

West Hill Parish Council (WHPC) Meeting 4<sup>th</sup> April 2023  
Agenda item 23/102

### Annual Parish Meeting 2023

An Annual Parish Meeting is required to be held and in accord with the Local Government Act 1972 Part III sections 14 – 22 such a meeting was called for 10<sup>th</sup> March 2023. The Chairman of the Parish Council convened the meeting in accord with Section 15, and chaired the meeting in accord with Section 17(1). Parish Councillors, who are also electors for the Parish, have the same rights to attend, vote and speak as any other “Elector”. There are no additional “rights” for Parish Council Members, except for the Chairman.

The draft Minutes of the meeting are available on the WHPC website and will go to the Annual Parish Meeting 2024 for signature.

The Meeting was attended by 40+ people, including electors, representatives of local organisations, groups receiving Council grants/awards and other interested local residents. The Guest Speaker, Emily Lezzeri, CEO Ottery Help Scheme, Chairman Ottery + District Health Matters gave a very interesting update on behalf of both organisations. Other attendees spoke, including the District/County Councillor Jess Bailey. Those attending were offered refreshments at the end of the evening.

### Motion at the meeting

During the course of the meeting an elector of the Parish sought to have a question decided by the electors present (Section 18). Others present then made clear their concerns regarding a Councillor’s conduct, lack of contribution to the work of the Council, unnecessary costs and resources incurred. Following discussion, the Chairman summarised the concerns raised and put the following statement to those in attendance and eligible to vote.

The statement:-

*“This meeting has no confidence in Councillor Peter Bennett’s capabilities as a Parish Councillor to represent the views and interests of the community whilst observing his obligations under the Code of Conduct”.*

A vote was conducted by a show of hands, checking that only those eligible were voting and the result is final. Following a discussion it was concluded that the cost and timing to call a Poll was inappropriate.

The votes cast were:

In favour – 25; against – 5; and Abstentions – 8.

Thus the question was decided by a majority of the eligible voters. Councillor Bennett was not in attendance and so the Chairman formally wrote to advise him of the Motion prior to the draft minutes being circulated.

The pre-election period does not stop ‘business as usual’ for the Council. However, being cognizant of the pre- election period, it would be best that the Council does not vote as to whether or not it agrees with the motion. Councillors are of course free to make comments and have such minuted.

### Decisions

- **Councillors to note the report on the Annual Parish Meeting.**
- **Councillors to note the Motion of No Confidence in Councillor Bennett.**

**Chairman: Cllr Della M CANNINGS QPM, 21<sup>st</sup> March 2023**