

CULMSTOCK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on 13th March 2024 at 7pm in Culmstock Village Hall

Present: Cllrs. Miss L Jones (Chairman), Mrs J Zebedee, Dr C Bass, Mrs J Saunders, Sarah Leppard (arrived during the democratic period), MDDC Cllr. Natasha Bradshaw and the Clerk. Two members of the public were present for the democratic period.

- 32.** Democratic Period: Two members of the public were present following approval of planning application 23/01241/CLP. Comments were noted by the Parish Council; whilst it is not the Planning authority, the Parish Council was sympathetic to the residents' comments.
- 33.** Apologies: Cllrs. Mrs R Balchin, C Kay and MDDC Cllr. S Clist.
- 34.** Declarations of Interest: Cllrs. Dr Bass and Sarah Leppard (DPI) due to personal payments in respect of cheque numbers 1907 and 1908.
- 35.** The Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 14/02/24 were approved and duly signed by the Chairman.
- 36.** Matters Arising: It was reported that the bench on the beacon has been marked with permanent pen; the bench will be repaired later in the year.
- 37. Planning and Planning Correspondence/Information.**
- a) Applications considered by the Parish Council:
-24/00232/HOUSE Erection of side extension, replacement of roof to porch, removal of conservatory and replacement of flat roof to rear. 1 Great Close, Culmstock. EX15 3HQ. No objections.
-24/00064/FULL Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of replacement dwelling. Waterslade, Nicholashayne. EX15 3HT. No objections.
- b) Results from Mid Devon District Council: The following Appeal is dismissed: APP/Y1138/W/23/3328724 Land at Bartletts, Culmstock, EX15 3HW. Change of use of agricultural land to allow the siting of 1 mobile home and associated works for the use of gypsy and traveller family (Revised Scheme).
- c) Any other Planning Matters. (i) Report on "Campaign to Protect Rural England" (CPRE) planning workshop - Cllrs. Mrs Zebedee and Dr Bass reported on workshop hosted by CPRE; slides have just been received and have been circulated to all. Cllr. Mrs Zebedee informed the Parish Council of information regarding Battery Energy Storage Systems and for a proposal at Junction 27, Willand. MDDC Cllr. Natasha Bradshaw will look into further details.
- 38. Culmstock Play Area and Pavilion.**
- a) Maintenance works: An estimate for various maintenance works has been received following the annual inspection - following a quotation for a new backboard for the basketball of £935 (ref 40c), enquiries will be made regarding a refurbished board. The contractor will be asked to provide a quotation for a new spinner if the existing spinner cannot be repaired - opposed to having a spinner bowl. Costs for further minor maintenance works will be sourced.
- b) Any other matters: The portable toilet will be in place from Easter. The annual Fire Risk Assessment has been carried out and a report will follow.
- 39. Reports.**
- a) The Chairman: None.
- b) The Clerk. (i) MDDC Cllr. Natasha Bradshaw will attend the Connecting the Culm event - Forum 6. (ii) The Clerk is to meet with the maintenance contractor shortly to look at all grass cutting areas before cutting commences. Fitting of replacement benches will also be looked at. The DCC grass owned areas as cut by MDDC will be looked at separately. (iii) Several parishioners attended the Resuscitation and Defibrillator Awareness Session as provided by South Western Ambulance Service Trust. (iv) Contact will be made with Devon Communities Together (DCT) together later in the year following an invitation from DCT regarding Emergency Planning.

Reports Continued:

- c) P3/Footpaths and/or Access. (i) Mid Devon Walking Festival – 14th to 29th September 2024: The footpath co-ordinator and footpath warden will not be hosting a walk; the Parish Council will promote the event for the district council. (ii) Apologies received from the P3 Footpath Coordinator and Volunteer Footpath Warden - a report was circulated to all: The P3 Survey forms have now been completed and will be submitted to DCC. The Clerk will submit the finance forms. FP4 - gatepost replacement cancelled again due to waterlogged site. FP29- reinstalled good part of old post, a lot shorter but able to fasten gate shut. Full size post to be fitted later. FP25 - cleaned small sleeper bridge, will need replacing soon. FP12 - renewed post on kissing gate fence, and 9 more posts in fence beside path. The Beacon area - more cycle tracks seen near Blackdown Gate entrance to Bridleway 34 and the common. It was noted that tools have been used. Rubbish has been found (*MDDC Cllr. Natasha Bradshaw will make contact with Natural England*). This is part of the common where ground nesting birds such as Nightjars are frequently heard during the season. BW34 - enquiries will be made regarding the combination padlock which has been replaced with a key operated padlock.
- d) Highways: Cllr. Dr Bass reported on a recent site visit with the newly appointed DCC Neighbourhood Highways Officer where a few issues were highlighted. It was noted that one area near the church does not meet the safety defect policy so no immediate action will be taken; it will be remarked when Parish remarking is due.
- e) Any other reports including reports from DCC & MDDC Councillors: MDDC Cllr. Natasha Bradshaw reported on The Blackdown Hills National Landscape Management Plan Review Workshop - the Plan is under review, MDDC Cllr. Natasha Bradshaw has asked for dark skies to be a consideration. The Plan will be going to consultation at the end of the year. The district council is in the top 10% of the country with Bin It 123. Recycling is at 53%. The collections of side waste has now ceased. Regulations regarding soft plastics are to be introduced. Cllr. Sarah Leppard, MDDC Cllr. Natasha Bradshaw and the Clerk will attend the upcoming State of the District Debate at the MDDC council offices.

40. Finance.

- a) Finance report - a report was given, the bank balance was noted as £44,465.63 as at 29/02/24. Credits: £57 in respect of cemetery fees on 19/02. Direct Debits: £108.90 Nest 06/02.
- b) Payments were resolved:
- Chq 1897 £ 19.94 SMA Services. Payroll provider.
 - Chq 1898 £ 820.80 Countrywide Grounds Maintenance Ltd. Maintenance contract.
 - Chq 1899 £ 864.67 Clerk - salary & expenses.
 - Chq 1900 £ 175.77 Parish warden - salary & expenses.
 - Chq 1901 £ 43.00 M Delamain. Maintenance at playing field.
 - Chq 1902 £ 18.00 Culmstock Village Hall. Room hire.
 - Chq 1903 £ 26.40 Eagle Plant. Fencing hire.
 - Chq 1904 £ 150.00 BHPN. Annual subscription.
 - Chq 1905 £ 100.88 Computerlink (Leicester) Ltd. Printer cartridges.
 - Chq 1906 £ 66.15 Volunteer Footpath Warden. Expenses ref. P3/footpath work.
 - Chq 1907 £ 51.26 C Bass. Expenses - travel to CPRE Planning workshop & printing. See declarations.
 - Chq 1908 £ 10.36 S Leppard. Expenses - refreshments at CPR/defibrillator session. See declarations.
 - Chq 1909 £ 396.00 Clerk - reference Royal Mail. Annual fee for P.O Box.
 - Chq 1910 Cheque cancelled
- Culmstock Village Hall: To note that cheque numbers 1877 and 1895 for £18 each have been cancelled and are replaced with cheque number 1911 for £36.00
- It was agreed to raise the following cheque for footpath works:*
- Chq 1912 83.76 P3 Co-ordinator (re: Brookridge Timber). P3 footpath work.
- c) Estimate from T K Play Ltd., for maintenance works at the play area following the annual inspection: It was agreed to defer works and the Clerk will make enquiries with the contractor regarding alternative options - see 38 (a).
- d) Estimate from M Delamain for replacement tap in cemetery - an estimate of £50 plus parts and labour was agreed for a self-closing tap.

Finance continued:

- e) Additional noticeboards for the Parish – estimate from Greenbarnes Ltd: Various sizes of noticeboards are available in recycled plastic. Other options will also be considered. It was agreed that a noticeboard will be ordered for the cemetery and play area at a later date, when it has been determined which of the other noticeboards are in need of being replaced - Cllrs. Mrs Zebedee and Dr Bass will carry out a survey of the Parish noticeboards.
 - f) Review of Fixed Asset Register: The register was updated and approved.
 - g) Any other financial matters: As above, it was agreed to raise cheque numbers 1911 and 1913.
41. **Culmstock Cemetery:** None.
42. **Collier's bridge project:** It was agreed to discuss this at a future meeting when all councillors are present. In the meantime the Clerk will enquire about the possible reallocation of S106 funds as held by the district council.
43. **Annual Parish Meeting 2024:** This will take place at 7pm on 08/05/24. Refreshments will be available; Cllr. Mrs Zebedee to organise.
44. **To agree to appoint Cllr. Mrs Balchin to the Playing Field Advisory Group:** Agreed.
45. **Correspondence & Any Consultations.**
Consultations:
DCC - Tiverton and Cullompton Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan consultation. *Cllr. Dr Bass to respond; a request for this to be extended to Hemyock and Culmstock.*
DCC - Devon & Torbay Devolution Deal: have your say on proposed devolution deal. *Noted, no comments.*
46. **Items for information, future agenda items, and future meeting dates.** Future meeting dates - 10/04/24 and 15/05/23. It was noted that the Soap Box Derby will take place in May; the village hall will cover the cost of insurance.