

MORCHARD BISHOP PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 6 July 2026 at 7.00pm

At Morchard Bishop Memorial Hall

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

Members of the Public attending: Kate Bray, Lisa Vogwell and two individuals who wished to remain anonymous.

1. Apologies: Debbie Ticehurst, David Gillbard,

2. Members of the Public – Kate Bray was there to answer questions, if any, about her planning application, Lisa Vogwell simply wished to listen to the meeting.

3. The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 1 June 2026 were amended about the parking along The Green and approved - Proposed: Dawn Parkhouse, seconded: Sheila Sinclair - carried unanimously.

4. Matters Arising (not dealt with elsewhere in the minutes):

- **Seats - Sarah and Debbie would see if they could put some paint on the seat at Groberry Hayes.**
- Kirk Gilroy had kindly repaired the 2000 Commemoration seat in St. Gaten Garden, **both seats in St Gaten would benefit from a rub down and a coat of wood preserver.**
- **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.**
- Stephen Leese had placed the “no such thing as a dog poo fairy sign” on the website and also the promotion of the new Crisis and Resilience Fund.
- The Clerk had made a new application for Locality Funding for £1,000 towards the drains and gully work – he awaited a response from Devon County Council.
- The information relating to Digital Landline Switch over – free resource for residents had been placed on the Parish Council Website and Noticeboard and passed to the Carers’ Group.
- **Sarah and David Gillbard will organise a rota of people to run the Welly Wanging at the Fun Day.**
- Sarah Vere had located a suitable “headland plough” to be used as an “edge plough” for the roads, the Parish Council approved a spend of up to £300, **Sarah Vere will arrange for it to come to the village for inspection,** David Grant confirmed his offer to contribute £100 towards the purchase of such a plough.

5. Finance.

A cashflow table for July was circulated which explained the income and expenditure figures for June/July. Expenditure for July was £1,593.80 on the main account, nothing on the Reserve account and nothing on the footpaths account. Funds at the end of June before payment of these invoices stood at: Reserve Account, £12,015.73; Current Account £22,591.34 (the increase due to MorFest proceeds); P3 Account £2,614.32.

Current Account Receipts and Invoices to be paid:

British Gas Energy	Outside lighting of the Church (est.)	£ 18.71 Direct Debit
SHT Dockings	Grass Cutting (Dec 25 – Feb 26)	£ 267.00 BACS
Lydcott Nursery	Summer Planting	£ 174.09 BACS
David Parker	Clerk's Salary Apr - Jun	£ 907.20 BACS
HMRC	Clerk's Tax	£ 226.80 BACS

The Current account stands at £20,997.54 after payment of these invoices, the Reserve account stands at £12,015.73 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 David Grant seconded that these invoices be paid and the Financial report accepted – carried unanimously.

Parish Council Insurance – The Clerk reported that between meetings the Parish Council Insurance had come up for renewal. The existing provider, Clear Councils had quoted £704.78. The Clerk had sought a quotation from Zurich Municipal who had quoted £363.00 for a like for like policy. The Clerk and the Chairman had reviewed the policies and opted for the Zurich policy.

Electricity provider for Outside floodlights at St. Mary's – The Clerk had been approached by a number of firms offering a new electricity contract from the end of the current term which expires on 8 May 2027. Currently we pay British Gas 27.53p/Kwh and a standing charge of 45p/day. For the new contract David had been quoted 28.99p/day and a standing charge of 65p/day to stay with British Gas Lite, however another quote had been found from yū Energy who offered 28.52p/Kwh with a zero standing charge. – The Clerk had accepted the new quotation thus avoiding paying a standing charge for three years from May 2027.

6. Planning

26/00707/FULL	Conversion of barn to holiday let to include installation of an electric vehicle charging point and solar photovoltaic panels	Park House, Fore Street, MB
26/00708/LBC	Listed Building Consent for conversion of barn to holiday let to include installation of an electric vehicle charging point and solar photovoltaic panels	Park House, Fore Street, MB

Kate Bray gave a short explanation of her planning application for a potential holiday accommodation. Following discussion Councillor Les Partridge proposed that the applications be supported, Councillor Stephen Leese seconded the proposal and the Parish Council all voted in favour of the proposal. The applications therefore were both SUPPORTED.

Planning: decisions / appeals / withdrawals:

26/00397/FULL Granted	Conversion of barn to self-build dwelling and alteration to existing vehicular access.	Land and Buildings at NGR 276997 107128, Polson Hill, MB.
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7. County and District Councillors' Headlines

Councillor Steve Keable mentioned the roadworks around the Tesco store at Crediton. The reason for the work is that Tesco wanted the County Council to adopt Joseph Locke Way but that it had not been built to County Council standards and so was having to be re-laid. The roundabout also linked to the new trading estate, which had not been envisaged when it was built and so improvements to the roundabout were necessary too. Councillor Keable also mentioned the tractor fire on the A377 at Bugford which had meant the road had to be re-laid and caused the closure of the A377 for a few days. Steve Keable was very concerned that the Fire Engine took far too long to arrive due to a local crew not being able to be mustered. Steve will be looking into the facts.

Councillor Mark Jenkins mentioned the new Mid Devon APP which made it easier for members of the public to access services at MDDC. Councillor Helen Tuffin commented that the App worked well for accessing Planning Applications.

8. Correspondence not dealt with elsewhere in the meeting:

- MDDC new App for accessing MDDC services
- Circet – Footpath between Fore Street and The Green would be CLOSED between 30/9 to 6/10 for work to provide Fibre Broadband.
- CHAT – Thank you for the donation
- Mid Devon Mobility – Thank you for the donation
- MDDC – S106 Funding update (there was nothing new in it for Morchard Bishop)
- MDDC – Publication of Members' personal information – new register of Interests form. Councillors were invited to update their Register of Interests following new legislation which meant that their address no longer needed to be shown on public websites. **Parish Councillors were asked to complete a new form if they wanted to and to let the Clerk have their forms by September.**
- Finding Fitness Ltd – offer to assist with funding applications for park equipment – this may be useful for the proposed Community Orchard.

9. Ongoing Matters:

- a) Roads, Signage, Hedges, Potholes, Footpaths and Mud on roads, Road Wardens and Finger Posts: David Grant was asked to speak to the farmer whose hedge ran up to the river bridge at Morchard Road to ask the farmer to cut the hedge. Sarah Gillbard proposed that the Road Warden team commence repairing potholes in the evenings as it was currently too hot during the day.
- b) Accidents and Incidents – None.
- c) Defibrillators – All checked and in working order.
- d) Work around the War Memorial – Stephen Dockings had done an excellent job of repairing the chains around the War Memorial so that they now hung in a uniform manner. Stephen Dockings would commence work on the wooden bollards soon.
- e) MorFest – After what had been a very successful event, now the finances were concluded, the Parish Council were able to confirm that financially it had been successful too making a profit of £12,900. A final wind up meeting was to be held on Tuesday 14 July where it would be decided how to distribute those profits between village organisations.
- f) Church Clock – The payment for the three-year servicing contract (not a contract for other repairs) had been paid. A date was awaited for when an engineer would visit to service the clock and restore the chimes.

10. Crediton Association of Local Councils – Sarah Gillbard reported that she had attended the group on Monday 8th June, unfortunately only one other parish attended apart from Crediton Town Councillors so there had not been as much discussion as had been planned. Whilst there she picked up some doubts from County and District Councillors as to whether Local Government Reorganisation would actually go ahead. Sarah Gillbard agreed to attend the next meeting of the group.

11. Replacement of Parish Councillor – The Clerk informed the Parish Council that the vacancy had been advertised and that there had not been any request made for an election. The Parish Council could, if they wanted to, now co-opt a new Parish Councillor. One member of the public had written to the Clerk to express an interest in being co-opted onto the Council. After discussion, Sarah Gillbard proposed that the Council remain as they were and that the vacancy not be filled, Sarah Vere seconded the proposal and it was carried.

12. Plan Mid Devon – The Parish Council approved the wording of the Parish Council response to Plan Mid Devon which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The response will be appended to these minutes.

- a. MDDC's Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) had been published although it did not mention any parcels of land specifically and was a further call for land to be offered for development. – The Parish Council noted it.
- b. A Local Plan for North Devon was being developed by North Devon and Torridge District Councils. – The Parish Council discussed and acknowledged it but declined to send a response.
- c. The proposed Bow Conservation Area Management Plan was discussed by the Parish Council. The Council discussed and acknowledged it but declined to send a response.

13. Community Orchard – The Chairman proposed a small working group to meet on Monday 13 July at 7.00pm. The working group would consist of Simon Baker, Les Partridge, David Grant, Sarah Gillbard, Sarah Vere, Wendy Vere and Paul Tulley.

14. Tidy-Up Day – The Chairman proposed that the village have a Tidy-Up day to deal with things like clearing kerbs, sweeping paths, cleaning signs, painting posts etc. The Parish Council agreed to the proposal and a date was set of Saturday 26 September between 9.00 and 11.00am to meet in the Pub Car Park. A separate notice of the event would be put in the Morchard Messenger which Simon would draft. Sarah Vere would announce the event at the FOMBS AGM in September to ask for support.

15. Village Archivist – The Chairman proposed that the Parish Council try to recruit a Village Archivist. There was a wealth of knowledge and material that needed documenting, files to be sorted, newspaper cuttings to be scanned and filed etc. The Parish Council thought this a good idea and an advert will be placed in the Morchard Messenger. Sarah Gillbard, Dawn and the Clerk would approach certain individuals to gain their support.

16. Trustees and Village Organisations Reports

- Sustainable Morchard – were meeting on Wednesday 8 July and were looking at a scheme to recycle coffee pods.
- Memorial Hall – The Solar Panels were being switched off by the grid company during times of strong sunshine as the grid could not cope with all the power being generated. There was ongoing discussion about the maintenance of the hall.
- Morchard Bishop Playing Fields – A Committee meeting was to be held on Monday 13 July and the Mediation would take place on Wednesday 15 July. The Rally and Fair were taking place on Saturday 1 August so there was a lot of preparation for that.
- School – Report from Academy Head Hannah Bancroft:
 - Our wider curriculum enrichment continues to gain strength. All children have taken part in multiple sports fixtures through the Link Trust PE team. Frisbee, athletics, multi-skills to name a few. Trips to museums and gardens. Our Y5/6 children recently attended a residential trip in London for 3 days which was superb - seeing all the sights, a London show, dinner out. This was a first for MB, they have never done a city residential before.
 - All children have made good progress in their learning, we are delighted
 - Our after-school club will continue in September, to the later time of 5:30. It still runs a deficit.
 - We have stronger working partnerships with our Link Trust cluster schools which is great - shared CPD, peer to peer working etc
 - The heat wave presented us with many issues (the buildings are not in good enough condition to cope!) but we embraced the weather with much outdoor shady time, water games and a huge wet n wild afternoon complete with slippery slide
 - Our school production is well under way, and we can't wait to perform it at the Memorial Hall next week.
 - Our year 6 children leave us soon, ready for secondary school. We are very proud of them.
 - Our Pre-school is positively booming! Our register is full for September, it hasn't been like this for years. This is due to the excellent provision on offer to our under 5s!
- Churchyard – No news.
- Parochial Church Council (PCC) – The PCC was to meet on 7 July and would discuss whether to support the appointment of a Team Administrative Assistant. Four people had applied for the post of Team Vicar and interviews would be held on Thursday 9 July.

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

- Nothing mentioned.

Meeting Closed at 8.42pm

The next meeting of Morchard Bishop Parish Council will be on **Monday 3 August 2026** at the Memorial Hall at **7.00pm**.