

Yarty Ward – District Councillor’s Parish Council Report;

Cllr. Paul Hayward

January 2020

Contents:

| | |
|------------------------------|----------|
| Next EDDC Council Meeting | Page 2 |
| Recent EDDC Council Meetings | Page 2 |
| Planning Matters | Page 2/3 |
| Other news in the Yarty ward | Page 3/4 |
| Finally, potholes again! | Page 4 |

Next meeting of East Devon District Council (as published before)

Council is due to meet again on 26th February in Honiton.

As always, all members of the public are welcome to attend and ask questions / make representations as they wish.

Details of the agenda and previous minutes are available (including audio recordings for those suffering from insomnia) via the website link below.

There will be motions to be debated and a series of written questions to Leader of the Council (which can then be followed up with additional verbal supplementary questions). This will be the first meeting of Full Council in 2020. Thereafter 22nd April, and then Annual Meeting on 13th May 2020.

Recent meetings of EDDC:

All minutes / decisions / audio recordings available online at:

www.eastdevon.gov.uk

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| Cabinet February) | 8 th January 2020 (and again on 5 th |
| Scrutiny | 15 th January 2020 (joint with Overview) |
| Strategic Planning | Next meets 25th February 2020 |
| Development Management (DMC) | 7 th January 2020 & 4 th February 2020 |
| Overview | See Scrutiny above |

Planning Matters in East Devon:

The vast majority of planning applications are dealt with by EDDC planning officers under what are commonly called “delegated powers”. This is simply because there are too many to be debated individually at a Council meeting. However, if the application is contentious, or over a certain size, or if the ward member disagrees with the recommendation of the officer, then the matter can be referred to the DMC or Development Management Committee.

This committee consists of 16 Councillors (including myself) from across all the political groups in East Devon who have been trained in planning law and procedure. We sit and consider each application put before us and decide, by majority vote, on whether to approve or refuse, and we have to provide good reasons – based on existing planning policy – as to why we reached that decision. Discussions are often heated and lengthy, and we do not always agree with what the Officers have suggested, and – quite naturally – sometimes the person who we have decided against can feel quite aggrieved, but this is the fairest way of dealing with planning matters.

All meetings are open to the public and anyone can pre-register to speak at the meeting, in support or in opposition to an application, and be heard before any debate or decision is taken. All planning documents are available for public scrutiny on the EDDC website and everything is done in the open, and under the full glare of public view.

I would urge anyone with an interest in the planning process to come along and see for yourself how the system works. I imagine you would be fairly surprised at the rules and regulations behind it! The EDDC Local Plan is the principal reference document for planning decisions, but even that has to accord to a national set of rules (the NPPF) and, of course, any community that has created a Neighbourhood Plan and had that adopted by referendum also can use that document to guide and persuade Councillors to make a particular decision.

Yarty Ward news:

In recent weeks, I have been delighted to offer some assistance to Membury regarding the ownership of a wall in the village that is raising concerns, and to also offer my support for their nascent Tree projects.

There have been concerns raised regarding another fire at the Crawley Mill feed plant on the Yarcombe Road, and I am liaising with the owners, the HSE, the Fire Service and Environmental Health officers to make other parties aware of the potential risks here and to safeguard the site for residents and drivers alike.

In Chardstock, the ongoing energy efficiency works at the Community Hall are progressing at speed and I am extremely happy to hear that the Parish Council in Chardstock secured a grant of nearly £9000 from The Peoples Postcode Lottery Fund to allow even more works – solar panels and batteries – to be carried out.

Chardstock Parish council is also arranging a Climate Change Awareness event in April and I would urge all residents to come along and offer your support to the Council as they seek to make tangible contributions to address the issue.

In Hawkchurch, I was present when the new and improved village shop was opened a few weekends ago and my sincere congratulations to all the members of that community who have worked tirelessly to fundraise, organise and bring their plans to fruition. EDDC was able to make a small contribution towards the costs but the vast majority came from other sources, together with huge amounts of goodwill and effort from the village.

Finally, in All Saints, we are assured that the road repairs to Socks Hill will be started and completed in April after many years of delays. More on this below.

Potholes:

The wet weather has made repairs difficult and, whilst we are perhaps fortunate that the cold weather hasn't materialised to any significant degree and thus damaged the roads even further, I am still contacted almost daily by residents alarmed at potholes in and around Yarty (and just over Weycroft bridge into Axminster!) and I would urge all residents to use the DCC "Report a Problem" website to notify Highways if you see a hole that is causing, or might cause, damage to a vehicle or a potential injury to a road user.

We are assured by our newly returned MP that funds are forthcoming to assist DCC in their mission to fix as many holes as they can and several parish councils have already written to Neil urging him to come good on that promise!

My best wishes to you all as always. Please do get in touch if can assist in any way

Paul