



**ROCKBEARE
PARISH COUNCIL**

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DRAFT MINUTES OF ROCKBEARE ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

HELD ON

21ST JANUARY 2026

PRESENT: Cllr. Franklin (Chairman), Cllr Nequest (Vice-Chairman), Cllr. Brookes, Cllr. Wall and Cllr. Priddis.

Also: Cllr Todd Olive (EDDC), and Mr. Ben Hunt

Parish Clerk: Carolyn May

AGENDA

90/25-26 Apologies – Cllr. Boddington

91/25.26 Declarations of Interest – No declarations of interest were made.

92/25-26 Public Forum – no matters were raised in this part of the meeting.

93/25-26 Rockbeare Amenity Feasibility Study

Mr Ben Hunt, author of the draft Feasibility Study, addressed the meeting.

It was ascertained that there had been no matters contained within the document with which an issue had been raised.

The second stage of the Feasibility Study was discussed. This stage requires the appointment of an appropriate Architect to draw up initial plans for the proposed amenity.

The Parish Council had received proposals from two appropriate Architects. Both companies are experienced in the design of community buildings. Members discussed the merits of each company, considering experience, company size and costs.

Members felt that, at this juncture, the service offered by the smaller company would fit well with the requirements of the parish. Fairview Architecture Ltd is a local company which has undertaken work on several similar projects (including the Heavitree Parklife Project), the company offers one –

to – one working with clients, the owner managing each project personally. The estimated cost of the proposed service is in the region of £3,000, plus disbursements. VAT would not be payable on invoiced submitted.

It was **proposed** by Cllr. Franklin, **seconded** by Cllr. Nequest and **RESOLVED** that Fairview Architecture Ltd would be appointed to undertake the next phase of the project, on behalf of the Parish Council. It was also **agreed** that Mr Ben Hunt would liaise with the architect to take the project forward. Unanimous. **Carried**.

94/25-26 Reports

- **DCC (Cllr. Vanstone)** - none received
- **DCC (Cllr. Gent)** – none received

Cllr Todd Olive EDDC

Cllr Olive addressed the Members, acknowledging that he had not attended a Rockbeare Parish Council meeting for at least eight months. He provided EDDC updates on the following matters:

Budget Setting

The 'Fair Funding Review 2025' – the outcome of the review has resulted in EDDC being allocated a reduced sum from central government. The allocated sum for 2026/27 has been set at £20 million, a reduction of £5 million from the previous year.

Cllr. Olive advised the meeting that the reserves built up by EDDC will protect the essential services provided by the authority.

Government Re-organisation 2028

The proposed government re-organisation, scheduled for April 2028, will bring about the abolition of EDDC. At present there are three proposals being considered for Devon, posts April 2028. These proposals are:

1. The 911 DCC Proposal

The DCC reorganisation proposal focuses on local government reorganisation in Devon, aiming for a unitary authority that combines Devon County Council, Torbay Council, and Plymouth City Councils.

2. The Greater Exeter Proposal

Exeter and Plymouth City Councils joined forces to submit a single shared proposal for local government re-organisation in Devon. The model creates four councils:

An Expanded Exeter Unitary Council covering the city and the forty-nine surrounding parishes from East Devon, Mid-Devon and Teignbridge (including Rockbeare).

An expanded Plymouth Unitary Council – Extending Plymouth's existing boundary into thirteen South Hams parishes.

An Expanded Torbay Unitary Council which will encompass twenty- one parishes from Teignbridge and South Hams.

A New Devon Coast and Countryside Council overing the remaining rural and coastal areas of Devon County Council. This new authority brings together towns, villages and rural communities with similar needs and characteristics. It supports a more focused approach to the challenges facing dispersed rural populations.

At present, there is no preferred option. The government is to launch a consultation on the proposals, in February 2026, with the result being published in June/ July 2026.

Housing Service Maintenance

The service has been restructured, with many of the previous shortcomings having been addressed. The service has been reviewed recently by the Regulator and has been identified as one of the best services in the county.

Infrastructure

Cllr Olive reported that there has been £3/4 million of CIL upgrades to London Road.

£2 million has been allocated to move the Cranbrook Leisure Centre project forward. It is anticipated that this will be completed by Quarter 4 of 2027, or Quarter 1 of 2028 (prior to the abolition of EDDC).

A new Neighbourhood Health Centre has been agreed for Cranbrook.

Planning

An employment site has been considered for the Grange Hotel area. An Environmental Impact Assessment is being carried out for potential development on the Green Wedge between Cranbrook and Rockbeare. Any development on what forms part of Rockbeare Parish will be subsumed into Cranbrook.

95/ 25-26 Governance Review

The EDDC Governance Review (listed on the Agenda at Item 10) was alluded to. Among other matters, it has been proposed that the housing development planned from the Gribble Lane area of Rockbeare Parish is to be transferred into the boundary for Cranbrook. Cllr Franklin raised the point that a recent resident's poll (within a margin for error) did not definitively support this proposal.

Cllr. Olive was questioned on the purpose for transferring parts of Rockbeare Parish into Cranbrook. It seemed that areas identified for development were those areas which Cranbrook Council and EDDC seemed intent in removing from Rockbeare Parish. Those areas had the potential for raising revenue for the parish and increasing the parish population. It appeared to Members that any income generating development in the Parish was to be transferred to Cranbrook – to the detriment of Rockbeare.

Cllr Olive stated that this was not a planning matter but one that had been handled by the EDDC Legal Department. He added that the proposals were entirely legitimate, and that the process had been instigated at the request of Cranbrook Town Council. He confirmed that any council could request part of another parish's land without engaging with the parish to be deprived of asset.

The Clerk observed that this could not be merely a decision made by the EDDC Legal Team and that the EDDC Planning Department also had a role. The Clerk highlighted the fact that Cllr Olive does in fact serve on the EDDC Planning Committee.

The Clerk then asked Cllr Olive if he, as the elected District Councillor for Rockbeare residents, was willing to support the Parish Council's opposition to the proposal. Cllr Olive categorically stated that he would not support the PC's opposition. When asked why? Cllr Olive stated clearly that he 'supported the proposal'. The Clerk then suggested that as the elected EDDC representative for the Parish, Cllr. Olive had a duty to support the residents with the objection. Cllr. Olive was obdurate that he would not assist the Rockbeare Parish Council stance, adding that he was not obliged to.

Cllr Olive was then asked by Cllr. Franklin to explain why there was EDDC support for the sequestration of Rockbeare Parish Land, against the will of the Parish Council, with that land being gifted to Cranbrook. Cllr Olive stated that there were obligations (particularly financial obligations) attached to the maintenance of new developments and that Cranbrook would better afford these.

Cllr Franklin pointed that no financial documentation/ evidence had been provided to substantiate Cllr Olive's stated opinion and that no informed decision could be made without that information. Cllr Olive stated that such information had not been part of the process engaged in by EDDC. It was argued that, if lack of financial consideration had not formed part of the EDDC process, then the EDDC decision was flawed. Cllr Franklin also highlighted the view that the increased residences in the parish would generate additional income and grant funding. Therefore, only provision of the requested data could justify the EDDC view and enable an informed decision to be made by all of the parties.

Cllr Olive then stated that it would be preferable to many new residents to be part of Cranbrook rather than Rockbeare. Cllr. Franklin disputed that point. He advised that many people choose to live in a smaller rural parish than a larger estate like Cranbrook. In any event, he added, if the issue was not of a financial nature, then where did democracy stand in the decision-making process? Surely those who chose to live in the new developments should have the choice of which town/parish they wished to belong to.

The Clerk raised the point that all money highlighted for expenditure in Cllr. Olive's report related to the development of Cranbrook. She suggested that this indicated that EDDC was favouring Cranbrook over the surrounding parishes. The Clerk asked if it was the intention of EDDC to subsume Rockbeare into Cranbrook. Cllr Olive stated clearly that that would not happen.

The Clerk then raised the issue of the abolition of EDDC in 2028. She asked if it was morally acceptable for EDDC to engage in the act of subsuming parts of ancient parishes into Cranbrook, when EDDC would not be present to deal with the ramifications of the same. Surely such decisions should be made by the bodies that will be appointed by the boundary changes consultation, not by EDDC.

Cllr Olive reiterated his stance on the matter, namely that he supported the same and would not assist the Parish with its objection, adding 'you will have to do this yourself'.

In conclusion, Cllr Franklin requested that Cllr. Olive obtain the financial information required, so that Rockbeare and its parishioners were able to make an informed and fair decision on the matter.

Chairman's Report

The Chairman reported that he had recently attended the Airport Committee meeting. Attendees were taken on a tour of the Private Aircraft Facility.

There has been an increase in air traffic at the site, and healthy passenger numbers are utilising the facility. Attendees were advised that KLM would, by the end of 2026, be increasing the number of flights it operates from Exeter.

The Chairman also reported that he had attended a recent web meeting relating to the proposed Devon boundary changes.

The Chairman met with the Head Teacher of the primary school to discuss parking issues in the vicinity of the school. The Head Teacher advised Cllr. Franklin that staff are receiving many complaints relating to the said issues, which the school has no control over. She asked if the Parish Council could provide details relating to responsibilities for parking etc. It was **agreed** that this would be included in the next newsletter.

96/25-26 To Approve the Draft Minutes of the meeting held on 19th November 2025

Members considered the draft Minutes for the meeting held on 19th November 2025.

It was **proposed** by Cllr. Nequest, **seconded** by Cllr. Priddis and **RESOLVED** that the Minutes for Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council, held on 19th November 2025, provided a true reflection of the discussions undertaken, and that the Minutes would be approved. Unanimous. **Carried.**

The Minutes were duly signed by the Chairman.

97/25-26 Finance and Economy

Payments to be approved:

As a result of there having been no Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held in December 2025, Members were required to consider both the December 2025 and January 2026 payment schedules – the former to be approved retrospectively.

Payment Schedule - December 2025

Date Approved	Payee	Invoice Ref	VAT NUMBER	Cheque	Gross	VAT	Net
21/01/2026	Ionos	330401	75239027	DD	21.60	3.60	18.00
21/01/2026	Mr. B.Hunt		N/A	BACS	1400.00	0.00	1400.00
21/01/2026	Carolyn May	Salary	N/A	BACS	2025.00	0.00	2025.00
21/01/2026	Carolyn May	Expenses	N/A	BACS	94.50	4.80	89.70
21/01/2026	HMRC	N/A	N/A	401244	1154.50	0.00	1154.50
21/01/2026	Ionos (2nd pmt)	321015	75239027	DD	21.60	3.30	18.30
21/01/2026	ARBS (Stationery)	N/A	N/A	401247	203.32	0.00	20.00
					4920.52	11.70	4725.50

It was **proposed** by Cllr. Nequest, **seconded** by Cllr. Wall and RESOLVED that the Schedule of Payments for December 2025 would be approved. Unanimous. **Carried.**

Payment Schedule – January 2026

Date Approved	Payee	Invoice Ref	VAT NUMBER	Cheque	Gross	VAT	Net
21/01/2026	Ionos	3333363478	75239027	DD	21.60	3.60	18.00
21/01/2026	NALC	01274/01275	233410214	BACS	84.00	14.00	18.00
21/01/2026	Carolyn May	Salary	1966.60	BACS	1966.60	0.00	1966.60
21/01/2026	Carolyn May	Expenses	N/A	BACS	179.50	4.80	174.70
21/01/2026	HMRC	TAX/NI	N/A	BACS	786.05	0.00	786.05
21/01/2026	Gallagher Insurance	551843866	N/A	BACS	825.98	0.00	825.98
					3863.73	22.40	3789.33

It was **proposed** by Cllr. Nequest, **seconded** by Cllr. Wall and RESOLVED that the Schedule of Payments for December 2025 would be approved. Unanimous. **Carried.**

98/25-26 Birchend

The Clerk advised the Members that an email had been received from Every's Solicitor, reference the transfer of Birchend. The sum of £500 is required to effect a Deed of Release of Restriction, in order to enable the transfer to proceed.

It was **proposed** by Cllr. Nequest, **seconded** by Cllr. Franklin and RESOLVED that the sum of £500 would be agreed for the purpose of effecting the Deed. approved. Unanimous. **Carried.**

99/25-26 Finance Report – Annual Expenditure to date

Date	Payee	Invoice Ref	VAT NUMBER	Cheque	Gross	VAT	Net
09/04/2025	JJ Tree Services			BACS	10060.00	0.00	10060.00
01/04/2025	Ionos	2.03048E+11	75239027	DD	21.60	3.60	18.00
29/04/2025	J.C.Ecroyd	9	N/A	BACS	154.00	0.00	154.00
28/04/2025	RVH	2025/26-30	N/A	BACS	88.00	0.00	88.00
29/04/2025	Carolyn May	N/A	N/A	BACS	1986.60	0.00	1986.60
29/04/2025	Carolyn May	N/A	N/A	BACS	255.95	0.00	255.95
29/04/2025	Simon A. Martin	15339	380819379	BACS	24.00	4.00	20.00
30/04/2025	ionos		75239027	DD	21.60	3.60	18.00
16/04/2025	HMRC	N/A	N/A	401236	694.62	0.00	694.62
09/04/2025	Mr J. Freeman		N/A	BACS	10060.00	0.00	10060.00
15/05/2025	RVH	26-39	N/A	BACS	88.00	0.00	88.00
16/05/2025	J.C.Ecroyd	10	N/A	BACS	154.00	0.00	154.00
16/05/2025	DCW Polymers	1271	432710525	BACS	1019.40	169.90	849.50
16/05/2025	Carolyn May	N/A	N/A	BACS	1986.60	0.00	1986.60
16/05/2025	Carolyn May	N/A	N/A	BACS	182.75	0.00	182.75
16/05/2025	Simon A. Martin	15339	380819379	BACS	24.00	4.00	20.00
16/05/2025	HMRC	N/A	N/A	401238	694.62	0.00	694.62
16/05/2025	Inspiring Connections	108/109/110	423272031	BACS	4082.66	717.98	3364.68
21/05/2025	J.P.Peskett	401237	N/A	401237	290.00	0.00	290.00
29/05/2025	M. Nequest	Locks		BACS	139.94	23.32	116.62
30/05/2025	Ionos		75239027	DD	21.60	3.60	18.00
19/06/2025	Brightsea	114202	N/A	BACS	246.00	0.00	246.00
25/06/2025	J.C.Ecroyd	Jan-00	N/A	BACS	154.00	0.00	154.00
25/06/2025	RVH	2025/26-49	N/A	BACS	87.96	0.00	87.96
25/06/2025	RVH	2025/26-53	N/A	BACS	38.00	0.00	38.00
25/06/2025	RVH	25/26-06	N/A	BACS	105.00	0.00	105.00
25/06/2025	RVH	2025/26-22	N/A	BACS	102.00	0.00	102.00
25/06/2025	DALC Subscription	6588	N/A	BACS	357.24	53.54	303.70
25/06/2025	JJ Trees	402	N/A	BACS	1650.00	0.00	1650.00
25/06/2025	Carolyn May	N/A	N/A	BACS	2175.40	0.00	2175.40
25/06/2025	Carolyn May	N/A	N/A	BACS	357.00	0.00	357.00
25/06/2025	Simon A. Martin	15339	380819379	BACS	20.00	0.00	20.00
27/06/2025	Ben Hunt		N/A	401239	1400.00	0.00	1400.00
02/07/2025	Ionis	60312	75239027	DD	21.60	3.60	18.00
21/07/2025	HMRC	N/A	N/A	401240	577.25	0.00	577.25
28/07/2025	RVH	2025/26-59	N/A	BACS	51.96	0.00	51.96

28/07/2025	Simon A. Martin	15339	380819379	BACS	20.00	0.00	20.00
28/07/2025	J.C.Ecroyd	11	N/A	BACS	154.00	0.00	154.00
28/07/2025	Carolyn May	N/A	N/A	BACS	184.50	0.00	184.50
28/07/2025	Carolyn May	N/A	N/A	BACS	2175.40	0.00	2175.40
30/07/2025	Ionos	3890	75239027	BACS	21.60	3.60	18.00
08/08/2025	HMRC		N/A	401241	577.25	0.00	577.25
20/08/2025	Carolyn May		N/A	401242	2290.40	0.00	2290.40
10/09/2025	HMRC		N/A	401243	898.05	0.00	898.05
17/09/2025	ionos		75239027	DD	21.60	3.60	18.00
17/09/2025	DALC Subscription		N/A	BACS	53.54	0.00	53.54
17/09/2025	RVH	70,75,80	N/A	BACS	194.52	0.00	194.52
17/09/2025	Vigo Presses	646	tba	BACS	677.00	112.83	564.17
17/09/2025	PKF Littlejohn	SB20251294	440498250	BACS	378.00	63.00	315.00
17/09/2025	JJ TREES	429	N/A	BACS	3591.00	0.00	3591.00
17/09/2025	AG GARDEN & TREES	1252	N/A	BACS	120.00	0.00	120.00
17/09/2025	Carolyn May	N/A	N/A	BACS	2175.00	0.00	2175.00
17/09/2025	Carolyn May	N/A	N/A	BACS	352.00	0.00	352.00
17/09/2025	Simon A. Martin	1539	380819379	BACS	52.00	0.00	52.00
29/09/2025	Brightsea	115685	N/A	BACS	246.00	0.00	246.00
01/10/2025	Ionis	68257949	75239027	DD	21.60	3.60	18.00
23/10/2025	Carolyn May	N/A	N/A	BACS	2175.00	0.00	2175.00
30/10/2025	Ionis	68257949	N/A	DD	33.60	6.72	26.88
18/11/2025	Rockbeare Village Hall	Inv 88	N/A	BACS	87.96	0.00	87.96
18/11/2025	Simon A. Martin		380819379	BACS	24.00	4.00	20.00
18/11/2025	Alexander Shakespeare	1261/1277	N/A	BACS	180.00	0.00	180.00
18/11/2025	Rockbeare Village Hall	26-59	N/A	BACS	105.96	0.00	105.96
18/11/2025	Simon A. Martin	15399	380819379	BACS	20.00	0.00	20.00
18/11/2025	Inspiring Connections	Grant	N/A	BACS	250.00	0.00	250.00
18/11/2025	Carolyn May	N/A	N/A	BACS	283.68	0.00	283.68
18/11/2025	Carolyn May	N/A	N/A	BACS	1854.60	0.00	1854.60
02/12/2025	Ionos	68257949	75239027	DD	21.60	3.60	18.00
03/12/2025	HMRC	N/A	N/A	BACS	3192.13	0.00	3192.13
09/12/2025	HMRC	N/A	N/A	BACS	1154.50	0.00	1154.50
18/12/2025	Ben Hunt		N/A	BACS	1400.00	0.00	1400.00
21/12/2025	Stationery	250	N/A	401247	203.32	0.00	203.32
31/12/2025	Ionos	61321015	75239027	DD	21.60	3.60	18.00
					54544.76	1191.69	53353.07

Members considered the Finance Report provided. It was **proposed** by Cllr. Nequest, **seconded** by Cllr. Brookes and **RESOLVED** that the January Finance Report would be approved 2025. Unanimous. **Carried.**

Hub Income

Cllr. Wall reported that the sum of £538.70 is currently being held in cash. It is intended that a sum will be deposited into the Parish Council's account after the next bingo session.

It was noted that a new noticeboard is still required for the Rockbeare bus shelter. Cllr. Priddis has sourced a suitable noticeboard at a cost of £185 (incl. VAT) and requested the permission of the Parish Council to purchase the same.

It was **proposed** by Cllr. Brookes, **seconded** by Cllr. Franklin and **RESOLVED** that the purchase of a noticeboard, for the sum of £185 (incl. VAT) would be approved. Unanimous. **Carried.**

100/25-26 Planning Applications

Planning Application 25/1455/OUT – no comment

Planning Application 25/2503/FUL – 15 Hazel Grove, Rockbeare

Members considered the application. There was concern that the proposed alteration, if approved, would create a precedent in the area. Discussions highlighted that any person using the proposed accommodation would not overlook any other property. It was **agreed that the Parish Council would support the application but register the following caveat ' This application is approved on the understanding that the proposed accommodation would not overlook other properties'.**

101/25-26 Planning Decisions – Noted

102/25-25 Parish Council Contact Email Addresses

Cllr Franklin provided an update in respect of the actions being undertaken to ensure the Parish Council is compliant with the new regulations governing smaller council's websites, and email contact addresses.

The Parish Council website and contact information will be suffixed with. Gov.uk, as will all contact email addresses for Members/ Clerk. It is imperative that Members and the Clerk use these contact addresses to receive and respond to email correspondence.

103/25-26 EDDC Heritage Strategy Consultation

It was **agreed** that the Clerk would register the Parish Council's interest in this matter.

104/25-26 Correspondence

Members considered the correspondence received from:

- A parishioner – re: the condition of the road from Rag Lane to Lowbrook, Rockbeare. The Clerk advised the meeting that DCC had responded to the complaint and would inspect the area during February 2026.
- Operation Reindeer – a letter of thanks to the Parish Council for the donation made, and a description of how the monies were used.

- Rockbeare Community Hub (Amenity) Programme – discussed at 93/25-26.
- Ford Oaks Solar Park Community Fund – representatives from Marsh Green to attend the February 2026 Meeting to discuss the village requirements.
- Every's Solicitor – Quotation for Deed of Release of Restriction

105/25-26 Member Training – ongoing

106/25-26 Project Updates

Project	Current Position	Action
Rockbeare Café/ Hum	Remains well attended. Self funding. Successful Christmas events were held in December.	Noticeboard to be purchased. Deposit to be made into Account (Cllr. Priddis/Wall)
Birchend – Transfer of Land	Awaiting Deed of Release of Restriction – agreed that the sum of £500.00 would be made available for the Deed, but that it was to be emphasised that this would be the total sum payable for this matter.	Clerk to liaise with solicitor and arrange for the Deed to be Executed.
Millennium Field	Well used. Requires water/ electrical connection. A successful Christmas Carolling Event was held at the site in December.	Discuss in February 2026 with representatives from Marsh Green.
Newsletter	The next edition of the newsletter is being prepared. Articles relating to successful events are to be forwarded to Cllr Franklin.	All Members. Responsibilities relating to parking to be included.
20 is Plenty	Cllr Brookes advised the meeting that a new banners are to be ordered for Rockbeare. A speed awareness group of 4 persons has been established, training is to be arranged.	Training to be arranged. Cllr Brookes
Heritage Strategy Consultation registration		Clerk
Planning Decision		Clerk

The meeting closed at 20:20 hrs

Next Meeting: 18th March

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