



# OYEZ!

May 2015

*News from your Town Council*

## May Oyez in June

Because of the timing of Bank Holidays the May council meeting was delayed until 1st June and in consequence this edition of Oyez is arriving later than usual. There will be a knock-on effect in June when the council meeting will be delayed until 22nd June.

## Mayor Making

At the Annual Meeting and Mayor Making held on 18th May Councillor Jennifer Trotman was installed as Mayor for 2015-16, and Councillor Mike Taylor as Deputy Mayor.

## New council

The following councillors were returned at the recent local elections:

Mrs Helen Bridgeman  
Mrs Kate Browne  
Jeremy Gall  
Mrs Pauline Ham  
John Kendall  
Mrs Barbara Myerson  
Mike Taylor  
Ms Jennifer Trotman  
Craig Walking

Four seats on the new council remain unfilled as too few people stood for election. The council intends to fill the vacant places by co-option, and has already advertised for interested candidates.

## General Power of Competence

At the Annual Meeting on 18th May the Council, having satisfied itself that it meets the eligibility criteria, adopted The General Power of Competence as set out in the Localism Act 2011. This gives the council greater powers to act in certain circumstances.

## Police report

The Council received a report from PC Tracey Stiles, the local beat manager. Main points included:

### NEW LOCAL POLICING STRUCTURE:

The local team has now been re-organised under the

new name of Sedgemoor North-east. The local beat team of PC Stiles, PCSO Hawker and PCSO Shaw continue to cover the same area. Future reported crime figures will cover the whole area not just Axbridge town.

### CONTROL OF DOGS

The team have investigated 4 dog bites in the last month. Police advise that it is an offence to have a dog off a lead in a public place, and that owners can be prosecuted for a dog biting any person whether they suffer injury or not.

### DOG ATTACKS ON LIVESTOCK

One person has taken part in a Community Resolution their dog attacked livestock, and has offered compensation of £400.

## Dog fouling

The Council again considered the ongoing problem of dog fouling and the time, effort and measures taken over the years in a bid to address the issue, which is the biggest cause of complaints to the Council. The Town Council has provided a number of bins in the Town and had undertaken various initiatives, but still the problem remains.

The Council now feels that the only means left to it to tackle the problem is a prosecution, and is considering contracting a private investigator to gather evidence of offences which could be used in court.

A press report from Portsmouth was printed in Oyez in 2013 (*under the heading 'It could happen here . . .'*) about a dog owner fined £75 for failing to clear up her dog's mess, then taken to court for failure to pay and fined £650 including costs. The Council feels that prosecution here may be the only way to persuade the minority of irresponsible dog owners to accept their responsibilities, and will consider proceeding with this approach if there is no significant improvement in the matter over the summer.

## Dog bin

The Council has agreed to place a dog bin adjacent to the grit bin at the top of High Street, opposite the end of Horne's Lane.

## Moorland Street car park

After completion of protracted negotiations and legal matters the Town Council has now taken ownership of Moorland Street car park. There are still matters relating to regulation and management to be resolved and so Sedgemoor will continue to manage the car park for a short time, and continue charging, but when these are resolved car park charges will end. When the new regulations are in place it is intended that the Square should be for short term parking, Moorland Street for medium term and the Town Car Park for longer term parking.

## Grant to Town Trust

The Council has again agreed to make a grant to Axbridge Town Trust of £3640, to be paid in two instalments, towards the upkeep of the Town Hall.

## Community enhancement

The changes to The Square are underway. Donations are being received for improvements to the Square, and when sufficient funding is in place it is now agreed to purchase two bay trees and eight removable bike stands. The Council will own the street furniture and add these purchases to the asset register and to its public liability insurance.

## Membership renewals

The Council has agreed to renew membership of:

**SALC:** The Somerset Association of Local Councils, which provides advice and training to the Council

**PARISH ONLINE** which provides the Council with mapping facilities and the means to use Ordnance Survey data.

## Axbridge Town Trust 50 Club

All winners of prizes will be contacted directly, and sent a cheque for their winnings. If you would like to find out who has won, then please take a look at The Town Trust notice board outside Axbridge

Town Hall for the latest winners. All queries to Alan Mortimore, clerk to The Town Trust 01934 732687.

## Obstruction in The Square

Council noted that drivers continue to park in the "D" shaped space in front of the Almshouse, obstructing vehicles, especially buses, turning into Meadow Street. There were currently no plans to change this area - the removal of the 'D' shape outline might encourage faster driving in the Square. Drivers are reminded that parking in the Square is permitted in the marked bays only.

## Other matters

Some other matters mentioned or discussed at Council during May include:

- New local policing structure
- 'No cold calling zone' project
- Anti-social behaviour at the Furlong
- Audit of accounts
- Government consultation on Landfill Communities Fund
- Furlong play area
- Purchase of printer for the Clerk
- Financial reserves policy
- Road markings on the by-pass following resurfacing
- Membership of Council committees and advisory groups

Residents are invited to attend Town Council meetings to raise issues or just to listen. Matters may be brought to the Council's attention via the Town Clerk.

Meetings are *usually* held in the Town Hall on the 3rd Monday each month at 7.30 pm but the June meeting this year has been postponed to Monday 22nd June.

The agenda is displayed in advance outside the Town Hall and on the website

The Town Clerk, Vicky Brice, can be contacted by phone or e-mail:

07884 264033 vicky.brice@axbridge-tc.gov.uk

or by post to PO Box 1184, Axbridge, BS26 2WJ

The Town Council's website is at: [www.axbridge-tc.gov.uk](http://www.axbridge-tc.gov.uk)