

LITTLEHAM & LANDCROSS PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of the Council Meeting and Precept Meeting held at Littleham Village Hall on Thursday 09 January 2025 at 19.15

Present: Councillor – P Jollands - Chairman
Councillors: N Tregoning (Vice Chair), G Gray, M Brooks and C Hassall.

Apologies : Councillor: S Read, G Smith, L Batty and I Lawrence
County Councillor L Hellyer
District Councillor P Pennington

In Attendance: *David Edwards - Clerk to the Council*

2895 - The Chair welcomed everyone to the Meeting and apologies were accepted.

2896 - Declarations of Interest

[DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST Councillors are invited to declare any declarable interest, including the nature and extent of such interests they may have in any items to be considered at this meeting. They are also reminded to consider whether any items within their Register of Interests should be updated].

There were no Declarations of Interest.

Public Open Question Time

There were no questions from members of the public.

Report by County and District Councillors *(Allowance should be made for the District and County Councillor to speak later in the meeting should they be unable to arrive in time).*

The County Councillor Report had been circulated and was noted. The report is attached to the Minutes.

2897 - To Approve Minutes 2886 – 2894 of the Parish Council meeting held on 05 December 2024.

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes be approved.

Matters Arising.

2891 - It was confirmed that the Biodiversity Group funds amounting to £282.88 had been transferred to the Council account. As agreed the funds will be “ring-fenced” for Biodiversity Group projects.

2891 - Councillor Gray advised that her husband had a near miss at the Moorhead junction recently. The Clerk would make this known to County Councillor Hellyer.

2893 - The Clerk had made enquiries related to the cost of the Website and it is provided at a very competitive rate. The additional cost of adding the SSL Certificate for the required security will be offset by the deletion of all the individual Councillor email addresses which are not used. A new email address for the Chair will be set up. This will be chair@littlehamandlandcross-pc.gov.uk. As with the Clerk email, the address will go with the postholder.

2898 - PLANNING - To consider the Council response to the following application:

Planning reference: 1/1034/2024/FUL

Demolition of existing sheds, development of 5 new dwellings with access and external works.
Land at Grid reference: 243750 (E) 123359 (N)
Furlong Farm, Littleham, Bideford Devon

It was RESOLVED to recommend refusal based on the following comments:

The Application does not comply with the Local Plan

Local Plan policy statements:

There is a need to increase the supply of new housing with affordable housing delivery the highest priority and larger family housing in the open market sector being the lowest. There is no evidence of a housing need in Littleham. There are at least four 3/4 bedroom properties on the market. Over the past 5 years most of the 3/4/5 bedroom properties have been sold to people from outside the County. There are a number of second/holiday homes that have been purchased from buyers outside the County.

There are no shops or other services in the rural settlement making any development unsustainable.

Transport links are poor and road network is narrow lanes and sub standard road surfaces.

All routes to the rural settlement are designated "Unsuitable for HGV vehicles" restricting the viability of servicing the site with the required building materials.

Policy ST17 - A Balanced Local Housing Market

The site does not contribute towards the creation of sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities by providing housing that reflects the needs of present and future generations whilst improving the balance of the local housing market and sub markets.

Policy DM20 - Affordable Housing on Development sites

On sites with a capacity of less than 7 net additional dwellings, a financial contribution broadly equivalent in value to providing 25% of all dwellings on-site as affordable homes.

This does not appear to be met.

The fact that this is an untidy site and therefore should be developed should not be good reason to approve. This would set a dangerous precedent. The Environment Officer should be instructing the owner to improve the appearance.

The Council is concerned that the trees and hedgerows are being taken away. Barn owls are known to have been present in the barns but work has commenced on some parts taking away parts of the structures; thus disturbing the owls and other wildlife.

The entrance to the site is on to a narrow lane with poor access.

It is of concern that the existing sewerage systems and surface water drainage will not be able to deal with the additional requirements.

There is no evidence that this development provides any economic gain/social benefits to the locality.

It is the Council understanding that Current Land supply targets have been met, therefore, it is not designated an Exception Site.

There is no evidence that this development will have a positive affect on the rural settlement of Littleham. It is the Council view that if the reasons for refusal are not accepted, the Council should be allowed to have further discussions on how the development can provide an acceptable biodiversity net gain and provide the community with a public area and walking/bridleway route around the site.

2899 - FINANCE:

a.The Council will RESOLVE the Precept for the Council Year 2025/2026.

Calculations/items considered:

Defibrillator annual amount to set aside	£1000.00
Clerk salary	£2200.00
Hire of Village Hall	£ 300.00
DALC membership	£ 200.00
Auditor (Internal & external)	£ 400.00
Website costs	£ 350.00
Training (costs expenses & travel)	£ 250.00
Community information/ marketing/communication	£ 150.00
Repairs & maintenance (Bus shelter Notice boards)	£ 100.00
Grass cutting - Range Field	£1200.00
Parish Paths Partnership	£ 100.00
Biodiversity Projects	£ 500.00
Chairman Allowance	£ 100.00
Sub total	£6850.00

An additonal sum of £200 will be set aside for the Council to make grants to any organisations in the Villages that are deserving of the Council financial support.

It was RESOLVED that the Council Precept for the Financial Year 2025/2026 be set at £7050.

This will result in an annual payment of £28.75 for a Band D property. Previous year the payment was £29.03

c. To resolve that an interest bearing account be opened with Hinkley and Rugby Building Society to hold the Council reserves.

It was RESOLVED that a 90day Notice account be opened with with the Hinckley and Rugby Building Society with an opening balance of £5000. The signatories on the account be the Clerk(the Responsible Financial Officer), the Chair (Councillor P Jollands) and the Vice Chair (Councillor N Tregoning).

2900 - To discuss the future operation of the Council with a view to set out a Strategic Plan based on:-

- **a consultation with local organisations and residents.**
- **Councillors to take on a role as the “lead Councillor” for specific topics/initiatives or create Working Groups that would investigate options and provide written reports for the Council to discuss.**

It is suggested that an informal meeting be held to bring together the ideas and thoughts which would provide a more relaxed and flexible atmosphere.

The general principle of having individual Members meeting to discuss items of interest was thought to be a useful way forward. The Chair asked that the Members gave this some thought to bring to the next meeting.

2901 -To discuss any action the Council can take to support its policy for reducing the Carbon footprint and improving the bio-diversity in Littleham and Landcross. Up date on recent Biodiversity Group Meeting and Lottery Grant Application.

The Chair confirmed the date of the Biodiversity Event was Saturday 8th March at 2pm. He distributed some posters to be put up in the Villages. The Chair asked if it be made known that any items and pictures related to biodiversity and wildlife would be useful for the displays. Councillor Hassell confirmed that he had items that he would provide.

Councillor Brooks mentioned that the Groundworks organisation is a useful source of grants.

2902 - To consider correspondence & communications requiring attention. Emails circulated include:

DALC/NALC newsletter/updates/events
Public Sector - various
Devon County Council - various newsletters
Torridge DC – various
Torridge DC - Weekly Planning applications
South West Cyber Resilience
The Rural Bulletin
Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance. The Meeting was closed at 20.40hrs

Signed.....
Councillor P Jollands - Chair

Date.....