

CULMSTOCK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on 12th January 2022 in Culmstock Village Hall at 7pm.

Present: Cllrs. Miss L Jones (Chairman), Mrs J Zebedee, C Kay, Mrs J Saunders, Mrs R Balchin, G Barr, T Platel, MDDC Cllr. S Clist, MDDC J Bartlett (part of meeting) and the Clerk. Mr J Doody was present for the entire meeting being co-opted at minute 136.

1. Democratic Period: None.
2. Apologies: Cllr. G Bass & DCC Cllr. R Radford.
3. Co-option of Parish Councillors: Mr Doody was in attendance in respect of co-option. Cllr. Doody was proposed by Cllr. Barr and seconded by Cllr. Mrs Balchin; all councillors were unanimous in their decision to co-opt Cllr. Doody. Cllr. Doody completed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office form.
4. Declarations of Interest: None.
5. The Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 08/12/21 were approved and duly signed by the Chairman.
6. Matters Arising: None.
7. **Planning and Planning Correspondence/Information.**
 - 7.1 Applications to be considered: None.
 - 7.2 Results of applications from Mid Devon District Council: None.
 - 7.3 To note that the following application has been withdrawn: 21/01885/OUT Outline for the erection of 2 dwellings and associated works, with all matters reserved. Applegarth, Silver Street, Culmstock. EX15 3JE.
 - 7.4 Any other planning matters: (i) Notification of MDDC Planning Training 20/01/22. (ii) It was noted that details have just been received in respect of an application for change of use in respect of The Methodist Church (22/00075/FULL) and this will be placed on the next agenda.
8. **Finance.**
 - 8.1 The bank balance was noted as £44,832.23 as at 31/12/21. Direct debits taken: Nest 20/12 - £79.09.
 - 8.2 **Payments were resolved:**
 - Chq 1630 £ 20.50 SMA Services Ltd. Payroll provider.
 - Chq 1631 £ 662.12 Clerk salary & expenses.
 - Chq 1632 £ 115.78 Parish warden salary & expenses.
 - Chq 1633 £ 2856.00 Blackdown Contractors Ltd. Grass cutting maintenance contract.
 - Chq 1634 £ 315.79 HMRC. Quarterly PAYE.
 - Chq 1635 £ 100.00 CHAT (Churches Housing Action Team (Mid Devon) Ltd). Donation.
 - Chq 1636 £ 16.00 Culmstock Village Hall. Room hire.
 - Chq 1637 £ 44.10 Volunteer Footpath Warden. P3 expenses.
 - Chq 1638 £ 148.25 P3 Co-ordinator. P3 expenses.
 - 8.3 Notification from MDDC with reference to the cost of cutting of verges on behalf of DCC for 2022/23 - £981.63: Agreed.
 - 8.4 Following requests, a donation of £100 each for Citizens Advice Torridge, North, Mid & West Devon and The Blackdown Support Group was agreed.
 - 8.5 Grass Maintenance Contract from April 2022: The Clerk and the Chairman will prepare paperwork to send out shortly in respect of renewal of the maintenance contract. *MDDC Cllr. Bartlett arrived.*
 - 8.6 Precept 2022/23 - to agree a figure for the Parish precept. Following an informal meeting of the financial advisory group and circulation to all of suggested figures to cover financial needs for the coming year, a report was given and it was resolved to set the precept for 2022/23 at £41,427. Funds include an annual grant towards the Christmas lights and the village hall, funds towards a replacement bench on the beacon, a sum towards celebrations to mark the Jubilee and improvements to the Parish playing field. A contingency fund/ general reserve will be held as required, and a fund will continue to be built for the Collier's bridge project. Councillors were unanimous in their decision to set the precept at £41,427. As in previous years, MDDC will deduct the subscription for DALC from the precept.
 - 8.7 Review of effectiveness of system of internal control: Resolved that arrangements in place are satisfactory.
 - 8.8 Any other financial matters: None.

9. Reports.

- 9.1** The Clerk: An informal online meeting has been arranged with Airband.
- 9.2** P3 Footpaths: A report had been received from the P3 co-ordinator which was circulated to all - the annual survey is underway and strimming should start shortly. Footpaths 1 and 11 are wet underfoot. It is hoped that improvements can be made to FP9 by clearing the ditches. Various stiles are in need of some attention.
- 9.3** Highways: A reminder that roadworks can easily be reported online via the DCC website.
- 9.4** Any other reports: Cllr. Miss Jones reported that it is hoped that works to the permissive path will commence shortly.
- 9.5** MDDC Cllr. Clist: (Cllr. Clist gave his report after minute 17): The district council is looking into three weekly collections in respect of waste with no change the recycling schedule. The Development Manager is keen to visit Parish Councils.
- 10.** Collier's bridge project: The possibility of someone to investigate applying for grants will be explored.
- 11.** Culmstock Play Area and Pavilion: A contractor has been asked to investigate the pavilion roof following a report that it is leaking again.
- 11.1** New dog bin: The new bin has been ordered. It was confirmed that £5 per week/£260 pa is the minimum cost for MDDC to empty bins and it was agreed for weekly emptying.
- 11.2** Any other matters: It was agreed that the wooden picnic tables would benefit from regular treatment to prolong their lifespan and that the woodwork on the pavilion and barbeque shelter should be treated yearly for woodworm. Works to the replacement fence have almost finished.
- 12.** Culmstock Cemetery: Works to the bier house have ceased temporarily due to poor weather.
- 13.** The Queen's Platinum Jubilee 2022: It is hoped that a group of volunteers can be formed. Cllrs: Mrs Zebedee, Barr, Mrs Balchin and Platel will encourage support and assist.
- 14.** Replacement Bench on Culmstock Beacon: Cllr. Mrs Saunders gave an update; details have been sent out to a few interested parties and the deadline for quotations to be received is 31/03/22.
- 15.** MDDC Parish Review: Deferred to the next meeting.
- 16.** Climate Change - Achievable objectives for Parishes: Deferred to a future meeting.
- 17.** Correspondence & Consultations: None.
MDDC Cllr. Clist gave his report here, see minute 9.5.
- 18.** The Council went into Part 2 for a staff salary review.
- 19.** Items for information, future agenda items, and future meeting dates: Apologies received from Cllr. Mrs Zebedee for 09/02/22. Future meetings - 09/2/22, 09/03/22, 13/04/22.