

LANGTREE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING

14th November 2024

Present	Councillors: Mark Glover John Davies Pat Mitchell Geoff Bond David Ley Penny Stowell Andrew Saywell (DCC) Cheryl Cottle Hunkin, (TDC)
In attendance	Linda Davies Parish Clerk
727	WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Apologies were received from. Melissa Baker (PCSO) Chris Whateley (TDC) Anna Moseby Jenny Coles Colin Edworthy
728	MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING
728.1	Matters Arising <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Freedom of information policy has been updated on the website.• Potholes in road past Homeleigh Farm and Southcote Bridge were reported to DCC, who replied that it was too bad to be Dragon Patched and would have to wait until it could be added to the resurfacing program.• Waste bin at entrance to Southlands Drive has been replaced.• Clerk has written to DCC on behalf of Peters Marland Council as requested - regarding the signage for Lorries exiting Tarka Springs.• Responded to Southwest Heritage Trust re-funding request. No funding available at this time, would be discussed in Jan/Feb.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council agreed to cut down the willow tree in Langtree Park. • Grass in the church yard appears to have been cut.
728.2	<p>Minutes of meeting held on 10th October 2024 to be confirmed and signed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These were agreed - proposed by Penny Stowell and seconded by David Ley – duly signed.
729	<p>DECLARATION OF INTERESTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was no declaration of interests.
730	<p>REPORTS</p>
730.1	<p><u>Police Community Support Officer:</u></p> <p>Report received -</p> <p>Crime – 0.</p> <p>Logs – 1 violence domestic related.</p>
730.2	<p>DCC Report for Langtree Parish Council November 2024</p> <p>Devolution/Budget – As reported to you at the last meeting the Government have confirmed the Devolution Deal will be implemented without any changes (for the time being) from the Deal that was agreed with the previous Government. Currently a lot of behind-the-scenes legal work in being carried out to prepare the statutory instrument which will be laid down before Parliament. Timescales are fluid but it will likely be later this autumn.</p> <p>Following the Chancellor’s Budget, the indications we have had from Central Government is that the increases DCC will have to pay for National Insurance Contributions as an employer will be funded so it should not be a budget pressure for the next financial year. However, the impact on Adult Social Care and other care providers is still being assessed.</p> <p>Within the Budget documents as well has been an indication from the Government that they might want to re-open the thorny issue of Local Government Reorganisation and have a single Unitary Authority instead of the current ‘Two Tier’ system of District and County Councils. I hope in Devon we do not go down this avenue as it is very unlikely there would be agreement over what size and shape a unitary authority would be and instead of capitalising on our Devolution Deal and working together, I suspect the local councils in Devon will get consumed by this ongoing debate instead. The set up we have had in Devon with ‘Team Devon’ has, I think, worked relatively well. Of course, if the Government orders reorganisation, then we will have to do it, but I don’t think we are at that</p>

point yet so for the time being, 'business as usual' should remain the right approach.

Highways Winter Service – As we head into the colder weather period, I thought I might also be worth talking about the Council's 'Winter' or gritting service. DCC has replaced and upgraded six of its 37 frontline gritters with newer models ahead of this winter. These replacement vehicles include touchscreen controls to enable drivers to adjust their plough attachments without leaving their cab. The gritters are deployed by the Council's Network Operations Control Centre. Based in Exeter, they use CCTV, weather information, traffic and congestion data to monitor Devon's Road network 24 hours a day, every day of the year. Around 24,000 tonnes of salt are stored in gritting depots across the county at the start of the season. There are also more than 3,500 grit bins located across Devon to support community self-help on roads which are not on the gritting network. At this time of year, local communities are encouraged to check grit bins in their area and you can report any empty grit bins can be reported via the DCC "Report It" webpages (type in devon.cc/report-it on your internet browser).

Household Support Fund – DCC will receive a share of the Household Support Fund, as we have each year since 2021. This allocation, like previous ones, is a little over £5 million. The council are now agreeing how we will distribute the funding, working closely with Devon's eight District, City and Borough councils and voluntary and community partners. Citizens Advice Devon will be one of the recipients to receive Household Support Funding so that they can continue to support people who are struggling to meet their energy needs. Support comes in the shape of fuel voucher payments, and longer-term relief of fuel poverty through initiatives that help homes become more energy-efficient, and that help people stay warm at home – such as heated throws, body warmer or rechargeable hot water bottle, for example. This latest round of Household Support Fund also allows DCC to continue to provide Free School Meal holiday vouchers to families whose children are eligible for benefit-related free school meals during term time.

People Strategy – I don't normally comment on my Cabinet remit with staffing as a lot of it is focused on behind the scenes work which isn't always of relevance to my Town and Parish Councils, however I thought I would highlight the fact that the Council has agreed and is implementing a new 'People's Strategy' which, put simply, is about making sure our Council workforce feels valued and also instils a greater performance culture within the organisation. We have already started to see some tangible improvements with a new recruitment and retention strategy for

	<p>Children’s Services which has been reducing the number of Agency workers employed by DCC, and across the organisation the overall absence rate has declined (down to 8.9 days per year from 9.6 days lost to absence, sickness, etc.). Compared with the private sector that rate is still high, but it is lower with comparable public sector organisations and the trend is going in the right direction.</p> <p>Ultimately, I am of the view that a happier and more efficient workforce ultimately means a better service from Council Officers and officials to the people of Devon.</p> <p>Local Highways Matters – The roads from Sandy Lane Cross to Langtree Week to Five Lane End are currently being dragon patched. A Serviceability Patch is also due to be done on the road from Gortledge heading towards Little Comfort Farm.</p> <p>Locality Budget - I have been delighted to support many community projects with my local Councillor Locality Budget Grant from helping to set up Community Libraries, repairing community assets and supporting local schools with new learning resources. I do still have some funds available as we approach the end of this current financial year so if you do have a project on in your area please do get in touch as your organisation may be eligible for a grant.</p>
730.3	<p><u>District Councillor:</u></p> <p>C&R: TDC considered a revised proposal of tree planting in Bideford - Garfield Community Woodland and grassland after a presentation from Mike Day Lead Ranger and as part of North Devon Biosphere. The public feedback was positive and to be funded by Devon County Council and the Woodland Trust. Maintenance was discussed and the proposal was approved and resolved.</p> <p>Head of Legal Governance and Monitoring presented Household Support Fund 6.</p> <p>This is government Funding for £267,568 for financial hardship covering 1st Oct 2024 until 31st March 2025 and voted for unanimously. The fund covers areas such as Food, Energy, Appliances, Housing, and essentials. Apply torridge.gov.uk/householdfund or 01271 371 499.</p> <p>Full Council</p> <p>Holsworthy Leisure Centre was successful in £1.2M decarbonisation grant to include solar panels and replacing the oil-fired boilers. The capital programme was increased to provide a new roof to allow for solar panels at Holsworthy Leisure Centre. Bideford Town Hall and Old Library renovation project was also agreed. This is a huge project which has been on the capital programme for over a decade. The roof is a very complex</p>

	<p>structure and has been patched up for many years. There are plans for the council’s leisure company Active Torridge to open a new fitness space in the old library as well as work hub space on the ground floor of the town hall that can be used and hired out by various companies and community organisations.</p> <p>The Council received a presentation from Active Torridge outlining the Business Plan. Chris Keeble Chief Operating Officer of Active Torridge highlighted the strategic aims, financial history, growth, Fees and management projections. The business plan was approved after discussions by Council.</p> <p>The Community Projects Officer Adrian Avery presented a report on funding of three play zone schemes which are a type of multi-use games area. This is to be 75% funded by the Football Foundation/ Sport England. Some funding is coming from town councils and 12.5% from Torridge via the Rural England Prosperity Fund. The three proposed Play Zones sites are located at Stanhope Park, Holsworthy: Polyfield East-the-Water Bideford and the former Tennis Courts at Gas Lane Torrington. This was welcomed and approved by councillors with Active Torridge viewed as the suitable partner to manage each site.</p> <p>Phil Topham from Torrington Change Room attended to provide details of Torrington Change room, which was setup to fundraise, building control, project planning for a building in the Trust gardens as a local facility for information about climate change impacts and opportunities. TDC is involved and has been working with Phil for over 12 months.</p> <p>TDC Biodiversity Plan and Tree Planting</p> <p>The Sustainability Climate Sustainability Officer presented this item and after discussions a need was identified for suitable Land to invest and availability for funding and tree planting. It was confirmed land maps are in process of being integrated to a new IT system and once completed could be examined to identify areas suitable for tree planting.</p>
731	PARISH MATTERS
731.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on Langtree Park. - The team are still busy putting together funding bids for approval.
731.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Website – David Gubb had reported that the website was very out of date in places. He suggested that Council could take responsibility for its updating. After discussion it was agreed that there are too many different clubs and societies involved and that it would not be possible for Council to administer all the different pages. If Council change to a.gov.uk domain, we would no longer be part of the community website. (This is not mandatory YET)

731.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emergency Plan – TDC have requested parish council update their emergency planning. This was discussed at length. Council concluded that our parish does not face the same issues as larger more built-up parishes. It was agreed that the contact details for all councillors and the Clerk would be posted on the notice boards, and in a MAJOR emergency any councillor could be contacted. This person would call the clerk who would call the rest of the councillors, and they would all convene at the Parish Hall. (Parish Hall would serve as our mass evacuation centre). Once convened council would decide on best course of action and what resources were needed based on the exact type of emergency. 						
731.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other Matters impacting the parish – Clerk to contact DCC to obtain grit/salt for pavements and inquire about a grit/salt bin for the hall carpark. 						
732	PLANNING						
732.1	Any updates on potential planning application for land at The Crescent, Langtree – None						
732.2	Applications for discussion - none.						
732.3	<p>To consider any other planning applications received between issuing of agenda and meeting. -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1/0973/2024/REM–Reserved Matters Application - Council approve application. 						
733	CLERK’S REPORT AND FINANCE						
733.1	<p>To receive update on financial position at the end October 2024</p> <p>The position at the end of October was:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="435 1456 1385 1675"> <tr> <td>Lloyd’s account</td> <td>£7761.04</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Reserve account</td> <td>£1568.76</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>£9329.80</td> </tr> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Payments made. £ 52.19 All Coast Media. (approved by email) £50.00 British Legion donation, £200.00 British Legion – Tommy, £1277.10 Clerk salary. £15.00 received for allotment. In addition, there is £1553.09 in the Langtree Park account. 	Lloyd’s account	£7761.04	Reserve account	£1568.76	Total	£9329.80
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733.2	<p>To request approval of BACS Payments and cheques.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £ 52.19 All Coast Media. (approved by email) 						

733.3	<p>To review correspondence received.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email from David Gubb - discussed earlier on agenda. • Land and Property registration Co. – help with property records. • Meeting date from Collaborative group – meeting with G Cox, but no agenda given. • Email Devon Wildlife trust – free tree available.
733.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies Review: Code of conduct policy agreed to be updated on website. Health and safety policy will be discussed again at the next meeting. Contractors should be issued with health and safety policy.
734	<p>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No public participation.
735	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ANY OTHER ITEMS AT CHAIRMAN’S DISCRETION • 2 items for DCC = Councillor Ley noted that road signage was in a very dirty condition and Councillor Stowell noted roads and pavements through the parish (particularly Church Lane) were full of weeds and grass. <p>The meeting closed at 9.15pm.</p>
736	<p>Date of next meeting – Thursday 12th December 2024</p>