

Lifton Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held in the Tamar Room (The Arundell)
on 30th January 2025

These minutes are provisional until they are agreed and signed by the Chairman at the next meeting of the parish council

Present: Cllr Edmonds (Chairman), Cllr Alexander, Cllr K Dunn, Cllr S Dunn, Cllr Gynn, Cllr Lees, Cllr Measey and Cllr Sutton-Woodhouse

1. Apologies: Cllr Glen (apologies approved)

2. Minutes: The minutes of the meeting on 19th December 2024 were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman.

3. Dispensations and Declarations of Interest: None

4. Visiting/Guest Speakers: None

5. Public Participation/Borough Cllr. Update:

Public Participation: None

Borough Cllr. Update: Cllr Edmonds provided an update regarding the changes to Launceston's recycling centre's booking system. Cllr Edmonds had referred this issue onto Sir Geoffrey Cox MP last year; Sir Geoffrey's office has shared the following response received from Cornwall Council: 'Thank you for your letter outlining the concerns of your constituents about accessing services at the Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) in Launceston.

We greatly value the close working relationship we have with Devon County Council; however, it is important to note that our statutory duty with regards to the provision of HWRCs is to serve the residents of Cornwall. Our HWRCs offer slightly different services to those in Devon including different restrictions in respect of waste types and quantities accepted. In some cases our sites are more generous with respect to limits of particular types of waste, so proximity may not be the only reason that Devon residents have chosen to use our sites in the past.

We are introducing booking systems to manage congestion and queuing on our sites at various locations throughout Cornwall, but this comes with the benefit of being able to prioritise our provision for those who pay for them via Council Tax payments to Cornwall Council.

We understand the frustration of having to travel further to access these services, unfortunately, the way we are funded and our own budget pressures makes this necessary at present. If colleagues within Devon wish to discuss a financial mechanism that doesn't disadvantage the residents of Cornwall then we would certainly be happy to discuss.

We appreciate your feedback and will continue to explore ways to improve our services for all residents.'

6. General items:

6.1 Highways Update

The Clerk provided a report to Councillors prior to the meeting which detailed highways matters that have been reported to or from Devon County Council Highways (or other departments) since the last meeting. Please see separate attachment 'Appendix A'.

In addition to the above, the following matters were raised:
Whitely Hill embankment reinstatement; to be raised with South West Water.

The speed sign (VAS) in Liftondown stopped working and an electrician was called out to make a repair however this VAS is still faulty. Further work will be conducted to get it working again. The PC maybe able to utilise some parts from two identical VAS's which may be made available via a different parish; the Chairman will provide an update in due course.

The new VAS has been delivered and will be installed within the parish at an existing approved site.

The local U3A walking group are to walk the public footpaths in Lifton later in the year.
The Parish Clerk was asked to ascertain a quote for the re-printing of Lifton's village trail leaflet.

Lifton Community Speed Watch Group

Cllr S Dunn provided the latest speed data report which was circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting.

6.2 Liftondown Telephone Kiosk

At December's PC meeting the Clerk was asked to write to the Community Heartbeat Trust to confirm the PC's decision taken at that meeting to not adopt the Liftondown telephone kiosk and to ascertain whether they, the CHT, would proceed with the kiosk adoption themselves.

The Clerk received confirmation from the CHT that they did in fact proceed with the kiosk's adoption and had already sent paint to a Liftondown resident for the kiosk's renovation.

The local resident has confirmed that once the kiosk is in good order, they will then discuss with interested parties what it might be used for. Although the resident was prepared to invest some of their own money, they will need to raise further funds and would consider a 'Crowdfunding' exercise.

Councillors noted the above and reiterated that that they would only consider financial support by way of a donation to a registered charity such as the CHT.

6.3 DCC Grass Cutting Agreements 2025/26 (Urban & West Devon Drive)

Councillors resolved that the 2025/26 DCC grass cutting agreements for both Urban and West Devon Drive locations should be signed by the Clerk and returned to DCC. The allocation of these funds was most needed and welcomed.

Proposed: (SD); Seconded: (DM); All in favour. A vote was taken by a show of hands.

Action: The Clerk to return the signed agreements to DCC and to share the budgets/schedules with the local contractors.

6.4 Defibrillator Update - To include request to take on an additional defib

Cllr K Dunn undertook the defib checks during January and it is in working order. Cllr Measey agreed to undertake the defib checks at the Community Centre in February.

Councillors were informed that a request had been received from a local resident asking for the PC to take on additional checks of a defibrillator located at the Health and Fitness Studio on Tinhay Industrial Estate.

Councillors discussed this request and expressed concerns about the direct access to this defibrillator and the on-going cost implications given replacement batteries cost around £200 and replacement pads cost just over £100. Councillors also noted their own limited availability to undertake additional defib checks.

Councillors agreed that the local community and businesses in Tinhay be approached and asked if they could take on the responsibility of this defib. In agreement with all Councillors, the Chairman will liaise with the original requester to help resolve this issue.

Action: The Parish Chairman to liaise with the original requester to work within the Tinhay community to ascertain help/support with the defib located on the local industrial estate.

6.5 Arundell Gardens – Litter bin

LiveWest Housing Association have confirmed that they will be able provide a litter bin at the Arundell Gardens play area. They have asked if the PC would consider covering the cost of the bin's installation.

The Chairman reported that there was a local contractor who could install the bin, subject to Councillor's agreement to cover this cost and to cover WDBC's charges for on-going bin emptying (£79.56 plus VAT twice a year).

Councillors resolved to cover the costs of the bin installation and WDBC's charges for bin emptying; both of which would come out of the PC's general reserves for 2025-26 as the budget for the next financial year had already been agreed.

Proposed: (AL); Seconded: (SD); All in favour. A vote was taken by a show of hands.

Action: The Parish Chairman to liaise with LiveWest and the local contractor regarding the litter bin installation. The Clerk be asked in due course to liaise with WDBC to arrange the additional bin collection.

7. Reports:

7.1 QEII Report

Refurbishment of the exterior of the pavilion is to be completed, weather permitting, this week. Refurbishment of the gateway including improving the current drainage is due to start in the near future.

The small slide has suffered some damage and has been out of use for the past weeks. Repairs are in hand and it is hoped to be back in use within the next few weeks.

A survey of the landing site was carried out by the Air Ambulance Service on Friday. To aid maintenance, they have asked that the landing light be switched on each month for an hour or so.

The QEII Committee will be drawing up a rota to carry this out.

The annual inspection of the play area is to be carried out by ROSPA in March.

A motorbike was sighted on the recreation ground churning up the grass; the van containing the bike was reported to the Police as this is anti-social behaviour.

7.2 OPCC Councillor Advocate Scheme

CLlr Gynn provided the following update:

Data from 'Teams' meeting 2/12/24 - Statement by OPCC Treasurer:

OPCC Police budget last year was £7.3m

Police Officers in post: 3610 PCSOs: 150 Staff: 2209. 73 Road safety staff

Just over 1000 vehicles

Max. increase in spend (2025/26) to be 5.1%

Statement by Assistant Chief Constable, D&C Police:

Performance at December 2024

D&C Police took 586,439 contacts (999, 101, and on-line)

Nationally, D&C Police had the 9th (of 44) quickest answer

2/3 of 999 calls answered within 10secs.

8. Finance

8.1 For payment:

Clerk's salary for January	£ 730.73
Clerk's expenses: Filing cabinet suspension files (pack of 25)	£ 17.99
The Arundell: Tamar Room hire for LPC meeting 30.01.25 (inc. £6.67 VAT)	£ 40.00
Baker Electrical Services: Work at QEII and VAS in village	£ 87.08
QEII Recreation Ground Grant 2024-25	£ 1,200.00
Donations made:	
Citizens Advice Torridge, North, Mid and West Devon	£ 150.00

Proposed (DM) and seconded (SD); all in favour that the above payments be made online.

[Above payments: £ 2225.80]

Action: Clerk to make all payments online.

The above invoices for payment and the bank statements dated 31st December 2024 were seen and signed by two Councillors.

8.2 Receipts:

Interest	£ 6.70
JH Spry & Son Funerals: Burial fee	£ 175.00

8.3 Outstanding invoices: None

General matters relating to Finance:

8.4 Bank reconciliation

Councillors noted the bank reconciliation from October to December 2024; it was duly signed by two Councillors.

8.5 Internal Auditor - Letter of Engagement 2025

Councillors resolved to appoint Penny Clapham PSLCC, BA (Hons) Community Governance, Internal Auditor PIALC, for the PC's 2024-25 internal audit. The Clerk signed and dated the 'Letter of Engagement 2025'.

Proposed (DM) and seconded (SD); all in favour.

9. Planning

9.1 Applications:

3855/24/ARM - Proposal: Reserved Matters Application for Layout, Scale, Appearance and Landscaping for the Construction of 68 Dwellings with Associated Public Open Space including Allotments, Landscaping and Sustainable Drainage and the Discharge of Conditions 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27 Pursuant to Outline Application 2536/20/OPA. Site Address: Development Site at Sx 382 850, Fore Street, Lifton

Councillors discussed this application and raised the following questions, they also asked for the concerns raised below to be taken into careful consideration by the planning authority:

Clarification is sought on how many of the proposed dwellings will have air source heat pumps installed. Councillors noted there was some confusion, under section 9 of the application, as to whether ASHPs will be installed in all or just 25% of the proposed dwellings.

In relation to the proposed site layout plan, Councillors queried why the small bungalows (1 bed) are stuck right at the back of the site.

Councillors noted the comments contained in the Heritage Officer's report regarding the boundary fencing along ancient woodland and western boundary of the site.

Councillors ask that consideration be given to the whole boundary and that all boundaries are protected in perpetuity. The planning scheme seems too vague given the 'buffer strip' and it is not clear who will be responsible for this open space. The PC requests the planning authority to consider including this as a S106 requirement, or by planning condition, to secure meaningful protection for the boundary as described above and establish who will be responsible for the open space.

Councillors raised the lack of a 'wildlife corridor' in the proposed plans and would request that this should be considered as a requirement of the application.

Councillors noted that they would not have sight of the highways report prior to making their decision at the PC meeting this evening.

Councillors seek assurance from the developer that they will minimise the disruption on local roads (especially Fore Street) whilst this next phase of development proceeds to help mitigate the chaos and disruption that occurred during phase one. With this in mind, Councillors asked that as part of the application process, the developer submits a schedule of any proposed works required in Fore Street to install or connect services be submitted to DCC Highways and that Highways provide assurance that any works to be carried out can be undertaken without closure of Fore Street at any time during the period of the construction.

Councillors sought reassurance that the existing trees and hedgerows at the site are adequately protected; that construction/site workers do not park their vehicles on the local village verges; that adequate 'wheel washing' facilities are provided on site; and that any mud on village roads is regularly brushed. Lorries awaiting access to the site should not wait 'in convoy' outside Westend Cottages; which happened in phase one of construction. Councillors noted that some of these concerns are included in the CEMP but would request that they are dealt with by planning condition to provide greater focus and clarity.

Councillors also requested an appropriate planning condition to ensure that any pre-construction site drainage system is fit for purpose to ensure that surface water/storm runoff is adequately controlled to prevent water escaping from the site into Fore Street.

In relation to the attenuation ponds, Councillors and local residents have expressed serious concerns around the lack of safety measures put in place by the developer. The attenuation pond on phase one is considerably large with only a single bar boundary fence in place. Two further ponds are planned in phase two. Councillors request that a planning condition be put in place to ensure improved secure fencing is installed around all attenuation ponds along with some appropriate signage surrounding the ponds warning of the potential dangers.

Councillors ask that the external colour schemes for the phase two houses be consistent with phase one.

Councillors would like a request for a designated pedestrian crossing to be considered along Fore Street for when both phases are completed given there will be a considerable increase in footfall from the new estate to/from the village and its many facilities (primary school, Doctors, shop, pubs etc). Although the initial request for a pedestrian crossing was refused before commencement of phase one, Councillors ask for this new request to be considered.

Councillors agreed to support this application subject to the above questions being addressed and matters raised being taken into careful consideration.

Proposed and seconded. PC decision: support (7); not support (0); abstain (1). All in favour. A vote was taken by a show of hands.

9.2 Approvals:

3374/23/ARM - Description: Application for approval of reserved matters following outline approval reference 1408/20/OPA for the erection of an industrial building & associated works. Site Address: Land to the North and West of Lifton Strawberry Fields, Lifton, PL16 0DE. Decision: Conditional Approval

3198/22/ARM - Description: Application for approval of reserved matters following outline approval 1408/20/OPA for access & adoptable road layout. Site Address: Land Adjacent to Lifton Strawberry Field, Lifton. Decision: Conditional Approval

2718/24/FUL - Description: Extension to existing workshop. Site Address: Autospray Bodyshop Centre Tinhay Mill Industrial Estate, Tinhay, PL16 0AH. Decision: Conditional Approval

3671/24/AGR - Description: Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed portal steel-framed agricultural building measuring 18.48m (length) x 12.2m (breadth) x 6.85m (height to ridge). Site Address: Land at SX 364 861 Launceston. Decision: Prior Approval Not Required

3672/24/AGR - Description: Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed new agricultural track (length 275mtrs x width 3.6mtrs). Site Address: Land at SX 364 861 Launceston. Decision: Prior Approval Not Required

9.3 Refusals: None

General matters relating to Planning:

9.4 None

10. Correspondence:

Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service: Consultation - Automatic Fire Alarms

SLCC: Government Consultation: 'Strengthening the Standards and Conduct Framework for Local Authorities in England'

11. Councillors' items for future agenda: Allotments and village Christmas decorations.

Meeting closed at 20:35.

SIGNED..... Date.....

Next Meeting: 7.00pm, Thursday, 27th February 2025 (Venue to be confirmed)