

Beer Parish Council

The Parish Council Meeting was held on **Wednesday 12th February 2025**, copies of minutes and reports are available on request.

Present:

Cllr M Shobbrook	Cllr L Reeve
Cllr K Stevens	Cllr M Westlake
Cllr A Smith	Cllr J Heath
Cllr S Reeve	Cllr T Stevens
Cllr C Thompson	

Minutes were taken by the Clerk: Mrs Nicky Ingarfield

In attendance: Cllr P Arnott, 2 members of the public

- 1. Apologies and reasons for absence:** Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr M Richards, bereavement.
- 2. Members to declare and interests they may have in agenda items that accord with the adopted code of conduct (NB this does not preclude any later declarations). To consider dispensation requests:** None were declared.
- 3. To agree any items to be dealt with after the public, including the press, have been excluded.** There were no such items.
- 4. Public Participation:** Cllr Paul Arnott thanked the Council for letting him speak. Cllr Arnott is the Ward Councillor Colyford, he was asked by the Liberal Democrats to stand as County Councillor, previously he was independent. Cllr Arnott campaigned to get Seaton Hospital listed, he also saved Seaton Jurassic and has been involved in the shoring up of the Cliffs behind Ducky's, commenting that Seaton and Beer have a close relationship, he in fact has family in Beer himself. The Local Government reorganisation is taking up a lot of his time at the moment, going on to explain that Plymouth would be standing on its own Exeter was hoping to follow suite, it's unlikely that either will be leading Districts. It is very complicated, but County Councils would be abolished and Town and Parish Councils would play a larger role, which could provide opportunities but also risks. The Government are not really clear on what they are doing at the moment. There are issues with County Councils being in debt, Devon is 2 million in debt. Cllr Arnott felt that Districts already work together, but if there were fewer Councillors this would diminish democracy. Devon is a huge county with different dynamics, a one size would not fit all, what works in the North of the County would not work in the South. Cllr Arnott mentioned that a professor had written a paper which concluded that rural areas need different Governance to urban areas. The Government have sent strong legal letters with tight timescales. Devon County Council failed in asking for Elections to be cancelled this year, so the May elections will go ahead, this means it would be at least three years before the changes could happen. Beer Councillors raised concerns about planning, the decisions seem to go against what the Parish Councillors submit in their role as Consultees, there is a lack of consistency.

A resident raised concerns over a shared chimney, he owns his property but is joined to an EDDC property, he has found getting information from EDDC really difficult, especially when it comes to the party wall act, although he has had permission from the tenant to complete the work. The EDDC website is not user friendly, and you have to scroll through hundreds of answers, at present he has had to pay for the whole chimney to be fixed. East Devon have agreed to financially support. Councillor Heath and the Council said that if they can support to get in touch.

- 5. Police: To receive the report:** The link to the website was shared with all Councillors prior to the meeting, there were no questions. The Clerk informed Council that she had met with two local Police Officers at the Branscombe Parish Council meeting and they are keen to be involved with the Community, the Clerk will forward them the dates of the Table Top Sales. If there are any questions that Council would like answered the Clerk can email them direct.
- 6. To consider and approve the minutes of the Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 15th January 2025:** Council agreed they were an accurate record, Cllr T Stevens signed and initialled each page of the minutes.
- 7. EDDC and DCC Cllrs: To receive reports/consider matters for the attention of EDDC/DCC Reps:** There was no report from the DCC Cllr Hartnell, holiday. Cllr Heath advised Council that the wall at Berry Hill is being repaired. The netting that is being installed on the cliffs has proved to be quite challenging but is being completed. Cllr Heath has been supporting local residents to be re-housed and has been involved in supporting residents in West Seaton regarding the Chine. Many potholes have been filled. Cllr Heath will be attending the Seaton Gateway meeting next Wednesday and will be advocating for it to be reopened. Cllr Heath will also be chairing a meeting on the 29th February to discuss moving forward with the Seaton District Youth Group, the group does need to raise funding.
- 8. Financial reports**
 - 8.1 To approve the monthly bank reconciliation to the end of January 2025:** The bank reconciliation and the statement were checked and signed by the Vice-Chair.
 - 8.2 To receive monthly Alpha software reports:** Reports were noted, no queries were raised.
 - 8.3 To approve the schedule of payments for January: Proposed Cllr K Stevens, seconded Cllr Westlake , resolved all in favour.** The schedule and the invoices were then checked and initialled by the Vice-Chair.
 - 8.4: To appoint the Auditors, Aalgaard Renshaw Business Solutions for the 2024/25 Accounts:** Councillors agreed the last years audit was very thorough, proposed Cllr K Stevens, seconded Cllr Shobbrook, resolved all in favour.
 - 8.5: To agree a donation to Beer Horticultural Society:** Council all agreed that the Horticultural Society do an amazing job and thanked them for all their hard work. Council agreed to a donation of £200.00, proposed Cllr Westlake, seconded Cllr L Reeve Resolved all in favour.

9. Environment and Community Portfolio

9.1: To receive an update on the bin at Starre Bank: Peco had raised concerns that the re-installation of a bin would encourage fly tipping as this had previously been the issue. Council suggested the Clerk contact EDDC and see if they would install a bin which the Village workman would then empty.

9.2: To note the letter from BT regarding the removal of the phone at Fore Street: It was noted that the actual phone box is listed, Clerk to reply to email stating this.

9.3 To discuss the Community Pay Back Scheme letter and agree on a response: The Community Pay Back Scheme will tidy up the Jubilee prior to the Grizzly and also the weekend before the VE Day Street Party, there is always weeding and tidying up to be done. The team do an amazing job and Council are very grateful for their help.

9.4: To discuss and approve the document to be sent to DCC to request the road closure at Common Lane: Common Lane has been of concern for a long time, Council have concerns that if the cliff was to give way it would have a massive impact on tourism in the village, effectively cutting off the top car park and the caravan site. Cllr Thompson was concerned that the village hadn't been spoken to about the proposal and the impact the proposed road closure would have on the village, she also expressed concerns that the Council were not giving DCC any other options, could the road be closed halfway? Cllr T Stevens explained how the change to the traffic flow was implemented at The Meadows, which is supposed to be the main drive through route through the village. Cllrs Shobbrook and Westlake explained that at this stage the proposal was for Highways to look at and investigate, which was the advice given by Highways at a previous meeting, and if they come back to the Council and agree to talk about the proposal, Phase 2 would then be implemented, which would be the Public Consultation, at this stage, Council need a response from Highways before they can take it to Consultation. Cllr Tompson would like it noted that she would like the proposal communicated to the whole village. The Clerk explained that the proposal is open and transparent and should any residents wish to see the document they can contact her for a copy. Council decided by a vote of 8 Councillors, Cllr Thompson abstained from voting, that the proposal be sent to Highways. Proposed Cllr L Reeve, seconded Cllr S Reeve, 7 further Cllrs in favour.

9.To discuss the lighting on Long Hill: A concern had been raised that Long Hill was not bright enough for motorists in the evenings, Council held a discussion around the fact that until recently there had been no light there at all, Highways had informed Council that if they turned the light up the resident could request that the light was taken away all together as it was on their property. Council felt that it was better to have a light there than not at all and with the planned dimming of lights across the County to save power was due to be implemented shortly it was better to leave as is. Clerk to write to Highways and confirm that if they are happy with the lighting as is it should remain the same with no changes.

10. To agree to the contents of the response to DALC regarding the proposed Devolution: The Clerk had attended an online meeting with DALC who were formulating a response to Government, they had asked that all Parish and Town Councils write an A4 document of what they currently do in their Parishes, and what they would like to do if they had the power. The Clerk will formulate a response, if Councillors could email her with some suggestions of things they would like to do.

11. To note the submission of the Assets Transfer letter to the monitoring officer with a deadline of 5th March 2025 for a response: Noted

12.To note the code of conduct training booked for 26th February 2025 at The Mariners Hall, Balcony Room at 7pm: Noted

13. To discussion the verbal application to become a co-opted Councillor by Simon Whitelock, the discussion must take place without intervention from the candidate or public. Voting will be according to the statutory requirements, in that, a successful candidate must have received an absolute majority vote of those present and voting: Simon is known to many of the Council as he has been involved in Food Save and has also been helping with maintenance at the Church and is very keen to support the village. Proposed Cllr K Stevens, seconded Cllr Heath, resolved all in favour.

14.Correspondence – no questions raised.

15.Date of next meetings: Full Council Wednesday 12th March 2025
Table top sale: Saturday 22nd February 2025

Signed: Cllr M Richards

Date: