

**MINUTES**  
**OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING**  
HELD AT 7.30PM MONDAY 3 MARCH 2025  
AT BISHOPSTEIGNTON COMMUNITY CENTRE, SHUTE HILL



**2503.01 MEETING GOVERNANCE**

.01 **Attendance:** Cllr. H. Merritt (Chair) Cllr. R. Gateshill Cllr. R. Gill  
Cllr. J. Grimble Cllr. E. Harris Cllr. J. Head  
Cllr. J. Hooper Cllr. A. Keohane Cllr. D. Robbins  
Cllr. W. Vooght Cllr. D. Dixon (11/11)  
District Cllr. A. MacGregor, County Cllr. R. Peart.  
Clerk: Mrs. K. Ford, & 1 member of the public.

**Apologies:** PCSO. S. Bunce.

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

.03 **Order of Business:** It was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed to defer agenda item 2503.05 COMMUNITY AWARDS to part II, without press and public.

.04 **Ratification of Minutes:** Draft minutes of the Full Council meeting, held at Bishopsteignton Community Centre on 04.11.24, parts I & II, 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.

**2503.02 OFFICIAL REPORTS**

.01 **Police Report:** A report had been provided, for crimes in January and February 2025. The next PACT, taking place at The Old Commercial on Thursday 27 March will include security marking for adult bike, this is included on the poster and police social media channels.

.02 **District Councillors Report:** Cllr. MacGregor provided the following written report to members prior to the meeting:

**Local Plan** - A vote to move to the next stage of the process which is to go to public consultation on the changes advised by the Planning Inspectorate. The changes include some policy changes which are portrayed as being clarification.

**2025-26 Budget** - The budget is approved for the coming year. It maintains the council's commitment to maintaining council tax rises of under 3%, 100% council tax support for those in dire need.

**Devolution** - There is an early indication of what is proposed under the Local Govt Reform. The current proposal which received in principle support by majority, is 3 unitary authorities for Devon. Plymouth remains as is, with South Hams, Torbay, West Devon and Teignbridge as a new combined authority and the rest comprising of Exeter, East Devon, Mid Devon, North Devon and Torridge as the other new combined entity. It places TDC between two major population centres with excellent rail and road connections to both, with a free port also available in Plymouth.

The auditors issued a statutory recommendation around behaviours which appear to be based only on officer views and no discussions with councillors, and was passed by majority.

The Lib Dem administration decided to reduce committee numbers on both overview & scrutiny and planning. To counter loss of seats, all independents are now sitting as a single group and I have retained my place on planning there. It's a disappointing erosion of democracy, supposedly in the name of streamlining planning and scrutiny decisions.

There will be no more Full Council meetings before May 1st with only Exec, Overview & Scrutiny and Planning likely to be scheduled once before the election period starts on March 25th.

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Further to this report Cllr. MacGregor reported if proposals for devolution in Devon are accepted TDC will function until April 2027 after which two separate shadow councils will merge to overview the transition. All forms of TDC will cease completely in April 2028, alongside the other remaining districts, from which time the new unitary authorities should be ready and running.

.03 **County Councillors Report:** Cllr. Peart provided the following written report to members prior to the meeting:

**Public Health.**

We have finally received confirmation of the ring-fenced public health grant for 25/26. Headlines are an additional £200million nationally to fund public health services and support national priority shifting from sickness to prevention.

For Devon, this represents a rather disappointing increase of £1.67million to £33.3million and moves us from £37.62 per head to £39.20 per head- still a lot less than Plymouth {£67.45 and Torbay {£81.96} . We have asked why such a difference and not yet had a satisfactory reply.

We will have to wait for the detail to come through to see if there are any additional expectations placed upon us for example picking up the full cost for NHS Agenda for change pay increases.

**Waste Disposal.**

The Government has officially announced the implementation of a Deposit Return Scheme {DRS} for single – use plastic bottles and cans, set to launch in October 20/27.

Under the long -awaited scheme, consumers will pay a deposit when purchasing drinks in plastic or metal containers. Once the drink is finished, the containers can be returned to a collection point {such as your local supermarket} to reclaim the deposit.

This proven system, already in place in over 50 countries Worldwide, has seen return rates averaging over 87% in European countries with such a scheme, in fact Germany is claiming 98%. Germany had such a scheme over 30 years ago, I can remember when I was a boy {yes, I can go that far back} we used to go out to find empty pop bottles and take them back to the off-licence for a penny for six.

An estimated 6.5billion of these single -use drinks bottles and cans go to the landfill or incinerated per year in the UK-that's over 17million every day. This means an unimaginably large amount of plastic, aluminium or steel is used once and then buried or burnt; It's about time such a scheme was put in place.

Further to his report Cllr report advised that DCC are to submit a work in progress report to central government in approximately 12 months with a view to launch the new unitary councils from the following November. This will largely depend on the response of the Boundary Commission who will need to be consulted about ward rearrangements.

When asked Cllr. Peart confirmed the increase for the DCC portion of council tax portion is to be increased by 4.99%, 2% of which is for adult social care.

**2503.03 FINANCE**

.01 **Payments:** It was proposed by Cllr. Hooper and seconded by Cllr. Gill, agreed unanimously, and therefore RESOLVED that these payments were transacted by the clerk across the period 01.01.25 to 28.02.25, be approved retrospectively.

.02 **Financial Statement:**

- a. A financial statement for the period ending 31.01.25 was NOTED by members with no queries raised and signed by the Chair. Clerk to publish these on the BPC website.
- b. A financial statement for the period ending 28.02.25 was NOTED by members with no queries raised and signed by the Chair. Clerk to publish these on the BPC website.

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**.03 BPC Community Grant Policy**

The updated grant policy was discussed briefly, with the clerk highlighting the main changes. It was proposed by Cllr. Hooper, seconded by Cllr. Head, to adopt this policy for financial year 2025-26. Unanimously agreed therefore RESOLVED.

**.04 Employers Pension Discretion Policy**

This policy which has not required amendment but requires annual readoption was discussed briefly. Subject to a minor clerical error this was proposed by Cllr. Harris, seconded by Cllr. Grimble, to adopt with immediate effect. Unanimously agreed, therefore RESOLVED.

**.05 Virement of Unused Funds**

Members considered the reallocation of unused funds from budget headings 'D-Day 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary' and 'Kings Coronation' the remainder of which is £614.85 to new budget heading of 'VE-Day 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary'. This will be used for part of the entertainment costs (approximately £250), promotional material preparation and printing (cost unknown).

It was proposed by Cllr. Hooper, seconded by Cllr. Merritt, that this amount be reallocated to the new heading for the 2025-26 financial year. Unanimously agreed, therefore RESOLVED.

**2503.04 COUNCIL STRATEGY & GOVERNANCE:**

**.01 Bishopsteignton Strategic Plan: Updated:** As chair of the BPC Strategy & Governance committee Cllr. Keohane gave a brief overview of the updates to the strategic plan including the mission statement and aims. Members expressed thanks to the clerk for preparation, and the S&G Committee for regular review of the plan.

It was proposed by Cllr. Vooght, seconded by Cllr. Keohane, to adopt this version with immediate effect. Unanimously agreed, therefore RESOLVED.

It was suggested that the document should be shared/circulated widely within the parish for all to see the ongoing work and further plans of the council. The usual sharing platforms were discussed including the BPC website, Facebook and other social media platforms, the Parish Chronicle, and a linking QR code on BPC noticeboards.

**2503.05 COMMUNITY AWARDS:** *Deferred to part II, see separate minutes.*

**2503.06 CLERKS REPORT:** The report of all ongoing BPC business and activity was provided to members and the public prior to this meeting. Various matters were raised by the clerk and members:

- Scout & Community Hub at The Lawns – communications with TDC have been ongoing but they have been reluctant to hold a face-to-face meeting. They are relying on the legal guidance of their in-house team, which will not allow for the covenant on the Lawns land transfer to be removed or amended in any way. We intend to pursue the face-to-face meeting still but need to consider the instruction of official legal support before another approach is made.
- Devon Association of Local Councils (DALC) Devolution consultation – the Parish Councils answers to the three questions posed by DALC have been submitted. DALC are providing further zoom meetings for larger and smaller councils in Devon to consider the latest developments for Devon devolution. Clerk to forward details to members.

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- Cllr. Grimble and Cllr. Harris raised several areas which required attention under the tidy village fund, i.e. weeding and overgrowth. The clerk will assess and organise this work with a contractor.
- Cllr. Merritt expressed concern over the reports of theft from the cemetery. The clerk reported this matter has recently been raised with PCSO. Bunce who will increase patrols of the area.
- Cllr. Vooght raised the increase in fly tipping in the area, the clerk confirmed this has also been discussed with PCSO. Bunce and the police and council are following several leads to catch culprits.

**2503.07 MEMBERS REPORTS**

Cllr. Merritt reported parishioners concerns about the recently installed disabled parking bay on Manor Road. One resident has reported this to DCC but was not satisfied with their response. It was understood that all applicants are thoroughly vetted. Cllr. Peart advised he was consulted on such applications for disabled bays, as the County Council representative, but neither the residents in the vicinity nor the Parish Council would be consulted. The resident making the original enquiry is pursuing DCC for more information.

**2503.08 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

None.

**THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 20.45**

# MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING PART II

HELD 3 MARCH 2025

AT BISHOPSTEIGNTON COMMUNITY CENTRE, SHUTE HILL



## 2503.09 MEETING GOVERNANCE

- .01 **Attendance:** Cllr. H. Merritt (Chair) Cllr. R. Gateshill Cllr. R. Gill  
Cllr. J. Grimble Cllr. E. Harris Cllr. J. Head  
Cllr. J. Hooper Cllr. A. Keohane Cllr. D. Robbins  
Cllr. W. Vooght Cllr. D. Dixon (11/11)  
Clerk: Mrs. K. Ford  
The press & the public were excluded in accordance with Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and Local Government Act 1972, ss100 - 102 and BPC Standing Order 10xii.
- Apologies:** None.
- .02 **Declaration of Interests:** None.

## 2503.10 COMMUNITY AWARDS

Members collectively reviewed the nominations received discussing the merits of each candidate and gave praise for the community-spirited efforts of them all.

Following various suggestions, it was finally proposed and seconded that the recipient of the Individual award should be Mr. Eddy Stephenson. Agreed unanimously, therefore RESOLVED.

For the group category, Bishopsteignton Heritage was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed to receive the award; therefore RESOLVED.

There were no nominations received for the youth category; which should be reconsidered at a future meeting.

**THE CHAIR CLOSED PART II OF THE MEETING AT 21.20**