

Drewsteignton Parish Council.

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Minutes for meeting of Drewsteignton Parish Council that took place on Monday the 20th of January 2025 at 7.30pm at Whiddon Down Village Hall.

Present, Peter Brennan, Andrew Di Battista, Ian Rowe, Laurance Bennie, John Redman, Anna Imrie, and Julie Macey.

Also present, Lou Butler(clerk) 1 member of the public and Borough Cllr Guthrie

Business Transacted

1.1.25: Welcome

Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded everyone that an audio recording would be taken from item 1 on the agenda to aid note taking and would be deleted once the draft minutes had been written.

2.1.25 Current Vacancies.

Chair reminded the council of the current vacancy in the Crockernwell ward.

3.1.25: Apologies for absence:

Cllr Hember forwarded her apologies in advance of the meeting due to family commitments. Cllr Brennan proposed to approve the apology and Cllr Rowe seconded. All in favour. Motion carried. RR25/01

4.1.25: Minutes of the Last Meetings. Draft Minutes were made available on the website.

Cllr Di Batista proposed they were a true and accurate account of the previous meeting held on 09th of December 2024 and Cllr Brennan seconded this. All in favour. Motion carried. RR25/02

5.1.25: Declarations of Interest.

Cllrs were invited to declare any interests they may have in items on this agenda, including the nature of the interest. Cllrs were reminded of their responsibility to keep their Register of Interests.

6.1.25: Public Speaking Time (max. 3minutes/person. Session time: 10 minutes).

A Member of the public from the village hall committee came to the public forum to discuss the village hall requesting a grant for blankets and supplies for a snow refuge point to be created at the village hall. In times in the past when the A30 has been closed at Whiddon Down the village hall has been opened for stranded travellers to rest and keep warm. The Cllrs thought this would be a worthy cause and have ask the village hall to put forward a proposal for a grant to support them with this idea.

7.1.25: To receive reports (if any) from County Cllr. McInnes & Borough Cllr Guthrie.

Clerk read out the New year document from County Cllr McInnes (attached) and Cllr Guthrie attended the meeting and spoke about the need for the local government to start investing their money more wisely when completing road repairs. He also encouraged the council to review the devolution plans that were currently being discussed to form a Devon and Torbay Combined County Authority (CCA) which will devolve powers and funding from Whitehall.

8.1.25: Planning (DNPA unless otherwise stated) (Chair):

- a) 0005/25, Listed Building Consent, Charisma Cottage Hillmorhayes, Drewsteignton, EX6 6QR, Re-rendering the south elevation and a spandrel on east elevation and replacement of all 6 windows on the south elevation. Ex 13-02-2025 Cllr's reviewed the application and discussed the nature of the application being essential works to the property which were in keeping with the aesthetics of the village. Cllr Redman proposed a positive response to the application and Cllr Macey seconded, all in favour. Motion carried RR25/03
- b) 3301/24/FUL Land at SX 678 926 Whiddon Down, Change of use of land for proposed extension to Dartmoor View Holiday Park for 50 holiday lodges together with associated infrastructure and landscaping. Ex 19/12/24 (West Devon) Cllrs Macey and Redman had attended a site visit in December, where they had agreed that the proposal wasn't visible from any other property. They also commented of how the new design ideas were well thought out and that the park, and local amenities (public house and service station) would benefit from the extra footfall that the lodges would produce. Clerk noted that of the parishioners that had attended December's meeting, had failed to join the site visit although invited and had been contacted, but didn't want to comment further. Cllr Macey proposed retrospectively the positive response and Cllr Redman seconded, all in favour, Motion carried. RR25/04

9.1.25: Highway matters

- a) Clerk updated the Cllr's on the new public rights of way warden for the area. Chair requested that Cllr's still report problems though the clerk.
- b) One new road closure was added to the list of ongoing maintenance related closures with the road past Spinsters rock to be closed on 6th of May 2025
- c) Cllrs were made aware that the new green grit bin was currently situated at the Clerk's residence and was too large for her to transport it to its correct location. Location was agreed at the entrance to Knowle Lane. Cllr Redman agreed to collect bin and position it that week.

10.1.25 Current and new business

- a) Cllrs were made aware of Taw View Farm's increase in activity. What was originally a pig farm with 250 sows and has increased to a farm of ~2500 sows. This raised a concern to Cllrs about the increased smell that the farm may produce and how the extra porta pig units would look on the land. Clerk was asked to report to the relevant authorities. Chair reported his understanding that all the extra waste that the farm was creating, was being removed and taken off site.
- b) Clerk advised Cllr's that the oak tree that was being donated to the parish would be delivered on Thursday the 23rd of January. It will be delivered to the shed at the playing field and a location has been earmarked for it there.
- c) Clerk made Cllrs aware of a maintenance issue with the skylight within the public toilets in Drewsteignton. Cllrs Redman agreed to go and fix the problem. Plus put some more damp-proof paint on the walls. Chair reminded him to keep and submit his receipts for materials.

11.1.25 Annual review of Council Policies & Procedures:

DPC015 Internal financial control policy. Chair recommended the council amend this policy after the internal audit.

DPC016 Council risk assessment. Chair circulated the reviewed risk assessment document available on the website. Cllr Brennan then proposed the amended document DPC016 would be used as policy for the next 12 months by DPC, Cllr Rowe seconded this, all in favour. Motion carried RR25/05

12.1.25: Finance and Consideration for approval of purchases.

- a) Council received a grant application from the Drewsteignton Playing Field Committee for £500 to help towards installation of a new basket swing for the playing field. Chair briefed the council on the funding the committee had already secured with a WDBC Community Grant of £3,930 which would be paid on completion. Separately WDBC Cllr Guthrie Locality Fund £800 and DCC Cllr McInnes Locality Budget £850 had been received into the DPC current account. The committee would be transferring £1,788 from their funds to cover the balance towards the total purchase of £7,868.18 excluding VAT. Noted the PC will pay the VAT and seek to recover as per practice. Clerk requested transfer of funds to the separate Nat West "playing field account" totalling £2,150. Noted the Cheque for £500 towards supporting the fireworks display had been lost therefore the Clerk will reserve £500 in the DPC account to future invoice due for toddler swings already purchased. Cllr Imrie proposed that the £500 grant was granted and that the expenditure and transfer were approved, Cllr Redman seconded, all in favour. Motion carried RR25/06
- b) Clerk proposed a precept figure of £12,600 for the year 25/26 which is inline with the same Band D household cost for last year. Noted local Government increases for the year is 9% and the DPC felt that with the current financial crisis affecting its parishioners, that an increase at this time would be unreasonable. Cllr Brennan proposed DPC request a precept amount for a Band D property of -0.03% on last year and Cllr Rowe seconded, all in favour. Motion carried. RR25/07
- c) After a successful year of using Scribe accounting software. The clerk proposed that the Cllrs consider increasing the subscription to the professional level. This would give Cllrs' the ability to agree transactions online and have an overview of the council budgets and expenses. Cllr Brennan proposed that Drewsteignton parish council increase the subscription to £24 per month excluding vat, from the existing £12 per month. Justification noted to save accounting time and achieve a higher level of financial compliance and transparency. Cllr Imrie seconded, all in favour. Motion carried. RR25/08
- d) New MVAS device purchase. Due to time restrictions this item was put on hold until the next meeting in February.
- e) Cllrs were asked to review the budget considerations for 25/26 budget. Sent via email on the 15th of January 25. Clerk was made aware of limited access to email from a selection of Cllr's and has been asked to reestablish emails and resend budget for discussion in February.
- f) Noted the Clerk has now online access to the PC bank account. It was presented to the council that the clerk is now able to pay invoices via BACS. To ensure transparency and appropriate approval, these invoices would be signed at the monthly PC meeting by 2 Cllrs thereby authorising the Clerk to make BACS payments the following day. Cllr Brennan proposed a move to BACS payments and the revised approval process system and Cllr Di Battista seconded. All in favour, Motion carried RR25/09

13.1.25: Confidential matters (PART II) Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 s1 (2)

- a) Resolution required to move the Council into Part II. Cllr Brennan proposed to move the PV into Part II and Cllr Di Battista seconded. All in favour, Motion carried RR25/09. Clerk and members of the public left the meeting.
- b) Chair to discuss parishioners' complaint regarding RFO recruitment. DPC Policy 012 Complaints and Grievances Policy states formal complaints are a serious matter and will only be accepted in writing. Despite telephone contact no written complaint and supporting documentation has been provided thereby removing any possibility of further action.
- c) Chair to return the meeting to public session to hear resolutions. Cllr Brennan proposed a vote of confidence in the work of the Clerk and satisfaction with the HR Committee recruitment process held in April 2023 and Cllr A Imrie seconded. All in favour, Motion carried RR25/10

14.1.25: Confirmation of the next Council meeting:

Chair confirmed that the next council meeting would take place at Whiddon Down village hall on the 17th of February 2025 at 7.30 - Any changes will be posted on the website.

Cllr McInnes New Year message

Morning all

Happy new year, it is going to be an interesting 2025! Following the publication of the government's Devolution White Paper it is clear change is going to happen to Local Government in Devon. There is no change to Town and Parish Councils, but the County Council and the eight District Councils could be swept away and replaced by a Unitary Council/Councils. This would bring all council services under one Council. It is clear that there are two options: 1. Do nothing and government will imposed the changes they want, or 2. Engage with Government and be masters of our own destiny. DCC have a Special Full Council on the 9th of January to discuss these issues. My view is that DCC need to be proactive and work with Government to mould the future shape of Local Government in Devon. The key issues are, we need to make Local Government in Devon sustainable for the long term, able to withstand shocks like the pandemic and world financial crisis. At the heart of all this must be a stronger voice to inform Government of the issues Devon resident face. Happy to discuss.

As always please come back to me with any issues I can help with.

Thanks James

James McInnes
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Purchase Orders

Purchase Orders allows you to record data in advance of a payment and produce an order to send to the supplier. When you pay the supplier you can convert the order into a payment without having to re-enter the details.

[1 - purchase orders with expired due date](#)

Date	Order No	Financial Year	Name	Cost Code	Net	VAT	Total	Description	Bank	Tender	Total (Order)	
- 20.01.2025	6	2024-2025	playing field	Reserves 2	£2,150.00	£0.00	£2,150.00	grant payments	Current	ONLINE PAYMENT	£2,150.00	2 -
- 09.01.2025	5	2024-2025	sovereign	Reserves 1	£396.32	£77.26	£463.58	playing field equipment	Current	ONLINE PAYMENT	£463.58	1
- 20.01.2025	4	2024-2025	Louise Butler	Staff Costs	£541.13	£0.00	£541.13	Salary and costs	Current	ONLINE PAYMENT	£541.13	2
- 19.01.2025	3	2024-2025	WDVH	Open Spaces	£42.00	£0.00	£42.00	Hall Hire	Current	ONLINE PAYMENT	£42.00	1 -
- 04.01.2025	2	2024-2025	Stephen Park	Other/Miscellaneous	£225.00	£0.00	£225.00	WC cleaning	Current	ONLINE PAYMENT	£225.00	1 -
- 18.12.2024	1	2024-2025	source for business	Utilities	£94.81	£0.00	£94.81	water WC	Current	ONLINE PAYMENT	£94.81	1 -

