have all agreed to create a schedule of activities so there is something happening every month, using the hall or the church, to bring community together.

More volunteers are welcome to help with both at these events & with organisation.

The events will cover both adults and children and will raise funds for the year. These will be split between the village groups.

1.6 St Mary's Church Parochial Church Council & Save Our Church

It has been an eventful year for Aylesbeare's Medieval church. The lychgate has been repaired and will complete when the bespoke ridge tiles arrive and are fitted. Many thanks to the Friends of St Mary's who made this possible.

Alas, huge structural problems have been identified with the floor of the nave collapsed, new drainage to solve the water issues and the bell structure is failing.

Once a French drain has been placed around 3 sides of the church it will take about 2 years to dry out properly. Specialists will be needed, including archaeologists with the total bill being about £500,000. It already costs £200/week to run the church and there will be no financial assistance from the Church of England. The PCC & the Parish have to raise all the funds and C of E policy is that a flexible, sustainable community hub must be provided.

Fundraising has already started and Save Our Church has a meeting on 24th June.

There will be lots of activity over the coming months; come and help if you can.

1.7 Country Dancing

We have had a very difficult two terms but have managed to continue. Last November my husband, who was the dance caller and ran the club suddenly passed away. The members between them managed to carry on but it has been difficult.

Hopefully, I have a lady who has shown interest in running the club. In anticipation I have booked the Autumn term at the hall and hope we can continue as a club. After about 25 years we hope we will not have to disband. Thank you to the Hall committee for all their help & support over the years. New members of all ages are welcome.

1.8 Women's Institute

I am pleased to say that our membership has grown to 24, with 4 new members having joined us over the past year.

We have enjoyed a variety of speakers, on subjects such as Life on an Orkeny Island, Underwear through the Ages, Travelling though the Balkans, Lady Emma Hamilton, The Jurassic Coast, and Wellbeing. Also a variety of social times at each meeting have included quizzes, Coronation memories and Desert Island Disc choices. There was also a special evening when we celebrated our 80th Birthday in July last year.

In addition to our monthly meetings we have met up with other WIs in our group and taken part in some County events. A team took part in the Devon

..... Chair Initials

County WI quiz and this year we were lucky to win it! Not so lucky at the Hospiscare Quiz at West Hill. There have also been a number of coffee mornings and tea afternoons at members' homes, a Christmas lunch at the Nightjar and regular meetings of our Reading Group.

In the village we have participated in a number of events, the dedication of the Foxwell Room at the VH, the Christmas and the Coronation window displays at the church. We have a full programme lined up for the next year to look forward to, which will include a Craft Day for which we have been awarded a bursary.

1.9 Topics

Following consultation with the Parish of Aylesbeare, the result was a majority support for the continuation of a printed Topics, following the practice in neighbouring villages. Topics has always welcomed new contributors and I have put effort into trying to attract new advertisers. The trend is for new businesses to the area to advertise for a short period to raise their profile. We all appreciate that new businesses face many costs, so this is not a criticism.

Topics continues to be available for the whole Village and there is an open invitation to all to write an article, promote an event or send in a photograph .

I am most grateful to the Parish Council for their essential financial support, without which we will not survive, and to the contributions made by the promoters of village events e.g. Bingo.

Finally, Topics would not exist without our wonderful team of deliverers, now organised by Joan Rowles.

[Three members of the public left at 7:16pm]

1.10 Spring Clean (Keep Britain Tidy) Additional written report

The organiser was grateful for the thanks from the Chairman to all those who volunteered for the Spring Clean fortnight in March. Posters displayed around the village and the pub led to a good turnout and she was proud of the work of the volunteers who made the event possible. Hopefully everyone enjoyed the results.

2 Review of the year from the Chairman, Cllr Nick Warren

The Chairman reported the following:

Thank you for all your reports and I wish all groups a successful year. This will be my last as chair as announced at the last Parish council meeting, I am stepping down as Chair, due to personal reasons, but will remain a councillor. This will be my 4th Annual Parish report and looking back it starts with this meeting being held via Zoom due to Covid restrictions where has the time gone!

We welcome our new Councillor Debbie Banks who unfortunately due to work commitments cannot be with us tonight. We thank Councillor Banks for volunteering and being co-opted, following Cllr Kirsty Trude stepping down. This now brings the council up to full strength adding to our strength of debates.

The Centenary of this building we are in Aylesbeare's Village Hall was successfully celebrated with various events during the past 12months. The Village Hall has continued receiving new investment with the opening of the Foxwell Room and we must thank the Committee especially the Chair Andrew Bennett for their hard work as you heard in the VH report just now.

As you are aware by now our Parish Church needs a great deal of TLC and the Parochial Church Council have been & are continuing to be hard at work arranging fund raising events. Congratulations and big thank you to the PCC for arranging these events especially the Christmas window displays which drew in the crowds.

Aylesbeare Community Events (ACE) headed up by Kirsty Trude and her helpers continue in their good works arranging village events such as the Easter Trail & Coffee mornings to bring the community together.

Just recently Ann & Mary Turl have stood down organising the distribution and delivery of Topics and we thank both ladies for all their good work in doing this and welcome Joan Rowles who has taken on this vital roll and our continued thanks to the delivery people and not forgetting Fiona Incoll in her role as editor in Chief. Thank you very much one and all.

..... Chair Initials

Many thanks go's Nicky & Will Thomas & Penny Roberts for running the "Aylesbeare Buzz" Facebook page which has proved its worth sharing information and helping to keep the village connected.

Parish Council Meetings continue to be held on the first Wednesday of the month in the village hall all our welcome to come and speak at the open forum and stay and observe the council at work.

The council continues to look for willing volunteers to help us fulfil our obligations and this does not mean being a councillor one such position if anybody is interested is that of Footpath warden, no special skills are required and training is given please speak to one of us or Jim, our Parish Clerk.

Footpath 17. The section of footpath that runs alongside the stream from RandleHayes Farm to top of Minchin Lane has had its wooden bank replaced in its entirety due to the old rotting away.

Planning. The council continues to scrutinise planning application approx. 26 this year and appreciate the input from all.

The Government says EDDC must deliver 918 homes a year. This means the new Local Plan needs to identify land for more than 6,900 additional homes. This is in addition to those already planned for, like at Cranbrook and developments expected to come forward by 2040. EDDC new draft Local plan includes a new town situated near Westpoint close to Clyst St Mary and Farringdon in the East. It will be positioned between Exter Airport and Crealy Theme Park and have approx. 8,000 homes by 2040.

They have been no changes in land offered for development around the village and which can be viewed on the Parish Council website at present 9 sites have been put forward with 133 houses. EDDC or DDC have excluded a number as "not being achievable."

[Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment - East Devon](#)

Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) for new & Existing sites are to be consulted on in the forthcoming Draft Local Plan Further Consultation in May 2024.

Just to pick out a few notable applications:

- The application for siting 40 self-storage containers at Martins Gate, (opposite the petrol station on the Exeter Road)which the council objected to has been turned down by EDDC & the Planning Inspectorate after an appeal.
- The Solar Farm that has been proposed in Marsh Green called Ford Oaks was rejected by EDDC councillors however an appeal was made that has been passed by the planning inspectorate.
- There are 3 fields along Rag Lane in our parish that will be affected, and the transport plan is to use Marwood Lane & Quarter Mile Lane to bring equipment in returning via Westcott to their storage site off the Marlborough round about.
- Barton farm will be redeveloped into 7 new properties which is putting a brown field site to good use.

Playground Equipment.

Looking back at my report from 4 years ago where I was reporting that the new play equipment had been chosen and we were waiting for final EDDC sign off well finally they have!! The lease is now with land registry awaiting them to go through the formalities! However Back in November/December 2023, delayed by the weather, the new equipment was finally installed. The Council thanks Cllr Jess Bailey for helping to push EDDC to finally react!!

Neighbourhood Plan, after being stalled for a while Cllr Mark Branson is reviewing EDDC comments after a pre-submission review and hoping we can submit this to EDDC for final commenting before going back to the Parish for final approval.

We must thank for organiser of the **Aylesbeare Flower and Produce** Show in September last year, 2023, which was held at the village hall and grounds and was well attend both by competitors and guests. Hope everyone has started early, despite chilly wet weather for this year's competition as advertised in Topics.

Aylesbeare Village Fete. In my 2021 report I sadly reported that it was last held in 2019 but on the 16 May there is a meeting here, at 1945, asking for

..... Chair Initials

volunteers to come forward and make it happen this year. Many thanks to Kim Brown for this.

Broadband. Airband, as contracted by Connect Devon & Somerset is a local government-led partnership have been busy in the Parish installing Fibre infrastructure but as yet no date has been given when this will go live.

Roads. This exceptionally wet weather is showing how in recent years the roads and drains etc. have been poorly maintained and the importance of reporting problems before they damage vehicles etc. DCC Cllr Jess Baily reported in Aprils Parish meeting that spending per year has dropped by £40m since 2012-2013.

If you have any problems, please contact the parish council, or to report potholes, flooding, footpath problems please use the Devon County Council reporting site web address: <https://www.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/>

Do not forget to include photographs as evidence.

Litter Pick Many thanks to all Parishioners who when out walking pick up all sorts of items. Please remember to do this safely. Do not hesitate to contact the Parish council or EDDC street clean to report fly tipping etc. streetscene@eastdevon.gov.uk 01395 517528.

Flooding. Following on from the roads this exceptionally wet winter has highlighted the on-going issue of flooding which is likely to keep recurring on a more frequent basis compounded by lack of ditch maintenance. The council **strongly urges** all domestic and landowners that have ditches running adjacent or through their properties to keep them clear, especially in way of culverts passing under drives etc. The council has a stock of bags, for filling with soil, which can be delivered quickly in an emergency. Please remember **ALERT** (Aylesbeare Local Emergency Reponses Team) with Cllr Anna Thompson co-ordinating matters. This still up and running and details can be found on the Parish Website. Should anyone need assistance.

Following on from last year's flooding caused by the sewers backing up during heavy rain in way of Church Close this has hopefully been resolved by Southwest Water clearing the pipes and carrying out work on the collection point under the road at the junction of Church Close & Village Way.

In addition, as you are all aware the water companies are coming under tremendous pressure to sort out the treatment of wastewater. Last year The River Trust installed monitors down stream of Aylesbeare's waste treatment plant, located on the Aylesbeare Brook, off Within Lane. It was sad to report that in 2022, a very dry year, the monitors detected 65 overflow spills, totalling 561,10 hours and 2023 it was even worse having spilled 136 times for a total of 1,355.27 hours discharging into the Aylesbeare Brook which is just a 100% increase!

Southwest Water has as you may have seen installed a new attenuation tank which hopefully will absorb the extra flow when it rains hard and allow this to be treated correctly during the dry spills with the results, we hope, that no spills will be occurring. This investment will also allow for further development in the village as the treatment plant should be able to cope. But the council will continue to watch the results The River Trusts map that monitors spills.

The Oak Tree that was planted in the Recreation Ground to commemorate the Platinum Jubilee of her Majesty Queen Elizabeth in 2022 continues to grow with a little TLC during the summer's hot weather and we thank those that cared for the tree.

Finally following the Post Box pole failure at the Corner of Village Way & Blind Lane the Royal Mail installed a new one after many, many months of badgering the Royal Mail to do so.

Finally, I would like to say thank-you for the support that I have received as Chair from our Clerk, Jim Roberts, fellow Councillors and our one-stop EDDC & DCC Councillor Jess Bailey. Thank you!

The Vice-Chairman offered a vote of thanks for all of Cllr Warren's hard work. He rejected that he had taken up the Chairmanship at a difficult time and steadily guided the Council through some choppy waters as well as enthusiastically and wisely leading the projects. He wished Nick all the very best and was very pleased that he would be staying on as a Councillor. The sentiments were unanimously agreed by all Cllrs.

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Chair
Initials

3 Questions to the Chairman from the public

A speaker raised the following points:

- The website still had an advert for a councillor vacancy. The clerk will update the website for with Cllr Banks' details.
- Thanks to the young Duke of Edinburgh volunteer who has done a really great job cleaning the road signs and tidying part of the village. Council agreed
- Thanks to Kirsty Trude for organising the Play Area refurbishment.
- The bridge area is an eyesore – needs tidying. It spoils the rest of the village
- What's the future of the Telephone Box? Council will ask for an update.
- What's the future of the Nightjar?
- There will hopefully be a vicar appointed in the summer for the 7 White Mission Churches including ours.

2024 ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING

1 Election of Chair

Council **ELECTED** Cllr Anna Thompson as Chair.

2 Apologies

Cllr Banks had sent apologies as she is working and Cllr Cooke is away. Council **RESOLVED** to accept the reasons given.

3 Election of Vice-Chair and Allocation of Roles

Council **ELECTED** Cllr Mark Branson as Vice-Chairman.

[1 member of the public left at 7:52pm]

4 Councillor Administration

There were no changes to Registers of Interests.

4.1 Cllrs Branson and Warren will continue to act as Trustees for the VH committee. The Chair will step down after several years as an ex-officio trustee. Cllr Owen volunteered to be the third trustees.

4.2 Noticeboards

Councillors confirmed they would continue to post notices to save the clerk time.

4.3 Emails

Cllrs completed their authorisations for use of their contact information.

5 Review of Council Orders and Policies

Council approved and adopted the following policies:

[Aylesbeare Parish Council Standing Orders](#)

[Aylesbeare Parish Council Members' Code of Conduct](#)

[Internal Control Statement](#)

[Financial Regulations](#)

[Grievance Procedure](#)

[Complaints Procedure](#)

[Unacceptable Actions Policy](#)

The clerk was asked to amend the terminology from Chairman to Chair.

6 Financial Arrangements

6.1 Bank incl, Cheque Signatories

Council **RESOLVED** to continue banking with NatWest. Cllr Warren has successfully added 2 cheque signatories and will add the other two in due

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Chair
Initials

course. He had also removed all previous signatories who were lingering on the account.

6.2 Purchase Threshold for Three Quotes

Council **RESOLVED** to set the level at £1000 as the threshold above which three quotes must be sought for any expenditure.

6.3 Pension Payments

Council **NOTED** that the clerk has to pay the Pension Fund contributions in advance of Council meetings and then be reimbursed. This is because the pension provider is required by their regulator to receive all payments by the 7th of the month following the month in which the pay is earned. As payments are made by cheque this was rarely achieved before the system changed.

7 Risk Management

Council **RESOLVED** to adopt the Risk Assessment document as presented.

8 Dates and Times of Meetings

Council **RESOLVED** to hold meetings on the following dates:

7:15pm Weds 5 th June 2024	7:15pm Weds 8 th January 2025
7:15pm Weds 3 rd July 2024	7:15pm Weds 5 th February 2025
7:15pm Weds 4 th Sept 2024	7:15pm Weds 5 th March 2025
7:15pm Weds 2 nd October 2024	7:15pm Weds 2 nd April 2025
7:15pm Weds 6 th November 2024	6:45pm Weds 7 th May 2025
7:15pm Weds 4 th December 2024	

9 Public Open Session

A member of the public raised the issue of the increasing level of the Precept and she hoped that this will not become a habit. She perceived that savings could be made by putting Topics online for those who indicated they wanted it. Clerk will investigate with the Editor of Topics publishing the magazine online.

The Nightjar will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

10 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interests in any items on the agenda.

11 Minutes

Council **RESOLVED** to approve the meeting minutes of 10th April 2024 as a true and correct record. The Chair duly signed them.

12 Report of the District & County Councillor

C & D Cllr Jess Bailey reported:

DCC had an Extraordinary Meeting to discuss the new combined authority entity above DCC but C & D Cllr Bailey sees it as a waste of money and the seat allocation made no sense given the relative populations of the authorities. The new funding this body would receive is not even half the amount currently spent on roads.

Potters planning application decision is expected soon and Great Halls application has been refused.

C & D Cllr Bailey reminded the meeting that her Locality Budget is available for help with small items of expenditure.

13 Noticeboards

Council **RESOLVED** to keep all the noticeboards (Blind Lane/Village Way, Church Close, Perkin's Village & Withen Lane) and discussed replacing the 3 smaller boards.

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Chair
Initials

Council asked Cllr Warren to get binding quotes for green, aluminium signs with Header Boards and carriage.

14 Planning 24/0696/AGR Land off Withen Lane Agricultural building

Council **RESOLVED** to make the following comments:

Aylesbeare Parish Council supports this application and suggests that the Planners impose a condition that the entrance to the field is surfaced with a hard, permeable material to ensure hardcore and mud aren't deposited on the road.

15 Topics Newsletter

Council **RESOLVED** to donate £550 to Topics.

[C/Cllr Bailey left 9:05pm]

16 Accounts and Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)

16.1 Accounts for 2023-24

Council **RESOLVED** to approve the Accounts for 2023-24 and the Chair duly signed them.

16.2 AGAR Internal Audit

Council **RESOLVED** to receive and note the Internal Audit.

16.3 AGAR Governance

Council **RESOLVED** to approve the Annual Governance Statement and the Chair duly signed the completed form.

16.4 AGAR Accounting

Council **RESOLVED** to approve the Annual Accounting Statement and the Chair duly signed the completed form.

16.5 Notice of Public Rights

Council **NOTED** that the period for the exercise of public rights will be Monday 10th June to Friday 19th July 2024.

17 Finance

17.1 Current balances

Council **NOTED** the current balance of £ **8,091.21**

17.2 Payments

Council **RESOLVED** to make the following payments:

17.2.1 The Play Inspection Company Ltd	Inspection invoice 68176	£	177.00
17.2.2 J P Roberts - clerk pay, (April)	£ 284.63		
Reimbursements: Pension payment for April	£ 91.47		
VH Internet Jurassic Fibre (8 th April 2024)	£ 17.50	£	393.60
17.2.3 HMRC (clerk's PAYE Income Tax for April)		£	68.00

18 Next Meeting - Wednesday 5th June 2024

The Vice-Chairman led the Councillors repeating their thanks to Cllr Warren for all his efforts as Chairman and Cllr Thompson for taking over as Chair.

There being no other business the Chair closed the meeting at 9:19pm thanking everyone for all their hard work.

Signed Date
Cllr M R Branson, Vice-Chair