

# DUNSFORD PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of meeting held in Village Hall dressing rooms on Tuesday January 7th 2025

**Present:** Cllrs P French (Chairman), R Squire, D Matthews, P Lewis, B Webber and the Clerk Lynne Ogden  
1 member of the Public attended.

The Chairman began the meeting by welcoming Cllr Beth Webber to the Council.

He also welcomed the member of the public and asked if there was anything he would like to say.

He said he was concerned about the flooding at Butt's Pond. It has flooded four times since November. He appreciates that the Lengthsman has been working on it but further work is needed on the land opposite the pond. The Chairman said that the Council had approached the Landowner and this was going to be followed up. The member of the public said it needed sorting straight away. (Further info. see item 8)

**1. a) Apologies** – Cllrs C Heard, A Arnold, K Morris, T Anderson, County Cllr Brook and District Cllrs Swain and Purser

**b) Declaration of Interest/ Register of Interests:** None

**2. Minutes of the Council meeting held on December 3rd 2024** had been distributed, were approved and signed.

### **3. Progress Reports**

**3.1 Action Points from last meeting-** All actions completed from last meeting.

**3.2 Clerk's report** – had been sent to all Cllrs. No Highways meeting this month.

**3.3 Reports from other Councillors/representatives** – District Cllr Swain sent a report that was sent to all Cllrs

**3.4 Housing Working Group** – Nothing to report. The work of this group has been suspended whilst waiting for the detailed planning application for the site on Reedy Hill.

**3.5 Dunsford Emergency Response Team (DERT)** – Nothing to report.  
**Action Cllr Morris**

**3.6 The Dunsford Climate Initiative (DCI)** – Nothing to report **Action Cllr Squire**

**3.7 Reports from other meetings attended by Dunsford Cllrs –a) None**

**4. Correspondence:** - List of correspondence received by email listed overleaf.

**5. Finance** 5.1 C/A - £12,124.50 as at 20/11/2024    BBI/A - £1863.15 as at 11/11/24

**The Council resolved to pay the following invoices: -**

**5.2 Clerk's Salary** – 5 weeks x 10 hours a week Gross pay £718

Net pay to Clerk £574.40 + expenses £31.49= **£605.89 chq 1584**

**5.3 BG - Lengthsman's tasks for December – £100 chq 1585**

**5.4 Village Hall MC - Room Hire (November) - £17.50 chq 1586**

**5.5 Graham Dicker – invoice not received**

**5.6 Ian Seward – room hire for January - £10 chq 1587**

**5.7 HMRC PAYE for Q3 - £398.77 chq 1588**

**5.8 Budget 2025-2026 –** The Updated Proposed budget was Approved by the Council and signed by the Chairman and RFO. This will be posted on the website.

**5.9 Precept –** The Council discussed and approved the Precept for 2025-2026. It was decided to raise the precept to **£16,560**. Teignbridge has raised the tax base which means Dunsford will get £16,320 for the same amount of resident's council tax as last year.

Therefore, the Council will only ask for £240 on top of this. This means there will only be a rise of 75 pence a year (total of £52.38) for Band D households.

**6. Village Green a) Monthly Report – a)** A report had been sent to all Cllrs. The grass needs cutting. Molehills have started to appear in the Green and the Clerk was asked to explore ways of solving this problem. **b) Benches –** Cllr Matthews will contact the contractor and report the progress to all Cllrs. **c) The trial to remove the bins** has been initiated but the shelter cannot be moved to store the bins. Cllr Matthews will organise storage of the bins. All notices asking people to take their rubbish home will be in place by the next meeting.

**Action Cllr Matthews/Clerk**

**7. Planning: - Applications: 7.1 None      Decisions: None**

**8. Lengthsman –** The Council is aware that several areas were flooded during the extreme weather conditions in January. The Lengthsman has been carrying out work to try to limit the damage and this has had a positive effect on **Thomas Cross and parts of Boyland's Lane. Bigport Farm area** was kept clear of flood water due to the gullies, culverts and drains being cleared effectively and the Farmer making sure his land was prepared correctly to accept the water.

The area around the **Clifford Bridge end of the Nature Reserve (known as the Black Hole)** was particularly affected last month and the Clerk and Local Highways Officer are meeting tomorrow to plan what needs to be done.

The Lengthsman has also worked hard in the **Butt's Pond area** where he can but further works are needed by the Landowner on the other side of the road to ensure water can keep flowing away from the road. Initial contact has been made and the Local Highways Officer, with the Clerk, are pursuing this.

Highways have assessed and located the problem with the end of **Lea Lane flooding**. This is on the list to be rectified during the year 25-26 (i.e. from April this year). Meanwhile, it will be jetted to try to keep the area free from flooding as much as possible.

It was also reported that there are blocked drains at Brownings Mead and by the Old School House. The Clerk will check these with the Lengthsman to see if it can be sorted by him or whether it needs to be reported to Highways. **Action**

**Clerk**

**9. Village Shop and Tearooms** – Various members of Council have been approached by members of our community concerned about the prospect of losing the shop, when Church Cottage is sold. Cllr French met with Ian Seward (owner), at his request, recently, at Caute Farm with Cllr Arnold present throughout. Below is a report of that discussion, shared with Council.

Ian (landowner) wanted to emphasise that he shares the concern being expressed by the community about the possible negative impact a sale of Church Cottage might have on the shop/PO. He pointed out he too is a member of the community and user of the shop/PO and would not do anything that deliberately threatens the shop/PO future.

Ian confirmed he wishes to sell the property in its entirety with the shop as a sitting tenant and is becoming rather fed up by what he, probably rightly, sees as external interference, in the form of well-intentioned advice about how he should sell his property.

He also raised the suggestion that the shop be listed as a community asset. I explained what this meant. He would prefer this not to happen. (council endorsed this at our meeting)

Cllr French advised Ian that the PC has no role vs the sale of his property/the shop and was simply acting as a channel to communicate the concerns of the community and provide offers of assistance from individuals with relevant expertise.

Ian said he will seek expert help, should he need it, via Cllr French/the PC (he does not want to have a group contact) as he proceeds with the sale. Otherwise, he politely requests that we refrain from contact and try to constrain others that might wish to get involved/help. I (Cllr French) agreed.

The Council is happy to explore whether there is any realistic prospect of the community raising the cash to buy the property in its entirety.

**10. Matters brought forward by the Chairman (for. information only /possible addition to next month's agenda including:** - a) Any pressing **Highways issues** for Clerk to pass on to Highways' contact – possible drains mentioned in item 8. b) the hedge from Linhay to Butt's Pond needs cutting back. c) The light 7 in the same area is on during the day time.

**11. Date of next meeting: Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2025 at 7:30 pm at the Village Hall dressing rooms**

**There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8:30pm**

**Signed as a true record..... Cllr French (chairman)**

**Date .....**

### **Email circulation during the past month**

- Planning applications and decisions from DNPA and Teignbridge
- Rural Services Network Bulletin plus Funding Digests
- DALC newsletters
- Devon Communities Together – various newsletters
- Teignbridge District Council newsletter
- Devon County Council newsletter
- Mel Stride's Christmas card
- Devon Climate Emergency newsletter
- Info on Local Government Re-organisation from Cllr Brook