

MINUTES
OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT 7.30PM MONDAY 4 NOVEMBER 2024
AT BISHOPSTEIGNTON COMMUNITY CENTRE, SHUTE HILL
PART I



2411.01 MEETING GOVERNANCE

- .01 **Attendance:** Cllr. H. Merritt (Chair) Cllr. R. Gill Cllr. E. Harris
Cllr. J. Grimble Cllr. J. Head Cllr. J. Hooper
Cllr. D. Robbins Cllr. A. Keohane Cllr. W. Vooght (9/10)
District Cllr. A. MacGregor, County Cllr. R. Peart. PCSO
Clerk: Mrs. K. Ford, & 4 members of the public.
Apologies: Cllr. R. Gateshill (1/10). PCSO. S. Bunce.

- .02 **Declaration of Interests:** Cllr. Robbins for item 2411.04.03 as a member of Bishopsteignton Players, non-pecuniary therefore Cllr Robbins may take part in the discussion but shall not vote.
- .03 **Order of Business:** It was considered appropriate to defer item 2411.06: Asset Management to a closed council session to exclude members of the press and public as the information to be discussed is of a confidential nature. Unanimously agreed.
- .04 **Ratification of Minutes:** Draft minutes of the Full Council meeting, held at Bishopsteignton Community Centre on 02.09.24, 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.

2411.02 OFFICIAL REPORTS

- .01 **Police Report:** A report had been provided, for crimes September & October 2024.
- .02 **District Councillors Report:** Cllr. MacGregor provided the following report.
1. The motion regarding the Lawns and Scout Hut saga was presented to the Full Council. It will now go to Executive. The MO has informed the leader Cllr Keeling that he consulted external legal advice, however that claim has been used before and I lack confidence that the advice was expert. I have asked for a meeting with the leader, MO and the parish to find a way forward. According to Cllr Keeling, Cllr Palethorpe has been in 'regular' contact with the parish.
 2. The budget saw some relief for local authorities, but looking at the numbers, any additional funding is at best small. The increased costs of NI and wage increases are likely to be covered and the council tax increase model of 2.99% remains in place for the District.
 3. You'll no doubt have been informed that progress is being made on the business case and seeking funding for the Teign Estuary Trail. I do not have clarity on which section this applies to at this stage.
 4. At the Full Council, there were a number of proposals regarding consulting on assets and services going out to public consultation. These services and assets include selling the Grade 1 listed Old Forde House, assessing whether to continue providing public toilets, disposing of or transferring the Lido. While most or all of these are outside BP area, these are District assets, and we should encourage residents to participate in the public consultation.
 5. Approximately 1300 pensioner households are to receive support through a hardship fund. The cost is expected to be £303k and is to be covered by a share of a £5m+ hardship fund provided to DCC. The balance of TDC total allocation will be made available to other households encountering hardship through the winter. I have asked that they engage with all stakeholders including Parish and Town Councils and community groups in each.

MINUTES - continued
FULL COUNCIL MEETING - held 04.11.24.

Cllr. MacGregor added that the South Devon Alliance is disbanded, therefore he and all former members are now acting as an independent councillor at Teignbridge District Council. Praise was given to the ongoing development work at Broadmeadow Centre, an asset of TDC.

.03 **County Councillors Report:** Cllr. Peart had nothing to report.

2411.03 COUNCILLOR CO-OPTION

An application for co-option had been received before the deadline. The clerk confirmed the eligibility of Mrs. Diane Dixon. Unfortunately, Mrs. Dixon was not able to attend due to a prior engagement.

Members considered the applicant. It was proposed by Cllr. Merritt, seconded by Cllr. Head, to co-opt Mrs. Dixon as a Bishopsteignton Parish Councillor. Agreed unanimously therefore RESOLVED.

Clerk to engage with Cllr. Dixon for signature of the Acceptance of Office and Declaration of Interests, to provide the Councillors Code of Conduct, BPC Standing Orders, meeting schedule, email and tablet.

2411.04 FINANCE

.01 **Payments:** It was proposed by Cllr. Keohane and seconded by Cllr. Hooper, agreed unanimously, and therefore RESOLVED that these payments be transacted by the clerk across the period 02.09.24 to 31.10.24, be approved retrospectively.

.02 **Financial Statement:**

- a. A financial statement for the period ending 30.09.24 was NOTED by members and signed by the Chair. Clerk to publish these on the BPC website.
- b. A financial statement for the period ending 31.10.24 was NOTED by members and signed by the Chair. Clerk to publish these on the BPC website.
- c. A 2024-25 Precept Statement showing balances after payments and receipts in the second quarter was NOTED by members.

.03 **BPC Grant:** An application from Bishopsteignton Players for £500 towards new staging was discussed and considered against the remaining grant balance of £143.69.

It was proposed by Cllr. Harris, seconded by Cllr. Grimble to grant an award of £200 for this project, the balance to be taken from unearmarked reserves. Agreed unanimously therefore RESOLVED. Clerk to arrange grant payment.

.04 **Considerations for 2025-26 BPC Budget:**

- a. **BPC Grant:** Members considered the clerks report and suggested increase. It was proposed by Cllr. Gill, seconded by Cllr. Hooper that the BPC grant for financial year 2025-26 be £2,000, available at set times in each quarter, at £500 per quarter, with leftover funds carried forward to the next quarter. This was unanimously agreed and therefore RESOLVED. Clerk to amend the BPC grant awarding policy in accordingly.
- b. **Traveller eviction reassurance reserve:** Members discussed the clerks report but considered the suggested amount was too large to add to the budget at once. Particularly as it was felt the likelihood of travellers using spaces in Bishopsteignton was low.

MINUTES - continued
FULL COUNCIL MEETING - held 04.11.24.

It was proposed by Cllr. Merritt, seconded by Cllr. Vooght, that a budget of £1,000 be created from unused unearmarked reserves from financial year 2024-25, if possible, and that this be topped up by £500 in the 25-26 budget if totals are considered acceptable at the time.

- .05 **Investments:** Members considered the clerks report and recommendations. The risks of investments with public money were discussed as well as the environmental impact and ethics of any investment opportunity. Members felt more information was needed; both from the CCLA and about other opportunities. Matter deferred until a future meeting. Clerk to investigate further.
- .06 **Clerical Budget Revision:** the NJC approved pay scale increase was presented along with how this impacts the current financial years budget. This was NOTED by members.

2411.05 COUNCIL STRATEGY & GOVERNANCE:

- .01 **Policies:** The following policy has been updated in accordance with any legislative changes for council review. It was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed to adopt:
- a. Playground Management & Maintenance Policy (P004)
 - b. Reserves Policy (P008)
 - c. Responsible Purchasing & Procurement Policy (P.010)

It was agreed that the following policy should be reviewed again to include 'any investment should have no impact on the environment and should be ethical in all aspects. Therefore, deferred to a future meeting.

- d. Investments Policy (P009, reviewed annually)

2411.06 ASSET MANAGEMENT: See minute ref: 2411.01.03 Order of Business.

2411.07 LAWNS COVENANT & SCOUT HUT

Members considered the clerk's report provided as well as a response from Teignbridge District Councillor Palethorpe which arrived since.

Cllr. MacGregor advised that TDC do not hold any other covenants on other land which has been previously transferred. Furthermore, he reminded BPC that TDC have committed to be a community-led council.

It was concluded that the wording of Cllr. Palethorpe's letter meant the end for this project, however it was considered appropriate to request a face-to-face meeting to look for positive resolutions for the future. It was proposed by Cllr. Merritt, seconded by Cllr. Head, that a round table meeting with Cllr. Palethorpe, Managing Director Phil Shears and TDC solicitor Mr. Paul Woodhead be requested. Furthermore, that BPC seek advice from a solicitor to give clarity on TDC reasons for not amending the covenant. Agreed unanimously therefore RESOLVED.

2411.08 MEMBERS REPORTS

- .01 **Teign Estuary Trail - Cllr. Merritt**

A verbal report about latest progress including the successful approval of the business plan. He advised that the next stakeholders meeting will take place on 22.11.24 and requested at least one other BPC member considers joining this and future meetings.

There were no further members reports.

MINUTES - continued
FULL COUNCIL MEETING - held 04.11.24.

2411.09 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 and members:

- .01 **Village Diary:** Soon to feature on the BPC website rather than Bishopsteignton.org. To encourage community groups to add details of their own events in advance to ensure minimal clashing and maximum publicity.
- .02 **BERT:** Mr. Jon Watson has been newly appointed as chair of BERT; Mrs. Elaine Cawthraw becoming vice-chair. The plan is being updated and the risks reassessed due to increased risk of flooding due to climate change. The list of volunteers is being reviewed. More zone-coordinators are needed.
- .03 **Revised Meeting Date:** From 6 January 25 to 13 January 25, to allow the correct period of time for publication of the agenda, following a bank holiday.

2411.10 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

A resident, as a member of Sustainable Bishop, was pleased and thanked members for questioning the ethics of investments and asked to be kept in the loop; which the clerk will do. She raised concerns over the Parish Councils lack of visible action regarding climate change and challenged the declaration of climate & ecological emergency which was made by the council in May 2019.

She was disappointed to read in the September 2024 BPC meeting minutes that the proposal for a provision of EV charging in the village had been dismissed stressing the importance of such action and particularly noting the enthusiasm of previous councillor, Jon Watson, on this subject. She felt EV charging at the Lawns would not exacerbate village parking problems but could be a win-win option for the community.

She advised both higher authorities, TDC and DCC, provide climate action hubs as a source of information and support for their communities and she feel BPC could provide something similar. Both also have published goals and aims to reach net zero, but the parish council do not seem to have thought about it let alone published how it intends to reach these targets.

Cllr. Robbins gave a brief explanation of the EV meetings he had attended and the reasons for the council's original reluctance.

The Chair gave thanks for this feedback and advised a response will be given in due course.

THE CHAIR CLOSED PART I OF THE MEETING AT 21.06

MINUTES
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2411.PTII MEETING GOVERNANCE

.01 **Attendance:** Cllr. H. Merritt (Chair) Cllr. R. Gill Cllr. E. Harris
 Cllr. J. Grimble Cllr. J. Head Cllr. J. Hooper
 Cllr. D. Robbins Cllr. A. Keohane Cllr. W. Vooght (9/11)
 Clerk: Mrs. K. Ford.

Apologies: Cllr. R. Gateshill & Cllr. D. Dixon (2/11).

2411.06 ASSET MANAGEMENT:

.01 **The Lawns Playground:** Members present considered the required surfacing work to eliminate trip hazards as explained in the clerk's report, three quotes tendered for the work, and the recommendation from the Asset Management Committee (AMC) made at its recent site meeting. Following discussion, it was proposed, seconded and agreed to disregard the recommendation from AMC.

It was further proposed by Cllr. Harris that contractor B (Outdoor Play UK) be appointed to carry out the work as detailed in their quote and that this work shall be funded using S106 monies currently held by Teignbridge District Council for this purpose. This was seconded by Cllr. Gill.
FOR: 6, AGAINST: 2, ABSTAIN: 1.

Clerk to appoint contractor B and secure dates for the works, decline with thanks contractors A & C, and apply for S106 funds.

For the next item Cllr. Vooght declared an interest as a friend of one of the tendering contractors.

.02 **Interim Tree Inspection:** Members considered the clerks report which indicated the inspection work required and the quotes sought and tendered. Following discussion it was proposed by Cllr. Keohane and seconded by Cllr. Head, that Devon Tree Services be appointed to carry out the work in accordance with their quotation but that an alternate contractor be used for the next inspection and contractors be alternated for every inspection thereafter. FOR: 8. Therefore RESOLVED.

Clerk to advise all contractors accordingly and liaise for a schedule of works.

THE CHAIR CLOSED PART II OF THE MEETING AT 21.47