

## **Annual Parish Meeting 4<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

### **Report from District Councillor Andrew Moulding**

I currently serve on the Overview Committee, Strategic Planning Committee and the Arts & Culture Forum

#### **Overview Committee**

During the past year, the Overview Committee has been involved in creating a new Council Plan, which sets the direction For East Devon District Council and strives to make a positive difference to residents' lives and our environment in East Devon.

The Overview Committee has also been involved in the Public Toilet Review, which thankfully does not put our Axminster public toilets under threat – and in fact may lead to improved toilet facilities in the West Street Car Park.

#### **Strategic Planning Committee**

In recent months, the Strategic Planning Committee has been involved in numerous meetings in order to work towards a new East Devon Local Plan. Apart from lengthy debates over local planning policies, the Strategic Planning Committee also considered potential development sites and infrastructure in Axminster, which could contribute towards the growth of the town.

However, the Strategic Planning committee has just received a report regarding regulations issued by Natural England concerning water quality in the River Axe catchment area. This relates to the control of nitrates and phosphates entering the river.

Therefore, extra wastewater from new housing and other polluting developments can make matters worse. The advice from Natural England is that Habitat Regulations Assessments will need to be carried out on all development proposals, where nutrients could enter the catchment of the River Axe. This means that the council may not be able to grant planning permission for development that would increase the discharge of phosphates into the river, without some form of mitigation, which will be very difficult to achieve.

### **Arts and Culture Forum**

I find this a very useful forum, where currently a new Culture Strategy is being developed. It is hoped that this new strategy will help local Arts and Culture Groups to thrive –and perhaps to continue using our magnificent Guildhall.

### **Axe Valley Study**

I am pleased that work is currently being carried out to ensure that Axminster is a thriving town. A number of good ideas are starting to emerge from this work.

### **Axminster Skatepark**

As the theme of this Annual Parish Meeting is Community Spirit, I am delighted to confirm that work on the new Axminster Skatepark is scheduled to commence on 25<sup>th</sup> April and to be completed by the start of July. East Devon District Council and the Town Council have been central to this start date being announced. This is great news for the young people of Axminster.

Andrew Moulding

East Devon District Councillor – representing Axminster