

LITTLEHAM & LANDCROSS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at Littleham Village Hall on Thursday 05 June 2025 at 19.15 hours

Present: Councillors: P Jollands (Chair),S Read ,M Brooks,G Gray and P Footman.

Apologies : Councillors: N Tregoning (Vice Chair),L Batty,G Smith and C Hassall.

Also Present: District Councillor P Pennington
County Councillor Mark Barry

In Attendance: *David Edwards Clerk to the Council*

2945 - The Chair welcomed everyone to the Meeting and apologies were accepted.

2946 - It was *RESOLVED* that Mrs Patricia Footman be co-opted on to the Council.

2947 - 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].

Councillor Footman to complete her Declaration of Interests.

The Council RESOLVED to suspend Standing Orders and adjourn the meeting.

Public Open Question Time

There were no questions.

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).*

Councillor Pete Jollands welcomed Councillor Barry to the Meeting and congratulated him on his election.

Report from District Councillor Pennington:

- Following the District Council Annual Meeting there had been no changes to the Committee structures - the uncertainty of the future of the District Councils being a factor.
- Torridge DC is working closely with North Devon DC to ensure that the region has a strong voice with regard to any Local Government restructure.
- The importance of the District Council in supporting private companies and community organisations to run services that benefit the residents. For example, the transfer of the tennis courts in Westward Ho! to Northam Town Council.
- The Council reserves of £15m approx need to be protected for the region although it is likely that a proportion will be required to pay redundancy and other staff costs. The District Council has 260 full time equivalent employees.
- The District has sizeable financial service commitments with 4 Leisure Centres/Swimming Pools and the completion of the Appledore Maritime Centre.

Report from Devon County Councillor Mark Barry:

A Report had been submitted and forms part of the Minutes.

Councillor Barry stated that he had spent the time since his election learning the Council procedures and acknowledged the work undertaken by his predecessor. He advised that he is committed to

ensuring that the County Council services are improved for the benefit of its residents. The Liberal Democrats in coalition with the Green Party now run the Council.

- A review of the Planning changes being outlined by the Government which proposes the removal of some procedures to effect quicker planning decisions.
- He had attended the Highways Meeting on 22 May which included a discussion on the current contracts. The need to make changes to improve the efficiency of the work, particularly repairs to road surfaces and potholes. It was highlighted that Somerset County Council runs its Highways Department at a much lower cost. There is new machinery now available to improve the efficiency of the service.
- Parish Council surveys to improve the reporting procedures.

17.50hrs - Cllr Pennington left the meeting.

The Council reconvened.

2948 - It was *RESOLVED* to approve the Minutes 2934 – 2944 of the Annual Council meeting held on 08 May 2025.

Matters arising:

Ref: Min 2930 re letter to S Hearse Chief Executive regarding 1/0122/2022/FUL and an email from Mrs P Footman. A response has been received.

This was noted although it was commented that the reply had not fully addressed the issues raised.

*Ref: Minute 2938 - Planning Application 1/0282/2025/FUL -
Reference to the Council comment regarding a more detailed Bat survey to be undertaken.
The Planning procedure is for this comment to be included in the overall examination of the Application. The Council would not receive any further correspondence.*

2949 - FINANCE

- To receive Internal Auditors Statement for financial year 2024-25 and supporting report. (*to follow*)
- To resolve that the Council Certify it is Exempt from external audit or to submit to a Limited assurance review by PKF Littlejohns (External Auditor)
- To complete and approve Annual Governance Statement 2024-25.
To note the significant variances as follows:
Total other income from £3257 to £853 - 74% decrease:
The Vat refund was £1940 higher and a Grant of £560 was received from Devon County Council for the Parish Paths P3 Scheme in 2023/2024.
- To note the Cashbook balance as at 29 May 2025 of £8966.54. The only payment this month is the Bank Charge of £4.25.
- To resolve to pay the Annual Insurance Premium (due on 01 June 2025) to Community First Trading Limited. Payment amount to be confirmed.

The above documents form attachments to the Minutes.

It was RESOLVED to approve the documents and the information as shown.

2950 - 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.

Councillor Pete Jollands commented on the offer from Jon Gething who is a director of the newly formed 361 Community Renewables Community Benefit Society which has been set up to complement the work of 361 Energy CIC who have been providing energy advice in northern Devon for many years. 361 Energy is now a registered charity which should help it further develop its energy advice work.

Mr Gething has emailed the Council as follows:

"We are pursuing a couple of renewable electricity projects in Georgeham parish and are looking for other parishes that might be interested in developing community owned renewables. I have been in contact with Donna Sibley recently who has told me that your parish may well be interested.

If so I would be happy to meet up with councillors to discuss the possibilities."

Councillor Jollands confirmed that he and Councillor Greg Smith will meet Mr Gething and report back to the Council.

2951 - To discuss the email from Torridge Parish Councils Collaborative Group - Notes from Meeting 15 May 2025. (attached and form part of the Minutes)

This was noted and commented that it is important for the Council to join the Group and attend the meetings.

2952 - To consider correspondence & communications requiring attention. Emails circulated include:

1. DALC/NALC newsletter/updates/events
2. Public Sector - various
3. Devon County Council - various newsletters
4. Torridge DC – various
5. Torridge DC - Weekly Planning applications
6. Devon CPRE

The items were noted.

2953 - Items for next meeting and Next Full Council Meeting - Thursday 03 July 2025.

The Chair confirmed that there were 2 Applicants for the Clerk position and he will arrange dates to interview and appoint. Councillors Tregoning and Gray will also be part of the interviews. If the Chair requires another Councillor to join the interview panel he will action.

A review of how the Council will work on individual issues with specific Members asked to take a lead, obtain relevant information and report back with proposals for the Council to consider. The items to be looked at are: survey of the roads and particular dangers (potholes, signing), the details of how the Council should consider making grants to local organisations and review of the Emergency Plan.

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and the Meeting was closed 20.10hrs

Signed:

Councillor P Jollands (Chair to the Parish Council) Date.....