

**Minutes of the Meeting of Clayhidon Parish Council
Held at the Church Rooms, Clayhidon, at 7.30pm on Monday, 10 November 2025**

Present:

Councillors Saunders (Chair), Bendle, Drew (arrived at Item 5), King, and Kidner together with Councillor Clist (MDDC and DCC Councillor) and Mrs S McGeever (Parish Clerk).

10112025/1. Welcome by Chairman, apologies for absence and introductions

Councillors Saunders (Chair) opened the meeting and welcomed those present to the meeting.

Apologies had been received from Councillors Blackmore and Weekes.

10112025/2. Declarations of Interest/Dispensations

There were no declarations of interest.

10112025/3. To approve minutes of the meeting on 15 September 2025

It was RESOLVED that with minutes of the meeting of 15 September 2025 should be signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record of the meeting and the Chair duly signed the minutes.

PROPOSER: Councillor Saunders

SECONDER: Councillor Kidner

DECISION: unanimous by those present at the last meeting

10112025/4. Public Participation

No members of the public were present.

10112025/5. Planning

5.1 To consider the following planning applications:

25/01404/LBC

Proposal: Listed Building Consent to rebuild collapsed chert stone and cob west wall to single storey kitchen and replace opening lintols like for like

Location: Burrows Farm Clayhidon Cullompton

Site Vicinity Grid Ref: 316881 / 110586

Parish: Clayhidon 15

The Parish Council RESOLVED that it had no objection to this application given that the application would have been discussed with the Conservation Officer prior to being submitted and would be in line with planning regulations.

PROPOSER: Councillor Saunders

SECONDER: Councillor Kidner

DECISION: All in favour

25/01429/TPO

Proposal: Application to crown reduce between 3-4m and remove dead/crossing branches from 1 English Oak tree protected by Tree Preservation Order 06/00012/TPO

Location: The Old Forge Rosemary Lane Cullompton

Site Vicinity Grid Ref: 315841 / 114645

Parish: Clayhidon 15

The Parish Council RESOLVED that it had no objection provided that the Tree Officer was satisfied with the works being proposed.

PROPOSER: Councillor Saunders

SECONDER: Councillor Kidner

DECISION: All in favour

5.2 To note the following planning decisions:

The Parish Council noted the following Decision Notice:

25/01013/FULL – APPROVED – 2 October 2025

Proposal: Variation of condition 2 of planning approval 18/02002/FULL (Conversion of former smithy building to dwelling, demolition of adjoining agricultural buildings and replacement with extensions; formation of parking and amenity space and alterations to retained workshop) for substitution of plans to allow repositioning and repurpose of garage to workshop with office above and erection of canopy over main house front door

Location: The Smithy Clayhidon Cullompton Devon

5.3 Enforcement

Councillor Clist advised that he was unable to give an update due to legal reasons but the Parish Council would be informed if and when 'a notice breach of planning' was issued and available to view on MDDC's website.

5.4 Other matters

Councillor Clist advised that, East Devon Planning Applications did not normally go Mid Devon parishes. One of the Enforcement issues was in East Devon.

10112025/6. Finance

The Parish Council noted the financial report provided by the Clerk.

6.1 Unity Bank Current Account

Balance on 1 September 2025			£2831.82	
Less payments				
18-Sep-25	B/P to: c houghton	Lengthsman	-1273	
18-Sep-25	B/P to: c houghton	Footpaths	-298	
18-Sep-25	B/P to: DCC	64001302	-39.59	
29-Sep-25	B/P to: S.Aldworth	2447	-160	
30-Sep-25	Service Charge		-6	1776.59
Receipts				
18-Sep-25	Transfer from 20462521	Transfer	1000	
24-Sep-25	Devon Association	Overpayment refund	18	1018.00
Balance on 30 September 2025			£2073.23	
Payments made since the last meeting:				
S McGeever (wages July-September 25)			£540.84	
S McGeever (PAYE July-September 25)			£267.89	
S McGeever (expenses £26 pm and mileage x 6 months)			£156.00 and £72.00	
Defib Store (defibrillator spare pad)			£ 82.80	

Balance on 1 October 2025			£2073.23	
Less payments				
15-Oct-25	B/P to: Mrs S M McGeever	REIMBURSEMENT	-82.80	
15-Oct-25	B/P to: Mrs S M McGeever	WAGES JUL-SEP25	-540.84	
15-Oct-25	B/P to: hmrc cumbernauld	475PLO0323677	-267.89	
15-Oct-25	B/P to: Mrs S M McGeever	EXPENSES 6 MONTHS	-156.00	
15-Oct-25	B/P to: Mrs S M McGeever	MILEAGE 6 MONTHS	-72.00	
31-Oct-25	Service Charge		-6.00	-1125.53

Receipts

Balance on 31 October 2025 **£ 947.70**

The Clerk has raised the need to pay National Insurance with the accountant responsible for submitting the payroll. The Clerk was paid on a three-monthly basis and it should be submitted as such and not recorded as a monthly payment which would raise the annual income above the NI threshold. A response was awaited by the accountant. The Basic PAYE payroll package allowed for payments to be recorded as three monthly and dealt with accordingly for NI purposes.

Payments to be authorised at the meeting:

Village Hall (meeting room)	£ 72.00
Church Rooms	£ 18.00

The Parish Council RESOLVED to make the payments listed above.

PROPOSER: Councillor Kidner

SECONDER: Councillor Saunders

DECISION: All in favour

6.2 Unity Bank Instant Access Account

Balance on 1 September 2025	£5580.83
Less payments	
Transfer	£1000.00
Receipts	
Interest	£ 32.70
Balance on 30 September 2025	£4613.53

Balance on 1 October 2025	£ 4613.53
Less payments	
Receipts	
Precept	£ 5775.00
Balance on 31 October 2025	£10388.53

The Cumulative bank reconciliation from 1 April 2025 to 30 September 2025 and to 31 October 2025 were given to the Chair for signature and were duly signed.

The six-month and seven-month budget monitoring information had been circulated to Parish Councillors and would form part of the budget discussions.

6.3 S106

Clayhidon has £2500.00 towards benches in open spaces.

The S106 application has been prepared for submission to MDDC and two of the three quotes received and would be actioned this month.

6.4 Defibrillators

The defibrillator pad to replace the faulty pad had been purchased.

One of the existing defibrillator pads was due to expire in November and would need to be replaced – the oldest pads would be in the defibrillators, and the newest pads would be the spares with a view to always using the oldest first.

The Parish Council RESOLVED to purchase the defibrillator pad.

PROPOSER: Councillor Saunders

SECONDER: Councillor Drew

DECISION: All in favour

6.5 Grant requests

The grant applications forms had been sent to Mid Devon Mobility.

6.6 Precept 2026-27

The Clerk advised that the 2026-27 calculation was initially based on reaching a point where the Parish Council held a year's precept in reserve in accordance with best practice. As the current figures showed at the 7-month period, the Parish Council held £11336.23 in its accounts which was less than the 2025-26 precept of £11550.00.

However, this year there were other considerations before a final budget could be set. Local Government Reorganisation was likely to increase the workload of both parish councillors and the clerk with more time being spent on such items as planning which would no longer be handled by District Councils.

The Parish Council also needed to consider if it wished to spend money on a Neighbourhood Plan (£10000) and a housing survey (£3000). Despite its relatively isolated location, the new planning targets meant that all parishes were likely to experience large planning applications.

Councillor Clist advised that there was the possibility that active members of the Parish Council would be able to be remunerated for time to attend meetings etc.

Parish Councils had started increasing their precept substantially in preparation for the change and were communicating this to their residents. For example, if the Parish Council put its precept up to £16750, the additional cost per household would be 70p per week. Doubling the precept to £23100 would give an additional cost per household of 97p per week.

It would be possible to speak to residents at the next Parish Council meeting. Councillor Clist advised that last year, two residents had responded to the MDDC Residents Survey.

6.7 Assertion 10

The Annual Return for 2026-27 will require additional work to be compliant for Assertion 10.

Training was available and the Clerk had suggested that costs be shared between the Parish Councils to reduce the cost.

The Parish Council RESOLVED to share the costs of training.

PROPOSER: Councillor Saunders

SECONDER: Councillor Drew

DECISION: All in favour

10112025/7. Clerk Update and Correspondence

Emergency Plan

The Clerk was still working on a draft Emergency Plan. When completed the Parish Council would need to consider who the members of the Response Team would be and take the plan to a Public Meeting.

Neighbourhood Plan

The Clerk had hoped that all three speakers would be available in November, but the meeting was now likely to be January.

Free Landmark Tree

Councillor Drew advised that he would now be planting the tree and would provide the location and photo.

Storage of Parish documentation and maps

The Clerk was arranging for the minute books and maps to go to the Devon Archive.

Devon Communities Together

The Wild About Devon Community Wildlife Grants scheme - applications for up to £300 from Devon-based community groups and organisations for funding to support local wildlife projects.

Mid Devon District Council - State of the District Debate

The slides and question responses has been circulated to councillors.

DALC conference

The Clerk attended the DALC conference, the key message was for councils to prepare for Local Government Reorganisation.

Animal Welfare Licensing Policy

The Clerk advised Mid Devon District Council that the Parish Council could not comment on this policy.

Open Letter to PM regarding National Parks and Landscapes October 2025

The information had been circulated to councillors.

2025 MDDC Resident's Survey

The information had been circulated to councillors and posted on social media.

MDDC Stakeholder Engagement

The information had been circulated to councillors.

Dumped Caravans

The dumped caravans had been reported to MDDC who had placed notices requiring their removal.

Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service Precept Survey

The information had been circulated to councillors.

Blackdown Hills National Landscape Management Plan

The information had been circulated to councillors.

Blackdown Hills Parish Network

The October newsletter had been circulated to councillors.

Devon Countryside Access Forum

The information had been circulated to councillors and published on social media.

Japanese Knotweed

This invasive plant had been reported in Clayhidon and the lengths man had proposed its removal and burning.

Councillor Clist advised that there was a group in Culmstock who tackled Japanese Knotweed in that area. They cut it in late May early June and burnt it. This did not eliminate the weed but did control it.

The Clerk would contact Culmstock for further information

Devon Communities Together at our Annual General Meeting (AGM)

The information had been circulated to councillors.

Other matters:

Asset Register – the Clerk was working to determine whereabouts of all items listed

Continuity Plan – the Clerk was producing a continuity plan

10112025/8. County Council Report

Councillor Clist advised that the biggest issue for DCC and MDDC was Local Government Reorganisation and the need to submit proposals by 28 /11/25.

DCC were favouring a 9-1-1 solution or one Devon with Torbay and Plymouth Unitary Councils remaining in place.

MDDC were in favour of 1-4-5 which allowed for Plymouth to be separate, Torbay the hub for 4 of the current districts and Exeter the hub for five district councils.

Plymouth wished to put forward a different proposal as did Exeter. The concern was that the three major cities may each see to expand and form unitary authorities with rural Devon forming a fourth unitary with no economic base.

Councillor Clist also advised that he was on a committee looking at affordable/social rent housing. Other duties included reviewing the Devon County Farm estates.

He was given to understand that businesses were struggling to recruit staff and figures predicted that by 2040 the number of people aged
25-40 would not have increased
40-65 would have increased 55%
65-80 would have increased 97%
85 and above would have increased 120%

10112025/9. District Council Report

See above.

10112025/10. Highways/Footpaths

15.1 Highways

Councillor Clist advised that Highways was not a statutory obligation and the budget was not available to repair all the roads in Devon. Priority was being given to urban areas.

The Parish Council considered if more pothole work should be done but resolved that during the winter months, maintenance work to clear ditches etc to try and prevent water on the roads was more important. If the potholes reached a point of being safety defects, DCC would mend them.

In the spring more potholes could be repaired.

15.2 Footpaths

The Clerk had reported the missing sign at Lillicombe to DCC.

The new Footpath Map had been received.

10112025/11. Clayhidon Charity & John Griss Charity

The Clerk reported as follows:

11.1 Clayhidon Charity

A meeting of the Clayhidon Charity was required to sign off the accounts but this could not be done without the final bank statement from HSBC (see below)

HSBC

The accounts are with the internal auditor but awaiting the final bank statement for the year. HSBC have confirmed that the signatures are the same and another attempt to set up online banking needs to be done.

Action: Councillor Blackmore

Unity

Paperwork to allow for the signatories to authorise payments was required (Councillor Blackmore/King).

Merger

The merging of two charities depends on the constitutions and the decisions taken by the Trustees in line with the information provided by the Government. The Clerk felt it would be worthwhile taking some advice but in the main the Clayhidon Charity is for the benefit of Clayhidon residents as is the John Griss Charity. The definition of poor was a difficult one to consider and this should also be taken into consideration when issuing grants.

The Parish Council RESOLVED to seek advice on merging the two charities.

The Parish Council would be the sole Trustee so that when Parish Council members changed the Charity Commission website did not need to be changed.

11.2 John Griss Charity

Following on from a letter from a resident, Councillor Kidner advised that a meeting to follow up on the ideas put forward at the Open Meeting in April should be held. A date would be agreed at the next John Griss meeting.

Councillor Kidner had completed the paperwork to provide his identification for setting up the deposit accounts. Action required from other signatories.

The trees around Greensands Pond needed to be pruned/removed. The Clerk would obtain quotes.

Councillor Kidner advised he was still looking at potentially sources of water. In addition, work was ongoing on the 30-year plan monitoring biodiversity net gain. The hedge cutting would be undertaken when the ground was a little dryer.

Permission had been given for a defibrillator at Bolham Water and quotes would be provided at the next meeting.

The land lease needed signing, and the scouts had rejected the land offer. The question was whether that land could be used for biodiversity net gain.

The affordable homes were about to be occupied.

10112025/12. Items raised by Chair

The Chair raised the issue of Broadband.

Councillor Clist advised that DCC were looking for a provider that could fulfil the shortfall that had occurred whereby urban communities had been provided with broadband but not rural areas.

The Clerk had contacted had contacted Connecting Devon and Cornwall but the email had bounced.

10112025/13. Items raised by Councillors

The Clerk confirmed to Councillor Bendle that the Garland Bower invoice for hay at £150 had been raised.

Councillor King raised the fence at the old Merrier Harriers site.

Councillor Kidner had been to view the Z-Pods.

10112025/14. Date of the Next Council Meeting

The Parish Council set the following dates for its meetings:

- 8 December
- 12 January
- 9 February
- 9 March
- 13 April
- 18 May

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