

**MINUTES**  
**OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING**  
HELD AT 7.30PM MONDAY 4 DECEMBER 2023  
AT BISHOPSTEIGNTON COMMUNITY CENTRE, SHUTE HILL



**3011 MEETING GOVERNANCE**

.01 **Attendance:** Cllr. H. Merritt (Chair) Cllr. K. Benham Cllr. R. Gill  
Cllr. R. Gateshill Cllr. J. Grimble Cllr. J. Hanafin  
Cllr. J. Head Cllr. D. Robbins Cllr. W. Vooght (9/9)  
County Cllr. Peart, PCSO S. Bunce & PC. B. Chadwick., Clerk: Mrs. K. Ford.  
3 members of the public at various times.

**Apologies:** District Cllr. MacGregor.

.02 **Declaration of Interests:** None.

.03 **Order of Business:**

.04 **Ratification of Minutes:** Draft minutes of the full Parish Council meeting held at Bishopsteignton Community Centre on 04.12.23 were considered. It was proposed and seconded that these be approved as a true and correct record. Agreed unanimously therefore **resolved to approve** and to be signed by the Chair.

**3012 OFFICIAL REPORTS**

.01 **Police Report:** Nothing to report. Both expressed they will continue to attend BPC meeting as and when other commitments allow but are always contactable via the clerk and Cllr. Gill. Monthly PACT meetings will also continue. Cllr. Benham, on behalf of the council and the community, thanked them for their service, expressing appreciation of the good working relationship.

.02 **District Councillors Report:** Cllr. MacGregor provided the following report, in his absence. No comments or questions were raised to be forwarded.

- Broadmeadow Leisure Centre refurbishment. This was presented to council last year and Cllr Jane Taylor put in a motion regarding retention of single sex facilities. There is a survey on this, but the changing facilities question is unclear. At last Exec mtg I spoke at length about retention of single sex facilities, following the law, legal advice and statistics relating to risk to women and girls.
- Voluntary Sector commitment. TDC have committed to maintaining the financial commitment to the voluntary sector at the same level as last year. Unfortunately, this does mean that without an inflationary uplift, the voluntary organisations will actually be receiving real terms cut.
- Council Tax Reduction scheme. 100% support for the most vulnerable across the district. Good news I think, but a risk if the 3conmy continues to struggle.
- TDC is now a stakeholder in the 'reducing serious violence' drive with D&C Police. I spoke on this to emphasise TDC needing to address failings in respect of 'domestics'.
- Budget outline. Some interesting stuff covered. Biggest concern is the potential big gap in funding/expenditure in 2026/27. This is likely to lead to the immediate next budgets being set around cost reduction and revenue increases which is of concern obviously.

.03 **County Councillors Report:** Cllr. Peart provided the following report.

**Winter Carriageway Conditions - January 2024**

Following the period of extended wet weather that we have experienced over the festive period the Highways and Traffic Management Service has experienced a significant increase in the number of potholes reported by the public and recorded through the Highway Safety Inspection process.

**DATED:**

**CHAIRMAN:**

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Enquiries by Year & Month

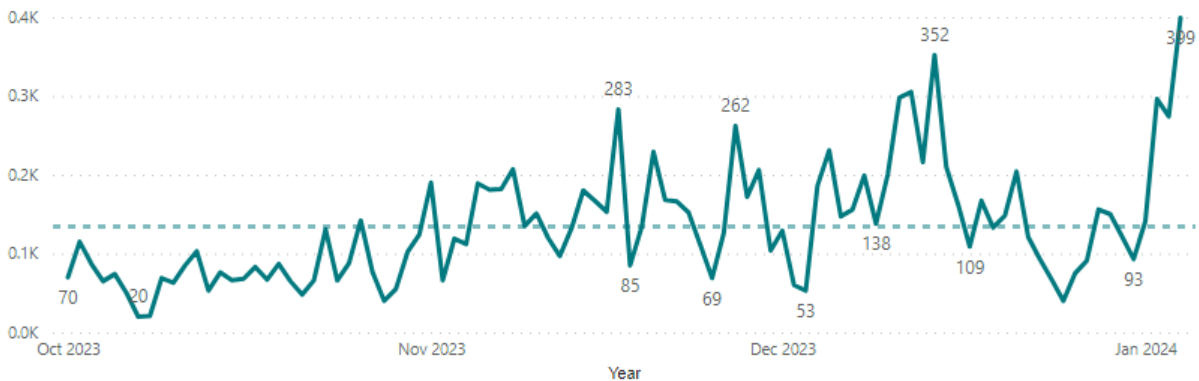


Figure 1 Table of Public Pothole Reports from Oct 2023

This increase in numbers highlights the fragile nature of our carriageways due to the long-term lack of capital funding, leading to under investment.

This situation is undoubtedly going to get worse over the next couple of weeks as the current cold spell leads to further deteriorations due to freeze thaw effects.

If you receive direct contact by members of the public regarding potholes it would help if they were encouraged to use the 'report a problem' webpages.

[www.devon.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-a-problem/](http://www.devon.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-a-problem/)

Once a defect has been reported by the public the Service aims to visit and triage the report within 3 working days on our higher category road network, and 7 days in our lower category network. The Triage Officer will then arrange the appropriate response based on the Council's [Highway Safety Policy](#). Should members of the public contact you regarding the late repair of defects or suggestions that defects have been closed without action, please ask for the reference number (it starts with a D) that they will receive when they made the report. With this number it is much easier to follow up on these enquiries. In addition to the increase in defect repairs the additional task of gritting the network is likely to stretch resources, particularly if this cold snap continues for any length of time. Currently the road surface temperatures are rising above zero in the daytime. When they remain freezing all day we enter a cycle of continuing to grit the roads throughout the day. This draws heavily on resources. The potential impact will be the need to focus on the safety critical operations over the planned improvement works such as patching and drainage improvements. While this is frustrating for our communities, the safe operation of the network has to be prioritised.

The Network Response Team are in daily communication with our contractor, Milestone, to assess the current demand, adequacy of resources and priorities. This includes identifying non-safety or 'serviceability' defects that do not meet safety defect criteria, but that may represent sufficient deterioration to be considered a nuisance or are likely to continue to deteriorate further. Where defects are situated near one another, inspectors can specify larger patch repairs to encompass those defects. In addition to identification and repair of non-safety defects we are continually innovating and trialling new products and processes to improve the efficiencies associated with defect repairs. For example, the recent trial of a product called 'Elastomac' which we demonstrated at County Hall back in the summer (a mastic asphalt that utilises around 70%-80% recycled materials). This is in parallel to now established processes like the dragon patchers we operate in Devon. Whilst pothole numbers may be higher than we'd like in the weeks ahead, it's worth reflecting on where we might be if it wasn't for a combination of these combined efforts.

To give you an understanding of the current level of resources, at present there are up to 26 defect gangs across the County undertaking pothole repairs, supported by 2 additional sub-contractor gangs. With regards to serviceability repairs, we currently have around 8 internally resourced Milestone gangs

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carrying out larger scale repairs across the County. In addition to this they are being supported by two externally resourced gangs and further work is underway as we speak in potentially bringing in one or two further sub-contractor gangs. Lastly, all four dragon patching gangs are on programmed work this week and will continue whilst the weather remains favourable.

As I reported before Christmas, the additional £6.663m is already being invested into the carriageway with additional serviceability patching and local planned works brought forward in the programme. Again, I would encourage you to continue liaising with your local Neighbourhood Officer to agree future priorities.

*Stuart Hughes - Cabinet member for Highway Management*

**3013 FINANCE**

**.01 Payments:**

- a. It was proposed and seconded, agreed unanimously, and therefore RESOLVED those payments transacted by the clerk across the period 05.12.23 to 12.01.24, be approved retrospectively.
- b. It was proposed and seconded, agreed unanimously, and therefore RESOLVED that the payments indicated in payment schedule 2401 be approved and transacted accordingly.

**.02 Financial Statement:** Statements for the period ending 31.12.23 was NOTED by members and signed by the Chair. Clerk to publish this on the BPC website.

**.03 BPC Grant:** An application from BAGS for £220 towards a solar PV panel to charge gardening equipment on site was considered. Members agreed not enough information was provided with the application, to understand the need for and possible usefulness of the unit. In addition, members asked if a battery was included for the storage for harvested energy. It was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed to DEFER a decision until more information has been provided.

**.04 BPC Budget & Precept for Financial Year 2024-25:** Papers detailing a draft budget & precept, as recommended by the BPC Finance Committee, were discussed.

Cllr. Benham expressed concern about the increase being too large and to implement this during a cost-of-living crisis would be morally wrong. She felt the decision should be presented to the parish at an open public meeting to be debated. She felt the matter has not been communicated enough to parishioners.

Other members understood that the Finance Committee has scrutinised each area of expenditure which is relevant to council business and to continue to provide for and improve the parish. It was explained by the clerk how every year the result of the increase is explained fully to parishioners via the website and Parish Chronicle and only occasionally receiving response, from very few parishioners. Members were reminded they are elected to represent the parish, to make the decisions, it is unnecessary to open this up for public debate. All meetings of the council are open to public attendance with the agenda and papers published.

It was proposed by Cllr. Merritt, seconded by Cllr. Gateshill, that the recommended budget and precept be approved by BPC. That £81,986 precept be claimed from TDC. This is an increase of £11,977 which is 17.11%. FOR: 8, AGAINST:1, therefore RESOLVED.

All reasoning for this increase shall be explained to the parishioners in the usual ways.

**3014 PLANNING**

**Application Ref:** 23/02216/OUT - Iona Teignmouth Road Bishopsteignton TQ14 9PL

**DATED:**

**CHAIRMAN:**

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**Proposal:** Outline application for new dwelling (all matters reserved)

This proposal was considered, however as there were no public comments yet listed on the planning portal for this application it was suggested by Cllr. Benham that the matter be deferred for consideration at the next meeting of the BPC Planning Committee (29.01.24). This deferral was unanimously agreed and therefore RESOLVED.

**3015 COUNCIL STRATEGY & GOVERNANCE**

.01 **Strategic Plan Review Schedule:** A schedule of review dates was provided by the clerk. This gives a quarterly review by the BPC Strategy & Governance Committee, before reporting and making any recommendations to the Full Council. Some members felt quarterly review may be too often. It was proposed and seconded to keep to this schedule for the first year and consider a longer period between reviews in the future. Unanimously agrees, therefore RESOLVED. Schedule to be added to the BPC Strategic Plan as an appendix.

.02 **Strategic Plan Review:** Following the initial review by the BPC Strategy & Governance Committee a list of the objectives within the plan has been enhanced to show project leader, an estimated timescale for the objective and its status. This was provided to all BPC members for consideration.

Cllr. Benham questioned why the clerk believed it would take up to 12 months to produce a Biodiversity Action & Carbon Reduction plan. The clerk responded to remind members this important document required input from external sources, that it shouldn't be rushed, but also that if the council expected the clerk to produce this document within her current working hours, alongside all regular tasks and other projects taken on by the council it would take time. Cllrs. Gateshill and Hanafin suggested task if all members considered this task a priority that a working party be formed to expediate the production and adopt of the plan, and that Cllr. Benham becomes a member of this working party; to establish the steps required to prepare a plan and give an improved timescale as desired.

It was proposed by Cllr. Benham, seconded by Cllr. Vooght, that the notes included in the review document, and the suggestion above be included. Unanimously agreed therefore RESOLVED.

.03 **BPC Committee Membership:** following the recommendation made to full council by the BPC Finance Committee it was proposed, and seconded, that Cllr. Robbin becomes a member of this committee. Unanimously agreed, therefore RESOLVED.

Whilst there were some other committee which would benefit from increase membership numbers the clerk suggested this be reviewed once the Parish Council was at full quota again; hopefully following co-option at the next full council meeting (19.02.24)

.04 **Policy Review:** The following policies were reviewed by the council.

- **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Policy (P.022)** – updated. It was suggested that above the project/potential spend list it be added that there is no order of preference or priority. It was proposed and seconded, unanimously agreed, and therefore RESOLVED that this be adopted with immediate effect subject to the minor alternation discussed.
- **BPC Risk Assessment Schedule (P.014)** – as work to update this policy is not yet complete it was agreed to DEFER for review at a future full council meeting. RESOLVED.

**3016 COMMUNITY RECOGNITION AWARDS**

**DATED:**

**CHAIRMAN:**

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Members were asked to consider ideas for recognising community spirit in both individuals and groups in the community and how this could be processed and awarded. As guidance the clerk has circulated an example, using the scheme used by Dawlish Town Council.

This was briefly discussed but it was suggested the matter be deferred to the next full council meeting, to be held 19.02.24. The Chair requested members think about the opportunity and forward ideas and examples to the clerk.

**3017 CLERKS REPORT:** The report of all ongoing BPC business and activity was provided to members and the public prior to this meeting. The following further matters were raised by the clerk:

- .01 A BPC Planning Committee meeting is scheduled for 29.01.24, the agenda will include the latest planning application for the development of Bakers Yard.
- .02 Several comments have recently been raised about overgrown hedges throughout the parish, however it seems many of these are from private land but infiltrating public spaces. This is to be mentioned in the February Parish Chronicle as a reminder to carry out any necessary hedge trimming before the bird nesting season.
- .03 The latest councillor resignations have been through the Casual Vacancy notification period and no requests were received for this to go to by-election; therefore, the council may co-opt new members. This opportunity will be promoted imminently and co-option, from any applications received, take place at the next full council meeting, 19.02.24.
- .04 The Community Centre Management Committee are reforming the Centre Regeneration working party and have invited members of BPC to attend. Several members offered and it was proposed, seconded, and unanimously agreed that Cllr. Gill and Robbins will attend to represent BPC. RESOLVED.

**3018 MEMBERS REPORTS**

**.01 TDC Peer Review Group Meeting – Cllr. Benham**

To represent BPC Cllr. Benham attended this online meeting which was organized by TDC. An independent assessment has been commissioned. The aim of the assessment is to help TDC develop better strategies to work better with Town & Parish Councils. An intermediate report was provided to the District Council and to meeting attendees for discussion. On completion of the assessment a full report including recommendations of how to move forward will be published.

**.02 ACT with Art: Climate Festival – Cllr. Benham**

Cllr. Benham reported details of an upcoming arts festival which ACT are arranging for June 2024. Further details can be found on the ACT website: <https://actionclimateteignbridge.org/>

**3019 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

- .01 A member of the public asked the clerk for details of the trees being planted at The Lawns. The clerk will email this in due course.
- .02 Mrs. Cawthraw was disappointed to report that, despite reminders, there has still been no response from Cllr. Martin Wrigley, regarding amendments to the covenant at The Lawns. Hopefully an update will be imminent.

**THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 21.13**