

## **DRAFT MINUTES EGGESFORD PARISH MEETING 2024**

**HELD AT ALL SAINTS CHURCH, EGGESFORD**

**MONDAY 24 JUNE 2024**

### **In attendance:**

Peter Court - outgoing Chair

Chris Rose - New Chair

Chris Rogers – WEBMASTER & Vice Chair

Councillor Margaret Squires, Devon County Council

Councillor Natalia Letch, Upper Yeo and Taw Ward

Councillor Alex White, Upper Yeo and Taw Ward

Joanne Court - Clerk

Eggesford Parishioners

1. Minutes of Meetings. The Minutes of the 2023 Meeting, circulated by email to parishioners in advance and posted on the Parish website, were approved. The only matter arising was the further consideration of a parish defibrillator.
2. Chair of Eggesford Parish Meeting. Chris Rose had volunteered to take over as the new Chair of Eggesford Parish Meeting and his appointment was unanimously approved by all present and took immediate effect. Chris Rogers was asked to be Vice Chair and was thanked for all his contributions to the community in various roles. Joanne to continue as Clerk. [Afternote: Peter Court is thanked for his period as chairman of the EPM, and Joanne Court for her continued work as Clerk].
3. Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024. The Annual Governance and Accountability Return for a Parish Meeting with no financial activity 2023/24 would be completed immediately following the meeting and submitted to pkf auditors before the 1 July deadline and displayed on the Parish website [Afternote – actioned on 26 June 2024].

There was discussion at this stage of how to make sure that parish information reached everyone. It was acknowledged that there were 4 main sources of information, each with different purposes: the eggesford whatsapp group (kindly administered by Sara Penelhum), the parish notice boards (opposite Eggesford Fourways and at the Station), the parish website and the local Neighbourhood Watch scheme (kindly administered by Lee Berrecloth). Sara Penelhum confirmed that any resident who wishes to be added to the eggesford whatsapp group should contact her (telephone number by email to parish list to follow). The Parish email list should be up to date as the Chair is notified of any changes to the Electoral Roll. This is used for forwarding more formal, council related

information. The Neighbourhood Watch information (providing local alerts from Devon and Cornwall Police) will be circulated by parish email for anyone who wishes to receive. The website is really only used to publish parish notices but could be used more if desired.

4. Planning Applications. It was explained that the Parish Meeting Chair is asked to comment on all planning applications within our bounds. As we are not a formal parish council, it was agreed that a 'no objections' comment is usually appropriate. Neighbours are asked by the planning authority to comment directly and the Chair would usually remain neutral unless all neighbours were in agreement and support from the Parish Meeting might assist. There is now a ten year time limit for enforcement of planning breaches. The Chair would contact the District and County Councils to ensure that the Parish were informed of new planning applications.
5. Eggesford Church Warden. Chris Rogers introduced himself as the new Eggesford Church Warden, Michael Downward having retired. Chris explained that most of his duties relate to making sure everything is in order for the monthly services. As the church is the only community building in our parish, its possible use for other purposes was considered. It has in the past been used for talks and concerts. It is one of the few churches to be open to the community, and indeed to the public, every day from about 9am to 5pm and is a beautiful, peaceful, historic space.
6. FEAST. Ed Howell gave a brief history of the Friends of Eggesford All Saints Trust. In 1982 the church had been declared redundant but through the hard work and determination of local people, the redundancy notice was lifted and All Saints was restored to use as a church on 1 April 1991. Ed had found the first FEAST newsletter from 1991. It reported that £20,000 had been raised by FEAST at that stage, of their target of £30,000, with most being spent on necessary repairs after years of neglect. FEAST has continued its good work over the years to keep the church in good repair but renewed efforts are now needed and new volunteers to join FEAST were invited.
7. Airband Fibre connection. Peter Green gave a short briefing on our recent Airband fibre connection. The majority of households have now been connected with only the final stretch of the main contractual route past the church to the Barton remaining to be completed. The church has been nominated as our public building for free connection, but it seems that there will still be a monthly charge for the connection. Could the FEAST assess if there is sufficient interest and funding for such a connection for the Church? As regards home connections, Peter Green recommended that any connection difficulties/outages were communicated to Airband by email ([support@airband.co.uk](mailto:support@airband.co.uk)) or telephone (01905 676121) for action. Peter Green was thanked for all his efforts, without which such a small community would not have been connected. The Parish also thanked Rob Skinner for generously allowing the siting of the necessary poles across his land.
8. Road Issues. The possibility of a reduction in the speed limit on the A377 at Eggesford station was discussed. When last raised with the Neighbourhood Highways Officer, his response was that the site has been looked at on a number of occasions and 'there are no incidents at this location in the last 5 years involving any sort of injury'. The 'nature

of the junctions means that people take great care already'. The Clerk to find out from police whether there are any statistics to confirm this. Cllr Squires suggested we email her and ask for a SCARF process to be initiated, once we had ascertained the statistics for the junction.

A reduction in the speed limit at Fourways had been discussed on Eggesford whatsapp prior to the meeting. Outgoing Chair suggested informal and temporary 'Twenty is plenty' signs on, for example, wheelie bins as a short term DIY measure.

Potholes on the A377 have recently been repaired. Andrew Millward was concerned about the standard of the work done and asked how the council chooses its contractors. Mr Letch explained that contractors are appointed under 10 year contracts which are up for review in April 2027 and outlined a new scheme called the Pothole Spotlight Review, to focus attention on the problem of potholes on local roads. Cllr Squires encouraged everyone to report potholes online; the more people report, the better the chance that they would be repaired and recommended keeping the reference number; however Claire Green raised the point that the Devon CC online reporting system will not accept more than one report of the same pothole so this is impossible.

9. Devon CC update. Cllr Margaret Squires spoke briefly about the council work she is most involved in; there are fewer children in care this year in Mid Devon as more support is being provided to keep children in their families. More foster parents are needed.
10. District and Ward update. Our Ward councillors are Alex White and Natalia Letch. Cllr White was elected in a by election earlier this year. His responsibilities are mainly planning and enforcement matters, also rubbish collection and recycling. (Devon now has the best recycling rate in the country). There are government plans to standardise recycling collections across the country. Cllr Letch added that Mid Devon has only one Planning Enforcement Officer and noted the poor enforcement; the aim was to increase scrutiny in the future.
11. AOB: The Chair will form a small working party to consider the siting and funding of a defibrillator. [Afternote: Cllr Squires had offered some funding to support acquisition]. Concerns were raised over the bus route to Chulmleigh from Crediton rather than via Eggesford; it was considered that a small adjustment to the bus routing and timetable would allow connection of Chulmleigh to Eggesford trains by bus. Action – tbc.
12. Date of Next Meeting. The next Eggesford Parish Meeting would be held in mid-late June 2025; exact date and draft agenda to be published beforehand.