

# BICKLEIGH PARISH COUNCIL

The Council Offices, The Woolwell Centre, Darklake Lane, Woolwell, PL6 7TR  
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## Minutes of a Meeting of Bickleigh Parish Council held on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2025 at 7.30pm at the Woolwell Centre PL6 7TR

**Present:** Cllr Larry Taylor (Chair) Cllr Paul Blight, Cllr Geoff Pithouse, Cllr Gary Stewart, Cllr Jackie Taylor, Cllr Nicky Hopwood.

**In attendance:** Mrs H Broughton, Clerk (remote), Cllr B Hill (remote) County Councillor John Hart, District Councillor Chris Oram and 5 members of the public.

Minute number: 2501:

### **Open Forum**

*The first session of Junior in Bloom has taken place (aged 2 to 12 years) and had been very successful. The Chair thanked Woolwell in Bloom for this initiative.*

75. **Apologies for absence** were received from Cllr Brian Hill
76. **Pecuniary and other interests:** none received
77. **Dispensations:** none received
78. **Minutes**  
It was agreed that the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2024 be signed by the Chair as a true record.
79. **Co-option**  
IT was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed to co-opt Andrew Clarke as a parish councillor. Mr Clarke would sign his declaration of acceptance of office before, or at, the next meeting.
80. **County and District Councillors reports**  
**County Councillor John Hart** addressed the following points:
- The structure of local government remains uncertain at this time, prompting some discussion.
  - The recent increase in the minimum wage has resulted in a cost of £17 million and is also impacting charitable organizations.
  - A 4.99% increase in County Council tax has been implemented.
- District Councillor Nicky Hopwood** reported that the District Council had not been consulted by the County Council regarding the decision to postpone the elections by 12 months. In response, an emergency District Council meeting was held, and a letter was sent to Devon County Council objecting to the postponement.

Cllr Hopwood also discussed devolution, noting that it is likely Bickleigh, along with some neighbouring parish councils, will merge into Plymouth. This may lead to challenges related to parish council assets. She has met with the Woolwell Centre Manager to inform her of this, and the manager will communicate the information to the Trustees.

A planning application for 2,000 houses in Woolwell has been approved. Cllr Hopwood expressed concern about the low number of affordable homes included in the development and the access issues through Woolwell.

**Cllr Chris Oram** commented on the matter, explaining that if the application had been rejected, it would likely have gone to appeal, resulting in significant costs for the District Council. He personally had been in favour of objecting however. Cllrs Hopwood and Oram will collaborate as the development progresses.

81. **Clerks Report**

The action list was noted.

82. **Devolution**

This had been discussed under the councillor reports.

83. **Finance and Administration**

- i. Receipts and payments against budget as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024 were noted.
- ii. The bank reconciliations to the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024 was approved.
- iii. A grant request from the Roborough Recreation Hall and Playing Fields to extend and modernise the sports pavilion was discussed. Cllr Pithouse reported that S106 funding towards the project had been approved. The total cost of the project is approximately £150,000 and a grant of £40,000 has been requested from the Parish Council. Plans were circulated. There was some discussion, during which trustees present at the meeting were asked to clarify certain points, particularly regarding the involvement of Bickleigh parishioners in the football club. The Chair and other councillors also raised concerns that the application is excessive for a small Parish Council, as the grant would represent 40% of the precept budget. It was agreed that Cllrs Pithouse and Hopwood would discuss the matter further at the Trustees' upcoming meeting and report back to the Parish Council. The report and findings from the meeting with Cllr Hopwood, Cllr Pithouse and the Trustees of the Playing Field will be reviewed at the February Parish Council meeting.
- iv. A VAT reclaim of £24,287.49 has been submitted and funds received from the HMRC.
- v. It was agreed to defer and an application to the PWLB for funds for upgrade the electrical and mechanical services. This would be considered at the next meeting.
- vi. Reserves were reviewed and it was agreed to transfer the following to earmarked reserves:
  - £30k to a new decarbonisation EMR
  - £10k to Woolwell Centre EMR

- i. The following payments were approved:

**Pre-paid**

SUPPLIER	DETAILS	TOTAL	VAT	NET
Cutec	Microsoft monthly fee	70.32	11.72	58.60
Woolwell Centre	Room hire	72.00	0	72.00
H Broughton	Salary December	711.93	0	711.93
Nest	Pension payment Dec	80.81	0	80.81
Unity Bank	Service Charge	6.30	0	6.30
Chubb Fire and Security	Annual service intruder	1020.65	170.11	850.54
Security Mgmt SW	Keyholding response	57.60	9.60	48.00

**For approval**

SUPPLIER	DETAILS	TOTAL	VAT	NET
H Broughton	Salary January	711.93	0	711.93
NEST	Pension January	71.19	0	71.19
PWLB	Loan repayment 4/2	3947.61	0	3947.61
Woolwell Centre	Room hire Feb	72.00	0	72.00
HMRC	Q3 tax and NI	650.67	0	650.67
Enviroline	Manhole cover Woolwell Centre	1320.00	220.00	1100.00

84.

**Woolwell Centre**

- i. It was reported that a meeting with the Woolwell Centre Trustees had been positive.
- ii. The design for upgrade of the mechanical and electrical services would be completed in 5 weeks and the program of works would then be available along with a target completion date. A program of dates would be discussed with the Woolwell Centre Trustees and Centre Manager by the contractor.

85.

**Planning**

No applications

86.

**Roborough Village Hall**

Cllr Pithouse gave and update.

87.

The **date of the next meeting** was agreed as 27<sup>th</sup> February 2025 at the Woolwell Centre.

The meeting closed at 9.10pm