

Minutes of the Council Meeting held 02/01/25, 19:00 at Witheridge Parish Hall

PRESENT:

Cllr Harvey	Chairman		Cllr Fox	Cllr Richardson
Cllr Northam	Vice Chairman	Cllr Cunningham		Cllr Smith
		Cllr Dorow		

In Attendance:

Parish Clerk

“Minutes of proceedings of a council and of its committees must be kept. They are intended to be formal records of official acts and decisions, not reports, still less verbatim reports of speeches...” Local Council Administration.

1. To receive the following Reports (strictly maximum 15 minutes – long reports should be submitted in advance to allow circulation to councillors prior to the meeting– submitted reports will be appended to meeting minutes):-

1.1. County and District.

None.

1.2. Police Advocate update.

<https://devonandcornwall-pcc.gov.uk/councillor-advocate-scheme>
<https://www.police.uk/pu/your-area/devon-and-cornwall-police/south-molton/>

1.3. Parish Groups with Council Representatives.

None.

2. Public Session (maximum 3 mins per subject overall max. 15 minutes).

(Please note in accordance with Council Standing Order 3(h) a question shall not give rise to a debate or require an immediate response).

None.

Council Session – No public participation

3. To Approve Apologies for Absence.

Apologies noted from Cllr Jones. Cllr Cunningham advised Cllr Bibby was likely still at work.

4. Minutes.

4.1. 05/12/24. To sign if approved, minutes of the Council.

RESOLVED: Cllr Northam proposed, Cllr Cunningham seconded and all were in favour approval.

5. To consider Code of Conduct Matters:-

5.1. Written councillor dispensation requests arising.

None.

5.2. Declarations of Interests.

(Code of Conduct available on website under Finance & Policy*).

Agenda	Councillor	Reason	Dispensation
	None		

5.3. To consider any application(s) Co-Option to fill councillor vacancy.

None.

6. To consider the following Planning & Licensing Matters.

6.1. Planning applications received following agenda publication.

None.

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6.2. Enforcement Issues Arising.

None.

7. To consider the following Finance & Policy matters:-**7.1. Finance update circulated to councillors' for review.**

RESOLVED: Cllr Cunningham proposed, Cllr Richardson seconded and all were in favour to note 29/12/24 Report and Bank Reconciliation including online banking payments raised reviewed with no issues.

7.2. Sanction payment schedule appended & instruct signatories.

RESOLVED: Cllr Dorow proposed, Cllr Richardson seconded and all were in favour settlement accounts 7.2.1 through 7.2.12 (7.2.1 subject to verification of works to take down Christmas Tree in The Square), **clerk to setup online payments, Chairman to authorise, Cllr Northam to verify tree works.**

7.3. NDC Confirmation Band D rate for 2025/26 (dated 17/12/24).

Correspondence confirmed Band D rate of £79.79 and noted.

7.4. Parish Council Section 106 Working Group Update (Chairman).**7.5. 2025 Meeting Dates Schedule.**

<https://www.middevonparish.co.uk/witheridge/meetings/2025/> .

Dates noted, Cllr Northam queried whether April's Annual Parish Meeting scheduled to start at 18:30 was too early for any councillors. There were no objections to this or continuing with scheduled council meetings commencing at the new time adopted of 19:00.

8. To consider the following Property/Environment matters:-**8.1. Highways, Drainage & Public Rights of Ways Issues.**

<https://devon.roadworks.org/> | <https://www.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/>

Cllr Fox raised a lane drainage issue likely to cause problems with freezing temperatures, link to DCC online reporting system were forwarded to Cllr Fox.

8.2. DCC Annual Parish Paths Survey 2025.

Cllr Dorow and the Chairman agreed to survey the same paths a last year. Clerk to circulate schedule to all councillors for volunteers to undertake unallocated paths. **Clerk to action.**

8.3. Grounds Maintenance Estimates for:-**8.3.1. Replacement of Lakelands corner bench.****8.3.2. Address rutting Parish Hall Playground pedestrian entrance.****8.3.3. Removal of gorse bushes at Adventure Playground.**

RESOLVED: Cllr Dorow proposed, Cllr Northam seconded and all were in favour accepting the estimates subject to 8.3.1 being inclusive of any additional concrete foundation requirements. **Clerk to action.**

8.4. NDC - Pest Control in The Square.

Correspondence dated 02/12/24 advising the District Council do not provide a pest control service and property owner(s) impacted should seek private contractors; the District Council only "investigate an infestation in certain circumstances, for example: pests arising from neighbouring land or property or public health issues – for example, pests in a shop, restaurant or workplace".

8.5. Tenant – Proposal for installation of Airband broadband connection at public toilet block to service hair salon (Consider any Conservation Area Consent requirements).

Noted, cllrs requested a scale drawing of the proposed installation and confirmation of planning requirements required. **Clerk to notify tenant.**

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8.6. Adventure Playground – Skateramp Repairs Update (Cllr Dorow).

Cllr Dorow reported he was seeking further information from the contractor (A) he had been dealing with to provide a revised quotation. Cllr Cunningham reiterated he was aware of another contractor (B) however they charge £200 to travel to site, refundable if awarded contract.

RESOLVED: Cllr Smith proposed, Cllr Richardson seconded and all were in favour a further attempt to contact A, failing this to proceed to invite B to quote. **Cllrs Dorow and Cunningham to action.**

8.7. Defibrillator Provision Update.

Cllr Northam reported L&G had responded to the clerk’s written grant application advising an online application form was now available. The clerk confirmed he had resubmitted the application online.

9. Correspondence / Consultations Received for consideration:-

9.1. Witheridge in Bloom – Grant thanks.

Correspondence dated 17/12/24 noted.

9.2. NDC - Updated Five Year Housing Land Supply Statement.

Correspondence dated 04/12/24 noted.

9.3. NDC - Parish Boundary Review.

Correspondence dated 28/12/24 noted.

10. Dates of Next meetings recommended:-

10.1. Finance & General Purposes Committee - 16/01/25.

Cllrs Smith and Richardson advised they were unavailable. Alternative dates and substitutions were discussed. It was agreed to continue with 16/01/25 with Cllr Fox substituting Cllr Richardson.

10.2. Parish Council - 06/02/25 – agenda deadline noon 24/01/25.

Noted.

10.3. Agenda Items for consideration by the next meeting.

None.

Meeting closed 20:42

Payments

Item	Ref	Payee	Purpose	£
7.2.1.	OB	Hooper Services (SW) Ltd	Grounds Maintenance *306	1950.00
7.2.2.	OB	S Sandland	Toilet Management & Cleaning Contract	220.00
7.2.3.	OB	Mid Devon Mobility	Funding Contribution	50.00
7.2.4.	OB	Citizens Advice	Funding Contribution	50.00
** Staff Salaries & Expenses **				
7.2.5.		Redacted under GDPR	Total:-	1050.86
7.2.6.				
7.2.7.				
7.2.8.				
7.2.9.				
To Ratify:-				
7.2.10.	DD	EDF Energy	Public Toilet Block Electricity Charges *006	109.48
7.2.11.	OB	N Stevens	Xmas Tree Supply & Delivery *20	600.00

Invoices Received after Agenda compilation - To Be Ratified

7.2.12.	OB	Hooper Services (SW) Ltd	Grounds Maintenance *311	108.00
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Signed:

Chairman.

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Agenda Item 3 – Reports

Police – Cllr Smith

Chief Constable James Vaughan appointed.

Outlined stats from Operation Scorpion.

Four Advocate Meetings planned for 2025, three online.

Update on surgeries, likely sessions will be reduced to one hour.