



# MINUTES

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**Committee:** Open Spaces Committee  
**Date:** Tuesday 25 February 2025  
**Time:** 7:00pm  
**Venue:** Parish Council Office

## Present

Cllr Gordy Keep (Chairman)  
Cllr Catherine Fileman-Wright  
Cllr Mike Warner  
Cllr Rob Austin  
Cllr Gemma Hampton

## Also Present

Samantha Parkin (Clerk)

## PUBLIC SESSION

### 01/2025 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Jeffery.

### 02/2025 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS / REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

Cllr Austin declared an interest in min no 05/2025. No requests for dispensations were received.

The Clerk had written to the council to declare an interest in this item in accordance with Local Government Act 1972 s117.

### 03/2025 MINUTES

It was proposed by Cllr Fileman-Wright, seconded by Cllr Warner, and **resolved** to accept and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2024 as a correct record.

### 04/2025 STANDING ITEM - CLIMATE AND ECOLOGY EMERGENCY

The Council noted the Declaration to embed the climate and ecology emergency declaration across all Council services, activities, plans, and other relevant work, considering the environmental impact of decisions, ensuring a fully integrated approach to mitigating the impact of climate change.

## 05/2025 OPEN SPACES TENDER

The Clerk had circulated a tender scoring matrix guide, tender comparison, tender evaluation, and the total annual cost of tenders received. As the only member of staff, the Clerk applied the matrix to assess each tender fairly and impartially. Cllr Evans, Chair of the Finance and Policy committee reviewed the documents prior to the meeting. The committee thanked the clerk for her work on the matrix. The committee discussed each contract.

The Clerk recommended awarding contracts to a mix of companies to minimise risk.

- **Contract 1:** An important area requiring good communication with the Clerk. Concerns were raised over Company A's low price, which may underestimate the work involved. Company B, though scoring slightly lower, provided a more realistic quote and performed well on Contract 2 last year. Company D was more expensive. Company B was preferred due to its realistic pricing and understanding of health and safety, scoring slightly higher than Company C, which had the same price.
- **Contract 2:** Three companies submitted similar prices. Company A scored highest on the matrix, but Company B, the existing contractor, had performed well. Company A was preferred on price.
- **Contract 3:** Three companies submitted bids. Concerns were raised over Company A's high price. Company D was preferred based on cost, subject to providing public liability insurance and a more detailed health and safety risk assessment, particularly regarding public access.
- **Contract 4:** Company A did not provide a price for the full October cut. Three companies submitted bids, with Company D's price being significantly higher. Company B was preferred based on price, pending clarification of Company A's full cut price.
- **Contract 5:** Two companies submitted bids. The contract is funded through cemetery fees, not the precept. The Clerk clarified the burial fees, all of which exceed the tender costs. Company C, the existing gravedigger, has maintained good communication and performed well. Concerns were raised over Company D's lack of a risk assessment. Company C was preferred due to its history and better risk assessment.

The Clerk will request additional information from Companies A and D, to be received before the Full Council meeting on 4th March.

It was proposed by Cllr Fileman-Wright, seconded by Cllr Warner, and **resolved to recommend** the following contracts are awarded to the following contractors as per the quotations to the full council:

Contract 1 (St Andrews Churchyard) – Company B

Contract 2 (Sentry and Children's Play Area) – Company A

Contract 3 (Pound, Henge and around the Coronation Bench) – Company D subject to clarification of the points above.

Contract 4 (Grass verges) – Company B subject to clarification of the points above.

Contract 5 (Grave digging) – Company C

Cllr Austin and Cllr Hampton abstained from the vote.

## 06/2025 GRIT BIN PROVISION

The clerk had circulated a report discussing concerns raised by Cllr Austin regarding the availability of grit bins in Moretonhampstead during winter.

The committee discussed Cllr Austin's concerns and the potential benefits of a Snow Warden. Cllr Warner raised liability concerns. Cllr Fileman-Wright clarified that Devon County Council provides limited public liability insurance if the Snow Warden follows proper training and procedures but noted the role would still fall under the Parish Council's responsibility, increasing the clerk's workload. Cllr Keep mentioned that past council-purchased grit was unused, and Cllr Warden highlighted challenges in finding volunteers and storing grit. The clerk confirmed she usually checks and reports empty bins.

After discussion, the committee concluded that taking on additional responsibility would be a burden to the council.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.31pm.