

Hemyock Parish Council

Full Meeting

held at Blackdown Healthy Living & Activity Centre, Hemyock at 7.30pm on 4 December 2024

Present

Councillors P Doble (Chair), A Doble, Lawrence, Matthews, Moon, Povah, Talbot and Ward together with Parish & District Councillor Clist, District Councillor Bradshaw and Mrs S McGeever (Clerk) and members of the public.

Councillor Doble opened the meeting at 7.30pm.

1. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Councillor Summers and DCC Councillor Radford.

2. Declarations of Interest/Dispensations

- Agenda Item 7 Planning – Councillor Clist is a member of the planning committee of Mid Devon District Council and chooses not to participate in any planning application consultation.
- Agenda Item 8 Longmead – Councillors P Doble and Ward may have a personal interest as both are members of Longmead Management Committee

No declarations of interest were made.

3. Public Participation

Members of the public raised the following points which would be addressed under the appropriate agenda item or dealt with in any other business:

- blocked drains on Station Road
- blockage along the Shutlake
- MDDC emails to deceased residents

4. To approve the minutes of the meeting on 6 November 2024

PROPOSAL: The council minutes of 6 November 2024 are approved as a true record of the meeting.

PROPOSER: Councillor Ward

SECONDER: Councillor A Doble

It was RESOLVED by those who had been present at the meeting that the minutes were a true record of the meeting, and they were duly initialled and signed by the Chairman.

5. Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman thanked Councillors Summers and Talbot and the Clerk for their actions following blocked drains.

6. Finance

6.1 Report from the Finance Committee

Councillor Lawrence referred to the items listed in the agenda as follows:

Improvements to Longmead

The Finance Committee recommends that the improvements to Longmead be approved and paid for by the Parish Council.

The Longmead Committee had advised that income did not cover the basic expenditure for running the pavilion and there would be a loss this year. Maintenance of the building and all the grounds were covered by the Parish Council. The constitution of the Longmead Committee did need to be amended to correctly reflect the financial distribution of costs relating to Longmead.

The Finance Committee felt the improvements offered the Longmead Committee the ability to break even and, possibly, start contributing to the overall costs of Longmead. It also maintained what was a valuable Parish Council and community asset.

The Finance Committee was recommending that £10,000 be set aside for the improvements with additional sums to cover insurance, prior planning advice, planning permission, possible structural survey and the potential need to meet building regulations. This sum represents £2k per year over 5 years.

The possibility of Football Federation grants would be explored.

Councillor Lawrence also recommended that the works for the showers (3 quotes had been obtained by the Longmead Committee) should be actioned prior to submitting a planning application.

PROPOSAL: The council allocate the funds of £10,000 to undertake the works in the schedule presented by the Longmead Committee and other associated costs.

PROPOSER: Councillor Lawrence

SECONDER: Councillor P Doble

It was RESOLVED that the proposal be accepted with one abstention by Councillor Clist given the planning nature of the project.

Improvements to the MUGA

The MUGA was a key component in improving the revenue at Longmead and again was a Parish Council asset. The current surface was not fit for purpose and could be deemed a health and safety issue.

The Longmead Committee were organising quotes for the MUGA to be re-surfaced and it was hoped that this would be covered by grants.

The Clerk had spoken to the person organising the quotes and contacted two firms that had sent promotional emails to the Parish Council. These two companies would supply quotes for tarmac and 2g surfacing.

Skatepark

The Finance Committee recommends that the Parish Council increase the amount from £25,000 to £30,000 representing 10% of the known cost. It was felt this would assist in the Skatepark Committee obtaining grants etc.

The Finance Committee felt that the amount should not be increased above £30,000 unless public budgetary participation was in favour of further investment.

It was noted that the Skatepark had approximately £3700 in Parish Council funds and some £5000 had already been provided by the Parish Council for planning and the environmental assessment plans.

There will be a launch of the Skateboard project which will require attendance from the Parish Council. The question should be raised if any finance is required for the launch.

PROPOSAL: The council increase the allocate the funds to the skatepark from £25,000 to £30,000. Any further funds to be agreed by public budgetary participation.

PROPOSER: Councillor Lawrence

SECONDER: Councillor Moon

It was RESOLVED that the proposal be accepted on a unanimous decision.

Action: Clerk

Assistance for the Clerk

The Finance Committee felt it was important that the Parish Council had a clear understanding of the documentation held. A person has been identified who could do this for £13/hour and recommended at budget of £1000 be set (over 75 hours) to identify all documentation handed over. If more expenditure is required the Committee will return to the council with details. An inventory of the paperwork would assist in registering land etc.

PROPOSAL: The council allocate £1000 to assistance for the Clerk.

PROPOSER: Councillor Lawrence

SECONDER: Councillor Moon

It was RESOLVED that the proposal be accepted on a unanimous decision.

Action: Clerk

National Joint Council for Local Government Services agreement on the 2024/25 pay award

The Finance Committee recommends that with effect from 1 April 2024, an increase of £1,290 (pro rata for part-time employees) will be paid as a consolidated, permanent addition on all NJC pay points 2 to 43 inclusive, should be applied to the Clerk's salary.

Given the Parish Council had also approved the increase at the meeting on 6 November 2024, a further vote was not felt necessary.

Action: Clerk

Grant requests

- the Lights Brigade - £750

The Finance Committee recommended granting £750 for this 10th anniversary year . However bearing in mind pressures on budgets, this level of support is not likely to continue and it is recommended the Lights Brigade look at alternative sources.

PROPOSAL: The council give a grant of £750 to the Lights Brigade.

PROPOSER: Councillor Lawrence

SECONDER: Councillor A Doble

It was RESOLVED that the proposal be accepted on a unanimous decision.

Action: Clerk

- CHAT

The Clerk was awaiting a response to her email requesting the number of Hemyock residents using the service.

Action: Clerk

The Grant Application policy and form , currently on the website, will be reviewed by the Finance Committee in February. All requests for grants should use the published form.

Action: Finance Committee/Clerk

MDDC Grass Cutting Charges

The contribution for 2025-2026 at £1284.24 ex. VAT was noted by the Parish Council.

Action: Clerk

Devon Communities Together

The membership fee by Direct Debit of £50.00 was noted by the Parish Council.

Action: Clerk

Lights Competition

The Finance Committee had recommended a sum of £100 should be set aside for prizes and that the competition terms should be amended to say that a resident could only win the competition once in every four years.

PROPOSAL: The sum of £100 should be set aside for prizes and any individual could win once in every four years.

PROPOSER: Councillor Lawrence

SECONDER: Councillor Moon

It was RESOLVED that the proposal be accepted with one abstention.

Action: Clerk

Budgets/Precept

Councillor Lawrence advised that Scribe is now providing in-year comparisons with the previous year's full figures, which is very helpful. A few issues have been identified, mainly involving the detailing of already agreed project expenditure. The Committee will return to the PC with updated details for confirmation.

However, given the Government budget and the increases in the minimum wage, lowering of National Insurance thresholds and the need to pay contributions together with other ongoing costs, the Finance Committee was recommending an increase in the precept. The precept had been held at its current level for 6 years and this was not sustainable, however, the total amount has increased due to more properties (7%).

Normal expenditure is taking the Parish Council over the amount we received for the precept in this financial year. To be prudent, we need to be sure that we are not using reserves for general expenditure which are earmarked for specific projects.

The proposed increase was 11% to £98,000 , taking band D from £97.31 to £107.53, just under 20p more per week.

PROPOSAL: The precept be increased by 11% to £98,000.

PROPOSER: Councillor Lawrence

SECONDER: Councillor Moon

It was RESOLVED that the proposal be accepted on a unanimous decision.

Action: Clerk

Future projects

Cemetery

Councillor A Doble had asked for three quotes and received two quotes to take down the back fence and use it to extend the side fence with the requirement to purchase 17-20m of additional fencing.

Quote A

Painted £7975 plus VAT

Galvanised £8325 plus VAT

Quote B

Painted £6800 plus VAT

Galvanised £7600 plus VAT

It was RESOLVED that the option for galvanised fencing was preferred.

PROPOSAL: Quote B for the fencing at the cemetery be accepted.

PROPOSER: Councillor A Doble

SECONDER: Councillor Moon

It was RESOLVED that the proposal be accepted with four abstentions. The details of the contractors would be provided in Part 2 of the meeting.

Action: Councillor A Doble

Longmead Carpark

The addition of further parking at Longmead was needed with a Junior Football tournament being held in May and should be a project undertaken in early 2025.

The Parish Council RESOLVED that the drawings for the proposed car park which had been drawn up by Councillor Povah form the basis of the project and that Councillor Moon oversee the project to keep costs down. Any quotes obtained would be more expensive than a Parish Council led project.

PROPOSAL: Councillors Povah and Moon lead on the project and present a final design to the February meeting which should provide for the biggest car park possible and include galvanised tubing barriers.

PROPOSER: Councillor Lawrence

SECONDER: Councillor P Doble

It was RESOLVED that the proposal be accepted with one abstention by Councillor Clist given the planning nature of the project.

Action: Councillors Povah and Moon

Robotic Mowers

The Clerk had been unable to acquire three quotes for both purchase and lease of robotic mower(s).

PROPOSAL: The Parish Council should move to the use of robotic mowers to cut Longmead. If grant funding was available then the mower(s) would be purchased. If not the mowers would be leased. The Clerk would pursue three quotes for the next meeting.

PROPOSER: Councillor A Doble

SECONDER: Councillor S Clist

It was RESOLVED that the proposal be accepted on a unanimous decision.

Action: Clerk

Village Maintenance

The Clerk had identified a document that went out to tender for all village maintenance (grass cutting, repairs etc) and it was RESOLVED that this document should be used to provide for an updated document to include all contractors current rates.

Action: Councillor Povah/Clerk

Station Road Pavement

Councillor Povah had spoken to the solicitors and felt that the Parish Council was once again in a position to apply for planning permission.

The original architect had been approached to provide quotes for architectural services, a quantity surveyors services and a CDM safety inspector given that much of the work had already been done when the previous application was submitted. The pavement design had changed slightly so new plans would need to be drawn up. The quotes had been circulated to councillors.

PROPOSAL: The Station Road Pavement architect be appointed to apply for planning permission/oversee the project as detailed in the quote.

PROPOSER: Councillor Povah

SECONDER: Councillor Moon

It was RESOLVED that the proposal be accepted with one abstention Councillor Clist due to it being a planning matter.

Action: Councillor Povah/Clerk

Building Maintenance

A building maintenance plan had been started in 2020 but not followed. The Parish Council RESOLVED to agree the principle having a budgeted, maintenance plan for all assets and that funding may be required to achieve this.

Action: Councillor Povah/Clerk

Public Convenience

The Clerk had had difficulty in obtaining quotes because there was only one key and she lived away from Hemyock. Councillor Povah had volunteered to meet contractors on site but the problem of one key remained.

PROPOSAL: Three keys should be cut for the Public Convenience.

PROPOSER: Councillor Lawrwence

SECONDER: Councillor Moon

It was RESOLVED that the proposal be accepted on a unanimous decision.

6.2 To agree income and expenditure and bank reconciliations:

The Parish Council noted the income in the month of November.

INCOME

Account ending 1298	£100.00 (cemetery)
Account ending 1308	Interest £0.00
Account ending 1311	£0.00
Account ending 1324 Pizza van	£20.00 (pizza van)

EXPENDITURE – Invoices received 2024/25

Invoices to pay in November:

No	Amount	Payee	Reason
1.	142.50	E Ingledew	Cleaning public conveniences
2.	281.38	I Pike	Cemetery £75 Village maintenance £172.50 Reimbursements
3.	835.75	S McGeever	Clerk’s wages (Payroll 30/11/24) + NALC increase
4.	6.00	GiffGaff	PC phone paid by S McGeever
5.	36.00	S McGeever	Travel expenses – September
6.	208.80	HMRC	PAYE
7.	64.00	MDDC	Car park rates - November
8.	40.00	BHLAC	Meeting rooms invoices sent out 30/11/24
9.	180.00	Upcott	Cutting of the grass at Longmead (3)
10.	96.00	Bunyan	Blocked urinals at Public Convenience
11.	87.53	Source for Business	Public conveniences
12.	27.59	Source for Business	Cemetery
13.	39.00	Metcalfe Allen	Longmead – archiving CCTV
14.			

Invoices paid in October:

EDF Energy DD for Public Conveniences	£ 24.29
Bank service charge	£ 8.55
Approved payments total:	£2035.10
Total	£2067.94

The Clerk advised that an additional invoice from MDDC for the grass cutting in 2024-25 had been received in the sum of £1517.34.

PROPOSAL: The expenditure listed above be paid.

PROPOSER: Councillor Taylor

SECONDER: Councillor Lawrence

It was RESOLVED that the proposal be accepted on a unanimous decision.

Bank Reconciliations

The Parish Council noted the bank reconciliations given below:

Bank account	Closing balance 31/10/2024	Monies in	Monies out	Closing balance 30/11/2024
Unity Trust Bank current 298	4970.92	100.00	2067.94	3002.98
Unity Trust Bank deposit	143197.27	20.00		143217.27
Unity Trust Bank GF	747.99			747.99
Unity Trust Bank P3	1295.34			1295.34

Details of the other bank accounts would be given as bank statements were received. will be given at the meeting and recorded in the minutes.

6.2 To receive an update on the application for bank cards (Financial Regulations)

The Clerk advised the application was ongoing.

6.3 To receive an update on the change of key contact for Unity Trust Bank and changes for other bank accounts

The Clerk advised as follows@

Unity - completed

United Trust Bank – completed

The Parish Council confirmed that the annual budgets under £500,000 and thus eligible for the Financial Services Compensation Scheme.

Action: Clerk

Nationwide

The application for Nationwide had been re-sent.

Cambridge

Identification documentation was required from new signatories.

Skipton

Identification documentation was required from new signatories.

HSBC

The HSBC paperwork had been lost in the post. The documents were signed at the meeting.

Lloyds – Poor Charity

Councillor Matthews advised that she had had no contact from Lloyds.

6.4 To receive information on S106 monies

The Clerk advised that the possibility of additional funding towards the cost of the trim trail project was ongoing.

7. Planning

7.1 To consider the following applications:-

There were no applications to consider.

7.2 To receive the following decision notices/appeal decisions:-

24/01078/FULL – APPROVED – 1 November 2024

Proposal: Change of use of dwelling and associated works to form offices and accommodation for Blackdown Support Group

Location: Newland Station Road Hemyock Cullompton

Site Vicinity Grid Ref: 313702/113362

23/00511/FULL – APPROVED - 11 November 2024

Proposal: Erection of 5 affordable dwellings following demolition of existing garages with associated parking, landscaping and works

Location: Land and Garages at NGR 313963 113447 Eastlands Hemyock Devon

Site Vicinity Grid Ref: 313961/113446

7.3 To receive information regarding enforcement issues:

ENF/23/00164/COU – 13 July 2023

Re: Conversion of barn to dwelling

Shuttleton Castle Hill Hemyock

ENF/23/00214/BRE – 30 August 2023

Re: Home office used as living accommodation

Ploversfield Culmstock Road Hemyock

The Clerk had met with the Enforcement Officer and there are a number of ongoing issues in Hemyock. Enforcement issues were being dealt with on a 'risk' basis and those potential breaches that could have a serious effect on residents.

8. Asset Management Reports

8.1 Longmead

See information under Finance.

Lighting for the Hemyock Muga

The questions raised at the Parish Council meeting have been given to the Longmead Committee for consideration.

Councillor P Doble advised that the Longmead Committee were making a list of items that needed to be checked on a regular basis under Health & Safety. The Tennis Club had requested that the brambles be dealt with and it was understood action had been taken.

The big timbers in the stream were due to be removed by the designated contractor.

It was noted that some damage appeared to have been caused by South West Water and this would be addressed when the project was completed.

Councillor Lawrence believed that there might be historical documentation relating to the upkeep of the bridge.

Action: Clerk

8.2 War memorial

Councillor Povah confirmed the work would take place after Christmas.

8.3 Cemetery

See information under Finance.

The Clerk would contact MDDC to ascertain if there was information on the ownership of the hedge between Cavanna and the cemetery. In certain areas, there was no access to the hedge. A copy of the Tenant Management Committee document would be beneficial.

Councillor Lawrence believed the conifers should come down and the stumps be ground to provide additional plots. The Parish Council used a number of contractors and given the work would need to be done before the nesting season a proposal was put forward.

PROPOSAL: Three quotes be obtained and the lowest quote be accepted to take down the conifers and grind the stumps.

PROPOSER: Councillor A Doble

SECONDER: Councillor P Doble

It was RESOLVED that the proposal be accepted on a unanimous decision.

8.4 Blackdown Healthy Living and Activities Centre

Councillor P Doble advised that one parking spot had been lost during the provision of the electric car charging facility.

Councillor Lawrence raised the parking post that had been repeatedly hit. Councillor Povah considered the best course of action would be take the post away and fit a 5" curb.

Action: Councillor Povah to design and obtain quotes

Councillor Lawrence and the Clerk had contacted Connecting the Culm regarding the riverbank and this would be looked into by the Environment Agency.

8.5 The Parish Store

Councillor Lawrence advised that the heap in the middle had now been removed.

8.6 The Commons

Councillor Moon advised that he considered it beneficial to fence off the top end of the track at Shuttleton Common. Access to the common could then be obtained via a 10' vehicular gate that could be kept locked and a 4' pedestrian gate which would prevent damage to the common.

He had obtained three quotes:

Quote 1 £1626

Quote 2 £2106

Quote 3 £1782

PROPOSAL: Of the three quotes obtained, the lowest quote for fencing should be accepted and the work undertaken.

PROPOSER: Councillor Moon

SECONDER: Councillor A Doble

It was RESOLVED that the proposal be accepted on a unanimous decision.

Councillor Moon would also remove the fallen tree on the track at Turbary.

Councillor Moon also considered it would be beneficial to move the gun club stands at Hemyock Turbary nearer to the track. This would require some investigation and contact with MDDC and the gun club.

In principle driving across the common to the stands should be discouraged.

Councillor Lawrence suggested that it would be advisable for the commons to be inspected; Councillor Moon advised this had been done 4 to 5 years ago. However, there is no access to Owleycombe Common.

There would be a commons meeting in the New Year.

Action: Clerk

8.7 Public Conveniences

See report under Finance.

8.8 Car Park

The Clerk advised that MDDC was going out to tender for the car park to be re-surfaced now with a view to it being completed in this financial year.

8.9 Village Maintenance

See report under Finance.

8.10 Ground Maintenance

See report under Finance.

9. Project Reports

9.1 Community Land (Cavanna)

The Clerk had written a report which would be considered under Part 2 of this meeting due to the sensitive nature of some of the information. When matters were resolved a report would be given to the Parish Council in the public section of a future meeting.

Information published in the agenda was as follows:

- Information from Cavanna regarding the ROSPA report on the attenuation pond together with action relating to trees at the cemetery and Longmead is awaited at the time of writing the agenda
- Email exchanges have taken place with the Cavanna and our solicitor regarding the handover and a further call is booked before the meeting

9.2 Station Road Pavement

See report under Finance.

9.3 Connecting the Culm/DRIP

See report under BHLAC.

The paperwork for the flood works at Longmead had been completed.

9.4 Blackdown Hills Parish Network (BHPN)

Councillor Lawrence advised that the Village Hall would like to use the Flir C5 Thermal Imaging Camera.

Action: Clerk

10. Community Matters

10.1 Garages Youth Project

Councillor Matthews undertook to chase up the paperwork for the flood works at the Garages.

Work to set up a meeting to discuss the lease was ongoing.

10.2 Hemyock Community Larder

Councillor Doble advised that the community larder continued to be a success.

10.3 Footpaths (P3)

Councillor Povah advised that the bridge on Footpath 19 had now collapsed and Devon County Council had been informed and repairs would be carried out.

An additional P3 grant had been awarded.

10.4 Hemyock Day 2025

The event would take place on 21 June 2025.

A successful fundraising disco had been held with a further event planned in April.

11. Highways

Road Warden Scheme

Councillor A Doble advised Chapter 8 training had been arranged for 17 December 2024.

The Clerk reminded Councillor Doble that she needed his equipment order in readiness for the course.

Highways had also agreed to fund cones that could be used in the event the Road Warden needed to make off areas etc. The cones would be kept at Longmead and at Councillor Doble's home and be painted with a HPC. Councillor Clist advised that he also had a number of cones.

20mph applications/speed limits

The Clerk advised that correspondence from residents had referred to the use of speed cameras and the need for a reduction of speed on Cornhill.

Devon County Council had indicated that self-funded 20mph limits may be brought in but no cost information had been received.

Bus routes

The Clerk had requested a meeting with DCC and Dartline to address ongoing issues with buses and parked cars.

12. Police matters

12.1 Crime

The Clerk had contacted the Neighbourhood Police Officer and he hoped to come to the next meeting.

Councillor Ward indicated his willingness to go out on a police run.

Action: Clerk

12.2 Councillor Advocate Scheme

Councillor Clist had no information to give on the scheme at this meeting and reports had been circulated to Parish Councillors by the Clerk.

13. MDDC Report

Councillor Clist advised that Councillor Bradshaw would attend the next meeting to talk about the climate initiative and he reported as follows:

- The UK prosperity funding was available for local businesses.
- The Crediton plan had been adopted
- Free parking was being offered on a Saturday in the run-up to Christmas.
- It was hoped that the Culm Valley Light Railway would be added to the LCWIP project.
- The Let's Talk Devon consultation closed on 11 December 2024
- There had been no planning applications

Councillor Matthews believed that the Devolution Bill would see the district councils disbanded.

14. DCC report

Councillor Radford had submitted a report which was considered by the council and no questions raised.

15. Public Relations

Councillor Talbot advised there were no Public Relations issues.

The Clerk advised that work was ongoing to change to a gov.uk website domain and update the website.

16. Clerk Update/Correspondence

Emergency Plan

The Clerk has met with Devon Communities Together to run through the Emergency Plan. It would be helpful if a working group was set up to start the plan and then a parish open meeting held to identify key areas of assistance.

Neighbourhood Plan

The Clerk is still working on a date for the Neighbourhood Plan meeting with the consultant.

Grant Funding for Flood Works

See report under the Garages.

Consultation on remote Parish Council meetings

The Parish Council were in favour of councillors being able to attend remotely in exceptional circumstances. They did not wish to see proxy voting as believed it was necessary to hear the discussion before forming an opinion.

17. Matters raised by Councillors/meetings attended

The following matters were raised:

- mowing of Longmead
- drains on the hill blocked (reported to DCC)
- potholes at Ruggsmoor
- grant awarded by the Mary Waldron Charity
- membership of Open Spaces

The Chairman wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

18. Items for the next agenda

As detailed in the minutes of this meeting.

19. Dates of the next meetings:

The next meeting will be on:

8 January 2025 (if required for planning)

5 February 2025

12 February 2025 (Finance)

Meetings to be arranged: Commons Committee
 Community Land Committee
 Skatepark Committee
 Action Plan meeting

The Chairman closed the public meeting at 9.15pm and the meeting went into Part 2.

Part 2 covered the negotiations between Cavanna and the Parish Council together with their associated solicitors to bring to a conclusion the acquisition of the community land and its re-instatement to meadow land. The final contract, once concluded, will be published on the Parish Council's website.

Part 2 closed at 9.45pm.

Signed _____ Date _____
Chairman