

MORCHARD BISHOP PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Parish Meeting Monday 6 January 2025 at 7.30pm

At Morchard Bishop Memorial Hall

Present: Dawn Parkhouse (Vice-Chair), Simon Baker, David Gillbard, Sarah Gillbard, Andy Hankins, Stephen Leese, Debbie Ticehurst, and David Parker (Parish Clerk).

Members of the public attending: Frances Anson

1. **Apologies:** Steven Watson, Les Partridge, Sheila Sinclair, County Councillor Margaret Squires, District Councillor Mark Jenkins and District Councillor Helen Tuffin.
2. **Members of the Public** – Frances Anson in reference to the Parish Council budget raised the cost of the floodlighting the Church Tower and suggested that the hours the lights were on be reduced. The lights were currently on from dusk until 10.30pm. Andy Hankins suggested that he research whether there was a cheaper alternative to floodlighting the church with more modern equipment. The Parish Council accepted his offer.
3. **The minutes** of the Council meeting held on 2nd December 2024 were approved - Proposed: Simon Baker, seconded: Stephen Leese - carried unanimously.

4. Finance.

Cashflow table for January was circulated which explained the income and expenditure figures for December/January. Expenditure for January is £2,190.81 on the main account, nothing on the Reserve Account and nothing on the footpaths account. Funds at the end of December 2024 before payment of these invoices stood at: Reserve Account, £13,966.81; Current Account £8,777.03; P3 Account £1519.40.

Current Account Receipts and Invoices to be paid:

Function 28	Web hosting and Email management	£ 24.00 Standing Order
British Gas Energy	Outside lighting of the Church	£ 27.18 Direct Debit estimate
PFK Littlejohn LLP	External Auditor's Fee	£252.00 BACS
SHT Dockings	Grass Cutting	£267.00 BACS
MDDC	Grass Cutting	£102.85 BACS
Morchard Messenger	Special Grant	£100.00 BACS
Citizens Advice Bureau	Grant	£100.00 BACS
Morchard Messenger	Sponsorship	£ 40.00 BACS
HMRC	Clerk's Tax	£ 42.00 BACS
David Parker	Salary Oct-Dec	£1,014.50 BACS
J Powell	Repair to Snow Plough	£221.28 BACS

Footpaths Account Receipts and Invoices to be paid:

Devon Public Rights of Way	Major Works Grant	£3,000.00 Credit
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The Current account stands at £6,586.22 after payment of these invoices, the Reserve account stands at £13,966.81 including funds for Jubilee Funds (£113.46), DAAT (£346.06), Sustainable Morchard (£8.04), Clock Face fund (£613.99), Election Expenses (£1500), and the P3 account stands at £4,519.40.

There was a query about what grass MDDC cut – this was the Triangle at Frost and cut 10 times a year. It was agreed to leave the current situation as the area was a visibility splay and subsidised by Devon Highways. The donation to Citizen's Advice Bureau was challenged but after the clerk read a letter from CAB stating that they had helped 34 residents of Morchard Bishop with 100 problems and as a result had raised £47,655 in additional household income, it was agreed to make the grant payment.

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

The Clerk read the final report from the Auditor approving the Accounts for 2023/24 whilst making some comments regarding the accounts. – The Council noted the report.

5. Planning

24/01828/PNCOU	Prior notification for the change of use of an agricultural building to one dwelling under Class Q	GR 279701 105633 (Rolestone Barton) New Buildings
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For Information Only - The Parish Council NOTED the application.

24/01402/FULL	Change of use of change of use of an agricultural building to ancillary accommodation to dwelling	The Barn, Middle Leigh Farm, Morchard Bishop
24/01738/LBC	Listed Building Consent for change of use of an agricultural building to ancillary accommodation to dwelling	The Barn, Middle Leigh Farm, Morchard Bishop

After discussion David Gillbard proposed that this application be SUPPORTED. Dawn Parkhouse seconded the proposal, and it was carried unanimously.

24/01814/FULL	Variation of condition 2 of planning permission 23/00217/FULL (Erection of a rural workers dwelling) to allow revised plans and provide details of material finishes and biodiversity enhancements in line with the requirements of conditions 3 and 6.	Lydcott Nursery, Black Dog, Crediton
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After discussion Stephen Leese proposed that this application be SUPPORTED. Debbie Ticehurst seconded the proposal, and it was carried unanimously.

Planning: decisions / appeals / withdrawals

24/01680/CAT No Objection	Notification of intention to fell 5 Lawson Cypress trees (G1) within a Conservation Area	6 Corner Close, MB
24/01485/LBC Refused	Listed Building Consent for erection of covered walkway to include re-rendering of wall with lime-based render and installation of suspended floor.	The Old Dairy, 2 Chapel Street, Morchard Bishop

The Clerk was asked to speak with the owners of The Old Dairy to ascertain whether they were planning to appeal and would like a letter in support from the Parish Council.

6. Correspondence not dealt with elsewhere in the meeting:

- Citizen's Advice Bureau (Charity) had sent a letter making their annual request for grant support. The Council had budgeted £100 as in previous years for this grant, Stephen Leese proposed and Debbie Ticehurst seconded that we award the £100 grant to Citizen's Advice Bureau – Carried.
- Changes to Devon Bus Network from January 2025 – Information about the change to the service was read and had been forwarded to the Morchard Messenger for publication in February.
- Information from the Annual Meeting of Town and Parish Clerks. The Clerk had attended this meeting and reported back on the speeches from the Leader of Devon County Council, the Cabinet Member for Community and Parish Engagement at Mid Devon District Council, and reports on Emergency Planning and Community Land Trusts – the Clerk recommended that Councillors study the documentation that had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting.
- Community Risk Register – This register was a reduced version of the Emergency Plan but appeared to cover everything from general Nuclear attack to flooding of specific properties.
- Resilience Training Survey – The Community Resilience Forum had sent a survey trying to identify any gaps in Parish's training and what else was needed. There was a discussion as to whether anyone else other than the Clerk should be the Snow Warden.
- Street Works – notification to close Chulmleigh Road for South West Water between 13 January 2025 and 17 January 2025 and between 10 February and 14 February 2025.

Application for Road closure Bewsley Hill to Elston Cross and Elston Cross to New Building Cross between 22 December 2025 and 31 December 2025 for overhead cable work – No objection was raised.

- Traffic Regulation Amendment Order – Devon Highways will be painting “No Parking or Waiting” white lines at the Pedestrian Crossing by the School Car Park.

- The Christmas Card to the Parish Council from our MP Mel Stride was noted.

- S106 Funds update – £7,642 is available to the Parish to spend on “Provision of outdoor teen facilities on public open space in Morchard Bishop” and £45,519.58 is available for the Playing Fields Committee to spend on “Enhancements to Morchard Bishop Playing Fields”.

Post Box presently on the Old Post House will shortly be closed and a new Post Pox erected on the Village Green by the Car Parking spaces.

- Land and Property Registration firm had sent a flyer suggesting that all Council owned land ought to be properly registered with the Land Registry. The Parish Council owns very little land, but Stephen Leese agreed to look into this further.

7. Ongoing Matters:

- a) Roads, Signage, Hedges, Potholes, Footpaths and Mud on roads: The Clerk noted that more fingers had dropped off road signs and needed repairing. David Gillbard had looked at what needed to be done to repair the fingers that had dropped off finger posts, David felt that members of the Parish Council could repair these. The Clerk was still awaiting a quote from Ken White signs for the replacement of missing finger signs. The Clerk will chase Devon Highways for comment about the hope to erect a multiple venue sign on one of their signposts. David Gillbard mentioned that the Post Box at Brownstone cross was rusting out – The Clerk would report this to Royal Mail.
- b) Road Warden Scheme: Nothing to report.
- c) Accidents and Incidents: Nothing to report.
- d) Dog Control: Nothing to report.
- e) Defibrillators – All in working order.
- f) Bus Shelter – Nothing to report.
- g) Church Clock – Nothing to report.
- h) Emergency Plan – No further progress.
- i) Village Maintenance Plans – The Clerk mentioned that the turf/grass needed cutting back around the Green on which the bus shelter was located to expose the kerbstones and widen the footpath. Working Party to be arranged – but it may be that the Road Wardens would be willing to tackle this whilst they could not repair roads.
- j) Assisting local Businesses – No further progress.
- k) War Memorial – The Clerk had received three quotations for the work to repair the tarmac to the front of the War Memorial but was still chasing a fourth. The Clerk had now received quotes for the refurbishment and painting of the posts and would move towards making an application to the War Memorials Trust.
- l) Parish Diary – Progress with our software support company was painfully slow but we were making progress.
- m) Bad-Weather Wardens and Winter Gritting – All had seemed to work well during the recent icy weather. The clerk would check how full all the grit bins were. Still no volunteers to act as a Bad Weather Warden in Greenaway or Rectory Gardens. Jamie had repaired the snow plough.

8. Crediton Cluster Meeting Report – No report.

9. Sustainable Morchard Report – There would be a talk about Swifts that would be open to the public on 18th February at 7.30pm in the Memorial Hall. There would be a Seed swap on 1st March and a plant swap on 3rd May.

10. Budget for 2025-26 and Precept – Second Consideration – The Clerk had presented a balanced budget by taking out the subscription for Devon Association of Local Councils and reducing Sundry items. Stephen Leese Proposed and Debbie Ticehurst seconded that the proposed budget for 2025/26 be agreed – **CARRIED.**

The Clerk mentioned that the cost of elections had now increased (not having been increased for a long time). The likely cost of a contested election would be approximately £4,000. The Parish Council currently ring fence £1500 and it was agreed to ring fence a further £2,500 from the reserve account towards Election expenses.

11. Trustees and Village Organisations Reports

- Memorial Hall – An electrician had been engaged to fix the heating in the hall and adding new switches. The hall was now being cleaned by the Committee Members as the cleaner had resigned.
- Morchard Bishop Playing Fields – The committee was still trying to clarify the possibility of becoming VAT registered and what effect it would have on the Sports and Social Club. There was a fence down

between the Playing Fields and the Bowls Club, the fence was the responsibility of the Playing Fields Committee. Two quotes had been received for a new path into the Play Area that would allow for Inclusive Play and possibly open the door to further grants.

- School – No report.
- Churchyard – No report.
- Parochial Church Council – No report.

12. General (Note – items in this section cannot be discussed – merely scheduled for a future meeting).

- Sarah Gillbard suggested a working party be arranged to clean any signs in the village.

Meeting Closed at 9.05pm

The next meeting of Morchard Bishop Parish Council will be on **Monday 3 February 2025** at the Memorial Hall **at 7.30pm**. when we will consider a special village event, discuss VE day and look at the Emergency Plan if it is ready.