MORCHARD BISHOP PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 11 May 2026 at following the Annual Meeting at 7.00pm

At Morchard Bishop Memorial Hall

Present: Simon Baker, (Chair), Dawn Parkhouse (Vice Chair), David Gillbard, Sarah Gillbard, David Grant, Andy Hankins, Stephen Leese, Les Partridge, Sheila Sinclair, Debbie Ticehurst, Sarah Vere, County Councillor Steve Keable, District Councillor Helen Tuffin and David Parker (Parish Clerk).

Members of the Public attending: None

1. **Apologies**: District Councillor Mark Jenkins.

2. **Members of the Public** – No members of the public attended.

3. **The minutes** of the Parish Council Meeting held on 13 April 2026 were approved - Proposed: Sarah Gillbard, seconded: Sheila Sinclair - carried unanimously.

4. **Matters Arising (not dealt with elsewhere in the minutes):**
   - The Clerk had sent Stephen Leese his "Not-Spot" report. Cllr Leese had re-written the report and sent it to the South West Business Lead at Dragon Wi-Fi.
   - Seats - Sarah and Debbie would see if they could put some paint on the seat at Groberry Hayes. The 2000 Commemoration seat in St. Gatien Garden needed to be repaired by a joiner, both seats in St Gatien would benefit from a rub down and a coat of wood preserver.
   - The newer Notice Board by the skittle Alley had been repaired by Sarah Gillbard's friend Kirk who had made an excellent job. The Parish Council passed a vote of thanks.
   - Fuji Salt Spreader – Les confirmed that John Charman would clean down the salt spreader and give it a coat of diesel before putting it away for the summer.
   - Simon and Stephen confirmed that free software had not been able to open the Electoral Roll documents sent out by MDDC. The Clerk was authorised to purchase WinZip.
   - The Clerk had delivered a letter to Ridge House about the state of the Boundary Wall, within three minutes of delivering the letter, the Manager and two members of staff were out inspecting the wall and the Clerk was able to explain the danger to them. The Council will keep a watching brief on what work is done.
   - The Lifeline Alarm Service leaflet had been placed on the Parish Council Website and drawn to the attention of the Carer's group.
   - The VAS sign was moved on Friday 17 April.

5. **Finance.**
   A cashflow table for May was circulated which explained the income and expenditure figures for April/May. Expenditure for May was £1,543.97 on the main account, nothing on the Reserve account and £859.87 on the footpaths account. Funds at the end of April before payment of these invoices stood at: Reserve Account, £11,998.68; Current Account £16,292.50; P3 Account £3,474.19.

Current Account Receipts and Invoices to be paid:

MorFest	Ticket sales and Sponsorship	£ 883.00 credit
Memorial Hall	Meetings	£ 105.00 BACS
British Gas Energy	Outside lighting of the Church (est.)	£ 22.83 Direct Debit
Pro FM	MorFest Security	£1,104.00 BACS
WinZip	Subscription	£ 31.14 BACS
Morchard Messenger	Subscription from January	£ 125.00 BACS
Stapletons	Payroll Services	£ 156.00 BACS

P3 Footpaths Account

Northfield Landscaping	Work to Footpaths	£ 859.87 BACS

The Current account stands at £15,631.53 after payment of these invoices, the Reserve account stands at £11,998.68 including funds for Jubilee Funds (£113.46), DAAT (£150.48), Clock Face fund (£613.99), Election Expenses (£4,000), and the P3 account stands at £2,614.32.

Stephen Leese proposed, and Sheila Sinclair seconded that these invoices be paid and the Financial report accepted – carried unanimously.

6. Planning

26/00397/FULL Revised Drawings	Conversion of barn to self build dwelling and construction of a new vehicular access	Land and Building at NGR 276997 107128 Polson Hill, Morchard Bishop

The Parish Council were concerned about the proposed new access to the site off Polson Hill. Even with the increased visibility splay (which would mean ripping out established hedges) egress and access to the site would be very tight bearing in mind that the owners of the houses on Polson Hill had no alternative other than to park on the road opposite the proposed access. Comment was also passed about the speed of cars coming down Polson Hill as they exited the village making it a hazard. The Parish Council concluded that safety and access to the site directly from Polson Hill was unfeasible. The Parish Council confirmed their view from their April Meeting that this land was outside of the settlement limit according to the Adopted Policies Map agreed to be in place until 2033. After Discussion: Sarah Gillbard proposed that this application be OBJECTED to, Sarah Vere seconded the proposal and it was CARRIED unanimously.

Planning**:** decisions / appeals / withdrawals:

25/01755/HOUSE Granted	Create opening to connect longhouse section into annex to return property to one dwelling; erection of carport with solar panels on south facing aspect of roof and space to provide energy storage batteries and external groundworks to improve access.	Wigham, MB
25/01756/LBC Granted	Listed Building Consent for the replacement of windows and creation of opening to connect longhouse section into annex to return property to one dwelling.	Wigham, MB
26/00369/PIP Approved	Permission in Principle for the erection of 9 dwellings	Land at NGR 276588 107753 Chulmleigh Road,
26/00326/CAT Objected and Tree Preservation Order put in place	Notification of intention to remove 2 stems of a 3 x multi stemmed beech tree and then crown reduce remaining stem by 2 – 3 m within the Conservation Area	Chippings, The Green, MB
26/00547/PNAG No Objection – Prior Approval Not Required	Prior Approval for the erection of an agricultural building to form covered silage clamps.	Land at NGR 278281 107786 Barnsclose Farm, MB
26/00529/PNAG No Objection – Prior Approval Not Required	Prior Approval for the erection of roof covering over existing silage clamp.	Land and Buildings at NGR 277612 107895 Wood Barton, MB
Appeal No. 6003247 Appeal Allowed	Appeal against MDDC's decision to refuse change of use from agricultural building to dwelling under class Q	Building near Rolestone Barton, MB

7. **County and District Councillors' Headlines**

Councillor Steve Keable's report was circulated before the meeting: Councillor Keable confirmed that he had been able to increase the Locality Budget for the VAS sign to £750 and that the forms had now been submitted. Councillor Keable mentioned the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) with regard to Housing and Employment Land availability. The report had been made available early in order to give Parish Councils the opportunity to study and understand it. He urged the Council to participate and said there would be three windows for consultation all with very tight deadlines. With regard to Roads, Steve spent a day a month with the Highways Liaison Officer chasing up work on the tracker documents that he

had produced for each of his Councils. There was no update on drains or gullies. The Clerk was asked to write to Steve Tucker about the Village entrance sign at Jane Ways Grave which had been stolen. Three capping stones had been dislodged from the bridge over the river at Bugford.
Councillor Helen Tuffin's report was received before the meeting. Councillor Tuffin particularly wanted to draw the attention of Councillors and the Parish generally, the new Crisis and Resilience Fund which was being managed by Mid Devon District Council. The purpose of the Fund was to offer rapid, flexible support alongside access to advice on income, debt, housing and wellbeing.

8. **Correspondence not dealt with elsewhere in the meeting:**
- Mid Devon District Council – Economic Development Team have refreshed the Visit Mid Devon Website. www.visitmiddevon.co.uk . There is a section on there about Morchard Bishop and they are advertising MorFest.
- Keep Britain Tidy – have launched an anti-dog fouling campaign and are offering a pack including "There's no such thing as a dog poo fairy" posters. Stephen would place one on the Parish Council Website.
- Mid Devon District Council – Invitation to attend the Civic Service. – No Councillor was available to attend.
- Mid Devon District Council – Promotion of the Mid Devon Business and Economy Newsletter.
- Mid Devon District Council – Promotion of the new Crisis and Resilience fund as mentioned by our District Councillors. This information will be placed on the Parish Council Website.

9. **Ongoing Matters:**

a) Roads, Signage, Hedges, Potholes, Footpaths and Mud on roads, Road Wardens and Finger Posts: Devon Highways had confirmed that the pothole repair material had been ordered and was on its way. Network Rail confirmed that although the last examination of the road by the rail bridge at Morchard Road was in May 2025, no issues had been found but they would continue to monitor it. The Parish Council are impatient with progress from Devon Highways in clearing the drains they had agreed to do and so Stephen Leese proposed that the Parish Council spend £1,000 to clear as many drains as they could within that fee. Debbie Ticehurst seconded the proposal and it was carried unanimously. It was agreed that the jetter should commence with the drain from the Chapel to the open ditch behind Amaury Cottage. The Clerk to inform Stephen Keable. There are problems along The Green where a car is parking and blocking larger vehicles such as the dust cart and oil tankers getting through. Sarah Gillbard agreed to try to speak with the resident concerned. Parking is available in the Bishops Meadow Car Park.

b) Accidents and Incidents: The Clock in the Church has stopped chiming and Bob Robinson has reported that it is because the wires attaching the weights are no longer attached to the system. The Parish Council agreed to instruct A E Smith to service the clock and carry out any necessary repairs. The Plants around the War Memorial had died, either due to the Winter Planting having dried out or because they had been sprayed with weed killer it was not clear. Robert Moore was due to do the summer planting soon and a watering rota would then be put in place. The Clerk was to chase up Steve Dockings regarding his agreement to tidy up the area and put in further bollards.

c) Defibrillators – Still to be checked for this month.

d) Neighbourhood Plan – After the June meeting of the Parish Council, there would be a working group to consider the Neighbourhood Plan and the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) particularly with a view to identifying land in the Parish for future building.

10. **Crediton Association of Local Councils** – Unfortunately no-one from the Parish Council attended the last meeting on 13th April and Minutes had not yet been received.

11. **MorFest –** Organization of the event was progressing well. There was now a need to push ticket sales and call for more draw prizes and volunteers.

12. **Community Orchard** – The Chairman proposed that the Parish Council accept the offer of land from Mr Jeffrey for use as a Community Orchard. The Parish Council unanimously accepted the proposal. A group of the Council would need to meet with Mr Jeffrey to finalise details. The possibilities were discussed of planting Memorial or Celebration Trees particularly those with Devon Heritage. The possibility was also raised of using s.106 funds towards outdoor Gym equipment.

13. **Villages Competitions** – The Chairman proposed that the Village enter the next, or a future round of the Britain in Bloom Competition. This proposal was unanimously accepted

14. **Trustees and Village Organisations Reports**
- Sustainable Morchard – Plant swap on 2nd May had been successful, the group were considering writing a book about gardens in the village.

- Memorial Hall – The Annual General Meeting would be held on Tuesday 12 May.
- Morchard Bishop Playing Fields – Professional Mediation between the Playing Fields Association and the Sports and Social Club Committee – Suggestions were being put to the Mediator and a date for Mediation was awaited. The Parish Council agreed to run the Jacket Potato Machine at the Fun Day and Sarah was asked to find out the distance of the longest throw of the Welly. People were asked to turn up the Vintage Rally and Fun Day planning meeting on the last Tuesday in May.
- School – Year 6 were doing SATS at the moment. Bikeability was also happening this week. The following week, years 5 and 6 would go on a Residential to London. The School had recently been inspected and had received a "Good" Report.
- Churchyard – Nothing to report.
- Parochial Church Council (PCC) – The position of Team Vicar was finally being advertised and some interest had already been received. The new incumbent would live in the Rectory in Morchard Bishop. Robert Vere was to receive a St Boniface Award for Extraordinary Services to the Church. – The ceremony would be on Saturday 6th June at Exeter Cathedral.

15. Items for Future Meetings (Note – items in this section cannot be discussed – merely scheduled for a future meeting).

- Nothing mentioned.

Meeting Closed at 8.57pm

The next meeting of Morchard Bishop Parish Council will be on **Monday 1 June 2026** at the Memorial Hall at **7.00pm** which will be followed by a working group on the Neighbourhood Plan and HELAA