



**ROCKBEARE
PARISH COUNCIL**

Chairman: Cllr. Phil Franklin

Clerk: Carolyn Y. May
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8th July 2025

ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF ROCKBEARE PARISH COUNCIL

To all Members of Rockbeare Parish Council

You are hereby summoned to attend the Annual Parish Council Meeting of Rockbeare Parish Council, to be held at **7.00 pm**, on **Wednesday 16th July 2025**, at Rockbeare Village Hall, for the purposes of transacting the following business:

Carolyn May
Clerk to Rockbeare Parish Council

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies**
- 2. Declaration of Interests** – for both registerable and non-registerable interests under the Code of Conduct (to declare interests on agenda items), to issue dispensations (if required) & to declare gifts of over £50.
- 3. Reports**
 - EDDC Councillor
 - DCC Councillor (Attached at 'A')
 - Chairman Of Rockbeare Parish Council
- 4. To approve the Draft Minutes of the meeting held on 14th May 2025 (Appendix B)**
- 5. Re-Adoption of the following policies:**
 - IT Policy
 - Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy
 - Data Protection Policy
 - Data Breach Policy and Procedure
 - Data Subject Access Request Procedure

Policies forwarded separately.

6. Finance and Economy:

- a. Payments to be approved.
- b. Quarterly Finance Report to be considered.
- c. Bank reconciliations to be reviewed and approved.
- d. Hub Income.

Financial Documents to be distributed under separate cover.

7. Planning Applications – (Appendix C)

8. Planning Decisions – to note

9. Grass Cutting Contract

10. Bouncy Castle / Notice Board Acquisition

11. Millennium Village Green Status

12. Correspondence

- PKF Littlejohn – acknowledgement of AGAR
- DCC – Re unauthorised use of Parish Council Property (Prickly Pear Woods Car Park)
- NALC - Email Regulations

13. Member Training

14. RPC Project Updates

- Hub
- Millennium Field
- Newsletter
- Birchend
- Village Facility
- Prickly Pear Woods Car Park
- Parish Council Gazebos/ BBQ Grill

15. Next Meeting

Devon County Council News

July 2025 newsletter to parish councils in Broadclyst Division from Cllr Henry Gent

County Council finances

Towards the end of June a report to Cabinet showed that DCC managed to stay within its £637.5 million budget for 2024/25 and balance the books despite growing demand for services like social care and support for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. £40 million in planned savings were delivered across council services, though this fell short of the £50 million target.

There is an increasing deficit position relating to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), which is accounted for separately under statutory regulations, with an accumulated deficit of £169.1 m. This deficit has contributed to the fall in Reserves which are now lower than any other comparable county.

<https://democracy.devon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=133&MId=5162&Ver=4>

We have ended the last financial year in balance - but tough choices lie ahead - News

Local Schools

As I reported last month, there has been a number of children in our area who have failed to gain admission for September 2025 to their first choice school, even when they live in the catchment area of that school. 18 children living at Tithebarn failed to gain admission to reception at Monkerton School, despite living in the catchment of Monkerton. Similarly, at Cranbrook, children have been unable to gain admission to Reception at Cranbrook Education Campus, or St Martins, in some cases. This lack of capacity in the new developments is being managed by transporting children to village schools, some of which, such as Rockbeare, are taking on increasing numbers of children. It is not ideal to be providing extra capacity at remote schools, whilst failing to provide capacity closer to the homes of the pupils. This is particularly the case at Tithebarn and at Cranbrook, where more homes are being completed all the time. At Cranbrook, the Education Campus has got space to expand, and plans to expand, but unfortunately these plans were not implemented for September 2025. At Tithebarn, there is a place for a school, and developer funding to build it, but at the time of writing a Feasibility Study has not been initiated, because the authorities have not decided how to fund the Feasibility Study! I am continuing to meet and correspond with officers, the local MP, and parents and schools, on this important local problem at both Cranbrook and Tithebarn. The Leader of DCC, Cllr Julian Brazil, has taken direct responsibility for schools, and will be visiting our area to find out more.

Personally, I will not rest until all children who live in the catchment area of a school, and put it as their first choice for admission, can gain a place at that school.

Free School Meals: auto-enrolment

Free School Meals (FSMs) are available to pupils whose parents are in receipt of a range of benefits and currently a claim must be made by the parent or another responsible adult before the pupil becomes entitled. Pupil Premium funding is then allocated to schools based on the number of pupils eligible for FSMs or have been recorded as eligible in the past 6 years. It is calculated that nationally at least 10% of families who are entitled to FSMs do not apply to receive them. This could be because of language or technical barriers to application, for example.

We know that if pupils are well nourished, they are better able to learn in class, and this can lead to increased attainment. This is also so important because the associated Pupil Premium funding means schools can offer more targeted interventions and extra support to these students.

As Pupil Premium Funding is allocated to schools based on the number of pupils who are recorded as eligible for FSMs, schools are missing out on at least 10% of their Pupil Premium entitlement if all eligible families registered. This is costing Devon Schools significant amounts of money, possibly in the region of £2 million per annum of additional funding.

A number of local authorities have already successfully adopted the policy of auto-enrolment for FSMs and I am pleased to hear that Devon County Council is looking into this option, with discussions ongoing at Devon Education Forum.

Auto-enrolment of Free School Meals could transform the lives of thousands of children across the county and support Devon schools who are under considerable financial pressure and are poorly funded by national standards.

It is my aim that the process to adopt FSM auto-enrolment is treated as an absolute priority by officers so that our schools can benefit from auto enrolment from the 25/26 academic year. Any delay could be extremely costly to our local schools and children.

Henry Gent 03/072025



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DRAFT MINUTES OF ROCKBEARE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

HELD ON

1 4TH MAY 2025

PRESENT: Cllr. Franklin (Chairman), Cllr Nequest, Cllr. Wall, Cllr. Boddington

Also: Two members of the public

Parish Clerk: Carolyn May

AGENDA

15/25-26 Election of Chairman

It was **proposed** by Cllr. Wall, **seconded** by Cllr. Nequest and **RESOLVED** that Cllr. Franklin be returned as Chairman to the Parish Council, for the Municipal Year 2025/26. Unanimous.
Carried.

16/25-26 To Receive the Chairmans' Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Cllr Franklin completed the Chairmans' Declaration of Acceptance of Office, which was witnessed and signed by the Parish Clerk/ RFO.

17/25-26 Election of Vice- Chairman

It was **proposed** by Cllr. Franklin, **seconded** by Cllr. Wall and **RESOLVED** that Cllr. Nequest be returned as Vice-Chairman to the Parish Council, for the Municipal Year 2025/26. Unanimous.
Carried

18/25-26 To Receive the Chairmans' Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Cllr Nequest completed the Vice-Chairmans' Declaration of Acceptance of Office, which was witnessed and signed by the Parish Clerk/ RFO.

19/25-26 Parish Councillors' Declaration of Acceptance of Office

All Councillors present completed their respective Declarations of Acceptance of Office, which were witnessed and signed by the Clerk/RFO.

20/25-26 Apologies – Cllr. Brooks, Cllr. Priddis

21/25-26 Declarations of Interest - None

22/25-26 Presentation by Ben Hunt – Heavitree Park Life Project

Mr Hunt was welcomed to the meeting by the Chairman.

Ben had been invited to the meeting to explain to Members, the process followed by the Heavitree Park Life Project, in relation to the procurement/ funding of the community building at Heavitree.

It was explained that Rockbeare Parish Council was pursuing the possibility of providing such an amenity for the parish. An area of suitable land for such a project has been made available to the Parish Council, by way of a donation by a local benefactor and the Parish Council is keen to explore the possibility of progressing such a project.

The Heavitree Park Life Project is the template for several other PROJECTS IN THE East Devon/ Exeter area, and the Heavitree Team has established a small company which is able to assist parishes like our own.

The Heavitree Park Life Hub is a self-supporting amenity, which provides a café, meeting rooms, hall, and playground. Many of the climbing opportunities/ pump track etc have been created at minimal cost, utilising fallen trees and the natural topography of the surrounding land.

Members felt that a suitable Hub, with café, small shop and meeting areas would be beneficial for the parish. Naturally, there would have to be a consultation process undertaken with parishioners.

It was **proposed** by Cllr. Franklin, **seconded** by Cllr Wall that the June Parish Council Meeting would not take place. Rather, Members would meet at the Heavitree Park Life Hub, at 6p.m. on 25th June 2025, in order to view the facilities and discuss progressing the RPC Project. All Parish Councillors and Parishioners are welcome to attend. Unanimous. **Carried.**

Cllr. Franklin thanked Ben for addressing Members.

It was **proposed** by Cllr. Franklin, **seconded** by Cllr. Wall and **RESOLVED** that the Parish Council would request that Ben Hunt should provide a quotation for completion of the first part of the required work to advance the project proposal. Unanimous. **Carried.**

23/25-26 Public Session – No matters raised.

24/25-26 Reports

Chairmans' Report – Cllr. Franklin reported that he had attended a recent meeting of the Exeter Airport Consultative Committee. There was nothing to report to the PC.

Members also learned that the scheduled discussion between Cllr. Franklin and David Reed M.P. had been called off by the latter. This is to be re-scheduled.

EDDC Councillor – No report received. Members noted that Cllr Olive had not attended a Parish Council Meeting for a considerable period. It was **agreed** that the Clerk would correspond with Cllr Olive.

Devon County Councillor – No correspondence/ report received.

It was **agreed** that, due to the recent elections, County Councillors were unlikely to have settled into the role yet. Cllrs Henry Gent (Green Party) and Nat Vanstone (Reform) had been elected to represent the area.

25/25-26 To approve the Draft Minutes of the meeting held on 16th April 2025

Members considered the Draft Minutes for the Ordinary Parish Meeting held on 16th April 2025 and found them to be a true representation of that meeting.

It was **proposed** by Cllr. Franklin, **seconded** by Cllr. Wall and RESOLVED that the meeting minutes for the 16th of April 2025 would be accepted. Unanimous. **Carried**.

The Minutes were duly signed by the Chairman.

26/25-26 To Approve the Annual Internal Audit Report

The annual internal audit report was presented to the Meeting by the Clerk/ RFO.

The Parish Council was commended within the report that ‘we (the Internal Auditors) are of the firm opinion that the control objectives set out by the Financial Regulations for Parish and town Councils, have been achieved within the financial year 2024/25 to a high standard’.

‘The Clerk/ RFO and Members of the [Council] Body are to be highly commended for the efficient and effective way in which they have conducted the business of the Parish Council during the past fiscal year. The manner in which the Clerk/ RFO has maintained the organisational policies, and the quality of the Parish Council Minutes is exemplary’.

It was **proposed** by Cllr. Franklin, **seconded** by Cllr. Nequest and RESOLVED that the 2024/25 Internal Audit Report would be accepted by the Parish Council. Unanimous. **Carried**.

The Chairman and Members of the Parish Council expressed their thanks to the Parish Clerk for the work undertaken by her to ensure that the Parish Council continued to operate to a high standard.

27/25-26 To Receive and Approve the Annual Governance Statement

Members considered the Annual Governance Statement for 2024/25.

It was **proposed** by Cllr. Franklin, **seconded** by Cllr. Nequest and RESOLVED that the 2024/25 Annual Governance Statement would be approved by the Parish Council. Unanimous. **Carried**.

The Annual Governance Statement was duly signed and dated by the Chairman and the Parish Clerk.

28/25-26 To Receive and Approve the Annual Finance Statement for 2024/25

Members considered The Annual Finance Statement for 2024/25.

It was **proposed** by Cllr. Franklin, **seconded** by Cllr. Nequest and **RESOLVED** that the 2024/25 Annual Finance Statement would be approved by the Parish Council. Unanimous. **Carried**.

The Annual Finance Statement was duly signed by the Chairman.

29/25-26 Re-Adoption of Parish Council Policies

The Following policies were reviewed and re-adopted by the Parish Council:

- Standing Orders
- Financial Regulations
- Code of Conduct
- Statement of Internal Control
- Risk Register

It was **proposed** by Cllr. Franklin, **seconded** by Cllr. Boddington and **RESOLVED** that the Parish Council would re-adopt the listed policies. Unanimous. **Carried**.

30/25-26 Finance and Economy:

Payments to be approved.

Date	Payee	Invoice Ref	VAT NUMBER	Cheque	Gross	VAT	Net
14/05/2025	Ionos	2.03048E+11	75239027	DD	21.60	3.60	18.00
14/05/2025	J.C.Ecroyd	10	N/A	BACS	154	0.00	154.00
14/05/2025	RVH	2025/26-39	N/A	BACS	88.00	0.00	88.00
14/05/2025	DCW Polymers	1271	432710525	BACS	1019.40	169.90	849.50
14/05/2025	Carolyn May	N/A	N/A	BACS	1986.60	0.00	1986.60
14/05/2025	Carolyn May	N/A	N/A	BACS	182.75	0.00	182.75
14/05/2025	Simon A. Martin	15339	380819379	BACS	24.00	4.00	20.00
14/05/2025	HMRC	N/A	N/A	401236	694.62	0.00	694.62
14/05/2025	Inspiring Connections	108/109/110	423272031	BACS	4162.66	717.98	3444.68
					8333.63	895.48	7438.15

Members considered the Schedule of Payments in conjunction with the appropriate invoices. Members raised their concerns in relation to the Inspiring Connections charges, querying two of the same.

It was **proposed** by Cllr. Franklin, **seconded** by Cllr. Nequest and **RESOLVED** that the list of payments for May 2025 would be approved, and the liabilities discharged. – with the exception of £80 charged on the Inspiring Connections Invoice. The Clerk is to investigate the charges further. Unanimous. **Carried.**

The invoices and payment schedule were signed by the Chairman in the presence of all Members present.

Bank Reconciliation	£	£
Balance as at 31/03/2025	68,302.57	
Income		
Parish Precept	21,000	
Hub	6.00	
	89,308.57	
Expenditure		12,611.75
Balance as at 30/04/2025		76,696.82
Minus Uncashed Cheques		-
		694.62
Reconciled Balance		76,002.20

Members considered the Bank Reconciliation in conjunction with the latest Bank Statement. It was agreed that the Bank Reconciliation was acceptable. The Bank statement was then signed by the Chairman.

31/25-26 Planning Applications

Reference 25/0954/FUL
Address: Middlemarsh, Marsh Green EX5 2EX
Proposal: Replacement of Existing Conservatory

Members considered the application. It was **proposed** by Cllr. Nequest, **seconded** by Cllr. Franklin and RESOLVED that the Parish Council would support the application. Unanimous.
Carried

Reference 25/0871/COU
Address: The Littlefield Land, South of Hazel Grove, Rockbeare EX5 2HH
Proposal: Change of use of Agricultural Land to Residential.

Members considered the application. It was **proposed** by Cllr. Nequest, **seconded** by Cllr. Franklin and RESOLVED that the Parish Council would support the application. Unanimous.
Carried

32/25-26 Planning Decisions – noted.

33/25-26 Correspondence – the following items of correspondence were noted:

Letter from Infinis – Construction of Ford Oaks Solar Park

The Circuit- Requirement to purchase/ change defibrillator pads. – Cllr. Nequest to identify which pads are to be purchased.

34/25-26. Action List Updates

Date	Action	Responsible Member	Completed
14/05/2025	Contact Local MP	Chairman	Initial appointment cancelled – to be re-arranged.
14/05/2025	Contact Ben Hunt- funding and hub advice	Clerk	All Members to meet at Heavitree Hub, 6p.m. on 25 th June 2025. Members of the public welcome.

14/05/2025	Marsh Green- felled trees and detritus left on PC land. Cllr Nequest to liaise with JJ Trees in order to ascertain if that company felled the trees- if so, at whose request.	Cllr. Nequest	The Clerk has contacted the house owners' spokesperson. The trees were felled at the request of the householder. Therefore, the removal of the arisings are the responsibility of that person. It has been requested that the arisings are removed in their entirety . Ongoing
14/05/2025	If trees felled at Marsh Green on the instruction of another, the Clerk to correspond with that third party to request the removal of detritus from Parish Land.	Clerk	ibid
14/05/2025	Rubble deposited at Prickly Pear Wood- no authorisation requested. This is PC land.	Cllr. Nequest	Rubble removed.
14/05/2025	Birchend transfer to PC	Chairman	On-going.
14/05/2025	Local Government Devolution- re-organisation consultation documents. To read and precis for next meeting.	Chairman	On-going. To monitor for final decisions relating to governance of the Devon County area.
14/05/2025	Members Remit- post on website	Chairman	Complete
14/05/2025	Bi-monthly PC surgery	Clerk/ Chairman	Still to be arranged
14/05/2025	Millenium Field- Shed Cladding- to arrange when drier weather.	Cllr. Nequest/ Clerk	This has now been arranged.
14/05/2025	Millenium Field Memorial Benches	Clerk	Ordered
14/05/2025	20 is Plenty- liaise with Cranbrook	Cllr Brooks	Volunteers to be identified and arrangements made for the camera to be delivered.
14/05/2025	Hub- Committee formation and management of events	Cllrs. Wall /Priddis/Boddington	The Hub is being run by a committee of volunteers. Clerk to enquire about IC invoice.

14/05/2025	Plants etc for Village	Cllrs Wall and Priddis	On-going – some already planted
14/05/2025	Newsletter	Cllr Franklin	Published
14/05/2025	Defibrillator Pads	Cllr Nequest	Make/ type of pads to be identified.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Reference	25/0793/FUL
Alternative Reference	PP-13910789
Application Validated	Wed 21 May 2025
Address	Rockbeare Manor Rockbeare EX5 2FE
Proposal	Alterations to three buildings to create 6 additional guest bedrooms
Status	Awaiting decision
Appeal Status	
Appeal Decision	

Reference	25/0965/MFUL
Alternative Reference	PP-13728506
Application Validated	Wed 02 Jul 2025
Address	The Grange London Road Rockbeare EX5 2FP
Proposal	Full planning permission for the demolition of an existing storage building construction of 21 light industrial units (Use Class E (g) (iii) with associated access, parking and landscaping.
Status	Awaiting decision

Planning Decisions – To Note

Reference	25/0954/FUL
Alternative Reference	PP-13978849
Application Validated	Tue 29 Apr 2025
Address	Middlemarsh Marsh Green Devon EX5 2EX
Proposal	Replacement of existing conservatory with single storey extension
Status	Approved
Decision	Approval with conditions
Decision Issued Date	Tue 03 Jun 2025