

KENTISBEARE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on 14/01/2025 at 7pm in Kentisbeare Village Hall

Present: Cllrs. Mr Nick Allan (Chairman), Mr Oliver Forster, Mr Mark Kent, Mr Neil Woofenden, Mrs Elise Ellicott, Mr Edd Southerden, MDDC Cllr. Cathy Connor, DCC Cllr. John Berry and the Clerk.

01/01/25. Public Question Time: None.

02/01/25. Apologies: Cllrs. Martin Disney, Mrs Queenie Broom, Mrs Felicity Ryan, Mrs Lorna Downing and MDDC Cllr. Andrea Glover.

03/01/25. Declarations of Interest: None.

04/01/25. The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 10/12/2024 were approved and duly signed by the Chairman.

05/01/25. Matters Arising: None.

06/01/25. Planning & Planning Correspondence/Information:

a) Applications considered by the Parish Council: None received.

b) Results of applications from Mid Devon District Council.

-24/01722/CAT Notification of intention to reduce the crowns of 2 Oak Trees by 4 mtrs within the Conservation Area. Approved.

c) Culm Garden Village: (i) Cllr. Allan reported following the last meeting of the Delivery Board – MDDC is hopeful that the relief road will be delivered in the first quarter of 2028 and works regarding the motorway junction will be complete by the end of 2030. It is understood that the sports clubs will shortly receive a briefing. (ii) The Chairman, Cllr. Mrs Ellicott and the Clerk will shortly be updated at an informal meeting with the project manager and the Chairman of the Delivery Board.

d) Any other Planning Matters: None.

07/01/25. Highways - items to report and any other matters. (i) Signage – possible warning signs in the village were discussed as those recently erected at Rectory Road; agreed not to pursue presently in the village. The Clerk will meet with a local sign company shortly regarding the village sign. (ii) An update on dog fouling is awaited. (iii) It is hoped that works will take place in Machine Lane ASAP; a parishioner has recently raised concerns and this has been passed to the NHO.

08/01/25. Reports.

a) The Clerk: Arrangements are being made with Devon Communities Together regarding a session to be held in Kentisbeare Village Hall for councillors regarding resilience.

b) Reports from DCC & MDDC Councillors. (i) DCC Cllr. John Berry – a report was circulated to all prior to the meeting. Just before Christmas government announced the English Devolution White Paper in respect of plans for local government reorganisation which proposes a new council structure (unitary) for Devon. A unitary authority would take on the responsibilities of the county and district councils which would cease to exist. It is understood that...*the intention is to formally invite unitary proposals from all councils in two-tier areas, and small neighbouring unitary councils in January 2025. The white paper mentions that new unitary councils must be the right size to achieve efficiencies, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks. For most areas, this will mean creating councils with a population of 500,000 or more. There may be exceptions to ensure new structures make sense for an area, including on devolution. Final decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis.*

Local elections planned for May 2025 may be postponed.

Changes for disposal of upholstered furniture - new environmental requirements to dispose of Waste Upholstered Domestic Seating (WUDS) at one of eight of the council's specially designated Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs), following the introduction of new requirements from the Environment Agency (EA); the requirement is for recycling centres to have segregated facilities to handle WUDS. These items contain large quantities of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs or forever chemicals) and other hazardous chemicals in the textiles and foam. These chemicals are often used as fire retardants; they persist in the environment, can accumulate in human and wildlife fatty tissues and can be harmful to health and the environment. All WUDS need to be sent for incineration separately where these chemicals are destroyed. The EA requires that all WUDS are segregated and transported separately from other waste.

DCC report continued:

Segregation will require additional containers and facilities at HWRCs. Due to space constraints, only a limited number of sites in Devon will be able to accept WUDS and the majority of the recycling centres will not be equipped to accept them. Those able to accept WUDS are Mid Devon; Ashley, Tiverton or Exeter; Pinbrook Road, Exeter. WUDS cannot be accepted at any other recycling centre and residents will need to ensure that they take their WUDS to a site that can accept them or book a bulky collection with their district council who will charge for the service.

(ii) MDDC Cllr. Cathy Connor – a report was circulated to all prior to the meeting. Details include an update on plans for movement towards a unitary authority and include the joint statement from the eight Devon district councils on devolution and local government reform following the publication of the English Devolution White Paper – the statement mentions that *“The Devon districts are fully supportive of genuine devolution of powers from Whitehall to local government. However, following the publication of the Devolution White Paper, and subsequent statements by the leader of Devon County Council, we would like to make it clear that we do not support the creation of one unitary council for Devon”*. Multiple meetings continue to take place and MDDC councillors are working hard in order for the DCC elections in May to go ahead as scheduled and not be postponed or cancelled.

Rent Corrections - work is ongoing to correct and refund excess rent that had been paid by MDDC tenants.

The Household Support Fund will be open for applications until 31/03/25 but may close earlier if funds are allocated.

Culm Valley Sports Centre fitness studio and functional area have been updated with the council investing more than £140,000 to upgrade the facilities.

Santa Float - the float brought great delight to residents of Cullompton, Willand and Kentisbeare on Christmas Eve 2024 and it has been booked for Christmas Eve 2025. Thanks go to MDDC Cllr. Andrea Glover and the team at Bridgwater Carnival.

c) P3 Footpaths, Parish Paths & Silver Wood. (i) Bridleway 37 – works have taken place to remove a fallen tree as necessary. (ii) Silver Wood – a notice has been publicised online following contact from The Woodland Trust to remind users of the area to keep to the paths at all times for safety reasons. Cllr. Woofenden reported that following communication with the landowner, arrangements will be made for removal of a tree where the permissive path meets the wood. A quotation will be sourced to replace the nearby stile with a gate. (iii) A meeting with the DCC Parish Paths Liaison Officer will be arranged for the spring. (iv) A farmer will be contacted regarding difficulty accessing a footpath.

d) The Chairman: None.

e) Any other reports: The Parish Council is most grateful to The Wyndham Arms for hosting the Christmas Eve event in Kentisbeare which continues to be a great success. Thanks were extended to MDDC Cllrs. Cathy Connor and Andrea Glover and the team for their involvement, together with thanks to the local choir, Voiceworx.

09/01/25. Annual Parish Meeting: The annual Parish meeting (APM) will take place in May immediately before the monthly Parish Council meeting. It is hoped to hold a reception with the APM in 2026. The Parish Council may look to hold a small event on site to coincide with completion of the pump track. Also a drop in event will be held in respect of the History Project at some point over the next 12 months or so.

10/01/25. Finance.

a) A report was given and the balances were noted. Direct Debits taken: Nest £180.95 on 06/12, EDF £28 on 10/12, Utility Warehouse £44.05 on 31/12.

b) Payments were approved:

-Chq 2238	£ 992.20	Clerk – salary and expenses.
-Chq 2239	£ 365.60	Countrywide Grounds Maintenance Ltd. Grass maintenance contract.
-Chq 2240	£ 266.18	M L Thorne. Website and e-newsletter.
-Chq 2241	£ 604.80	MDDC. Play Area Inspections (Jan to June 2025).
-Chq 2242	£ 943.20	R&R Services. Tree Felling.
-Chq 2243	£ 68.14	Computerlink (Leicester) Ltd. Printer cartridges.
-Chq 2244	£ 50.00	J Bagnall. Christmas Light power supply in village square.
-Chq 2245	£ 50.00	St. Mary’s Church. Christmas Light power supply re: council church crosses.
-Chq 2246	£ 912.00	Community Council of Devon. First payment re: pump track professional services.
-Chq 2247	£ 100.00	Torrige, North, Mid & West Devon Citizens Advice. Donation.
-Chq 2248	£ 155.04	HMRC. Quarterly payment.

c) A quotation from T K Play Ltd., for £810 was agreed for maintenance at the play park following the annual inspection. The Clerk will query if some items that have been suggested for removal may be repaired and replaced at a later date.

Finance continued:

d) To consider grants and subscriptions to the various groups and organisations for inclusion within the precept figure – it was agreed to continue as in previous years regarding subscriptions but for a reduction in some of the grants in order to assist with delivery of the pump track within the new financial year.

The Clerk reported that following communication with the Chairman and the Treasurer of Kentisbeare Village Hall Committee it is expected that the committee will be in agreement for the annual Parish Council grant of £1000 (as awarded in previous years) to be put towards the pump track in the financial year 2025/26 –this will be confirmed following the next hall committee meeting of 26/01/25.

e) The Council went into Part 2 for a Review of Clerk's salary and expenses.

f) Precept 2025/2026 - to agree a figure for the Parish precept: Following an informal meeting with the Clerk, the Chairman and Cllr. Woofenden and circulation to all of suggested figures to cover financial needs for the coming year, a report was given and it was resolved to set the precept at £45,000. The figure includes grants for Blackborough Village Hall, the three churchyards the sports clubs and subscriptions to various organisations as in previous years. An amount will continue to be held as a general reserve. It was agreed to endeavor to try and limit spending over the financial year where possible with the aim of completing the pump track. Once the pump track is complete funds will be built and reserved towards further improvements on the site and for the general reserve as required.

Councillors were unanimous in their decision to set the precept at £45,000. It was noted that this is a small increase in the amount that the Parish Council receives for the Parish – the last increase requested by the Parish Council was in the year 2022/23. As in previous years, MDDC will deduct the subscription for DALC.

g) Any other financial matters: DCC has asked that cheque number 002224 in respect of the HGV Road sign along Rectory Road be held back until works are complete.

11/01/25. Kentisbeare Play Area.

a) Pump (cycle) Track – update and to agree on the timescale, funding and phasing: A site meeting with the contractor has been arranged and it is expected that initial works will start in six weeks. Funding and phasing will be covered at the meeting and details will be reported at the next meeting.

b) Any other matters: The Clerk will meet with a local sign company shortly following the annual inspection report.

12/01/25. Update on the possibility of entering Britain In Bloom: Cllr. Forster reported on community involvement following a recent meeting with a judge. Cllr. Forster will form a group to take things forward and report at a future meeting.

13/01/25. Correspondence & Any Consultations. Various generic emails. Clerks and Councils Direct.

14/01/25. Items for information, future agenda items, and dates of future meetings. Future meeting dates: 11/02/25 – apologies from Cllr. Allan.