

Drewsteignton Parish Council.

Clerk: Louise Butler, clerk.drewsteigntonpc@outlook.com/ 07764683412

www.drewsteigntonparish.co.uk.

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Minutes for meeting of Drewsteignton Parish Council that took place on Monday the 19th of January 2026, at 7.30pm in Whiddon Down Village Hall.

Present, Peter Brennan, Andrew Di Battista, John Redman, Laurance Bennie, Anna Imrie, Lou Butler(clerk) Cllr Steve Guthrie plus one member of the public Gay Hill.

Business Transacted

1.2.26: 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.

2.2.26 Current Vacancies.

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

3.2.26: Apologies for absence:

On apology for absence was noted for Cllr Ian Rowe, Cllr Julie Macey RR26/07

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

5.2.26: 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 responsibilities to keep their register of interests updated. No interest was declared at this time.

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

Gay Hill from the Providence school trust, joined us to discuss the work of the trust. They give grants to local young people, as they venture off into adult life. These grants often of around £250 are primarily to support starting university or for educational trips. The trust is currently seeking a trustee from the Drewsteignton area, to assist with the grant award process. It is a relatively relaxed position with the trustees only meeting 3 times per year. If anyone is interested in the role please contact the parish clerk.

7.2.26: To receive reports (if any) from County Cllr. Davies & Borough Cllr Guthrie. Plus, parish councillors' reports.

Cllr Davies sent a note to the meeting for any updates to SWW and Crockernwell.

Cllr Guthrie attended the meeting. It was noted that the borough council tax increase is expected to be approximately 2.9%. Cllr Guthrie also covered the budget-setting process currently underway across local authorities. It was noted that councils are legally required to set balanced budgets and that finance officers are currently finalising figures for the forthcoming financial year. The challenges of balancing budgets while maintaining services were acknowledged.

Members were informed that there is an ongoing government consultation relating to local government structures and future arrangements. While the consultation is not widely open to the public, it is available through the West Devon website and relevant organisations are being

encouraged to review the proposals. The implications of potential reforms, including possible changes to election arrangements, were briefly noted.

Attention was drawn to an upcoming Arts and Culture Survey, which will also be promoted through the West Devon website and local newsletters. The purpose of the survey is to gather feedback from residents regarding the cultural activities they currently engage with and the types of arts and cultural opportunities they would like to see developed locally. This information will assist in supporting local arts organisations and strengthening applications for funding.

Members were also advised of a proposal to organise a planning and development workshop day. The event would potentially involve architects and specialists presenting examples of innovative building approaches and discussing materials, design principles and community-focused development. The aim is to encourage better-quality housing development that considers social and community impacts, rather than developments that prioritise housing numbers alone.

Finally, it was noted that parish councils may have opportunities to access funding or grants for local projects in the coming years. Chair observed that there are several potential projects within parishes that may benefit from such funding opportunities.

Cllr's will be kept informed as further details become available regarding consultations, the proposed planning workshop, and potential funding opportunities.

Cllr Hember attended an online shareholder update for South West Water. Hosted by the Pennon Group, with approximately 100 participants online. The session included representatives from South West Water and Watershare Plus, an independent body that reviews the company's performance. South West Water reported that water quality is currently ranked among the best in the country and reservoir levels are around 76% capacity. The company outlined plans to improve water treatment through the introduction of ozone treatment and UV systems, which will help reduce chemical use and address contaminants such as Cryptosporidium.

Concerns were raised about environmental water quality, including beach closures and pollution incidents. It was noted that ageing infrastructure and drainage systems continue to create challenges, particularly in areas with new housing developments.

The company stated that significant investment is being made in water treatment and network improvements, with increased monitoring of treatment works planned in the coming years.

Members also discussed the ongoing Crockernwell water issue, where around 10 properties remain affected, including five households still reliant on bottled water. It was noted that while South West Water believes it has identified the cause, this has not been shared with residents, and the company has not confirmed whether the water supply is safe to drink.

Cllr Imrie reported increased problems with potholes in Whiddon Down. Clerk to report again.

Cllr Redman reported fly tipping issues around Drewsteignton. Clerk to report after receipt of photographic evidence. He also reported that Steven Bowden had cut hedges to allow better access to Drewsteignton. Which the Chair noted and asked to pass the councils thanks onto Mr Bowden.

Cllr Redman also discussed a recent incident involving dogs loose in the parish which resulted in livestock being attacked.

Affected farmers had been informed that compensation for livestock losses would be provided, potentially through the police. However, no further communication has yet been received.

John noted the difficulty in contacting the police via the non-emergency number, with several calls reportedly redirected or disconnected before reaching an operator.

Clerk offered to contact a local police officer directly by email to obtain a suitable contact or clarification regarding responsibility for compensation payments.

It was also suggested that, should the matter remain unresolved, correspondence could be sent to the Police and Crime Commissioner.

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

0022/26 Full Planning Permission, Restoration, alteration and enhancement of grade II listed cottages following fire including the provision of Electric vehicle charging point. 1-3 Glebe And Trinity Cottages, Drewsteignton, Exeter, Devon, EX6 6QN exp 16/03/26

Members considered the planning application for Listed Building Consent relating to Glebe and Trinity Cottages, concerning the restoration, alteration and enhancement of the Grade II listed cottages following the recent fire.

Chair noted that discussions had taken place between the applicants, Dartmoor National Park, and building control regarding how the buildings could be modernised to meet current regulations while preserving their historic character and materials.

The proposal includes:

Restoration of the cottages following fire damage

Internal alterations and remodelling of the upper floors

Creation of clearer compartmental separation between the four cottages to address the previous flying freehold arrangement, which had contributed to the spread of the fire

Chair also noted the Heritage Design and Access Statement, which provides detailed historical information on the buildings, dating back to the 14th century.

It was reported that tendering and site access remain challenges, and that demolition and salvage work originally expected to begin in May 2026 may be delayed.

Land to the Rear of the Old Inn

Members were informed that the planning application previously discussed for development of land to the rear of the Old Inn has been withdrawn.

It was reported that the applicant and their agent continue discussions with Dartmoor National Park, who have indicated that development may still be possible on the site.

The applicant intends to resolve access arrangements before revisiting issues relating to drainage and sewage.

Members agreed to monitor the situation should a new application be submitted.

9.2.26: Current and new business

a) The Chair reported that she attended the Playing Field Committee AGM.

Members were informed that the committee has amended its constitution, including:

Removing provisions relating to formally hiring out the building, clarifying that the facility may accept donations for use, rather than charging hire fees, due to insurance restrictions

Making several general amendments and tidying up the document

The updated constitution has been submitted to the Parish Council for information.

b) Sand Bags. Following recent heavy rainfall, a resident contacted the council requesting sandbags due to the risk of flooding. It was noted that the Parish Council does not currently hold a supply of sandbags. Cllrs were informed that: Chagford Parish Council holds a supply of sandbags and The Chagford fire station also holds sandbags

Cllr's agreed that this information should be shared should future enquiries arise.

11.2.26: Review of council policies and procedures.

[DPC 020 Press & Media Policy](#)

[DPC 021 Removable Media Policy](#)

[DPC 022 Cllr Email & Own Device Policy](#)

These policies had previously been updated in line with the revised format.

The policies be reviewed and noted with no changes required.

The Chair advised that updated Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, aligned with NALC guidance and the forthcoming financial framework changes expected in 2027, will be circulated to members ahead of the Annual Parish Meeting.

12.2.26: Finance and Consideration for approval of purchases.

a) Members considered a proposal from a new printing company, Parish Magazines Printing (Tavistock), which had provided sample copies.

The quotation provided was:

£135 for 400 copies with six colour pages

£160.20 for a fully colour version

Members noted that this compares favourably with the council's current printing costs.

That the council trial the new printing company for a forthcoming edition.

Members also noted that the current editor, Shelley, is no longer able to continue due to personal circumstances, and a new volunteer editor may be required.

Distribution will continue via the existing volunteer network, with copies delivered to the Chair for allocation.

b)

Drewsteignton pc online payment log Feb 26					
Voucher n	Date	Supplier	Description	Amount	VAT reclaim
72	16.02.2026	Louise Butler	Salaries and expenses	£393.64	N
71	31.01.2026	Parish Mag Printers Ltd	Parish post printing	£157.00	N
70	02.02.2026	Scribe Accounting (Starboard Systems Limited)	Scribe	£28.80	Y
69	02.02.2026	EDF	Electric W/C	£23.68	Y
68	02.02.2026	source for business	Water WC	£274.40	Y
67	20.01.2026	EDF	pf electric	£19.54	Y

13.1.26: Confirmation of the next Council meeting: 16th of March 2026.7.30 at Drewsteignton Church Space - Any changes will be posted on the Website.