

OYEZ!
APRIL
News from your Town
Council



ELECTIONS – 5TH MAY

Local elections take place on Thursday 5th May. Two District Councillors, from six candidates will be elected to Sedgemoor District Council to represent a larger area than previously – not just the town area of Axbridge – but a new ward to be known as Axe Vale. There will be no ballot for Axbridge Town Council members as only ten candidates have been nominated for thirteen places. Electors will also be able to take part in the referendum on election reform – to say “yes” or “no” to the use of the Alternative Vote (AV) system in future elections for MPs.

CO-OPTION OF TOWN COUNCILLORS

In order to fill the three remaining places on the Town Council after May 5th there is likely to be a process of co-option, rather than an election. Details of how electors may volunteer to be co-opted to the council will be put on the Town Hall notice board, or may be obtained from the Town Clerk.

GOODBYE TO ALL THAT

Five existing Town Councillors have not stood for re-election – Jim Lukins, Dennis Bratt, Craig Walkling, Liz Scott and Paul Passey.

POLICE REPORT

Members were told that in the past year about 250 parking tickets have been issued to motorists parked illegally in the Square, with 23 tickets issued in the month of April alone. Cases of petty vandalism had been dealt with, with the young offenders’ parents being encouraged to undertake parenting classes. The police are aware of some small-scale drug dealing and taking within the town and have taken appropriate action including education work at the Kings of Wessex school.

VOICES DONATION

The “Voices of Axbridge Group” through its parent group the Axbridge Archaeological and Local History Society has made a donation of £525 towards the work of the Modern Town Archivist. The work of the Archivist and the “Voices” team closely co-incides.

DRILLING ON THE MOOR

The council was told that drilling-rigs will shortly be seen working on the moor to the south of the town as Wessex Water undertake geological investigations in connection with the proposed new reservoir.

BLASTING AT THE QUARRY

Cllr. Scott had been to a Quarry Liaison meeting at which recent large blastings had been discussed – some Axbridge had been severely shaken. This was likely to be due to new blasting on a different face of the quarry. Later explosions had been smaller and not detected by the quarry’s own measuring devices placed in the town.

WIND TURBINE AT SHIPHAM

Since the community of Shipham had rejected the idea of building a wind turbine at Callow Rock, the quarry was no longer prepared to support the proposal.

FACILITIES IN AXBRIDGE

Council agreed in principal to setting up a temporary advisory group to investigate the possible long-term provision of council offices and public conveniences.

MP TO AXBRIDGE

Tessa Munt MP is to be invited to see the work undertaken by the town council in the community and therefore to understand how it is that the town’s precept has increased, when other authorities have cut back.

Members felt that much of the increases in Axbridge’s expenditure had been to cover the lack of service from other larger authorities – Sedgemoor District Council in particular

NEW MAYOR FOR OLD

Mayor-making this year will be on Monday 16th May. This is a public meeting, although some seats will be reserved for guests. Cllr Baz Hamblin has been nominated to be the new Mayor and Cllr Ian Laken has been nominated to be Deputy Mayor. Councillors will vote on these appointments at the Mayor-making.

AXBRIDGE TOWN CAR PARK

The car park in Meadow Street, to be known as "Axbridge Town Car Park" will come under the control of the Town Council on 1st May. Parking will be free, but limited to periods of 48 hours. Certain vehicles will be prohibited and parking permits will be available at the discretion of the Town Council for persons wishing to park vehicles for periods longer than 48hours.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

The Council is to seek question the finances of Somerset Waste Partnership (SWP) under the Freedom of Information Act. Members expressed concern that items taken to recycling centres often had a value, but that charges were to be made for disposal at SWP sites. There were also suggestions that new charges and limited opening at the Cheddar Centre could lead to increased "fly-tipping".

AXBRIDGE CARNIVAL QUEEN

Anyone wishing to be Axbridge Blackberry Carnival Queen or Princess is invited to collect an entry form from the Post Office, Axbridge Pharmacy or Axbridge Butchers. The winner(s) will be announced at the Church Fete on June 11th.

FURLONG NEWS

The Furlong Manager is looking into the costs of placing artificial turf in front of the new Sports Wall as the ground there has become very hard and barren.

35 YEARS

Members were told that the Town Crier had been "crying" for 35 years.

STANDING ORDERS

Council approved the adoption of new revised Standing Orders to regulate the operation of the council's committees, advisory groups and the general management of council business.

END OF YEAR FINANCIAL REPORT

Council approved the End of Year Financial Report produced by the Clerk. Income to 31st March had been £74,302.41; Total payments amounted to £77,281.71 of which Revenue Expenditure - £57,227.05; Capital Expenditure - £10,658.89; Grants - £6840.00.

BUS STOP CONFUSION

The redundant bus-stop pole in the slip road at the east end of Cheddar Road was causing confusion for bus-drivers and travellers alike. Buses appear to be stopping in both locations, despite the fact that the slip-road pole has no "flag" and the Barnabas Close "flag" states that the bus is to stop on both sides. Removal of the redundant pole was seen as an urgent matter.

OYEZ EDITOR'S FINAL NOTE

In my last edition as "Oyez" editor I would like to pay tribute to all the volunteers who have delivered copies to residents over the years—especially to Edith Channon who has been the mainstay of the distribution system. One regret on standing down is that so few residents have found the work and decisions of the Town Council sufficiently interesting, wise, bizarre or even annoying to come along to meetings and either observe or take part. Democracy is a wonderful thing—if it is exercised by all and not just a few! PAUL PASSEY

RESIDENTS ARE INVITED TO ATTEND MEETINGS (3RD MONDAY EACH MONTH), TO RAISE ISSUES OR JUST TO LISTEN. MATTERS MAY BE BROUGHT TO COUNCIL'S ATTENTION VIA THE TOWN CLERK MRS VICKY BRICE 07884 264033