

BICKLEIGH PARISH COUNCIL (MID DEVON)

Clerk: Tracy Watkins

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Minutes of a Council Meeting held on Tuesday 13th January 2026 at the Bickleigh Village Hall, commencing at 6pm

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

In Attendance: The Clerk, Ms T Watkins and Cllr R Roberts (MDDC).

Meeting commenced at 18:05pm

1/26	<p>Apologies</p> <p>Cllr S Keable (MDDC) and Cllr G Lock (Chair). As the Chair was not present Cllr A Somerwill chaired this meeting.</p>
2/26	<p>Declaration of Interest under the Code of Conduct</p> <p>No declarations under the Code of Conduct were made</p>
3/26	<p>Minutes</p> <p>To resolve to adopt the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 11th November 2025.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matters and actions arising from the Minutes. • Lorry freight in layby. This appears to still be happening. Matt will look into this and report back. <p>PROPOSED: Cllr M Wright SECONDED: Cllr C Wolfenden RESOLVED. The Minutes were signed as a true record by the Vice Chair.</p>
4/26	<p>County and District Reports</p> <p>Cllr Keable (DCC) was unable to attend but his report has been circulated to councillors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Roberts (MDDC) - Mid Devon has updated website with new business rate changes. • Substantial damage to Tiverton Bus. Currently boarded up • Cllr Facebook – Ward matters, Christmas Tree collections (31st January). Cllr Somerwill will send email • Warm Home County Grant – fully funded energy efficiency upgrades visitwarmhomes@middevon.gov.uk. Clerk to advertise. • Cabinet has decided to bring back pay by day car parking. 5% increases in charges. Free parking days for Crediton and Cullompton to be announced some more dates.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New week new Budget meeting for Government Budgets. Could be a 10% rises across the board. • 17/2/26 Business Rates Day at Pheonix House MDDC offices. Nationally some changes to the formula. Further info on the MDDC website. • LGR plans – most other things have taken a back seat to this for months. Exeter want to become a Unity authority too but not enough numbers in Exeter to do this. Not sure what will happen now. • Timescales for this - Setting up Spring, Setting up a Shadow Authority in 2027 and new authority in 2028.
5/26	<p>CONSIDERATION OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS- (Council may consider any applications received after the publication of this agenda)</p> <p>None received.</p>
6/26	<p>Correspondence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None received
7/26	<p>Matters Arising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval sought to engage a new internal auditor – deferred from last meeting. PROPOSED: Cllr A Somerwill SECONDED: Cllr C Wolfenden RESOLVED. Clerk to send signed contract to auditor. • In order to facilitate a change to a new bank account the Council need to have a Code of Conduct, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. Unable to locate previous copies so the Clerk will produce all these and send to the Councillors to approve. Will discuss again with regards the Unity Trust account in the March meeting and adopt them and minute as appropriate.
8/26	<p>Public Question Time</p> <p>Up to 3 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>No members of the public were present</p>
9/26	<p>Community Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Deprieelle has now completed the section 106 application for the Bickleigh Community Garden. This has been discussed a number of times in previous meetings and after having reviewed the application we are happy to formally approve the project and for the Section 106 application to be submitted by Councillor Deprieelle on behalf of Bickleigh Parish Council. The funding we wish to apply for is Section 106 money that is to be spent specifically on the ground of Bickleigh Football Club. The

	<p>total cost of funding that we are applying for is £3035.65. Bickleigh Parish Council will pay the vat element and will look to reclaim this vat in the usual way.</p> <p>We have reviewed the quotes and are happy with the selected suppliers detailed on the funding application.</p> <p>We also approve the installation of fencing, polytunnel, benches and watering system at the community garden on land that Bickleigh Parish Council own.</p> <p>The Parish Council are excited to see this project develop and think it will be a valuable asset to the community of Bickleigh and we look forward to seeing how the garden develops over the coming year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bickleigh Charities – The AGM was held in November. An article was published in the Silverleigh Magazine. In a healthy position. They meet twice per year. <p>PROPOSER: Cllr M Wright SECONDED: Cllr A Somerwill RESOLVED</p>
10/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Santander update - Clerk now has access to the account and can make payments. Mandatory policies need to be created and adopted before the Parish Council can apply for an account with Unity Trust. Clerk to action.
11/26	<p>Finances</p> <p>To receive the accounts summary to 31st December 2025.</p> <p>To NOTE the following payments to be approved:</p> <p>3 x payments to the Clerk (Oct, Nov and Dec Salary and sundries)</p> <p>3 x payments to HMRC (NI & PAYE Oct, Nov and Dec Salary)</p> <p>1 x payment for remembrance wreath of £29.49 (03.11.2025)</p> <p>1 x payment to Bickleigh Parish Hall for room hire of £12 (03.12.2025)</p> <p>1 x payment to Gilbert Stephens solicitors of £500 (09.12.2025)</p> <p>1 x payment to Santander for Nov bank charges of £9.98 (20.12.2025)</p> <p>To NOTE the following amounts have been received:</p> <p>1 x receipt of £150 compensation from Santander (08.12.2025)</p> <p>Savings account interest of £24.94 between September and December</p> <p>Business account balance as at 31.12.2025 = £6128.19</p> <p>Savings account balance as at 31.12.2025 = £7482.24</p> <p>PROPOSED: Cllr C Wolfenden SECONDED: Cllr A Somerwill RESOLVED.</p> <p>Clerk to submit Precept request to MDDC as soon as possible.</p>
12/26	<p>Budget and Precept for 2026/27</p>

	<p>To discuss and set budgets for next financial year and decide on Precept claim for January submission.</p> <p>The Clerk has distributed a budget spreadsheet to all councillors for consideration before the meeting in November.</p> <p>It is clear from mandatory payments increasing year on year, which is the same across the country, the current Precept, which has been held for a number of years is not sufficient to cover outgoings and also retain a healthy reserves.</p> <p>The things that the Council cannot control and which have to be honoured are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parish Councils have to employ a Clerk. This is to ensure probity and lawfulness in all transactions. The cost of the Clerk is governed by National guidelines on hourly rate and Bickleigh Parish Council honour those guidelines. • Insurance for public liability and for Parish Council assets is mandatory. The Clerk will endeavour to go to the market at renewal to ensure best price. • An internal auditor has to be employed to scrutinise the Councils spending of public money and to ensure they meet legal requirements. • In April of 2026 Parish Councils will no longer be able to use gmail accounts for Council business. The Council has therefore invested in a .gov.uk email for this purpose and this is set at £60 per year. • The ICO registration is mandatory as the Council deals with data regarding individuals which has to be kept safe and dealt with in an appropriate manner. The Council has decided to opt out of Local Council membership for Devon as this is a large expense and it has not been utilised. In an emergency the Clerk can use her personal membership to ask for guidance. • The Joan's Orchard acquisition is seen as a positive and essential project for the local community. At the moment the Council is using reserves to cover the legal costs of transfer but will look into whether any S106 monies can be used to help with this. • After considering the budget for 2026-27 it was proposed that the Precept claim is increased to £5740 from £5200. <p>PROPOSED: Cllr A Somerwill SECONDED: Cllrs Wright and Wolfenden RESOLVED.</p>
13/26	<p>Joan's Orchard</p> <p>One set of paperwork has been received from one of the owners. No more correspondence from any of the other parties. Clerk to write to nearest owner geographically and ask for a meeting with her and Cllr Wolfenden.</p>
14/26	<p>Update on Repairs, renewals, Lengthsman, Road Warden Scheme, Highway and Section 106.</p> <p>Already discussed earlier in the meeting.</p>

15/26	EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (Part B) -To agree that the press and public be excluded from the meeting. Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, and having regard to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, to consider and agree that the Press and Public be excluded from the Meeting for the following item(s) of business
16/26	Close of meeting Meeting closed at 20:00pm
17/26	Date of the Next Meeting: Tuesday 10 th March 2026 starting at 6pm in the Village Hall

Chair

Date