

**Minutes of the Meeting of Clayhidon Parish Council
Held at the Church Rooms, Clayhidon, at 7.30pm on Monday, 12 January 2026**

Present:

Councillors Saunders (Chair), Bendle, Blackmore, Drew, King and Weekes together with Councillor Clist (MDDC and DCC Councillor) and Mrs S McGeever (Parish Clerk).

12012026/1. Welcome by Chairman, apologies for absence and introductions

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

Apologies had been received from Councillor Kidner.

12012026/2. Declarations of Interest/Dispensations

There were no declarations of interest.

12012026/3. To approve minutes of the meeting on 8 December 2025

It was RESOLVED that with minutes of the meeting of 8 December 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 Bendle

SECONDER: Councillor Kiing

DECISION: unanimous by those present at the last meeting

12012026/4. Public Participation

Members of the public were present and raised matters pertaining to potholes, noticeboards, Parish Council finances or lack of and the John Griss Charity.

With regard to the John Griss Charity, questions and ideas for investment and expenditure should be sent in writing to the Charity Chair via the Parish Council Clerk (clerk@clayhidonparish.gov.uk).

12012026/5. Planning

5.1 To consider the following planning applications:

25/01729/PNAG

Proposal: Prior Approval for the erection of a portal framed building to roof over existing silage clamp

Location: Land at NGR 315237112520 (Bolham Farm) Hemyock

Site Vicinity Grid Ref: 315252 / 112477

Parish: Clayhidon 15

The Parish Council noted that the above application had been sent to them for INFORMATION ONLY purposes and did not require a response.

25/01383/FULL

Proposal: Replacement of existing garage with home office

Location: Land at NGR 315978 114124 (Bridge House) Clayhidon

Site Vicinity Grid Ref: 315978 / 114124

Parish: Clayhidon 15

The Parish Council discussed the application, and concerns were expressed over the possibility of flooding, whether there would be adequate parking and if the proposed building was in keeping with other properties in the area.

PROPOSAL: The Parish Council has no objections to this application.

PROPOSER: Councillor Drew

SECONDER: Councillor Saunders

DECISION: Four in favour, one abstention and one against.

25/01611/HOUSE

Proposal: Installation of timber cladding to north and east elevations of dwelling and siting of new oil tank following removal of lean-to garage and wood store

Location: Highfield House Clayhidon Cullompton

Site Vicinity Grid Ref: 317451 / 116090

Parish: Clayhidon 15

The Parish Council discussed the application, and concerns were expressed over the materials being used.

PROPOSAL: The Parish Council has no objections to this application.

PROPOSER: Councillor Blackmore

SECONDER: Councillor Weekes

DECISION: Three in favour, two abstentions and one against.

25/01703/FULL

Proposal: Erection of a roofed enclosure to include PV array, compost loo, associated works and retention of containers for agricultural use

Location: Land at NGR 316234 113191 French Nut Lane Clayhidon

Site Vicinity Grid Ref: 316234 / 113191

Parish: Clayhidon 15

The Parish Council discussed the application which they had been advised by the agent was for a small-scale agricultural site and was, in part, retrospective. It was for an agro-forestry business and the commercial sale of medicinal herbs, jams etc. The green roof was a recommendation from MDDC planning during pre-application discussions and the application had taken account of all planning policies.

The Parish Council noted that this was a green field site and needed to be considered against other potential sites in the parish and the application had been brought as a result of a 'potential breach of planning' report to MDDC's Enforcement Team.

PROPOSAL: The Parish Council has no objections to this application but would request that the Decision Notice carry a clause that no further development could take place on the site without a full planning application being submitted.

PROPOSER: Councillor Drew

SECONDER: Councillor Weekes

DECISION: Three in favour and three abstentions.

The Clerk would prepare the responses to be submitted to MDDC and circulate to council members.

5.2 To note the following planning decisions:

The Parish Council noted the following Decision Notice:

25/01429/TPO – REFUSED – 8 December 2025

Proposal: Location: 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 Devon

5.3 Enforcement

It was understood that the Enforcement Officer had visited four sites in Clayhidon.

As noted above, application 25/01703/FULL had resulted one such visit.

As requested, the Clerk had submitted a further 'potential breach of planning' under 25/00220/RURAL.

Enforcement had recently won one and lost another appeal. The second appeal related to a mobile home and MDDC had circulated a consultation paper on mobile homes and caravans and, given it had not been received in time for this agenda, it would be brought to the next meeting.

The Clerk was also asked to write to Enforcement regarding Poachers Rest.

Action: Clerk

12012026/6. Finance

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

6.1 Unity Bank Current Account

Balance on 30 November 2025	£3351.70
Less payments	
Service Charge	£ 6.00
Receipts	
Balance on 31 December 2025	£3345.70

The Clerk has raised the need to pay National Insurance with the accountant.

The clerk's wages have been resubmitted to account for the three-monthly payment period, and this is reflected in the amount payable to HMRC in January 2026

Payments awaiting authorisation:

Defibrillator pad	£ 82.20
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Payments to be authorised at the meeting:

Clerk wages (Oct-Dec)	£578.80
HMRC (PAYE adjusted)	£ 11.91
Clerk expenses (Oct-Dec)	£ 78.00
Clerk mileage (Oct-Dec)	£ 28.80
Clayhidon Parochial Church Council (meeting room)	£ 18.00

PROPOSAL: The Parish Council authorise the payments listed above.

PROPOSER: Councillor King

SECONDER: Councillor Weekes

DECISION: All in favour

6.2 Unity Bank Instant Access Account

Balance on 30 November 2025	£7888.53
Less payments	
Receipts	
VAT repayment	£ 395.60
Interest	£ 47.30
Balance on 31 December 2025	£8331.43

The Cumulative bank reconciliation from 1 April 2025 to 31 December 2025 has been completed and brought to the meeting for signature by the Chair and it was duly signed.

The nine-month budget monitoring information had been circulated to Parish Councillors and it was noted that the nine-month spend of £14050.00 exceeded the precept 2025/26 precept of £11550.00.

6.3 S106

Clayhidon has £2500.00 towards benches in open spaces.

The revised S106 application to include a disabled picnic bench had been prepared for submission to MDDC and two of the three quotes received.

6.4 Defibrillators

The spare pad has been purchased – see Finance.

Chris Houghton is checking the defibrillators and updating The Circuit. The current details are as follows:

Rosemary Lane Chapel:

D00000002306

SC1330 001178

Pads:

28/04/2027

28/01/2028

Clayhidon Half Moon Pub:

D00000002503

SC1330001199

28/11/2025 – replaced now 28.10.2026

28.11.2027

6.5 Grant requests

Mid Devon Mobility

The Clerk was awaiting the grant forms from the charity.

St Andrew's Church, Clayhidon

Given that the John Griss Charity had not considered the St Andrew's Church grant at its last meeting, it was proposed that the grant of £540 be shared between the Parish Council and the John Griss Charity.

PROPOSAL: The Parish Council pay 50% of the grant monies and John Griss pay the other 50%.

PROPOSER: Councillor Blackmore

SECONDER: Councillor King

DECISION: Five in favour and one abstention.

6.6 Precept 2026-27

The third budget/precept calculation for 2026-27 has been circulated to councillors for consideration in line with the decision at the December meeting to increase the precept to £20250.00.

PROPOSAL: The Parish Council approve the third budget/precept calculation which reflected a 2026/27 precept amount of £20250.00

PROPOSER: Councillor Blackmore

SECONDER: Councillor Sauncers

DECISION: All in favour

This increase would allow the Parish Council to continue to build up a reserve of 100% of the precept in line with best accounting practices and allow for a contingency fund for any increased costs as a result of Local Government Reorganisation. The Clerk had reduced the original LGR buffer in this calculation to meet the Parish Council's precept decision to set the precept at £20250.00.

Taking data from the MDDC spreadsheet provided for calculating the precept, this increase from £11550 to £20250 would take the annual payment from £49.21 to £86.02 or £7.17 per month or £1.65 per week and ensure that the Parish Council could meet its legislative responsibilities, maintain parish assets and carry out maintenance work.

6.7 Locality Budget

A locality budget application for £250.00 has been submitted towards the new noticeboard at Great Garlandshayes Farm and the Clerk had received confirmation that this had been successful.

A discussion took place on the best location(s) for noticeboards in the parish and Councillor Clist advised that he supported a Locality Budget application for a second noticeboard in the parish.

Action: Clerk

All councillors were asked to consider the location of noticeboards in the village and come to the February meeting with suggestions:

12012026/7. 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. Funding was available for a Public Meeting and equipment.

Neighbourhood Plan

The Clerk had set the Neighbourhood Planning meeting for Tuesday, 20 January 2025. It would take place at Sampford Peverell Village Hall with a start time of 7pm.

Councillor Saunders would be in attendance.

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.

Dumped Caravans

The dumped caravans had been reported to MDDC who had placed notices on the caravans requiring their removal. There was one caravan remaining.

Blackdown Hills Parish Network

The latest newsletter had been circulated to councillors.

Councillor Weekes advised that she would be attending the meeting in February that had now been restricted to planning.

Japanese Knotweed

The Clerk was awaiting a response from the Environment Agency.

Action: Clerk to write to the Environment Agency for the best cause of actioned to remove the plant.

Other matters:

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

Continuity Plan – the Clerk was producing a continuity plan that could be held by the Chair of the Parish Council and would contain a list of processes, documentation and passwords.

Following a webinar, the Clerk advised that under Assertion 10, all parish councillors should be using their gov.uk email addresses and advice had been given that documentation should be stored in 'cloud' folders rather than downloaded to personal computers.

The Clerk would bring a full proposal to the next meeting.

12012026/8. County Council Report

Councillor Clist advised that DCC had been working to balance its budget. The 20% increase announced by the Government required DCC to raise its council tax amount by the full allocation and achieve a 100% uptake, the later not being achievable in part due to the various discounts offer for single occupancy etc.

DCC had voted that elections should take place for designated 58 councils (Cheltenham excepted) in 2026, and not be postponed. Elections in Devon were scheduled for 2027.

£3 million had been allocated to ensuring damage from Storm Goretti was dealt with expediently.

DRIP (Devon Resilience Innovation Project) had issued its latest report on flooding and coastal erosion and it had been circulated to council members.

Work was ongoing on a housing position statement with concerns that there was insufficient social and affordable housing.

12012026/9. District Council Report

Councillor Clist referred to the Town and Parish Report prepared by Councillor DuChesne and this would be attached to these minutes. Key messages were:

- Anti-social behaviour
- Christmas Tree collections
- Warm Home Grants
- A call for the National Planning Policy Framework to include solar panels, heat pumps and insulation on all new builds
- The impact of the Government decision to raise business rates and discounted VAT rates for the hospitality industry
- The abolition of the post of Police and Crime Commissioner

Councillor Clist also referred to the appeal Enforcement had lost on the mobile home on the edge of the Blackdown National Landscape and its possible implications.

12012026/10. Highways/Footpaths

15.1 Highways

The Parish Council debated the best approach to the problem of potholes in the parish.

Councillor Clist advised that the Government provided budget for roads had been decreased from £110 million to £54 million which meant major roads would take priority.

The Road Warden scheme allowed for Parish Councils to obtain tarmac and equipment free of charge so that potholes that did not meet the safety criteria could be mended by the designated parish Road Warden and volunteers. A number of volunteers had come forward, and it was noted that DCC would fund training for a total of three individuals per parish.

The Parish Council RESOLVED to ask Chris Houghton (parish Road Warden) to come to the next meeting. DCC no longer cleared ditches – this was considered the landowner's responsibility, but land was not always registered. Clearing ditches and preventing water on the roads which contributed to the potholes was equally as important to mending the potholes – prevention being better than cure.

Action: Clerk

The Clerk had reported the stonewall that had been built close to Gladhayes Bridge.

Action: Clerk to follow up

With regard to Highways in general, concern was expressed at the general state of the roads in Clayhidon and it was agreed that a list of priorities would be drawn up and sent to Highways with a copy to Councillor Clist and a nominated DCC Officer.

It was noted that the route to Wrangway was gritted but Ford Street, which was predominantly used by parishioners, was not. Lorries were advised at either end of Ford Street that the road was unsuitable for lorries, but it was still used. In icy conditions, this could become a risk to users.

Action: Clerk

The Grit Bin at Battle Street required grit.

Action: Councillor Drew

15.2 Footpaths

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

The Parish Council requested that Mr West, Footpaths Officer, be invited to the February meeting.

Action: Clerk

12012026/11. Clayhidon Charity & John Griss Charity

To receive any relevant information.

11.1 Clayhidon Charity

HSBC

The Clerk advised that the statements for only one bank account had been received.

Action: Councillor Blackmore

Unity Trust Bank

Councillors Blackmore and King asked the Clerk to provide details of the account.

Action: Councillors Blackmore and King to contact Unity Trust Bank

Merger

The Clerk had circulated information received from Tozers regarding the potential to merge the Clayhidon Charity and The John Griss Charity and a meeting would be required.

Action: Clerk to identify next steps

11.2 John Griss Charity

In the absence of the Chair, John Kidner, it was noted that the Angling Trust invoice had been paid.

Noting the comments made under the Public Forum item, a full and detailed report would be prepared to the next Open Meeting in April. Parishioners would be asked to submit their questions and ideas on paper prior to the meeting.

12012026/12. Items raised by Chair

The Chair had no issues to raise.

12012026/13. Items raised by Councillors

Council members had no issues to raise.

12012026/14. Date of the Next Council Meeting

The Parish Council set the following dates for its meetings:

9 February

9 March

13 April

18 May

The Parish Council would discuss holding a Community Showcase prior to the Annual Parish Meeting which would be on a different day to the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.

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

2025 December Parish Report

Happy New Year

Tiverton Bus Shelter Vandalism and Repairs

You may be aware that during the early hours of Saturday, 6 December (around 2:30am) each pane of glass in the shelter in Phoenix Lane was damaged by vandals, resulting in thousands of pounds of damage. The Council aimed to repair the damaged bus shelters in Tiverton before Christmas, but due to supplier problems, the glazing will be replaced in early January 2026.

Cllr Jane Lock, Cabinet member for Housing, Assets and Property Services, said:

"It was a sad sight to see so much purposeful damage caused to the bus shelter. It is hard to fathom why anyone would do such a thing, but we would like to reassure our residents that work is underway to repair the shelters as soon as possible."

Christmas Tree Collections in January

The Garden waste Service will collect Christmas Trees put out for collection by all residents up to and including 31 January 2026. The tree trunk must be no wider than 4 inches (100mm) in diameter and under 6FT tall (cutting it in half before collection would be helpful). Please place the tree next to the blue food caddy or, if you have a brown garden bin, it can be placed inside or next to the bin.

Please recycle all you can this Christmas season by putting the wrapping paper, cardboard, plastic containers, bottles and food waste into the right containers. It will not only help our hard-working crews out but also help us maximise our recycling rate and reduce our carbon footprint. Not only is this our Climate Change strategy in action but it also gives all residents the opportunity to make their own household contribution.

Warm Homes Local Grant

Warm Homes grants are being delivered in partnership with Devon County Council and other local authorities in Devon. It's a government backed scheme to make homes across Devon warmer, greener and more affordable to heat. The scheme offers fully funded energy efficiency upgrades for eligible households, including measures such as cavity wall and loft insulation, double glazing, air source heat pumps, solar panels and insulated doors.

visit [Warm Homes: Local Grant DCC - Energy Saving Devon](#)

Cabinet Decisions

1. [Car parking & Permit Proposals 26/27](#)

Reintroduction of a day permit option for car park users available to all residents across the district.

Development of proposals around a new business permit for the Multi Storey Car Park.

A 5% rise for Car Parking charges to be introduced as part of the budget setting process for 2026/2027.

The granting of additional free parking days for Crediton and Cullompton Town Councils to designate as they see fit to support their town centre activity.

For permits visit middevon.tarantopermits.com.

2. [Tax Base Calculation 2026/27](#)

That the calculation of the Council's Tax Base for 2026/27 be approved in accordance with The Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) (England) Mid Devon District Council – Decisions taken by the Cabinet on Tuesday, 2 December 2025 Agenda Item No Topic Decision 6 Regulations 2012 **at 31,180.16 an increase of 447.25 Band D equivalent** properties from the previous financial year.

The current collection rate of 97.5% will remain the same

New Funding Formulae Published

The Government has set out how councils in England will be funded from 2026/2027, with new funding formulae based on 2025 indices of deprivation, population projections and service demand.

As part of the fair funding review 2.0. it has also pledged: £2.4 billion for children's social care reforms; £2.4 billion for a new ring-fenced and combined homelessness, rough sleeping and domestic abuse grant; and a £600 million recovery for areas with the greatest immediate needs and less ability to raise income locally.

There will be an all member briefing on the 2026/2027 budget 19 January which should hopefully provide an answer as to how all of these changes will relate to Mid Devon?

Business Rates Day 17/02/2026 (Phoenix House)

Dean Emery, Head of Revenues, Benefits, Corporate Recover, Corporate Fraud, welfare & Leisure has arranged a Business Rates Day. The purpose of this day is to help businesses understand the changes which are being made to Business Rates. People can come in and speak to someone, more dates will be agreed after the bills are issued.

Impact

Businesses will see their bills increase in many instances there are Government schemes in place to help smooth the extra costs, these may not take the full financial impact away. Link below for information on the changes.

[Important changes to Business Rates 2026 - MIDDEVON.GOV.UK](https://www.middevon.gov.uk/important-changes-to-business-rates-2026)

Police and Crime Commissioners

Police and Crime Commissioners are to be abolished from 2028. However, the strong link between police and the local communities will be maintained particularly in areas that will see the introduction of new local authority-led policing boards. Local area authority policing boards are part of the new governance structure introduced by the government's devolution agenda in England.

Alison Hernandez issues a statement 13 November – in which she said.

"...I want to assure all members of the public that my office and I are still going to be here for the next two and a half years and we will continue to hold the police to account on your behalf. My team and I have a lot to be proud of. We have a record number of police officers – 3,610 - and are one of the areas with the most reopened police stations. We also believe Devon & Cornwall Police is the most financially stable force in England thanks to the good financial planning of my office.

"I am doubtful the change announced today will save the estimated £100 million that has been stated by the Home Office minister. The duties of my office must remain independent of policing and will continue to incur a cost to the public regardless of where the responsibility for delivering them rests. This includes providing services for victims, being the appeals body for complaints against the police and having responsibility for elements of the misconduct process for all police officers..."

National LGR analysis

State of local Government Reorganisation :

Averages can mask a lot, but this was the result of their national analysis:

Across all the proposals submitted to MHCLG, we find that the average reduction in councillor numbers is 55.2%, the average estimated transition costs is £54.8m, the average estimated recurrent annual savings is £42.0m, the average population size of a new unitary is 515,430. However, this varies significantly across the devolution areas and the proposals submitted.

So across the country (21 areas), it's a fair assumption that we're looking at a cost of over £1bn to do this, for a system that will reduce Cllrs by over half, and see new authorities created probably somewhere in line with the government's 500k 'ideal'.