

Cluster Meeting Notes

Cluster of Exminster, Ide, Kenn, and Shillingford St. George Parish Councils

Date: Monday, 14 October 2024

Time: 19:00

Location: Victory Hall Annexe, Exminster

1. Welcome

Chairman Kevin Smith (KS) of Exminster Parish Council provided a warm welcome to all attendees, expressing gratitude to Sheila Churchward (SC) for nominating Exminster Parish Council as the first host for the cluster meetings.

2. Attendance and Apologies

Present:

- Cllr Kevin Smith (KS) - Chair, Exminster Parish Council
- Cllr Sheila Churchward (SC) - Exminster Parish Council
- Jill Daw (JD) - Clerk to Exminster Parish Council
- Tania Foley (TF) - Admin for Exminster Parish Council
- Cllr John Goody (JG) - Clerk to Kenn Parish Council
- Cllr George Stephens (GS) - Shillingford Parish Council
- Maureen Adams (MA) - Shillingford Parish Council Clerk
- Mel Liversage (ML) - Ide Parish Council Clerk/RFO
- Cllr Laura Bell (LB) - Ide Parish Council

Apologies:

- Andy Chislett - Chair, Kenn Parish Council
- Peter Wareham - Chair, Shillingford Parish Council

SC opened the discussion by highlighting the meeting's purpose: to facilitate progress on local issues and share council experiences.

3. Discussion on Local Impacts from September T&PC Forum

SC provided an overview of the recent T&PC Forum, emphasizing the introduction of the planning department and the new online system for commenting on planning applications. Key points included:

- The new planning validation guides went through public consultation between April and June 2024; this process is to align guidance with the new Teignbridge Local Plan 2020-

2040. TDC Planning Officers emphasized the importance of public comments and upcoming training on its implementation.

- Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is a new material consideration that will be measured for all planning applications; this will not affect the Environmental Policy of Exminster Parish Council (EPC). Councils are encouraged to scrutinize BNG assessments based on local knowledge.
- The 4 and 10 year infringement rules for change of use applications were reviewed and from April 2024 all rules are changed to 10 years. (NB: Councils must always provide evidence of infringement).
- TDC Planning Officers are enforcing a strict validation policy, and if applications don't conform they will be returned to the applicant for resubmission (NB: as will the fee minus a 10% admin charge). Applications will no longer be free for resubmission within a year.
- It was noted that some enforcement issues raised by parish councils were not adequately addressed, raising concerns over the responsiveness of the District Council.
- General assessment of T&PC Forums deemed them informative but indicated a need for improved facilitation, citing issues with agenda adherence and excessive interruptions.

Attendance at future planning discussions is highly encouraged from all councils.

4. Proposed Discussion Points for the T&PC Forums planned for 2025

Spring T&PC Forum – 20 March 2025:

- Teignbridge Local Plan 2020-2040 implications for parishes: Timing dependent on the approval of the Local Plan.

Summer T&PC Forum:

- Finance and Budgets.

Autumn T&PC Forum:

- Flooding and Water Management: (DCC involvement).
- Transport and Highways Issues: (DCC involvement).
- Weed clearance on footways, cycleways and road gutters: Discussion scheduled for November.
- Lengthsman contractors: This is a potential link to existing DCC discussions.

5. Attendance Agreement for Future Meetings

It was resolved that future cluster meetings will be open to clerks and up to two councillors from each council, and not limited to Chairs. The terms of reference were discussed, confirming that both clerks and councillors with relevant agenda responsibilities should attend.

6. Next Host and Meeting Date – NB: PLEASE NOTE CHANGES

The next T&PC Forum is scheduled for Wednesday 5 February 2025 from 2pm – 4pm and Monday 10 February from 5pm to 7pm both in the Council Chamber at Forde House AND NOT ON 20 March 2025 as thought at the meeting.

Tamsin Cook emailed to say that the T&PC Forums will take place in February, June and October in 2025 and that the intention is to focus on two separate topics from the list of suggestions including:

- CIL/S106
- Emerging Local Plan and expected revisions to National Planning Policy Framework
- Conservation
- Biodiversity Net Gain
- Ecology/Biodiversity/Climate Change considerations in development

Looking at the notes in Item 4. above, could each Clerk send emails to Tamsin suggesting that discussions in February 2025 are primarily on the emerging local plan, and add a second subject, say, CIL/s106 or whatever you are interested in. The email could also include the suggested topics for the Summer and Autumn Forums (see Item 4 above).

Sadly this means that our February cluster meeting needs to be cancelled and another organized for May, to prepare for the Summer Forum in June. As agreed on Monday evening, Ide Parish Council will assume hosting responsibilities for the next meeting.

Meeting Adjournment:

The meeting concluded at 20:40.

Next Steps:

Clerks and Councillors to prepare discussion points for the next meeting and follow up on action items from this meeting in anticipation of the Spring T&PC Forum.