

## EDDC Yarty Ward Member report – May 2021

Dear Councillors, and residents.

A very short report for this meeting as I am bound by the rules of “purdah” \* in terms of what can be said about EDDC activity at present (as I am standing as a County Candidate for Axminster myself).

Like all Parish and Town Councils, EDDC was very sorry to learn of the death of HRH Duke of Edinburgh and all Councillors (and Officers) sent our condolences to Her Majesty the Queen and the Royal Family.

Consequently, Council business had to be curtailed during the period of mourning as per the LGA1972 s.243.

Similarly, EDDC was also affected by the shambles that relates to the legislation regarding the holding of meetings “virtually” by Zoom, or Skype, or whatever your ‘platform’ of choice is!! The court decision last week meant that a great many meetings either had to be cancelled, or brought forward, whilst we unpick how we can get 60 Councillors, and supporting officers, into a room, whilst being socially distant and Covid 19 compliant, and whilst also accommodating members of the public!!

A classic case, sadly, of central government ignoring the valid and reasonable suggestions (and pleas) of smaller Councils, with the result that the entire Local Government sector has been thrown into disarray!

We await the next “lockdown roadmap” step with great interest but with trepidation too!

As you can imagine, a great deal of my focus as Portfolio Holder of Economy is chairing the panel that is distributing the ARG (or discretionary restrictions grants) on behalf of HM Treasury. EDDC has been involved in the payment of over £65m in central government funding to local businesses and I hope to be able to report on the next planned scheme (ARG3) after the 5<sup>th</sup> May.

Finally, may I (through your Councillors) encourage all members of the public to exercise their democratic right to vote on May 6<sup>th</sup> (wherever they choose to place their X) and ensure that Council Tax(ation) is intrinsically linked to fair and proper representation.

My kindest regards. Hope to see you all – in person – very soon.

Cllr. Paul Hayward, Yarty ward

\* Purdah > <https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/guidance-and-resources/pre-election-period>