

**Minutes of the Clayhidon Parish Council Meeting
Held at Parish Hall, Clayhidon, at 7.45pm on Monday 20 May 2024**

Present:

Councillors Weekes (Chair), Bendle, Blackmore, Drew and King.

Councillors Clist (MDDC) was also present together with Mrs S McGeever (Parish Clerk).

1. To elect the Chairman and receive declaration of acceptance of office

Councillor Weekes proposed that Councillor Saunders be elected as Chairman and Councillor Drew remain as Vice-Chairman.

PROPOSAL: Councillor Saunders be elected as Chairman. He had advised the current Chair that he was willing to take on the position.

PROPOSER: Councillor Weekes

SECONDER: Councillor Blackmore

It was unanimously RESOLVED that Councillor Saunders would be elected as Chairman and his acceptance of office has been received by Councillor Weekes.

2. To elect the Vice-Chairman and receive declaration of acceptance of office

Following Councillor Weekes proposal under 1. Above:

PROPOSAL: Councillor Drew be re-elected as Chairman.

PROPOSER: Councillor Weekes

SECONDER: Councillor Blackmore

It was RESOLVED that Councillor Drew would be elected as Chairman and he declared his acceptance of the office.

Councillor Drew the newly elected Vice-Chair took over the Chair from Councillor Weekes in the absence of Councillor Saunders.

3. Welcome by Chairman, apologies for absence and introductions

Councillor Drew (Chair) welcomed those present to the meeting.

Apologies had been received from Councillors Kidner and Saunders together with Councillor Radford (DCC).

4. Declarations of Interest/Dispensations

There were no declarations of interest.

5. To approve minutes of the meeting on 8 April 2024

It was RESOLVED that with minutes of the meeting of 8 April 2024 should be signed by the Chairman as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

PROPOSER: Councillor Blackmore

SECONDER: Councillor King

DECISION: unanimous

6. Public Participation

No items were raised.

7. Planning

7.1. To consider the following planning applications:

No planning applications had been received for consultation.

7.2 To note the following planning decisions:

The following Decision Notice was noted:

24/00387/HOUSE – APPROVED 2 May 2024

Proposal: Erection of a rear extension

Location: Beech Cottage Smeatharpe Honiton Devon

8. Finance

The Clerk had circulated the latest account information to councillors.

8.1 Unity Bank Current Account

Balance on 31 March 2024	£2146.65	
Plus receipts:		
Internal transfer	£2500.00	£4646.65
Less invoices paid:		
S McGeever wages	£ 844.10	
Blackdown Hills Parish Network	£ 80.00	
Chris Houghton	£ 643.50	
Bridport Radio – clayhidon.org.uk	£ 100.00	
Savills (Recreation Field)	£ 323.00	
DALC (membership)	£ 196.81	
Clayhidon Village Hall grant	£2000.00	
S McGeever expenses	£ 99.48	
HMRC (PAYE)	£ 252.00	£4538.89
Balance on 30 April 2024	£ 107.76	

A transfer of £2000 has been made on 14 May 2024 from the Instant Access account to the Current account.

Payments requiring authorisation from last meeting:

Blackdown Support Group (grant)	£ 750.00
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It was RESOLVED that the payment should be made.

PROPOSER: Councillor Blackmore

SECONDER: Councillor King

DECISION: unanimous

Councillor Clist advised that some Parish Councils were reviewing their grant allocations.

8.2 Unity Bank Instant Access Account

Balance on 31 March 2024	£52495.80	
Credits:		
MDDC (Precept)	£ 5125.00	£57620.80
Less payments:		
Internal Transfer	£ 2500.00	£ 2500.00
Balance on 30 April 2024	£55120.80	

(includes Mary Parsons Gift Trust)

Request to change the address needs to be completed.

8.3 Signing of the contract for the Parish Clerk/RFO.

It was noted that the Clerk had prepared but not brought the contract.

8.4 Internal audit

The year end accounts have been sent to the Parish Council and the accountant. The Clerk was awaiting details from the accountant as to the additional paperwork required to complete the internal audit.

The following advice has been received regarding the Mary Parsons Gift Trust.

This is a small council, below £25,000. As it prepares receipts and payments accounts, it will need to show the receipt arriving (even though it shouldn't have) and the payment being made in the accounts. This will push the council into the over £25,000 band and require an external audit for at least one year, or two if the receipt and the payment occur in different financial years.

The Clerk advised that all efforts should be made to transfer the monies out of the Parish Council account during the year 2024/25 and this was noted by the Parish Council.

8.5 Financial regulations

The Parish Council noted that as advised by DALC, new financial regulations have been issued by NALC and a document will be prepared for the next meeting.

8.6 Purchase of a Parish Computer

The Clerk felt it would be advisable for the Parish Council to have its own laptop to ensure continuity in the future. The cost is likely to be between £250 and £400 depending on the model.

It was RESOLVED that the Parish Council should purchase its own computer.

PROPOSER: Councillor Weekes

SECONDER: Councillor Drew

DECISION: unanimous

9. Annual Return

The annual return will be prepared for the June 2024 meeting following the completion of the internal audit and submitted to the External Auditor in accordance with the timescales provided.

10. General Power of Competence

The Parish Council is not eligible to adopt the General Power of Competence as the current Clerk is not CILCA qualified.

The Clerk is undertaking the qualification.

11. Policies and Procedures

The Parish Council had received the core documents for review prior to the meeting.:

- Code of Conduct
- Standing Orders
- Financial Regulations

It was RESOLVED to adopt the policies in the knowledge that updated Financial Regulations (reported under Finance) would be presented to Council.

PROPOSER: Councillor Blackmore

SECONDER: Councillor Weekes

DECISION: unanimous

12. Clerk Update and Correspondence

Website

A redirect has been placed on the old website and a 'zip' file had been received containing all the data from the previous website.

Councillor Weekes advised that she had received a warning notice on the old site.

Action: Clerk to investigate

Email addresses

The change to the Parish Council email addresses was ongoing.

Locality Budget for a new village sign

The sign has been ordered and the monies (£250) will go directly to Highways with the Parish Council being invoiced for the remaining monies (£250).

Emergency Plan

The Clerk advised that there was a meeting on 12 June 2024 from 7-9pm at the Magelake Pavilion in Uffculme with Devon Communities Together and MDDC representatives to inform local Parish Councils on how to create an Emergency Plan. Parishes will also receive visit to look at any local issues.

The Parish Council would send to representatives to the meeting.

Action: All

The Portrait of King Charles III

The portrait had been received and would be hung in the Village Hall

Visit to Neroche Wild Area

Councillor Weekes had hoped that two residents would attend. Report awaited.

13. County Council Report

Councillor Radford had given his apologies.

14. District Council Report

Councillor Clist thanked Councillor Weekes for her Chairmanship and wished Councillors Saunders and Drew good luck.

The key points to raised were:

- a. Finance – MDDC was on course to balance the books over the next three years.
- b. Social housing – MDDC were looking to provide additional affordable housing and social rented accommodation. Plans for 30-35 social rented homes at Crediton, Tiverton, Cullompton and Hemyock had been passed but there were currently 105 applicants per property.
- c. Councillor Bradshaw had been given the Climate Change portfolio and was looking for MDDC to be Net Zero by 2030 and an action group was being put in place. There was now a requirement for 10% biodiversity next gain on any application and the idea of 'green walls' could form part of that. The local plan was looking to build such elements into the documentation.
- d. Inclusion of towns and parishes – the State of the District debate had been the first step along the path to increasing the role of towns and parishes in decision making and Councillor DuChesne had taken on this portfolio.

Councillor Clist was pleased to report that MDDC recycling rate was in the top 10% of councils and that bin and side was decreasing. Currently 62% of waste going to landfill across the country could be recycled.

The Devo deal would see £16m given to Devon County Council and Torbay with £8m going directly to the two authorities and £8m being distributed through a bidding process to the eight districts.

He finished by thanking the Parish Council for their support.

Councillor Weekes asked if the Parish Council should develop a Neighbourhood Plan and he believed it was worthwhile.

15. Highways/Footpaths

15.1 Appointment of the lengthsman

It was RESOLVED that Chris Houghton would be appointed the lengthsman for the parish.

The Clerk would prepare a breakdown of work spent on footpaths and village maintenance and work carried out on potholes.

PROPOSER: Councillor Blackmore

SECONDER: Councillor Weekes

DECISION: unanimous

15.2 Appointment of the Footpaths representative

It was RESOLVED that Phil West would be appointed the Footpaths Officer for the parish.

PROPOSER: Councillor King

SECONDER: Councillor Drew

DECISION: unanimous

15.3 Purchase of equipment for potholes

The Clerk reported that she had not yet received approval for the purchase of the wacker.

Action: Clerk to contact Highways

With regard to Footpaths, it was noted that the new wooded sign at Bellets (Footpath 15) had not been erected and the Clerk would contact Richard Spurway.

Action: Clerk

16. Clayhidon Charity, Mary Parsons Gift Trust, Mary Waldron & John Griss Charity

Following discussions with the Charity Commission, the Clerk had advised that only a Trustee can make changes to the information held. Given previous discussions on the number of charities, the Clerk had also circulated documentation on how to combine charities.

16.1 Clayhidon Charity

The Parish Council noted that the current Trustees were:

Jamie Blackmore

Nicholas King

The late Donna Evans

Councillor Blackmore undertook to contact the Charity and advise them that Donna Evans had passed and it was also RESOLVED to update the records to show that the Parish Council was the sole Trustee of the charity. It was noted that the Annual Report should be submitted to the Charity Commission.

PROPOSER: Councillor King

SECONDER: Councillor Drew

DECISION: unanimous

Financial Information

HSBC 4705 to 21 April 2024 £660.03*

HSBC 4713 to 21 February 2024 £514.52

* monthly charge of £5.00 deducted and a payment of £10.00 received.

Action was required on bank accounts, as previously advised. The accounts were currently classed as inactive and needed to be re-activated to allow for a cheque covering a Wayleave Payment of £3.06 to be deposited. Changes can only be made by a signatory to the account.

16.2 Mary Parsons Gift Trust (206173)

The Parish Council does not have any Trustee representation and consideration might need to be given to the second field. The funds received from the sale of the first field need to be invested.

The Parish Council felt it necessary to make an action plan.

16.3 Mary Waldron (306790)

The Parish Council does not have any Trustee representation.

Councillor Clist advised that the Trustees were:

Simon Clist

Rev Rebecca Totterdell

Barbara Churchill

Richard Kallay

Sally Cartledge

The Charity provided education grants for young people in the Clayhidon and Hemyock area and met once a year.

16.4 John Griss Charity

The Secretary now has access to the Charity Commission login to be able to make amendments to the correspondence address etc.

The Parish Council is the sole Trustee.

Submission of the annual report is overdue and to make the submission access was needed to the bank statements for 2022-2023.

The insurance policy has been renewed (Rose Cottage has been removed) at a premium of £593.95 paid by direct debit.

The signed Fisheries Lease has been received.

The Rural Payments Agency's records have been updated to reflect the new secretary's details.

Councillor Weekes believed that the Open Meeting on 17 April 2024 had been well received with a several ideas being put forward for consideration.

It was agreed that a meeting of the Charity would take place on 3 June 2024s at Deadbeer with a start time of 7.30pm at which time a new Chairman would be elected.

Action: Secretary to prepare the agenda

17. Items raised by Chairman

The Chairman had not items to raise.

18. Items raised by Councillors

Councillor Weekes advised that residents had raised the issue of Japanese Knotweed at **Lillicombe Lane** and the matter of responsibility for ditches despite the information received from Devon County Council.

Councillor King was concerned that the Parish Council had not been alerted to the TruckFest event.

Councillor Bendle raised the matter of the need to cut Garland Bowers and two possible individuals were noted.

19. Date of the Next Council Meeting

The Parish Council set the following dates for its meetings:

- 10 June 2024
- 8 July 2024
- 12 August 2024 (if required)
- 9 September 2024
- 14 October 2024
- 11 November 2024
- 9 December 2024
- 13 January 2025 (if required)
- 10 February 2025
- 10 March 2025
- 14 April 2025

The Annual Parish Meeting and the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council would take place on 19 May 2025.

Signed..... **Date**.....
Chairman

