

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 18th March 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, J. McDougall, S. Cholwill, K. Bowditch, J. Trayford,

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

Apologies : J. Morrish, F. Cogdell, M. Tape.

In Attendance : Clerk.

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

**3463. Public Open Question Time :** No questions raised.

**3464. County Councillors Report :** As Cllr JM had been delayed, his report was given by telephone. Main changes for DCC were that Torbay were going ahead with the Devolution framework and County Council Elections were to take place in May. There were approximately just over 2 weeks before the purdah period came into being. He reported on County Finances and that the budget for the coming year was not great but could be worse. From the budget of around £120 million, only £60 million remained after setting aside budgets for essential services like Child and Adult Social care. The £60 million would provide operational needs for the council. After the election, the share of seats from party candidates could change from the current parties share now. The council discussed with Cllr JM by telephone conference call concerns regarding recently introduced speed limits by DCC and areas within the parish which were not included. Some of the areas, including Churchtown were still subject to national speed limits which was unsafe in this small residential area. JM offered to come to Bridgerule as soon as possible, for further discussion, clerk to contact and arrange.

**3465. District Councillors Report :** KJ reported that TDC had received £20 million funding from central government and were working on development projects within the area. Plans to develop the Old Cattle Market in Holsworthy, the Manor Offices and more possibilities in Bideford and Torrington were continuing. Plans for the future LGR were continuing with many meetings taking place for TDC to present ideas and suggestions for the LGR. Some districts within the county were in favour of 2 or 3 unitaries, who would be responsible for everything the districts currently do, including Refuse, Planning and Governance. KJ had recently attended a conference in Windsor about the topic. The Appledore project, new Refuse centre were going ahead and TDC were looking at provision of additional housing at Bideford. DH asked about the situation with Exeter council, KJ replied that they had a population of around 120,00 and were possibly looking at amalgamation with East Devon Council. Torbay would bid for a single Unitary and Plymouth is nearly big enough to become a sole unitary and want to go alone. Some districts wish to form a Unitary split into two. TDC need to submit written letters by Friday and these include 5 different options on the subject.

**3466. Council Meeting Minutes :** Minutes of the meeting held on 18th February 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, JMD, 2nd JT, all councillors in favour.

**3467: Matters Arising :**  No Matters arising.

**3468 : To Receive Correspondence:** email from resident regarding recent flooding at Mill Road, clerk had contacted JM regarding this.

Enquiry from resident enquiring on installation of a new gate in existing gateway at Dux Cross, DH had contacted resident and would meet to discuss at the site, KJ advised no planning permission needed for this.

Two letters from residents regarding recently amended Speed limits, clerk to reply to both after meeting with JM.

Sent ; Letter of thanks to resident who had recently made repairs around the village.

**3469 : Chairmans Report :** DH had nothing further to add, other than what had been reported within the DCC report and call.

**3470 : New 20mph Zones :** Councillors reiterated what had been discussed with JM, the 20 sign on the bridge was not very visible to approaching cars as it was partially obscured by the bridge sign and the post had been place in the middle of the entrance to the Water works just off the bridge, making access to the area difficult. 20 had been painted in white along the roads within the speed limit zones. New 30mph signs in the village had been noted.

**3471 : Accounts and Accounts due for payment -** Finance sheets had been circulated to councillors,

Invoices this month, SC Garden Services, £102.00 for grass cutting,

Bude SEO services, £230.34 for new website hosting services, including the annual domain payment,

Clerks Expenses, £4.89, for postage and stationery,

Current account balance agreed at £6533.00 on 28th February 2025.

Proposed 1st, KB, 2nd KJ, all councillors in favour.

**3472 : Playpark Update :** The annual ROSPA inspection has been booked for some time during April. Councillors discussed last years report and DH had modified the gate hinge in line with its recommendations. Fencing was noted to be poor and in need of replacement. SC reported that a donor would be willing to provide wood needed, but a fencing contractor would be needed to do the work. DH would follow this up and the item to be discussed at next month’s meeting. Safety flooring under the Carousel had been affected by recent flooding and no progress to date with contact from South West Water who were responsible for the leak. SC would give contact name to clerk in case needed for insurance purposes.

**3473 : Vas Signs, Speedwatch Update and Highways :** JT reported no Speedwatch sessions this month, due to the recent change in Speed limits and not becoming statute until the 28th March. Clarification would be sought from Devon HQ Speedwatch as operational documentation referred to 30mph.

SW reported the following data from 14.1.25 to 17.02.25; Sign 1 at Vicarage Hill, 4540 passing vehicles, with 455 travelling over 30mph which equates to 1 in 13. Average speed of 22.1 with a maximum of 42.6mph being recorded. This sign had now been reset at 20mph.

Data from 4 days to the 18th March, were 429 passing vehicles, with 206 travelling between 20 and 25mph and 102 travelling at 25-30mph. 28 were travelling over 30mph. Data to be sent to Cllr. JM for information.

Sign 2 at Middle Road, 6123 passing vehicles with 429 travelling over 30mph which equates to 1 in 13.4 Average speed recorded was 22.1mph with a maximum speed of 43.8mph .

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

**3474 : 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.**

**1/0850/2024/FUL – 1 dwelling, design amendments, Enscot, Bridgerule.**

**Information only,** both applications granted permission.

**3475 : Bridgerule Open Space Group :** No further updates this month, clerk had received multiple emails from residents and would forward on to FC.

**3476 :**. **Village Hall/Shop Update :** KB reported that the hall continues to do well and has a new regular booking on a Thursday evening. Shop sales are increasing now, and the shop has both busy and quiet days.

**3477 : Clerks Report :** Clerks report – Attended the LEVI workshop with DCC on the 4th March. Presentation and information given by representatives of DCC. The process of appointing Scheme operators is underway and should be completed by May 2025. Phase 1 of the scheme should be completed by November 26 with all installations completed by March 2028. 71 sites for consideration in Phase 1, including Bridgerule. Contracts and performance will be managed by DCC and the appointed operators will maintain the sites for 10-15 years. Most sites will have 2 EV charging sockets and be marked EV Bays. Landowners will receive a share of the revenue likely to be around 3% on a quarterly basis. Operators will install equipment, landscape and construct. Maintenance will be carried out by the appointed company. Electricity supply will be from a separate meter, paid for by the company. Payment will be via contactless cards mainly. Once locations have been agreed and the site assessed, a lease agreement will be drawn up for signing between DCC and the landowners. There is no set programme for installation and delivery.

Holsworthy Police and Parish teams meetings resumed on 26th February with new neighbourhood officer PC Ithildin. Will be held 4 weekly. Some quad bike thefts had been reported in the area, along with White Van reports of suspicious behaviour. Landowners were asked to vigilant with equipment stored in rural area sheds. No replacement PSCO yet.

Electoral Register changes this month, 2 creations, 4 deletions and 2 amendments. New model Regulatory documents coming through from NALC, clerk will update existing policies as necessary and circulate for discussion and approval by council for next month.

**3478 :** **Exchange of Information :** Some concerns expressed by residents to councillors about the decision by Ruby Country Medical practice to no longer provide hospital requested routine blood tests at its practices in Holsworthy and Hatherleigh from April, requiring those requiring them to travel distances of over 70 miles round trips, local MP was aware and clerk to write to MP in support of those affected and request urgent action in seeking alternatives if possible.

Some streetlights had been noted as being lit all night, one is known to owned by Westward Housing and has been reported to them previously and another which is the responsibility of DCC. This light can be reported on the DCC portal and the lighting column will display its reference number, which will be needed for the faulty reporting form on the portal.

**3479 : Meeting closed at 8.28 pm :** Date of next meeting Tuesday 15th April at 7.30 pm. Meeting start times will revert to 7.30pm for the summer months.

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

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