



**ROCKBEARE
PARISH COUNCIL**

Chairman: Cllr. Phil Franklin

Clerk: Carolyn Y. May

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21st May 2026

DRAFT MINUTES OF ROCKBEARE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

HELD ON

20th MAY 2026

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

Also: Twenty-one members of the public

Parish Clerk: Carolyn May

AGENDA

01/26-27 Election of the Chairman

Resolution It was **proposed** by Cllr Wall, **seconded** by Cllr. Brookes and **RESOLVED** that Cllr. Franklin would be returned as Chairman to Rockbeare Parish Council for the civic year 2026/27. Unanimous. **Carried.**

02/26-27 Cllr. Franklin completed the Declaration of Acceptance.

03/26-27 Election of Vice Chairman

Resolution It was **proposed** by Cllr. Wall, **seconded** by Cllr. Brookes and **RESOLVED** that Cllr. Nequest would be returned as Vice Chairman to Rockbeare Parish Council for the civic year 2026/27. Unanimous. **Carried.**

04/26-27 Cllr. Nequest completed the Declaration of Acceptance

05/26-26 Declarations of Interest

Planning Application PA26/0603

Before this agenda item is reached, the Parish Council wishes to make a clear and transparent declaration. The Council has been informed that, should this planning application be approved, the developer intends to make land available for a potential community asset. Because this represents a benefit to the Parish Council, members recognise that this creates a prejudicial interest in the outcome of the application.

In accordance with the Code of Conduct and the principles of openness and integrity, councillors will therefore take no part in the discussion or decision making on this planning application. Council will not express a corporate view on the application.

The Clerk may provide factual or administrative information to the planning authority as required, but no opinion or recommendation will be given on behalf of the Council.

Planning Application PA26/0603 OUT – Land north of Hazel Grove, Rockbeare (Agenda Item 18).

Under the terms and conditions of The Localism Act 2011, and the Councillors Code of Conduct:

Cllr Franklin declared a Prejudicial Interest in relation to this matter, based on his membership of the Parish Council.

Cllr. Nequest declared a Prejudicial Interest in relation to this matter, based on his membership of the Parish Council.

Cllr. Brookes declared a Prejudicial Interest in relation to this matter, based on his membership of the Parish Council.

Cllr. Wall declared a Prejudicial Interest in relation to this matter, based on his membership of the Parish Council.

06/26-27 Apologies for Absence – none received.

07/26-27 Reports

- **Cllr. Gent (DCC) – no report received**
- **Cllr. Vanstone (DCC) – no report received**
- **Cllr Todd Olive EDDC – no report received**
- **Chairman's Report** – the Chairman had provided his report at the Annual Parish Meeting

08/26-27 To Approve the Draft Minutes of the meeting held on 18th March 2026

Members considered the draft Minutes for the meeting held on 18th March 2026.

Resolution It was **proposed** by Cllr. Nequest, **seconded** by Cllr. Brookes and **RESOLVED** that the Minutes for Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council, held on 18th March 2026, 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.

09/26-27 To Receive the Annual Internal Audit

Members noted matters raised by the Internal Auditor. It was agreed that actions would be identified and implemented to rectify the same. The issues related mainly to the Parish Council website.

Resolution It was **proposed** by Cllr. Brookes, **seconded** by Cllr. Franklin and **RESOLVED** that the Annual Internal Audit would be accepted. Unanimous. **Carried.**

10/26-27 To Receive the Annual Governance Statement for 2025/26

The Clerk presented the Annual Governance Statement to the Parish Council.

Resolution It was **proposed** by Cllr. Nequest, **seconded** by Cllr. Brookes and **RESOLVED** that the Annual Governance Statement would be approved and signed by the Chairman and the Clerk respectively. Unanimous. **Carried.**

The document was duly signed in the presence of the Members and attending parishioners.

11/26-27 To Receive the Annual Accounting Statement for 2025/26

The Clerk presented the Annual Accounting Statement to the Parish Council.

Resolution It was **proposed** by Cllr. Nequest, **seconded** by Cllr. Brookes and **RESOLVED** that the Annual Accounting Statement would be approved by the Council and signed by Chairman. Unanimous. **Carried.**

The document was duly signed in the presence of the Members and attending parishioners.

12/26-27 Re-Adoption/ Adoption of Policies (Policies Disseminated Prior to the Meeting)

- Standing Orders
- Finance Regulations
- Councillors Code of Conduct
- Statement of Internal Control
- Risk Register
- Investment Strategy Policy (new policy)
- Document Retention Schedule (new policy)
- Publication Scheme (new policy)

Owing to the April 2026 meeting being inquorate and subsequently cancelled, the April payment schedule had not been approved. The council therefore reviewed both the **April 2026** and **May 2026** payment schedules.

April Payment Schedule

Date	Payee	Invoice	PMT Type	Gross	VAT	Net
26042026	A.G. Tree & Garden	1284	BACS	60.00	0.00	60.00
26042026	A.G. Tree & Garden	1327	BACS	60.00	0.00	60.00
26042026	Ionos	63478	BACS	21.60	3.60	18.00
26042026	Clerk Salary	N/A	BACS	1860.00	0.00	1860.00
26042026	Clerk Expenses	N/A	BACS	88.78	0.00	88.78
26042026	HMRC	N/A	BACS	892.65	0.00	892.65
				2983.03	3.60	2979.43

Resolution It was **proposed** by Cllr. Franklin, **seconded** by Cllr. Brookes and **RESOLVED** that the Schedule of Payments for April 2026 would be approved. Unanimous. **Carried.**

May Payment Schedule and Bank Reconciliation

Date	Payee	Invoice	PMT Type	Gross	VAT	Net
26052026	Ionos	63478	BACS	21.60	3.60	18.00
20052026	DALC	7484	BACS	420.98	54.98	366.00
20052026	Clerk Salary	N/A	BACS	1860.00	0.00	1860.00
20052026	Clerk Expenses	N/A	BACS	165.50	0.00	165.50
20052026	HMRC	N/A	BACS	892.65	0.00	892.65
20052026	A.G. Tree & Garden	1337	BACS	60.00	0.00	60.00
20052026	J P Auditors	RPC/1A 2025-26	BACS	300.00	0.00	300.00
20052026	East Devon Home Fix	80	BACS	300.00	0.00	300.00
20052026	Simon Martin Accts		BACS	24.00	0.00	24.00
20052026	RVH	2026-42	BACS	106.00	0.00	106.00
				4150.73	58.58	4092.15

C/Forward (25/26)		71,609.00
Income	Precept	22,470.00
	CIL Fund	12,455.20
	<i>Total</i>	106,534.20
Expenditure	Apr-26	2,983.03
	May-26	4,150.73
		1,167.70
Reconciled Balance		
C/F plus Income minus Expenditure		105,366.50

Resolution It was **proposed** by Cllr. Franklin, **seconded** by Cllr. Brookes and RESOLVED that the Schedule of Payments and Bank Reconciliation for May 2026 would be approved. Unanimous. **Carried.**

15/26-27 **Change of Meeting Day**

Cllr. Nequest raised the matter of difficulty in attending mid-week meetings, due to work commitments.

It was **agreed** that enquiries would be made to ascertain if alternative room booking options are available.

16/26-27 **Correspondence**

Members considered correspondence received. The following comments were noted:

- **PFK Littlejohn** – the Parish Council has been selected as part of the 5% to be subjected to a more detailed inspection.
- **EDDC FOI Review** – The Clerk explained that due to the failure to provide information requested relating to the EDDC/Cranbrook Boundary Review, it had been necessary to issue a Freedom of Information Request. Upon receipt of the response, several matters required clarification, therefore s ‘Letter of Clarification’ was forwarded to EDDC. Unfortunately, despite having been advised on three occasions that this second document should not have been treated as a further FOI, EDDC Officers deemed to class it as such. Consequently, the Clerk has raised a formal complaint requesting to be advised of the name / position of the person who was able to designate the clarification as an FOI (Twice), on what basis was the letter classified as an FOI, and why the letters from the Clerk (advising of the error) were not responded to in a substantive manner.
- **Clay Hill Traffic**- and the lack of a safe route along the road – it was acknowledged that this has been an on-going problem and that several complaints have been made to

Devon County Council in respect of the same. One parishioner added that there is a need for better lighting along the route from the old A30 to Rockbeare, particularly on the bend. This matter should be reported to DCC again.

17/26-27 Planning Applications

Application: 26/0661/TRE – Monterey Pine to Fell

Members considered the application. It was accepted that the tree roots are damaging the structure of the garden wall and that the residents of the property are concerned that further damage will occur.

Resolution It was **proposed** by Cllr. Franklin, **seconded** by Cllr. Brookes and **RESOLVED** that the Parish Council would support the application to fell the tree. Unanimous. **Carried.**

18/26-27 Application 26/0534 MOUT – Land South of London Road, Rockbeare

The Chairman had met previously with the developer and indicated to them that the Parish Council, based on correspondence from parishioners. The Clerk drafted an objection email and forwarded the same to EDDC Planning on 27/03/2026. To date, the comment has not been posted on the Planning site. It was **agreed that the Clerk would address this matter.**

Resolution It was **proposed** by Cllr. Franklin, **seconded** by Cllr. Nequest and **RESOLVED** that the Parish Council would object to the application again and request to be informed of the reasons why the response of the 27th of March had not been actioned. Unanimous. **Carried.**

19/26-27 Application P26/0603/OUT –Land North of Hazel Grove.

All councillors present declared a prejudicial interest in this item, as the parish council has been offered land by the applicant should the planning application be approved.

As every councillor had a prejudicial interest, the council was not quorate for this agenda item and was therefore unable to discuss the application or make a formal comment to the Local Planning Authority.

No discussion took place and no response was submitted. A notice to that effect is to be sent to the Monitoring Officer at EDDC.

20/26-27 Community Governance Review

The Clerk advised the meeting that the Parish Objection to the proposed sequestration of land from Rockbeare Parish for the benefit of Cranbrook. The document submitted is substantial and identifies procedural and legal concerns with the process employed by EDDC. The Clerk is still awaiting a substantive response to the concerns raised.

Members considered whether to publish the parish council's objection to the EDDC/Cranbrook boundary review. It was noted that the document concerns the whole parish. To ensure transparency and good governance, members were invited to consider

whether the council wished to authorise publication of the objection. Members were also advised that, under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this type of document is almost always disclosable upon request. Proactive publication therefore supports openness, reduces administrative burden, and aligns with the expectations expressed by many of the parishioners present at the meeting, who were asked for their views on the matter.

Resolution It was **proposed** by Cllr Nequest, **seconded** by Cllr Franklin and **RESOLVED** that the parish council authorises the publication of its formal objection to the EDDC/Cranbrook boundary review, noting that the document relates to all parishioners and that parishioners at the recent meeting expressed a clear wish for it to be made publicly available. The document shall be published on the parish council website and made available upon request. Unanimous. **Carried.**

It was **agreed** that out of courtesy to EDDC, the parish council authorises the Clerk to notify East Devon District Council of the council's intention to publish its formal objection to the Cranbrook boundary review, noting that the document concerns the whole parish and that parishioners have expressed a clear wish for it to be made publicly available."

Resolution **Consideration of Redaction Prior to Publication** - Members considered whether the name of the EDDC ward Councillor should be redacted from the parish council's objection to the EDDC/Cranbrook boundary review prior to publication.

It was noted that EDDC Cllr. Olive's comments were made during an open public meeting, were accurately recorded in the January 2026 parish council minutes, and those minutes were approved and not contested. Members further noted that information disclosed in an open meeting forms part of the public record and that there is no legal requirement or justification to redact the name.

Resolution It was **proposed** by Cllr Nequest, **seconded** by Cllr Franklin and **RESOLVED** that the parish council would not redact the name of EDDC Cllr. Todd Olive from the objection document, as the information is already in the public domain, was recorded in uncontested minutes, and is necessary for maintaining an accurate public record.

21/26-27 RPC Project Updates

Project	Current Position	Action
Rockbeare Café/ Hub/ Bingo	Remains well attended. Self-funding.	Noticeboard purchased. £100 allocated for purchase of plants for village baskets
Birchend – Transfer of Land	Signature of Deed to be arranged	Deed received. Signatures to be obtained.
Millennium Field	Well used. Requires water/ electrical connection. Still awaiting costs from Paul and Julian	Costings to be obtained for additional shelter, tables and chairs, lighting and water connection, bus stop repair and replacement fencing at war memorial. (MG residents), Clerk to discuss additional

		groundworks with Infinis.
Telephone Box (Library)	New shelving installed. Box to be painted, new access path to be laid.	Cllr. Brookes Clerk
EDDC Boundary Review	Interim objection sent, FOI Breached, letter to CeX. Final objection forwarded to EDDC Awaiting responses to FOI Classification complaint and Monitoring Officer	Clerk
Newsletter	Distributed	Complete and to be distributed
20 is Plenty	Cllr Brookes to contact group to advance the project.	Cllr Brookes

The meeting closed at 2010 hrs

Next Meeting: 17th June 2026