

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 14th January 2025 at 7.15.pm, at Bridgerule Village Hall.**

These minutes are provisional until signed by the Chairman at the next meeting.

**Present :**  Chairman: D Hale

Councillors, F. Cogdell, J. McDougall, S. Cholwill, K. Bowditch, J. Trayford,

K. James, M. Tape, S. Whatmore, J. Philpott.

In Attendance : Clerk.

**Declarations of Interests:** The Chairman asked that interests be declared as they arise.

**3436. Public Open Question Time :** No questions raised.

**3437. County Councillors Report :** No report received.

**3438. District Councillors Report :** KJ reported that many discussions had been held regarding the proposed Devolution process and the DCC would like the County Council May elections postponed. Torridge were not in favour of this and felt it to be undemocratic and were not in agreement with this action as they were against the principle of doing so. TDC would support the proposal of a mayor for the whole of Devon and Cornwall, with separate unity councils. TDC had the view that the new proposals may not be a fair deal for North Devon. Some areas, ie, parts of Exeter including the airport and the Science Park now came under East Devon and as such had a financial advantage over others. Parts of Devon already had their own unitary councils, Plymouth, Exeter, East Devon and Torbay. Devon County would need to combine with Cornwall to meet the designated numbers required for the proposed process, but Cornwall was not keen to do this. It was hoped to give another update on this next month.

The Leisure Centre at Holsworthy was still closed temporarily due to remedial works needed to the roof to remove asbestos. JT enquired if there were any plans for an upgrade and refurbishment of the changing rooms during the closure. KJ replied that this will be done during the closure, and it was hoped the Centre would be re-open in early February.

**3439. Council Meeting Minutes :** Minutes of the meeting held on 11th December 2024 had been circulated to councillors prior to the meeting and were agreed by all present and signed by the chairman as correct. Proposed 1st, KB, 2nd FC, all councillors in favour.

**3440: Matters Arising :**  No Matters arising.

**3441 : To Receive Correspondence:** Bell Geospace, the company were currently conducting Geophysical surveys flying over the area until Mid-to end January.

**3442 : Chairmans Report :** DH was hoping to obtain some saplings via a scheme for Tree Planting organised by Cornwall CC. Trees were being given at various locations, one in Bude soon. If this was possible, they could be planted at Southfields or the riverside location.

He had collected the memorial sign by the Weeping Willow tree and would attach to the bench if possible. It was noted that that Black plastic type plaques, with silver etching were more durable than the brass plaques and weathered better.

**3443 : Vas Signs, Speedwatch Update and Highways :**  SW reported the following data from 19.11.24 to 13.01.25; Sign 1 at Vicarage Hill, 8565 passing vehicles, with 1426 travelling over 30mph which equates to 1 in 6. Average speed of 25.6 with a maximum of 45.2mph being recorded. Sign 2 at Middle Road, 9247 passing vehicles with 643 travelling over 30mph which equates to 1 in 14.5. Average speed recorded was 22mph with a maximum speed of 45.5mph. It was noted that vehicles were travelling very fast down the hill approaching the school.

JT reported that it was hoped to conduct some speedwatch sessions in the next month, it had not been possible to do this so far this month due to inclement weather conditions.

Road Closure, road from Chapel Corner to Furze Cross from Monday 10th March to Friday 14th March, new electricity cabling and upgrading supply for National Grid.

**3444 :**  **Accounts and Accounts due for payment -** Finance sheets had been circulated to councillors,

Balance of the new Grit Bin for Littlebridge Cross, £50. Clerk explained that DCC would invoice the Parish directly and a grant from TDC had been approved for the same amount and would arrive shortly, to cover this cost. Proposed 1st SW, 2nd JT, all councillors in favour.

Current account balance agreed at £7891.20 on 31st December.

**3445 :** **Precept for 2025-2026 :** The General Budget sheet had been circulated to councillors prior to the meeting, detailing expenditure for the financial year and estimations for requirements needed for the forthcoming year and projected costs. Areas which were facing additional increases were village grass cutting and maintenance, insurance and membership cost rises, and salary increases for clerk in line with NALC pay awards. DH suggested that an initial amount of £100 could be allocated to the Southfields Open space group for any set up costs , and for clerk to add to the budget sheet. Councillors discussed all at length, and it was noted that the taxbase had risen due to additional properties. It was decided to increase the Band D payment to £36.95, an increase of £0.76 or 2.11%. Proposed 1st, SW,2nd KB, after show of hands all councillors in favour. After discussion, it was agreed to increase clerks’ salary and banding to between level 7 and 8 to £13.30 per hour from April 2025. Proposed 1st, JMD, 2nd JP, all councillors in favour.

 **3448 : Playpark Update :**  KB was still in contact with South West Water regarding the leak and damage caused to safety surfaces. SC said a case had been opened regarding this and a stopcock had been installed above ground which was now a safety hazard.

**3449 :**   **Southfields Open Space :** A meeting was arranged for Saturday 8th February in the hall at 10.30am. Several residents had expressed interest in forming the Open Space group to maintain the area. The garden contractor would shortly be clearing the area initially for work to commence. The group committee would be headed by FC and the clerk would support with administration needs initially on a voluntary basis. Thanks to the Hall Committee for providing the use of the hall.

**3450 :**  **Village Hall/Shop Update :** The hall has been redecorated, and clubs and bookings are resuming this week after the Christmas break. New blinds will be installed next week.

The Shop’s trading figures for December varied from what was predicted, but the shop and hall are both doing well.

**3451 :**  **Clerks Report :** Electoral Register changes this month are 2 deletions. No further update yet regarding the proposed 20mph scheme. The new NHO is M. Duvall who takes over from TA, who has transferred to the Traffic team on the 20th January. The grant application to TDC has been completed, for the remaining cost of £50 for the new grit bin at Littlebridge.

**3452 :** **Exchange of Information :** Clawton has Street wardens it was noted, DH would contact to find out more information on how this worked,

Meadowview had had problems with flooding on the road, this was due to a item getting into the drain in the recent storm and causing a blockage,

The TDC Household Support Fund is still available to help those in need of support,

Bus Shelter roof- has not yet been repaired, DH said this would be done at the earliest opportunity,

**3453. Meeting closed at 7.57pm :** Date of next meeting Tuesday 18th February 2025 at 7.15.pm.

**Signed by Meeting Chairman : …………………………………………………………………………………..**

**Date of signing : …………………………………………………………………………………….**

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