

CULMSTOCK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on 9th October 2024 at 7pm in Culmstock Village Hall

Present: Cllrs. Miss E Jones, Mrs J Zebedee, Mrs J Saunders, Mrs R Balchin, J Bartlett, MDDC Cllrs. Natasha Bradshaw & Simon Clist. DCC Cllr. R Radford was present at the start of the meeting.

DCC Cllr. Ray Radford gave his report here, first - see 137.5 for details. Cllr. Radford then left the meeting.

131. Democratic Period: None.

132. Apologies: Cllrs. Dr C Bass, C Kay & Sarah Leppard.

133. Declarations of Interest: None.

134. The Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 11/09/24 were approved and duly signed by the Chairman.

135. Matters Arising: The Clerk reported with reference to the possibility of a community orchard on the village green; feedback from DCC is that it is expected that this will be at the discretion of the DCC Neighbourhood Highways Officer (NHO). Ongoing maintenance will be the responsibility of the Parish. A site visit will be arranged the NHO.

136. Planning and Planning Correspondence/Information.

136.1 Applications considered: None received.

136.2 Results from Mid Devon District Council.

24/00913/HOUSE Erection of summerhouse. Oakridge 1A, Earland Rise, Culmstock, EX15 3FY. Approved.

24/01141/CAT Notification of intention to thin the crown of 1 Walnut tree and remove 1 Sweet Chestnut tree within the Conservation Area. The Old Bakery, Town Hill, Culmstock. EX15 3JQ. No objection.

24/01091/CLP Certificate of Lawfulness for the proposed enlargement of patio to the front of pavilion from 30 sqm to 64 sqm. Culmstock Cricket Club, Culmstock, EX15 3HS. Approved.

24/01155/HOUSE Erection of two-storey extension and link and siting of an air source heat pump following removal of single storey lean-to and conservatory. Whitting House, Nicholashayne. TA21 9QY. Approved.

24/00898/LBC Listed Building Consent for re-rendering exterior elevations with lime render. Cadbury House, Fore Street, Culmstock. EX15 3JD. Approved.

136.3 For Information - to note that the following application was withdrawn as notified on 12/09/24:

24/00934/FULL Construction and operation of a micro energy storage facility. Land at NGR [310218 114073](#) Hunters Way, Culmstock.

136.4 Neighbourhood Planning - report from the Clerk on information received: The Clerk gave some information as received from the Campaign to Protect Rural England, MDDC and Devon Communities Together (DCT) which will be circulated to all together with The Councillors Guide to Neighbourhood Planning. It was agreed to discuss at a future meeting when all councillors could be present.

136.5 Any other Planning Matters: None.

137. Reports.

137.1 The Chairman/Vice-Chairman: None.

137.2 The Clerk: The Clerk reported on the Devon Association of Local Councils AGM & Conference and details of training; Clerk reserved for two training sessions with DALC and separately, possible website training for updates. Notification of the upcoming Annual Clerks meeting in November at MDDC - Clerk to attend.

137.3 P3/Footpaths and/or Access: Apologies from the P3 Team, report as follows - FP12, the fenced section of the path has been strimmed and the hedge pared. Hunkin Wood entrance has been strimmed and hedge cut to allow for maintenance vehicles to park inside the gate when working on FP 11&12. FP1A, the tree which had fallen across the path above the boardwalk has been cut up and removed. FP21 & Craddock Rd, following heavy rain road side gratings cleared to allow the flooded road to drain. Culvert in the lane cleared of debris and gravel. The Clerk will enquire with DCC reference clearing under the road drain pipes so the water from the lane (FP21) does not force its way up through the grating and flood the road - the local Lengths man was unable to rod through the blockage.

- 137.4** Highways. (i) The Clerk reported on behalf of Cllr. Dr Bass on “20’s Plenty” signage - cost approximately £32 each. Councillors will consider where signs could be placed and report at a future meeting; an application can be made to The Locality Budget as discussed with DCC Cllr. Radford at 137.5.
- 137.5** Any other reports including reports from DCC & MDDC Councillors. (i) DCC Cllr Radford reported on his Locality Budget which Culmstock Village Hall will apply to. The Parish Council will consider signage as 137.4. A report was circulated to all, details include - Tiverton and Cullompton are areas considered growth areas for expansion. See DCC online for the Local Transport Plan (LTP4) - to deliver an updated and adopted LTP4, it is recommended that a public consultation is approved to enable residents, businesses and other stakeholders further opportunity to have input to the plan. This consultation will build upon the extensive consultation already progressed for many of the draft LTP4’s schemes, strategies and policies. Over half of the population of Devon live in rural areas or in the market and coastal towns. These areas have attractive landscapes that contribute to a good quality of life. The longer distances to schools, work or shops means walking, wheeling and cycling may not always be a viable option. Residents are more reliant on the car and often rely on nearby market and coastal towns for key facilities. The Cullompton & Tiverton Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) focuses on a core area encompassing Cullompton and the proposed Culm Graden Village. Cullompton and Tiverton are historic market towns, with their location near Exeter making them attractive places to live for those commuting for work, key services or leisure. New planned housing developments mean that the population of Cullompton is due to rise from 8,900 to 18,000 by 2033 & Tiverton from 22,400 to 30,000 in the same period. At the most recent Corporate Infrastructure and Regulatory Services (CIRS) there were five options to choose from for the supply of Highways Maintenance from 2027 onwards, together with all anticipated cost of each. Recommendation to Cabinet for the All in-House option which would see all of the highway maintenance operations being managed and delivered by a Direct Labour Organisation (DLO), with staff directly employed by the county council which would retain the ability to establish framework contracts to deliver certain work streams, specialist operations or provide additional capacity. The efficiency and effectiveness of a newly formed in-house organisation will depend on good management. Extra funds added to the roads budget has meant patching repairs undertaken in the past four months are the equivalent of around 80% of the patching achieved for the whole of the last financial year. More funding is required from central government to make a bigger impact on the condition of the 8,000-mile road network. There is currently a highway maintenance backlog of £200 million in Devon which is increasing by £15 million per year - the national backlog is £16.3 billion. The last two winters and the extreme rainfall in the first half of this year have caused a huge amount of damage to our roads. Extensive work is being carried out on all categories of roads right across the county, and DCC is ensuring that the extra investment goes as far as possible. The number of children in care reduced from 882 in May to 860 as at the start of August. 65 of these are young asylum seekers reflecting a reduction of 6 since May 2024. Despite this overall reduction, placement budgets are forecast to overspend by £7.5 million. Financial risks within Integrated Adult Social Care and Children and Young People’s Futures are still being experienced, but the work underway across the whole authority to support these pressures continues to ensure the whole organisation is focused on achieving a break-even position for the end of the year.
- (ii) MDDC Cllrs. Natasha Bradshaw & Simon Clist - details of pension credit have been circulated. The modular homes have recently won awards. Funding for Cullompton Relief Road has been approved. A strong response has been submitted in response to the NPPF. A consultation is due out shortly on a revised management plan from Blackdown Hills National Landscape.

138. Finance.

138.1 Finance report - a report was given and the bank balance was noted as at 30/09/24 as £41,890.92.

138.2 Payments were resolved:

- Chq 1979 £ 791.54 Clerk - salary & expenses.
- Chq 1980 £ 152.77 Parish warden - salary & expenses.
- Chq 1981 £ 21.94 SMA Services. Payroll provider.
- Chq 1982 Spoilt cheque
- Chq 1983 £ 858.43 Countrywide Grounds Maintenance Ltd. Maintenance contract.
- Chq 1984 £ 202.86 Eagle Plant. Portable toilet hire.
- Chq 1985 £ 25.00 The Open Spaces Society. Publication.
- Chq 1986 £ 577.80 HMRC. Quarterly payment.
- Chq 1987 Spoilt cheque
- Chq 1988 £ 249.33 MDC Exports. Dog bags & replacement dispensers.

Finance Continued:

- 138.3** Poppy Appeal - Donation to the Royal British Legion: It was agreed for a donation of £120.00 - chq 1989.
- 138.4** Parish Council bank accounts - the Clerk reported on a 95 day notice account with Lloyds Bank; transfer is one way from a nominated account. It was agreed that this would be beneficial to hold an amount of reserve funds. The Clerk will report at a future meeting.
- 138.5** Any other financial matters: None.
- 139. Culmstock Play Area and Pavilion:** Further quotations for monkey bars are awaited. Cllr. Mrs Zebedee and the Clerk are in the process of sourcing quotations for a Petanque piste. The handyman has been sent details of general maintenance required on site.
- 140. Hillmoor Common:** None.
- 141. Culmstock Cemetery.**
- 141.1** Richard Grant Memorials - further details will be requested, following a request for approval for the option of QR codes to be included on memorials via applications for memorial headstones/tablets.
- 141.2** Any other matters: The Clerk will liaise with the maintenance contractor with reference to the inner hedge as nesting season finishes.
- 142. Parish Benches:** The Clerk and Parish Warden will look at the possibility of any more memorial benches in the cemetery.
- 143. Correspondence & Any Consultations.**
- Correspondence:** Clerks and Councils Direct. Open Spaces Society Autumn 2024 magazine. CPRE Devon Voice Autumn 2024 & notification of AGM on 16/10/24. Various generic emails.
- Consultations:** Devon and Torbay Local Transport Plan 4 - noted. Devon Countywide Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) public consultation - *to be carried forward to the next agenda; Cllr. Natasha Bradshaw encouraged a response with reference to the LCWIP.*
- 144. Items for information, future agenda items, and future meeting dates:** 13/11/24 and 11/12/24.