

BICKLEIGH PARISH COUNCIL (MID DEVON)

Clerk: Tracy Watkins

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Minutes of a Council Meeting held on Tuesday 10th March 2026 at the Bickleigh Village Hall, commencing at 6pm

Present: Cllr's G Lock (Chair), A Somerwill (Vice Chair), L Deprielle and C Wolfenden

In Attendance: The Clerk, Ms T Watkins, Cllr R Roberts (MDDC) and one member of the public

Meeting commenced at 19:00pm

34/26	<p>Election of Chairman</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To receive nominations and to elect a Chair for the year. • To receive the Declaration of Acceptance of Office by the Chair <p>Cllr C Wolfenden Nominated Cllr G Lock for Chair for 2026-27.</p> <p>PROPOSED: Cllr C Wolfenden SECONDED: Cllr A Somerwill RESOLVED.</p> <p>Cllr Lock signed the Acceptance of Office form to be retained by the Clerk</p>
35/26	<p>Election of Vice Chairman</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To receive nominations and to elect a Vice Chair for the year. • To receive the Declaration of Acceptance of Office by the Chair <p>A nomination was received from Cllr L Deprieelle,</p> <p>PROPOSED: Cllr A Somerwill SECONDED: Cllr C Wolfenden RESOLVED.</p> <p>Cllr Deprieelle signed the Acceptance of Office form to be retained by the Clerk</p>
36/26	<p>Approval for Apologies for Absence _ Cllr Steve Keable (DCC) gave his apologies these were accepted.</p>
37/26	<p>Declarations of Interest under the Code of Conduct</p> <p>Councillors are reminded of the requirement to declare any interest, including the type of interest, and reason for that interest, either at this stage of the meeting or as soon as they become aware of that interest.</p> <p>None were received.</p>
38/26	<p>Minutes of the previous meeting for approval</p> <p>To adopt the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 10th March 2026.</p> <p>PROPOSED: Cllr L Deprieelle SECONDED: Cllr G Lock RESOLVED</p> <p>The Chair signed the Minutes as a try record.</p>

39/26	<p>Public Question Time</p> <p>Up to 5 minutes Public Question Time for members of the public to bring forward any issues not on the agenda (where a matter is already on the agenda members of the public will be given an opportunity to speak when that item is considered, within the framework of the Council's standing orders). Where a decision is required, the issue will be placed on the following agenda.</p> <p>A MOP came to speak about the Bickleigh Mill. To purchase the Mill and run as a community asset. Community benefit society, café, workshops. In the early stages of thinking about this. There is a steering group. Have been in touch with organisations who specialize in community run assets. Next steps set up a website, survey the local community. Raise money. Rhys asked MOP to reach out to MDDC when further down the line. Economic Department.</p> <p>Cllr C Wolfenden declared an interest in that she is mentioned in the initial conversations regarding the above.</p>
40/26	<p>THE ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2025/26</p> <p>To discuss the report from the Internal Auditor, any recommendations to be noted and be acted upon during this financial year. To resolve to approve this report for submission to the External Auditor.</p> <p>The Clerk read out the Internal Auditors report. This highlighted areas in which the Parish Council had not met certain criteria with regards publishing documents and also noting that the Council have no asset register recorded.</p> <p>All Councillors agreed to investigate which assets the Parish Council owns and create an asset register as soon as possible. GL/LD/CW/AS</p> <p>A lot of the problems stem from not having a dedicated Parish Council website. This is vitally needed in order to complete the statutory requirements going forward. As this would come at a cost in excess of £500 for the initial set up and then annual costs the Parish Council recognises it does not have the available funds to do this. The Clerk will approach DCC and MDDC Councillors to see if there are any grants available to fund this.</p> <p>It is now acknowledged that a huge amount of work has gone in to standardizing policies and financial processes.</p> <p>To Approve the end of year audit report. PROPOSED: Cllr G Lock SECONDED: Cllr A Somerwill RESOLVED.</p> <p>The report and all the other Audit paperwork will be published on the website once it has been submitted to the External Auditor.</p>
41/26	<p>CERTIFICATE OF EXEMPTION 2025/26</p> <p>To resolve to agree this certificate and sign for submission to the External Auditor. The certificate confirms that the Parish Council falls below the £25,000 maximum gross income for 2025-26</p> <p>To approve and sign this certificate.</p> <p>PROPOSED: Cllr D Deprieelle SECONDED: Cllr A Somerwill RESOLVED.</p>

	<p>The Chair and the Clerk signed the Certificate.</p> <p>The Certificate and all the other Audit paperwork will be published on the website once it has been submitted to the External Auditor.</p>
42/26	<p>ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2025/26</p> <p>To resolve to approve this statement and sign for submission to the External Auditor Whilst it is acknowledged that for most of this financial year some of the statutory requirements were not in place this has now been rectified since August 2025.</p> <p>To approve the Annual Governance Statement.</p> <p>PROPOSED: Cllr G Lock SECONDED: Cllr A Somerwill RESOLVED.</p> <p>The Statement and all the other Audit paperwork will be published on the website once it has been submitted to the External Auditor.</p>
43/26	<p>ANNUAL ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS 2025/26</p> <p>To resolve to agree and sign this statement for submission to the External Auditor. It is NOTED that the carry forward amount for 2024-2025 in Box 8 is not correct. The Clerk has adjusted the paperwork accordingly.</p> <p>To approve the Annual Accounting Statements</p> <p>PROPOSED: Cllr G Lock SECONDED: Cllr A Somerwill RESOLVED.</p> <p>The Statement and all the other Audit paperwork will be published on the website once it has been submitted to the External Auditor.</p>
44/26	<p>Notice of Public Rights and Publication of Council's accounts</p> <p>To resolve to agree the dates of publication from Wednesday 3rd June 2026 to Tuesday 14th July 2026 thus including the first 14 days of July as required by law. The notice has been published on the website.</p> <p>The dates were unanimously agreed by all Councillors present. RESOLVED</p> <p>The Clerk confirmed that the Notice has been published on the website already.</p>
45/26	<p>Update from MDDC Councillor – Cllr Roberts thanked Councillors and the Clerk for their hard work over the last 12 months.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Government Reorganisation – should move to a Shadow Council next year. • MDDC have just entered a new financial cycle. • MDDC Chair remains the same as last year. They have a new leader of the Council David Wulff. • Crisis and resilience fund and heating support fund are now live. Full details on the MDDC council website on this link The new Crisis & Resilience Fund, and heating oil support - MIDDEVON.GOV.UK • The Parish Council now need to send a Louis Dyson(MDDC) a resilience plan. Clerk to find out. • There is a meeting tomorrow evening - MDDC Landlords event. (Property landlords)

46/26	<p>Update from DCC Councillor The latest update report from Cllr S Keable has been circulated to Councillors</p>
47/26	<p>Financial Items To resolve to approve the end of year reconciliation of accounts to 31st March 2026 and an explanation of variances (End of year budget spreadsheet has already been circulated).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bank Signatories - to review and approve any changes. No changes required at this time • Budgets – The budgets were reviewed in November 2025 before setting the Precept. They will be monitored each month. • Asset Register- There is currently no asset register available. To resolve to create one as soon as possible and publish. All Councillors will look into assets owned by the Parish Council and look to publish this asap. • Financial Risk Assessment and Financial Regulations. These were reviewed and adopted in March meeting. They will be reviewed again in March 2027 • Approval of bank standing orders and direct debits for 26/27 HMRC – NI and PAYE payments – variable – Standing Order ICO – Data Protection certificate- Annual cost £47 Direct Debit Bank Charges - £4.99 per month <p>All to be agreed and approved for the 2026-27 financial year.</p> <p>PROPOSED: Cllr Lock SECONDED: Cllr Somerwill RESOLVED.</p> <p>To NOTE the following payments were approved remotely in accordance with Financial Regulations up to 30th April 2026.</p> <p>2 x Payments to Tracy Watkins (March & April salary) 1 x Payment to HMRC (March) 1 x DD payment to ICO for data certificate £47.00 (09.03.2026) 1 x Card Payment to Heard and Sendell for bench £508.68 (14.03.2026) 1 x payment for bank charges £9.98 (20.03.2026) 1 x payment to Ebay for items for community garden £27.99 (01.04.2026) 1 x payment to Heard and Sendell for water pipes for community garden £115.74 (02.04.2026) 1 x payment to Andy Bulled Fencing for community garden £2073.64 (14.04.2026) 1 x payment to Premier Polytunnels for community garden £224.70 (23.04.2026) 1 x payment to Argos for community garden assets £24.50 (23.04.2026) 2 x payments to Bickleigh Village Hall of £16.00 (19.03.26 and 28.04.2026) 1 x Payment to Ladds of Crediton – antivirus software - £38.95 (28.04.26). 1 x payment to P Clapham for Internal Audit fees - £75.40 (23.04.26)</p> <p>Note: Payments approved by Councillors in accordance with the Financial Regulations.</p> <p>Council to NOTE that the following payments have been</p>

	<p>received:</p> <p>04.03.2026 – MDDC – S106 grant - £3035.65 15.04.2026 MDDC £5740.00 Precept</p> <p>14.04.2026 £5.75 and 14.03.2026 £5.92 interest on savings account</p> <p>All Financial items to be approved. PROPOSED: Cllr Lock SECONDED: Cllr Somerwill RESOLVED.</p>
48/26	<p>Parish policies All Parish policies were reviewed and adopted at the meeting on 10th March 2026. These will be reviewed again in March 2027.</p>
49/26	<p>Consideration of Planning applications 26/00580/MFUL - Land at NGR 301974 110937 Dean Hill Road Willand – sent to us as a neighbouring authority. Variation of Condition 17 of planning permission 22/02374/MFUL (Construction and operation of a solar photovoltaic (PV) farm together with associated works, equipment and infrastructure) 26/00068/LBC - Listed Building Consent for the rebuilding of the collapsed south-east tower Location: Bickleigh Castle Bickleigh Tiverton Devon – no objections 26/00153/CAT - Notification of intention to prune 1.5m off height of one Prunus tree (black cherry plum) and reduce height by 3m and lateral limbs by 2m each side from one Weeping Willow tree within a Conservation Area The Willows Bickleigh Tiverton Devon – leave to experts.</p>
50/26	<p>Other information/correspondence received for possible action/discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr M Wright has resigned from the Parish Council. The Council would like to thank him for his work. Cllr Lock will send a response. Clerk will advise the electoral services. Cllr Wolfenden will create an advert for a Councillor vacancy. Action GL/CW/TW • New website – The Parish Council desperately needs a dedicated website to be compliant. This is rather expensive and we do not have the reserves to pay for this. Clerk to work with MDDC and DCC Councillor to see if there are grants available or a solution can be found. Action TW • S106 community Garden update – This was given at the APM and will be reported in the Minutes. • Highways – A396 and A3072 – This was discussed in the APM and will be reported in the village. Clerk to ask Cllr Keable (DCC) if the bridge at Bickleigh can have narrow bridge signs on the main road into Tiverton and Exeter can we have signs warning driving and SLOW as you come into Bickleigh. Action TW • Lengthsman – A list of what needs to be done has to be drawn up. Gate into Joans Orchard needs replacing. Quote to be OBTAINED. Cllr Deprieelle will get this. Action LD • Joans Orchard – Not much to report yet. Update in July meeting

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repairs and renewals – nothing to report • Road Warden Scheme – Clerk to chase training dates. Action TW • Correspondence from MOP regarding blocked drains – Keep reporting it to highways. Link is here Report standing water, flooding or blocked drains - Roads and transport • Potholes past the Mill need to be reported to Cllr S Keable (DCC). • Dates for future meetings July 14th, Sept 8th, Nov 10th, 2027 – Jan 12th, March 9th, May 11th APM and AGM, July 13th
51/26	<p>Date of the next meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next Meeting on Tuesday 14th July – 6.00pm– Village Hall • Meeting closed at 20:26pm

Chair -----

Date -----

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