

## BEER ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The Annual Parish Meeting was held on **Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2023, 7.30pm** at the Mariners' Hall. Copies of minutes and reports are available on request.

**PRESENT:**

Cllr R Dormor (Chairman)	Cllr A Brewer
Cllr G Pook	Cllr S Greig
Cllr T Stevens	Cllr J Heath
Cllr M Richards	Cllr J Green

In attendance: Nicky Ingarfield (Clerk), Kayleigh Westlake (Events Co-ordinator), Cllr M Hartnell (DCC), representative from Jurassic Fibre and 8 members of the public.

**1. Welcome and Introduction by the Chairman of the Council:** Cllr Dormor opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and explaining the purpose of the meeting.

**2. To approve the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 11 May 2022:**

**Approved by Cllr Pook seconded by Cllr Brewer, resolved all in favour.**

**3. Open Forum:**

A resident gave feedback on the CLT project, she commented that people had move into the housing and appeared to be very happy and grateful for the housing. As a resident it was lovely to see permanent residents in the housing, she appreciated that this had been a huge amount of work with lots of people involved. Cllr Dormor also commented that it was a great success for the village.

Cllr Pook confirmed that all 3 rentals had been let to local families but that they had not had any interest on the shared equity housing, the details had been shared locally, via word of mouth, Facebook and via a local estate agent. Cllr Pook urged residents to advise people who may be interested to get in touch with either the CLT team or Penny's Estate Agents as if the housing was not taken up by local residents it would have to be offered out nationally. The Clerk will, again, post on Facebook and pass on to the village newsletter.

Another resident commented that he had written to EDDC regarding the state of the Jubilee but had not received a response.

Cllr Dormor confirmed that Street Scene would be on site on the 20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> April to work on the Jubilee and the play area, the Parish Council do contact the team on a regular basis and ask them to work on the area, the Jubilee is the villages 'shop window'. BPC do need to work along side EDDC to move forward in a positive manner.

**4. Presentation from Jurassic Fibre:** The representative from Jurassic Fibre explained that she had attended the meeting as the company were considering coming to Beer but wanted to gain feedback as to whether residents would be interested. The Company was founded in Sidmouth in 2018 and is now based in Exeter with a warehouse in Honiton so are local to the area. They have over 30 live sites in the area including Honiton, Seaton and Chard. Presently they are working in Axminster and Lyme Regis. It was explained that the old copper systems will be made redundant and that all systems would be going to fibre, presently Beer has fibre to the box at Longhill and then turns to copper which is very slow. BT are focusing on the bigger cities meaning they are highly unlikely to have reached everyone by the time the switchover takes place. Jurassic Fibre are competitively priced, all

charges are on the website and residents will be supported with the change over. Regulations are being updated so that people can change providers in the same way as changing energy suppliers, making the whole process much easier. There would be some disruption as roads will need digging up, but they would use the existing infrastructure set up by BT. They would work with the village on the best time to complete the works, for example when working with Lyme Regis, it was requested that the works did not take place in the Summer, and they were able to accommodate this.

Cllrs all agreed that it would be good to use a local provider that knows the area and if it was a better service for a good price people would be interested.

## 5. Reports

**Police Report:** PC Craig Amarillia introduced himself and explained that he covers rural Seaton which is a very large area. Crime overall is limited, and the local community are great at supporting each other. Serious crimes are rare, and figures can be 'out' as something as minor as stealing a bottle of ketchup must be included in the figures if reported. There was a spate of thefts of catalytic converters a little while ago and this increased figures. Craig works with the local team: Sam & Mike, they also work alongside the policing teams from Sidmouth, Honiton and Axminster. Craig emphasized how important it was for communities to speak to their local policing teams, even if it is over something minor as this could be a link to a bigger crime. The local Policing team's details are on display in the notice board outside the Mariners Hall.

**Parish Council:** Cllr Dormor gave a brief summary of the Cllrs, there are 11 Cllrs who meet on the second Wednesday of each month, excluding August, there is a Finance & General-Purpose Committee, Staffing Committee and Planning Committee, there are also 3 Portfolios: Assets & Property, Environment & Community & Events & Promotions who report and make recommendations.

The Council are not responsible for Highways but works very closely with them, the Council also work very closely with Street Scene. Planning Committee meets when required but as consultees, they do not make planning decisions. Elections are to take place next month. If there are not enough Cllrs, the Council can Co-Opt members.

The Council has three employees: the Workman, Events Co-Ordinator, and Clerk. The Council manage repairs and projects. The reserves are around £60K, we also apply for and receive grants e.g., S106 & SCIL. Fifty percent of the Councils income comes from the precept and the balance comes from parking.

The Council has been through a year of transition, the previous Clerk, Annie Dallaway had been in post for many years, she left during the year and Jackie Henderson took her place, but sadly she had to stand down, the Council were several months without a Clerk, until they recruited Nicky Ingarfield, Cllr Dormor thanked the Staffing Committee for all their work in recruiting a replacement, especially to Cllrs Adkin & Mollony for taking minutes whilst they were recruiting.

Cllr Dormor reflected on the Asset Transfer work that had taken place and thanked Cllr Green for the hard work he had put in to try and bring the project forward. Cllr Dormor also thanked Cllr Graham for all her hard work with environmental, planning and highways, alongside all the other things that she has done over the years. Also, a huge thanks to Cllr Pook who had been a Governor at Beer Primary when it achieved its Outstanding status, he also set up the CLT project and worked really hard on the Neighborhood Plan, which will benefit Beer for future generations. Cllr Pook always worked really hard on projects that would benefit Beer and he will be really missed now he has gone across the border!

**Devon CC:** Cllr Hartnell had sent his report to Council and wanted to talk through the highlights, Highways continue to take up a lot of his time and the last 12 months have been particularly challenging with funds becoming even more stretched, but he continues to lobby MP's for more funding, they are trying to do more work with less money. Cllr Hartnell has built good relationships with the team, and this helps. His role has a broad remit, and he sits on three committees. A key area is safer roads (e.g., 3052, Grammar School) 20mph zones, which he continues to lobby for, reviewing speed limits, Zig-Zag lines at Seaton Primary (they are no longer there so cannot be enforced), the multi-use trail between Colyton and Seaton which will be much safer. He recently attended the 'Action on Fraud' meeting, this was well attended by residents, Trading Standards and the local police attended to advise residents. He is also involved in discussions regarding the vacant 50% at Seaton hospital and hopefully there will be good news to follow regarding this. Cllr Hartnell will also now be involved with the newly formed Colyford PC, which will be in place after the May Elections, this will be his 9<sup>th</sup> PC. Cllr Hartnell also took the opportunity to thank Cllr Graham for all her help and support over the years.

Cllr Hartnell also reminded everyone that they needed ID when they attend the May Elections to be able to vote, the Clerk confirmed that she had posted a link on Facebook in relation to this.

Cllr Dormor thanked Cllr Hartnell for always attending Beer PC meetings and that it was good to have such a good working relationship.

**EDDC:** Cllr Pook had sent his report to the Council earlier that day. He began by talking about the elections in May and how this year would see the end to the current EDDC Council. The Council has a lot of statutory details, 95% of the time is spent on delivering these statutory requirements, steering in the direction that the constituents want. There has been a lot of work around poverty & environmental issues, EDDC has proved to be a green and caring council. Covid caused huge demands on staff, the finance and benefits team had to administer millions of pounds of grants and aid, but the team did a fantastic job. Business support and innovation grants are still being administered. Ninety-five percent of staff were working from home and continued to provide services to a high standard.

The majority of tenants in council housing are happy but maintenance continues to be a problem, this is still being developed. The right to buy scheme for council housing causes difficulties as the council only get back 85% to build a new house, and this cannot be done. The model was meant to be like the CLT scheme mentioned earlier but this has never really got off the starting block, this is because a Council cannot work commercially.

Refuse & Recycling – over 65% is being recycled which is one of the highest.

Estate Management – This has been a victim of cost cutting, EDDC has massive estates to maintain, these are statutory things, assets are now revenue driven, which is particularly important.

EDDC are looking at completing Asset Transfers across the District, Beer was going to be the pilot for this, it is about giving the residents control over assets in their area. EDDCs Community Asset Transfer Policy enables any Council to apply to take on an asset. EDDC has a superb finance team, grants are dropping which makes revenue from other streams such as assets even more important.

Planning – PCs are here to make a comment, when DC is looking at applications it must be compliant with policy, the planners do not make subjective decisions, they are objective, they make decisions against a policy.

Cllr Pook finished by advising everyone to support their Local Council, Somerset Council is now unitary, this means decisions are made miles away from the actual districts they relate to, it would be a real shame if Devon went the same way.

**6. Annual report and Treasurer's report from Mariners' Hall Committee:** The Treasurer's report was not available for the meeting. Mandy Graham Chair of Mariners Hall provided the following annual report: The Mariners Hall continues to go from strength to strength with increased bookings and new clubs and activities using the hall. We have introduced "wedding and party packages" for potential hirers with the option of an event's organiser to help make the event stress free and help with any queries problems or questions The space behind the stage has been cleared to provide a new changing room with the intention of bringing a more varied range of entertainment e.g. theatre, comedy shows etc to the village The space also has given the hall a chance to support "Beer Food Save" in giving it a permanent home to operate from the scheme is very well supported by the village both with volunteers to run the project and locals who use the service The bar will be getting a refurb later this year offering a wider range of drinks and the upgrade of a new chair lift will improve the facilities at the hall.

**7. Annual report and accounts from Baroness Rolle Welfare Trust:** The report was circulated prior to the meeting and no questions were raised.

**8. Update on the Emergency Alert on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2023:** Cllr Dormor read the information regarding the planned emergency alert to everyone present, more information is available via the Councils Facebook page.

The meeting closed at 8.36pm