

# ERMINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

## The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held in the Reading Rooms on 2 July 2024 at 7.30 pm

**Present:** Cllrs Denis Onley (Chair), Robert Owens, Patricia Hannam and Ian Creese

Devon County Councillor Dan Thomas  
District Councillor Alison Dewynter  
Teresa Drew (Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer)

**Parishioner(s) / Visitor(s):** 6

### **022/2024 TO ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies accepted from and Cllr John Dunlop.

### **023/2024 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTEREST(S) IN RESPECT OF ANY ITEM ON THIS AGENDA**

None.

### **024/2024 VACANCIES FOR FIVE PARISH COUNCILLORS**

The Clerk apologised as the review of the Co-option Policy was not itemised on July's agenda, it will be included on the next meeting's agenda.

No completed applications received.

### **025/24 CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINT ASSESSMENT DECISION NOTICE: CASE REFERENCE – RP/501340**

The SHDC Monitoring Officer received a complaint alleging that Cllr Onley had broken the Parish Council's Code of Conduct. The Monitoring Officer has determined that, based on the facts as alleged in the complaint, no further action will be taken.

### **026/2024 REPORT FROM DEVON COUNTY COUNCILLOR DAN THOMAS INCLUDING ITEMS FROM PAST MEETINGS**

When the Callidus Transport & Engineering Ltd report is received it should be sent to DCC for Highways to approve and confirm the costings, it can then be used to inform the community consultation. A recent highways alteration should be viewed on the road from Elburton to Brixton near Rogers Garage, as an example of what is required.

### **027/2024 REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR ALISON DEWYNTER INCLUDING ITEMS FROM PAST MEETINGS**

#### **1. Funding sources for sport and leisure clubs**

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/fundingnews/fund/category/physical-activity-sport-leisure/>

#### **2. Activities at Quayside Leisure Centre for SEND children**

- a. Soft Play (£2 per Child) is on weekdays 13:30-14:30 with reduced lighting and capacity
- b. SEND Family Swim (Both Pools) 30 Minute Session (£3 per adult, £2 per child)
  - i. Wednesday 13:00-13:30
  - ii. Saturday 12:00-12:30
  - iii. Sunday 12:00-12:30
  - iv. (Additional sessions to be added when the summer timetable is introduced)

Please could you share this information to anyone you think would benefit from the additional help that the centre is offering.

The contact for the leisure centre if you have any questions regarding this is 01548 857100

**027/2024 REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR ALISON DEWYNTER INCLUDING ITEMS FROM PAST MEETINGS (continued)**

**3. Volunteering opportunities for residents**

Devon Connect can provide information on volunteering opportunities. This includes roles as diverse as helping in cafes, befriending or enabling people to get out and about.

Click here to find out more: [Devon Connect](#)

**4. Voting in the General Election**

Information about the election and how to vote is on the SHDC webpage here: [General Elections webpage](#)

**5. Information on water quality for open water swimming**

Swimfo allows you to look up details of designated bathing water sites by name or location:

<https://environment.data.gov.uk/bwq/profiles/>

**6. Dog Identification**

Over the last few weeks, SHDC Localities Team have picked up several lost dogs across the South Hams who don't have an ID tag. Without ID, it can take a lot longer to reunite the dog with its owner.

Under the Dog Act 1992, the legal requirements are:

- A dog must be licensed and microchipped.
- A dog must wear a collar with a name/ID tag (exemptions apply for some working dogs).

The [Blue Cross](#) website provides information and tips on keeping dogs safe.



**028/2024 PUBLIC OPEN FORUM - Questions and Comments from Members of the Public to Parish Councillors, County and District Councillors**

Two parishioners had not been aware of a planning application adjacent to their property, as there is currently no information displayed in the area - Reference: 3908/23/FUL. The planning application is for two small barns to be changed to a large building for offices and storage. The plans do not show any facilities for a toilet or hand washing. There is another building on the site which could be developed and would not affect their property. The current proposal will affect the operation of their chimney, which is in use. There are also issues with drainage on the site. Cllr Onley confirmed this application is on the agenda later in the meeting for Councillor's attention and the comments made will be considered.

A parishioner – Agenda item 4 the Code of Conduct Complaint which they had raised, stated the answer on the response from SHDC is incorrect and they are investigating it further. They pointed out SHDC Monitoring Office did not contact the Chair or the Clerk. Cllr Onley confirmed he has not spoken to anyone at SHDC regarding this issue. The parishioner asked if the Chair would provide his telephone number. Cllr Onley declined. Parishioner pointed out within the Co-Option Policy it states a telephone number must be provided, and therefore he thought the Policy was not being adhered to and must be withdrawn. Discussion ensued and Cllr Onley pointed out that he and all current Councillors are elected and were in post prior to the Co-option Policy being adopted, therefore the Co-option Policy does not apply to them, as it is guidance the Council use to Co-opt new Councillors and give advice to candidates on the process & what to expect. It is drawn from the previous unwritten process the Council inherited from past Councillors, Policies are always subject to review, and there are four on the agenda tonight for review. Councillors had decided to follow more recent guidance regarding having a single point of contact for the Parish Councillors due to advice regarding threats to elected Councillors and MPs. Parishioners can contact all Councillor's by email and through the website or writing or telephoning the Clerk so the conversation is properly recorded and the issues dealt with or passed on to the appropriate Councillor. In due course the Policy will be updated to reflect this change, but in all other respects it is still in force as policy.

**028/2024 PUBLIC OPEN FORUM - Questions and Comments from Members of the Public to Parish Councillors, County and District Councillors (continued)**

A parishioner pointed out the Reading Rooms are incurring unacceptable costs with very little income, and thought they should be sold. Cllr Onley has not received any complaints from parishioners in connection with the spend on the building and the spend is to maintain the building. The church and some community events use the building free of charge as a service to the community, and many parishioners would be against selling the Reading Rooms as they were gifted to the village and are seen by many as an historic community asset. Cllr Hannam confirmed that she had not heard any adverse comments. The Clerk confirmed the directive she had been given from parish councillors was to mention the Community Hub is also available for bookings before taking any bookings for the Reading Rooms. Cllr Onley confirmed the Parish Council did not want to take bookings away from the Community Hub as we want the Hub to be sustainable, and it is more appropriate for many activities such as children's parties and activities which used to be held in the Reading Rooms.

A parishioner, asked why the dates of Parish Council meetings are not consistently on the first Tuesday of the month. The Clerk explained it was due to her holiday arrangements and a Parish Councillor. Cllr Onley confirmed that the date required for the APM & AGM in May each year, also impacted on the planning of recent Parish Council meetings, however it is planned the meetings will take place on the first Tuesday of the month.

A parishioner - Traffic issues update – the parishioner raised various points about the issue of speeding traffic. Discussion ensued. Cllr Onley has written to the Police Commissioner which has been forwarded to the Ivybridge Neighbourhood Team along with speed monitoring readings from Ermington Community Speed Watch. Cllr Onley confirmed the Parish Council had asked the school to employ a School Crossing 'Lollipop' person using the DCC support grant available, but they stated they could not do so. Cllr Hannam proposed that the new Ermington Head Teacher be approached to discuss the issue and stated it is frustrating that support had not been made available by the police due to insufficient staffing in the Ivybridge Team. RESOLVED Cllr Hannam will liaise with the school.

**ACTION: Cllr Hannam.**

The Councillors pointed out there is not much more they can do. Cllr Onley encourages parishioners to report offending behaviour to the police using the Operation Snap website, or direct Police contact at the time. Cllr Owens pointed out that unsafe and illegal behaviour must be reported to the police. The Parish Council is working on reducing the speed limit from 40 mph to 30 mph on the A3121, which the parishioners will be consulted on once costings etc are available. Cllr Onley pointed out, many ideas to slow traffic within the village have been explored with Devon County Council e.g. painted walkways ( virtual pavements ) in the village, but the roads are not wide enough. However if parishioners have new ideas we are happy to forward them to DCC, but parishioners also need to report their concerns direct to both DCC and the Police, as despite Parish Council efforts, the Police & DCC both report they get very few issues raised by Ermington residents so we are not seen as a priority. Parishioner pointed out the volume of traffic has vastly increased over the years.

**029/2024 APPROVAL OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

RESOLVED to approve the Annual Parish Council Meeting minutes of 21 May 2024 (as previously circulated).

**030/2024 PLANNING**

Reference: 1661/24/FUL Site Address: Higher Ludbrook Farm, Ludbrook, PL21 0LL

Proposal: Erection of covered silage pit

Recommendation: Support

Ermington Parish Council have declared a climate emergency and under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 we are obligated to encourage biodiversity and enhancements for nature. As such we welcome any action that can be taken to help the natural environment and wildlife in this time of climate crisis. Any new planning development offers an opportunity for parishioners to help the Parish Council with this requirement.

We will always assess any proposed planning application in terms of the contribution to climate change.

Steps we wish applicants to take include the following, although this is not an exhaustive list, and we would also welcome other solutions:

Incorporating energy efficiency, high standards of insulation, and low carbon systems for heating, cooking and lighting, together with renewable energy generation including PV solar, wind turbines, and electric vehicle charging points.

The use of locally sourced low carbon building materials and the use of building locations and designs to minimise carbon use and include the recovery and reuse of water and building materials.

Ensuring adequate drainage to reduce the risk of flooding and the use of permeable surfacing materials to hard landscape areas. N.B. The use of traditional soakaways in areas of known flooding risk will not normally be supported.

Mitigating carbon use by actions to support wildlife, such as; planting berry and fruit-bearing trees, planting hedgerows instead of fencing, maintaining hedgehog highways, installing bat and bird boxes.

**030/2024 PLANNING (continued)**

Reference: 3908/23/FUL Site Address: Kingsacre Care Home, Ermington, PL21 0LQ  
 Proposal: Proposed rebuilding & conversion of former outbuilding to provide workshop & storage space with office space above  
 Recommendation: Refusal – the single storey ruin is being changed to a two-storey building, which is an over development of the ruin. The style is not in keeping with the site. The building will impact on the neighbouring property working chimney. No sanitary provisions within the building. The building is in the flood plain area.

Note: It is confusing that the planning documentation has a different name to the site address.

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**Planning Decision**

1023/24/FUL Full Planning Application	Decision: Conditional Approval
1530/24/ARC Approval of Details Reserved by Conditions	Decision: Discharge of Conditions - Split
1680/24/NMM Non Material Minor Amendment	Decision: Conditional Approval

**031/2024 FINANCE**

RESOLVED to agree the following:

(i) Bank balances:- Business Bank Account on 9 May 2024 = £46,600.18  
 Treasurers Account on 13 June 2024 = £67,537.46

(ii) Receipt(s):- Bank Interest (Business Account) 09/05/2024 = £49.74

(iii) Payments:- RESOLVED to make the following payments:

Description	Gross	VAT	Net
Parish Clerk – May 2024 salary and working at home allowance	£781.73	-	-
Parish Clerk – June 2024 salary and working at home allowance	£781.73	-	-
DB Computer Repairs – maintenance of parish council website May 2024	£45.00	-	-
DB Computer Repairs – maintenance of parish council website June 2024	£45.00		
Zurich Insurance – 5 year long term agreement active until 24th June 2025	£941.18		
Source for Business (South West Water Business) - services at Reading Rooms = 3 February - 31 May 2024 (estimated)	£70.50		
DB Computer Repairs - Construct 3 new web pages and link them	£100.00		

(iv) Grant Request(s) - None

(v) RESOLVED to approve the Financial Statement and Earmarked Reserves

<b>Financial Statement</b>	
Lloyds Bank Business Account bank statement as at 9 May 2024:	<b>£46,600.18</b>
Lloyds Bank Treasurers Account bank statement as at 13 June 2024:	<b>£67,537.46</b>
Less: any unrepresented cheques:-	
001672	-£100.00
001675	-£335.53
001676	-£70.50
<b>Total Funds =</b>	<b>£113,631.61</b>
<b>Earmarked Reserves</b>	
Repairs to Reading Rooms, Ermington	<b>-£20,000</b>
<b>Total uncommitted Funds =</b>	<b>£93,125.58</b>

**031/2024 FINANCE (Continued)**

- (vi) Parish Councillors reviewed spend and income to date, against budget 2024/2025 - no issues raised
- (vii) Renewal of eDF contracts for Reading Rooms and Devon Air Ambulance – Fixed Term until 22 May 2027
- (viii) RESOLVED to increase the Parish Clerk salary by 7%
- (ix) RESOLVED to transfer £70,000 of parish council funds to a NatWest Business account.

(x) NALC Model Financial Regulations for Local Councils - The updated Model Financial Regulations compile essential procedures and financial guidelines for Councils to ensure efficient and transparent e.g. key 4.8 – council members are unable to approve new budget if they are in arrears with council tax. This must be declared at the relevant meeting 6.9 – signing of payments listing at each meeting. RESOLVED Finance Committee to meet prior to the next parish council meeting to check the EPC Financial Regulations.

**ACTION: Cllr Onley, Dunlop and Clerk (RFO)**

**032/24 EXTERNAL AUDIT OF THE 2023/2024 ACCOUNTS**

Documents have been sent to PKF Littlejohn LLP and are available to view on the parish council website or by contacting the Parish Clerk.

**033/24 REVIEW:**

Risk Assessment of Reading Rooms - no amendments

Health and Safety Policy – no amendments

Standing Orders – RESOLVED to make one amendment ref. Meetings (section 3, para q)

Fixed Asset Register – no amendments

**034/24 VEXATIOUS COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE – Cllr Onley**

RESOLVED to adopt the procedure and to include the policy on the website. **ACTION: Clerk**

**035/2024 REPAIRS TO FP10 (HONEY'S FIELD TO THE CHURCH), 2 QUOTES RECEIVED – Cllr Owens**

Two quotes received: the third company which was approached, is not able to do the work until 2025.

Quote 1 - £4,388.11 (excluding VAT) 1. Set up signing and guarding on footpath. 2. Excavate and clean off existing path from village to church gate, all arisings to be tipped on site. 3. Excavate new trench across footpath install French drain and backfill with 40mm clean stone 4. Supply and lay 30mm x Greystone dust over path and compact 5. Leave site clean and tidy

Quote 2 - £3,231.84 (excluding VAT) – Dig out approx. 300x300mm x 30m trench and install Non-Woven Geotextile Membrane on northern side of path to low point, install 100mm land drain pipe, back fill with 20mm clean gravel, install outfall at low point to southern side of path and £ 4,932.45 (excluding VAT) - Resurfacing FP 10 (100 metres long and 1 metre wide) with 20mm To Dust through Honeys Field to the Churchyard at the Holy Well. Install timber edging and pins to the lower side of path to reduce gravel migration.

RESOLVED to accept the lower quote. **ACTION: Cllr Owens**

RESOLVED to pay Westcountry Woodland and Tree Management Ltd the company who provided the second quotation the fee of £100.00 (including VAT) for providing on site consultancy and advice. **ACTION: Clerk**

**036/2024      REPORTS ON ALLOCATED AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY**

(a)      Ermington Parish Church Liaison = **Cllr Owens** reported that the PCC has postponed the installation of solar panels in the field behind the graveyard.

(b)      Community Speed Watch (CSW) report = **Cllr Owens**- Cllr Creese circulated the speed watch camera data, parishioners have reported that there are motorcyclists travelling at excessive speed on the A3121. Cllr Owens will liaise with CSW. **ACTION: Cllr Owens**

(c)      Ermington Environmental Group, Climate Change and Biodiversity Plan, River Erme Catchment = **Cllr Hannam**. Swift boxes to be located on the Reading Rooms. Ermington Environmental Group active since last PC meeting. 31st May: Bat Walk led by Bat Conservation Trust. Friday 14th June: 14 people travelled to North West Dartmoor using the Community Bus to a project where beavers have been reintroduced. Two Himalayan Balsam (an invasive species picks along the river Erme took place on May 18 and June 26. Swift boxes to be located on Reading Rooms. WATER (Wild About The Erme River) group first annual summer meeting took place attended by several Parish Cllrs. EE had presence at the Ermington Summer Fair. Saturday September 14th 10.00am Hedgehog talk. SuSH Is organising a Parish Councillor meeting on the 11 October 2024, RESOLVED Cllr Hannam will attend. **ACTION: Cllr Hannam**

(d)      Road Warden Scheme and maintenance of the speed cameras = **Cllr Creese**. The speed camera has been being relocated. Cllr Creese attended a strimming course organised by Modbury parish council.

**037/2023      CORRESPONDENCE TO NOTE**

*Some of the correspondence listed below can be viewed on the parish website: -*

- The Good Councillors Guide 2024 - *circulated to parish councillors*
- DCC - Sign of the Owl Update 240523 – highway to be reopened by the end of Friday 14th June, a full two weeks ahead of the original date
- DCC - Recent Flooding across Devon
- SHDC - Climate Adaptation Learning Journey
- DCC - 240624 Ermington ORD2105675 - substantial drainage works on the road between Crownhill Cross and Strode Cross in Ermington, Monday 24th June until Friday 19th July 2024
- SHDC - Planning Application 1389/24/TCA - Ermington County Primary School, School Road, Ermington, PL21 9NH -SHDC, Raise No Objections. The notified works should be undertaken in their entirety in accordance with B.S.3998 2010 Recommendations for Tree Works to ensure adherence to the prescribed works, and to further ensure that no works in excess of this notification are undertaken.
- DCC- Temporary Traffic Notice - LANGBROOK CROSS TO LUSON, Ermington (TTRO2457956) - MONDAY 14 OCTOBER 2024 for a maximum of 5 days Anticipated Finish MONDAY 14 OCTOBER 2024 Between the hours of 09:30 and 15:30
- Email from parishioner – parking at Fawns Close
- Email from Modbury Parish Council - Strimmer Training 25 June 2024 – Cllr Creese attended.
- DCC - (South) Temporary Traffic Notice - ROAD FROM MODBURY CROSS TO SEQUERS BRIDGE, Ermington, Holbeton (TTRO2458184) BC008FBA5808V & V01
- SHDC - Code of Conduct Complaint Response

**038/2024      TO CONFIRM DATE OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING AND VENUE**

RESOLVED the date of the next Parish meeting commencing at 7.30 pm, will be held on 3 September 2024, in the Reading Rooms.

The meeting closed at 9.45 pm.

*Denis Onley*

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*(Ermington Parish Council Chair)*

Date: 3 September 2024

**Agenda and minutes can be viewed on the Ermington Parish website - <http://www.ermingtonparish.com/parish-council>  
To report highway issues - <https://www.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/>  
SHDC website to report issues - <https://apps.southhams.gov.uk/webreportit>**