

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 18th February 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.

Apologies : J. Philpott.

In Attendance : Clerk.

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

**3454. Public Open Question Time :** No questions raised.

**3455. County Councillors Report :** No report received.

**3456. District Councillors Report :** KJ reported that TDC were discussing and working towards the Devolution Bill, which proposes one unitary Council for Devon and the existing District councils will no longer be in place. Some issues have been raised, regarding Adult Social Care within the county and discussions and proposals to develop a plan which is more favourable to North Devon councils are being held. An announcement in early March is due by the government on the amount awarded to TDC from the Levelling Up Fund. Cornwall are generally against a mayor of both counties. KJ had held meetings recently with the MP for North Cornwall and representatives from North Devon and others on the devolution topic. Exeter City would like to become unitary, but do not have enough populace to able to. TDC has a population of 70k, and North Devon has 90k. Parish councils could be given more powers but could run into difficulties with administration. TDC need to come up with a prospective plan and initial ideas within the next two weeks to submit, before the final draft in November. TDC have managed to balance their budget and multiple development projects are continuing well, the new Refuse collection centre, Marine Project and alternative electricity supply coming to the area.

**3457. Council Meeting Minutes :** Minutes of the meeting held on 14th January 2025 had been circulated to councillors prior to the meeting and were agreed by all present and signed by the chairman as correct. Proposed 1st, FC, 2nd SW, all councillors in favour.

**3458: Matters Arising :**  No Matters arising.

**3459 : To Receive Correspondence:** email from resident regarding 30mph for Mill Road,

Enquiry from prospective resident asking if there were any known restrictions of solar panels,

Clerk to reply: Speed limits currently under DCC new proposals and no restrictions on Solar roof panels and direct prospective resident to the TDC website for further information.

**3460 : Chairmans Report :** DH reported that he had been approached by several residents enquiring if the access could be opened between Southfields and the top of The Green. Councillors discussed this and felt the access would need to include disabled access and historically the police had not been in favour of doing so. However, it may provide a safer pedestrian access for those wishing to access the shop. KJ would look at the original plans.

He had attended a recent meeting of the TDC Collaborative working group in Langtree, where some parishes had expressed concerns with lack of Enforcement engagement. Sir G. C had been in attendance.

He would like a written letter of thanks sent to a parishioner who had made safe and improved various minor works around the village.

A blocked drain had been noted on the corner near Tamar House, the drain appeared completely blocked and water was pouring down the hill , coming off the fields near Glebe House during heavy rainfall and leading to flooding on the road from the school to Chapel Corner. Clerk to report to Highways. DH would talk to the field owners and see if improvements could be made.

**3461 : Vas Signs, Speedwatch Update and Highways :** JT reported that the first Speedwatch session had been carried out on the 22nd January on Middle Road in both directions. 38 vehicles had been observed and none were speeding. The group had received much positivity and praise from residents.

SW reported the following data from 14.1.25 to 17.02.25; Sign 1 at Vicarage Hill, 6986 passing vehicles, with 1153 travelling over 30mph which equates to 1 in 6. Average speed of 25.6 with a maximum of 45.4mph being recorded. Sign 2 at Middle Road, 7179 passing vehicles with 494 travelling over 30mph which equates to 1 in 14.5. Average speed recorded was 22mph with a maximum speed of 42.2mph. It was noted that vehicles were travelling very fast down the hill approaching the school.

Road Closures , road from Chapel Corner to Furze Cross from Monday 10th March to Friday 14th March, new electricity cabling and upgrading supply for National Grid, a reminder from last month’s meeting,

Road from Newacott Cross to Victoria House, Tuesday 22nd April to Friday 25th April, Service Trenchworks for Sewer/storm water connections.

**3462 :**  **Accounts and Accounts due for payment -** Finance sheets had been circulated to councillors,

Invoices this month, SC Garden Services, £600.00 for site clearing at Southfields,

Devon County Council, £50.00 for remaining balance on the new grit bin for Littlebridge,

Current account balance agreed at £7562.10 on 31st January 2025.

DH thanked KJ for the grant of £50 from his councillor’s grant fund, to cover the balance.

Proposed, 1st, FC, 2nd JMD, all councillors in favour.

**3463 :** **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.

**3464 : Playpark Update :**  As the annual ROSPA inspection was to be carried out in April, councillors discussed previous recommendations. Replacement fencing had not been installed yet, FC to follow up. DH would install the gate fixing in March. This item to be on March’s Agenda.

**3465 :**   **Council Website :**  There had been some delays and issues with updating the website with regular monthly documents going back to August and to now. An alternative hosting company had provided competitive pricing and was based in Bude. Councillors discussed and agreed to use and transfer the services of Bude Seo as this represented an annual saving. Proposed 1st, JMD, 2nd SW, all councillors in favour. Clerk to contact current provider and arrange.

**3457 : Planning : 1/1025/2024/REM – Reserved Matters application for Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale for up to 5 no: dwellings pursuant to 1/0780/2022/OUT, Land at Grid reference 227726 102911, Bridgerule.**

Councillors discussed the amended application. Consultee comment to TDC,

“ The Council has no additional comment to make on the amended application.”

**3458 : Bridgerule Open Space Group :** An initial meeting on the 8th of February was attended by 16 interested residents and it was agreed that a committee to run the group would be chaired by FC and consist of JMD as the 2nd parish council representative and 5 residents. Clerk had prepared a draft Constitution which was discussed by councillors and to be amended before circulation. A plan had been prepared by one of the residents, for group discussion. A query on ownership of the stream had been raised. FC would contact the committee members to arrange a meeting in the first instance, clerk to provide contact information. No date can be arranged for the next meeting of the whole group at present.

**3459 :**  **Village Hall/Shop Update :** The shop continues to do well, a new Butchery supplier is supplying them with fresh meat and is selling well. General shop sales continue to increase from January. A new volunteer will be joining the existing shop volunteers and is enrolled in the Duke of Edinburgh’s scheme.

**3460 :**  **Clerks Report :** Electoral Register changes this month are 3 deletions and 3 creations .

**3461 :** **Exchange of Information :** The pothole on the road to Bridgemoor Cross had not been repaired, KB reported this on DCC portal.

Some residents have asked for additional lighting to be placed on the bridge, existing street lighting is on both sides of the bridge,

A couple of nasty falls had been noted recently, where residents had slipped and fell in the carpark on uneven ground. Ideally, the carpark surface would need to be re- tarmacked.

**3462. Meeting closed at 8.41 pm :** Date of next meeting Tuesday 18th March at 7.15 pm.

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

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

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