



MINUTES

Committee: Parish Council
Date: Tuesday, 1 July 2025
Time: 7:00pm
Venue: Community Club

Present

Cllr Catherine Fileman-Wright (Chairman)
Cllr Jan Evans
Cllr Vivienne Hodges
Cllr John Farrand-Rogers
Cllr Mike Jeffery
Cllr David Bridger
Cllr Rob Austin
Cllr Gordon Keep

Also Present

Samantha Parkin (Clerk)
3 members of the public

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Two members of the public attended in relation to Min. No. 118/2025. They are the owners of the property on the opposite side of the fence in question and attended to provide background and clarification.

They explained that they had previously donated a strip of land to the community to allow a connecting path to be built. The only condition of this gift was that they would not be held responsible for the maintenance of the adjoining wall and fence.

The issue had arisen recently following the collapse of a neighbouring wall into the car park. Teignbridge District Council (TDC) had attended to assess the damage and had also identified that the fence required repair. Initially, TDC believed the responsibility lay with the landowners, but they explained the history of the land donation and the agreement made at the time.

One member of the public attended in relation to Min. No. 119/2025. He introduced himself as a Trustee of Moretonhampstead Development Trust (MDT) and the Lead for Health and Wellbeing for Wellmoor, which operates under the Trust.

He wished to share the Trust's official position on the future of the Hospital site: MDT fully supports any community initiatives to ensure the site is used to best effect if and when it is sold. However, the Trust has no intention of being a potential buyer. MDT supports any efforts by the GPs to facilitate a health and wellbeing hub, but such an initiative would not be led by MDT.

The Chair thanked him for attending and confirmed that it was helpful to have MDT's position clearly understood.

116/2025 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Hampton, Cllr Short, Cllr Warner and Cllr Walden.

117/2025 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS / REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

Cllr Jeffery declared an interest in min no.133/2025. No requests for dispensation were received.
Localism Act 2011 (sections 26-37 and Schedule 4)

118/2025 CAR PARK BOUNDARY FENCE

The clerk's report had been circulated with the agenda. The Chair explained that the Clerk had investigated the issue following an approach from the landowner. It appears that the Parish Council is responsible for the maintenance of the fence. The Clerk had prepared and circulated a tender with two options: to repair or replace the fence.

Cllr Jeffery expressed doubts regarding ownership, noting that the map was unclear and suggesting that the close-boarded fence may have predated the creation of the path.

It was proposed by Cllr Fileman-Wright, seconded by Cllr Jeffery, and **resolved to suspend** standing orders.

The landowners confirmed that the close-boarded fence had been installed at the time the path was constructed and that the work had been carried out by a local contractor.

The Council acknowledged that the mapping was ambiguous, but based on the available information, it appears that the Parish Council is responsible for the fence's maintenance.

It was proposed by Cllr Fileman-Wright, seconded by Cllr Farrand-Rogers, and **resolved to reinstate** standing orders.

Cllr Austin expressed a strong view that the fence should be **replaced**, rather than repaired, on the basis that ongoing repairs would likely be needed in future.

It was proposed by Cllr Austin, seconded by Cllr Evans, and **resolved to proceed** to tender for the full replacement of the fence and to liaise with the landowners to complete the work at a time convenient to them.

Two members of the public left the meeting.

119/2025 HOSPITAL UPDATE

Cllr Fileman-Wright's report had been circulated with the agenda. She summarised the report and encouraged councillors to attend the public meeting on 23rd of July at 10am in the Parish Hall hosted by the NHS.

It was proposed by Cllr Evans, seconded by Cllr Hodges, and **resolved to approve** the response to the media (in the report) and to note the latest developments and the position set out by MDT. There was one abstention.

The member of the public left the meeting.

120/2025 MINUTES

It was proposed by Cllr Farrand-Rogers, seconded by Cllr Evans, and **resolved to accept and sign** the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd June 2025 as a correct record. There were two abstentions.
LGA 1972 Sch 12 para 41(1)

121/2025 STANDING ITEM -CLIMATE AND ECOLOGY EMERGENCY

The Council noted its Climate and Ecology Emergency Declaration and committed to embedding it across all services, activities, plans, and decisions, ensuring environmental impacts are considered and a fully integrated approach to climate change mitigation is adopted.

122/2025 COUNCILLOR REPORTS

County Councillor Report

Cllr Keeling had sent his apologies, his report is attached at appendix 3 on page 40. The Chair expressed her disappointment that he has missed three consecutive meetings. She suggested that a letter be sent inviting him to meet with members of the Council at a time convenient to him, to provide updates on parish matters and to discuss the Council's concerns.

Dartmoor National Park Report

Cllr Jeffery reported on the Annual Meeting of the Authority on 27 June 2025. The following appointments were confirmed:

- Will Dracup elected as Chair of the Authority
- Mark Renders elected as Deputy Chair
- Caroline Mott elected as Chair of Development Management
- Guy Pannell elected as Deputy Chair of Development Management

For the financial year 2025/26, the Authority's core revenue funding has been reduced by over 13% compared to 2024/25. As part of the funding agreement from Defra, the Authority has been allocated £5.4 million, comprising £3.5 million in revenue funding and £1.4 million in capital funding, which must be spent by the end of March 2026.

Cllr Jeffery also reported that funding has been secured for improvements to Public Rights of Way (PROW). This will be used for:

- Upgrading signage and improving drainage
- Maintaining the Authority's 449 miles of PROW

Specific improvements include the addition of rest areas along the Wray Valley Trail between Lustleigh and Moretonhampstead, with plans for the entire route to be resurfaced in due course.

District Councillor Report

Cllr Farrand-Rogers reported the following:

1. Nothing much has happened that concerns our Parish in particular. Teignbridge District Council (TDC) continues to tick over as it prepares for the creation of new unitary authorities.
2. Local Government Reorganisation Discussions are ongoing, and no definitive outcomes have been confirmed. The "145" option remains a strong possibility. However, alternatives such as "8.2" or "9.1" may also be proposed. Torbay and Exeter are playing party-political games, while Plymouth is looking for a land-grab. It is possible that more than one option will be submitted to the government for consideration in November.
3. It does seem to be the case that the new reformed government will be more expensive, less efficient and much less democratic, since the idea of the Government is to put the whole of Devon and Cornwall under the control of one directly elected mayor.
4. Meanwhile, there are upgrades to TDC-owned play areas prior to their transfer to town and parish councils. The whole of Teignbridge pays the cost of these upgrades, of course.
5. The public toilets review continues to be deferred to a future meeting.
6. On a more positive note, we are in a new financial year, so existing organisations can ask me for support (for a small amount of money) from the Council's Community Fund.

123/2025 MATTERS ARISING

It was noted the Clerk has submitted the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024/25 and commenced the Period of Public Rights.

It was noted the Clerk has purchased the agreed office equipment and renewed the council's broadband contract with BT.

124/2025 CHAIRMANS DISCRETION

The Chair reminded authorised councillors to check emails and approve payments promptly. The Clerk offered to send text reminders via the new work phone, which councillors agreed would be preferable.

The Chair noted that the Clerk has drafted a Facebook post encouraging residents to help keep the town tidy outside their homes. Cllr Austin suggested forming a working party to tidy the centre of town ahead of the 100th Moretonhampstead Carnival.

The Chair noted that the Librarian has left, and cover is currently being provided from Tavistock. She highlighted the library's increasing reliance on volunteers, reflecting a wider trend across local services.

125/2025 OPEN SPACES REPORT

The Open Spaces monthly report had been circulated prior to the meeting. The report was noted and is attached at appendix 1 on page 39. The clerk noted that an official opening will be held on VJ Day.

Cllr Hodges commented that the Court Street baskets look fantastic and thanked the volunteer responsible for watering them, acknowledging the excellent job being done.

126/2025 CLIMATE CHANGE & ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCY WORKING GROUP

The Chair noted that the Clerk has reported the problems with the road surface following the South West Water mains leak by the Hospital. Cllr Short has suggested that the council do a landscape survey of the Churchyard with a view to looking at possible tree planting.

127/2025 INTERNAL CONTROLS COUNCILLOR REPORT

Cllr Bridger had checked the accounts for May.

128/2025 SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

The Council considered its monthly schedule of payments.

It was proposed by Cllr Evans, seconded by Cllr Keep, and **resolved to approve** the schedule of payments at appendix 2 on page 39. There was one abstention. *LGA 1972 s150(5)*

129/2025 CORRESPONDENCE

1. Correspondence was received and circulated prior to the meeting from the Moorlander asking the council to comment on how broadband connectivity is affecting the community.

It was proposed by Cllr Fileman-Wright, seconded by Cllr Farrand-Rogers, and **resolved to respond** to the Moorlander that the Parish Council has not received any representations from members of the public regarding broadband connectivity. There was one abstention.

2. Correspondence was received and circulated from the Parish Hall committee seeking the council's views on the Parish Hall.

It was proposed by Cllr Fileman-Wright, seconded by Cllr Farrand-Rogers and **resolved** that the clerk completes the questionnaire on behalf of the council.

3. Correspondence was received and circulated from a volunteer asking the council to share the Dartmoor Women in Farming – Time Out Group

It was proposed by Cllr Fileman-Wright, seconded by Cllr Jeffery and **resolved to publicise** the Dartmoor Women in Farming initiative. There was one abstention.

4. Correspondence was received and circulated from 20's Plenty For Us CIC encouraging the council to contact its County Councillor to explain why a 20mph speed limit is important to Moretonhampstead.

It was proposed by Cllr Fileman-Wright, seconded by Cllr Hodges and resolved to send a copy of the statement read at the Dartmoor National Park Authority meeting on 6th December 2023, as it is still considered relevant.

130/2025 INFORMATION CENTRE

Cllr Jan Evans (PC representative) provided a verbal update following recent meetings. The centre is working hard to raise funds, but footfall has declined due to its current location inside the café. Large posters have been placed in the car park to increase awareness. If visitor numbers and revenue do not improve, the centre may have to close after October. The café's support has been generous, but some visitors are unaware of the centre or reluctant to enter via the café. Cllr Evans asked the Council to consider ideas to help save the centre, noting her sadness as they celebrate their 30th anniversary.

131/2025 FIRE SERVICE UPDATE

Cllr Fileman-Wright's report had been circulated with the agenda. Cllr Fileman-Wright summarised her report, expressing concern that the withdrawal of South Western Ambulance Service Trust (SWAST) support could reduce call volume and threaten the future viability of the station.

Cllr Jeffery noted that the station was the first in the country (not county, as stated in the draft letter) to have a defibrillator, installed in 1996, which received 34 calls in its first year. It was also noted that in the past the station had been contacted by the Police service to provide the co-responder service.

It was proposed by Cllr Evans, seconded by Cllr Austin, and resolved to send the letters (in the report) with the suggested amendment to the Chief Executive, South Western Ambulance NHS Foundation Trust and Chief Fire Officer, Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service (DSFRS) copying in the Police Commissioner.

It was proposed by Cllr Fileman-Wright, seconded by Cllr Evans, and **resolved to invite** representatives from DSFRS and SWAST to attend the September meeting of the council to explain the changes.

132/2025 CCLA PUBLIC SECTOR DEPOSIT FUND

The clerk's report and supporting information had been circulated with the agenda. The clerk explains that she had investigated this item following a recommendation from the council's internal auditor.

It was proposed by Cllr Fileman-Wright, seconded by Cllr Bridger and **resolved to invest** the council's reserves in the CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund.

133/2025 BENCHES

The quotes had been circulated with the agenda.

It was proposed by Cllr Fileman-Wright, seconded by Cllr Keep, and **resolved to accept** the Community Shed quote to repair the benches in the Sentry.

The Clerk will draft a policy covering the maintenance of existing and future memorial benches and bring it to a future meeting for approval. The Council will need to decide whether to take on responsibility for the maintenance of existing benches in the town, including those it may not currently own.

134/2025 SUMMER BREAK

It is usual practice for powers to be delegated to the clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman to enable the Council to function effectively during the summer break.

It was proposed by Cllr Austin, seconded by Cllr Fileman-Wright and **resolved** that the Council's powers be delegated to the clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman over August.
LGA 1972 s.101

135/2025 CLERKS SUMMER HOURS

It was proposed by Cllr Fileman-Wright, seconded by Cllr Austin and **resolved to approve** the clerk using her accrued overtime hours to work three days a week during the summer holidays and to approve the clerks requested annual leave. *Employment Rights Act 1996 s.1*

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.05pm

TO DO ACTIONS

- Clerk to advertise the fence tender
- Clerk to action min no. 119/2025
- Clerk to make payments
- Clerk to respond to correspondence in accordance with min no. 129/2025
- Clerk to action min no. 131/2025, 132/2025 and 133/2025

MPC Minutes 01.07.2025 Attachment no.1 – Open Spaces Report

Inspection carried out by: S Parkin

Date: June 2025

Area	Comments	Action
The Sentry	Sentry seating area – Further deterioration. Bench and back rest removed.	Obtain quotes to replace seating.
Churchyard	Memorial Inspections have commenced.	None.
The Play Area	Looks good.	None.
The Henge	Looks good.	None.
The Pound	Looks good.	None
Cross Tree	Looks good.	None.
Geneva Island/War Memorial	Looks good. Volunteer has repointed the bench area. VE & VJ Day Bench and Memorial have been installed.	None.
Wheelwright's wheel	Needs weeding.	None.
Allotment	Looks good.	None
Seats/benches/ Lamp posts	Looks good.	None.
Gates and railings	Looks good.	None
Bus Shelter	Looks good.	None
Recycling bins	Looks good.	None

MPC Minutes 01.07.2025 Attachment no.2 – List of payments July 2025

Finance

To receive the Finance Report

On 30 June, the Accounts stood at:

Lloyds Current Account	£1,855.89
Lloyds Deposit Account	£79,904.04

Standing Orders

		Date Cleared
Moretonhampstead Development Trust Office Rent	£390.45	02/06/2025
BT Telephone and Broadband	£39.74	16/06/2025
EE Limited Mobile	£18.39	19/06/2025

Direct Debit

Microsoft 365 subscription	£12.36	25/06/2025
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Mandatory Payments

Staffing payments
(Salary, pension and quarterly HMRC) £2,993.09 30/06/2025

Card Payments

Amazon (Apple iPad and accessories) £315.26 09/06/2025
HP (Laptop, Printer and accessories) £1,276.99 09/06/2025
Amazon (Apple charger and phone case) £16.08 17/06/2025

Transfers £27,970.00 07/05/2025

Income

Bank Interest £56.10 09/06/2025
Interment payments £615.00 Various

Invoices for payment – to consider and approve invoices for payment itemised on the Payment Schedule

Payment Method	Payee and reason	Budget	Power to spend	Net Payment	Payment inc. VAT
Bank Transfer	Community Club <i>Room Hire</i>	EX5	Local Government Act 1972 s111	£15.00	£15.00
Bank Transfer	S Parkin <i>Mileage and parking SLCC</i>	EX11	Local Government (FP) Act 1962 s5	£26.10	£26.10
Bank Transfer	MDT <i>Photocopying</i>	EX4	Local Government Act 1972 s111	£1.20	£1.20
Bank Transfer	F J Stevens & Sons <i>VE & VJ Day Memorial</i>	VE	Localism Act 2011 s1	£846.00	£1015.20
Bank Transfer	Teign Valley Nursery LTD <i>Court Street Baskets Refills</i>	EX6	Open Spaces Act 1906 s10	£325.00	£390.00
Bank Transfer	AR Rural Solutions <i>Sentry, Pound & Henge & Verges Cut</i>	EX6	Open Spaces Act 1906 s10	£710.00	£710.00
Bank Transfer	AR Rural Solutions <i>Churchyard Cut</i>	EXCEM1	Open Spaces Act 1906 s10	£950.00	£950.00

MPC Minutes 01.07.2025 Attachment no.3 – County Councillor Report

Dear Colleagues,

Firstly, thank you to the Clerks and Councillors who have contacted me, and I have met over the last month with various issues in their Town/Parish.

I must give my apologies for your full council meeting as I will be attending the Local Government Association Conference, this gives me the opportunity to talk with fellow Leaders and Ministers about our pressures in Devon. I will also at conference be attending a South West Councils meeting of all the Leaders from the region, sharing and problem-solving major issues facing our councils and ultimately our residents.

I have recently attended DCC Cabinet meeting where a frank take on the finances and highways, the household support fund and a huge investment in homes for children was discussed. Please see attached link [Devon County Council - Cabinet 25.06.25](#) I have also pulled together in this report below work that has been agreed.

DCC Finance

We have ended the 2024/25 financial year without going over budget, but only by relying on temporary savings and one-off government funding.

A report presented to cabinet showed that we managed to stay within its £637.5 million budget and 'balance the books' despite growing demand for services like social care and support for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

We had been expecting to overspend by nearly £4 million in November but managed to avoid this through a mix of short-term measures, including delaying some projects, not filling vacant jobs, and using a one-off grant from government.

The report also showed that £40 million in planned savings were delivered across council services, though this fell short of the £50 million target.

Our highways teams will carry out a repair blitz on potholes in a few trial areas of the county following a decision by the Cabinet

While approving an £83 million programme of capital funded highway maintenance schemes, our Cabinet heard from Councillor Dan Thomas, Cabinet Member for Highways, who stated that the condition of Devon's roads is not up to scratch because the county is "grossly under resourced by central government".

Councillors backed proposals to trial areas where all potholes would be filled, rather than just dealing with safety defects. Although the exact details are still to be agreed, this pilot would be used to establish the budget implications of changing maintenance procedures.

Councillors also agreed that a task group from the Audit Committee should be formed to review the previous Cabinet's decision from last November on the future delivery model for highway maintenance.

The Cabinet at the time resolved that a procurement process should get underway for a Term Maintenance Contract to deliver core highway work such as safety defect repairs, gully emptying and winter service, supported with smaller "Framework Contracts" for additional patching, surfacing, drainage and other improvements.

It was also agreed to examine the costs of accelerating the remarking of white lines across the county.

A new long-term plan to improve the outcomes of Devon's most vulnerable young people by overhauling how they are supported and cared was approved.

In a bold move away from the council's previous preference to commission, rather than directly deliver, residential places for children in its care, councillors agreed to an ambitious multi-million investment programme to establish 12 new children's homes; 20 specialist foster places; and up to four new therapeutic schools, over the next 10 years.

'Growing Futures: Homes for children and young people in care in Devon' aims to provide new homes, support, residential therapeutic care, education and treatment for children with complex psychological, emotional and behavioural needs.

Our plan will be delivered through a strategic partnership worth up to £156 million and aims to address deficiencies in current care arrangements.

We are required to provide suitable homes for children in care; but nationally an over-reliance on for-profit providers has contributed to rising costs and poor value for money.

In Devon for instance costs have almost doubled in five years amid rising demand.

There has been a 29 per cent increase in Devon children in residential homes since 2020 and many of those are not in the county.

The new strategy will aim to reduce costs and improve long-term outcomes for children through more stable, local, and therapeutic housing and education options.

It was agreed it to allocate a smaller pot of national funding to help families struggling with high costs of food, energy, and other essential household items.

We have received funding to operate a Household Support Fund (HSF) since 2021. Last year, it totalled £10.1 million, but this year (2025/26) the funding has fallen for the first time, to £8.9 million – a decrease of 11.87 per cent.

Funding is allocated to support households across Devon in various ways. A large proportion of it goes in providing free school meal holiday vouchers to children and young people who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals during term time. Around 22,500 children and young people are eligible for benefits-related free school meals in Devon.

It's also shared among Devon's District Councils to support households struggling to afford essentials, helping those approaching them directly for support and/or targeting households in receipt of some benefits who they already know will be struggling with the cost of living. As the previous Executive Member for Finance at TDC I saw the real benefits this fund has achieved. In the last year TDC identified those vulnerable residents not receiving winter fuel allowance and helped with their cost of living.

Some of it is used by Citizen's Advice Devon, helping households struggling with high energy and water costs through an Energy and Water Relief scheme.

And Devon Community Foundation operates a Food Fuel & More, HSF-funded, grant scheme to support voluntary and community organisations, helping vulnerable people who are less like to access support through the other available support gateways.

Councillors agreed to continue funding free school meal holiday vouchers, to the same level – £15 per child per week during school holidays.

The decision effectively commits half this year's total Household Support Fund (HSF7) for free school meal holiday vouchers, compared to around 26 per cent of last year's (HSF6).

The rest will be allocated proportionally to Devon district councils, Citizens Advice Devon and Devon Community Foundation.

In addition, councillors agreed to set up a vulnerable families' contingency fund, to give the council flexibility to provide additional support for households later in the year, in response to cost of living issues – as a consequence of wider political and economic pressures.

More adult learners will have the opportunity to access education and skills training in the upcoming academic year.

I strongly welcomed this investment as this was identified as a major way of improving workplace skills and I have seen first-hand the benefits at South Devon College.

Following an extra £1.4 million investment from the Department for Education (DfE), it was agreed to commission additional delivery of adult learning from external providers.

Devon's adult education service, Learn Devon, currently supports around 6,000 learners, aged 19 and over, each year through the Adult Skills Fund (ASF). The fund supports people to gain qualifications and skills that improve their employability and life opportunities.

Councillors explored a number of delivery options but decided to commission delivery across a number of external providers through an open and compliant procurement process, supported by our procurement team.

This will build on existing delivery capability in the area which means the programme can start this August, and allow provision in different locations, communities, and qualification areas.

The increase in ASF funding enables local residents, including those on low incomes or with caring responsibilities, to access flexible, community-based learning. Courses funded through ASF are designed to align with local labour market needs, helping residents gain qualifications and skills that are in demand, and supporting progression into secure, higher-paid jobs or further learning.

For local businesses, it ensures the local workforce has up-to-date skills that match industry needs, especially in sectors with skill shortages such as health and social care, construction, and digital. This makes it easier for employers to recruit locally, and by investing in local talent, ASF funding reduces skills gaps and helps build a resilient economy that can respond to change, such as new technologies or market shifts.

As always please contact me by email or call on my mobile if you have any issues in your Town/Parish.

Kind regards

Richard

Councillor Richard Keeling, MLoL
Cabinet Member for Adults Services
Devon County Councillor for Chudleigh & Teign Valley