

Minutes of the meeting of Bridford Parish Council on Monday 2nd March 2026 in Bridford Village Hall

Present: Cllr. Topley (Chair), Cllr. Acheson, Cllr. Marriott, Cllr. Gallagher, Tamsin Mowat (Clerk)

Meeting opened at: 7pm

Agenda item	Action	Owner
<p>1) Public Discussion: Anne Mayes raised Primrose Rally – was actually a navigation exercise rather than a speed rally. Route of rally was changed just beforehand due to back lane road closure and some residents in centre of village upset by noise as unexpected. Other residents on the route had received a knock on the door and had it explained to them. Clerk has contacted rally organisers already with feedback and request to inform us in future and how frequently the rallies are held. Anne went to Christow to meet with Community Police to raise the issue and they apparently only turned up after 40 minutes and said it was 4pm rather than 2pm, despite emails stating 2pm. Cllr. Acheson said they’ve come once before since Covid, so maybe twice in 5 years. Next time posters can be displayed around the village to properly warn everyone.</p> <p>Anne Mayes raised the bus service – new contract with Dart Line getting better but still occasions when it doesn’t stop at the bus stop every time. Apparently, if you don’t stand outside in the rain it will go past. You have to flag bus down. No App to check bus times. Continue to monitor and see if things continue to improve.</p> <p>Anne Mayes raised the issue of congestion when driving down Pound Lane and gave an example at layby above Venn – standoff between cars going down from the village and a van coming up with a trailer. Much more traffic going through as being used as diversion to Moretonhampstead.</p> <p>Dan Tidball raised that the Chapel is up for sale. Newly renovated interior including Christian signs indoors and a number of people would like the signs to remain in the village as part of the history of the village. One parishioner would like to buy the signs and has contacted the Vendor. If no reply, Parish Council will consider contacting the agents, to let them know there is interest in the signs.</p>	<p>Ask Rally organisers to let Unity magazine know and give them contact details</p> <p>Continue to monitor bus service</p> <p>Liaise with Chair over contacting agents if needs be</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
<p>2) Apologies For Absence – to vote and agree on apologies received – Cllr. Purser (family reasons), Cllr Hollingsworth (work meeting), Cllr. Symons (PCC meeting) and Cllr Keeling – apologies all accepted and agreed</p>		
<p>3) Declarations Of Interest: Cllr. Gallagher declared interest in Planning application 0035/26 below</p>		
<p>4) Minutes – to approve and sign the Minutes of the meeting held on the 2nd February 2026 – approved and signed</p>	<p>Post approved minutes to website</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>5) Review actions from previous meeting:</p>		

<p>a) Clerk's: continue to monitor bus service and any issues, update website with approved minutes, put Highways as standing item on agenda each month, continue to raise, track and monitor highways cases and complaints, put Need to Talk youth support poster in Unity and on website and Facebook, set up payments in Unity Trust Bank, renew Microsoft annual subscription, Annotate policies with date adopted, make correction and post to website, check APM budget and report back to Chair, publicise date of APM, Carry over 20s plenty to March agenda, Share verges plan on website, Contact Hania Lee to arrange internal audit, Check insurance policy for coverage of volunteers for personal injury, Check DCC supply and pay for all training and tools and resources, Ask volunteers to formally agree to take part in Road Warden scheme, Let Anne Cronin know re. VH bookings, Publish meeting dates to website and Ask DCC Highways to install road closed signs at either end of road on back lane between Christow and Bridford. All in hand.</p> <p>b) Councillors': SS - painting fort in play park (carry over), JT: Update Parish Plan after meeting (drafted but need to add play park costings after this meeting) and ask volunteers to formally agree to take part in Road Warden Scheme (once insurance confirmed)</p>	<p>Carry over painting fort in play park to April agenda</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>6) District and County Councillor Reports – summarised here and full reports available at the end of the minutes and on the website</p> <p>County Cllr. Keeling covered the Devon County Council budget for 2026/7 covering Highways and transport, libraries, Children's services, Adult Social Care, Public Health and Communities as well as additional funding</p> <p>District Cllr. Swain covered Teignbridge District Council's budget for 2026/7 and safeguarding assets such as the Teignmouth Lido and public toilets, decarbonisation and local housing as well as the impact of Local Government Reorganisation.</p>		
<p>7) Chair's Report (for information only) – summarised here and full report available at the end of the minutes and on the website</p> <p>Chair covered Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), Local Leaders training, Parish Plan meeting and Village Hall meeting.</p>		
<p>8) FINANCES</p> <p><u>Income</u> None this month</p> <p><u>Expenditure</u> <u>Clerk's salary, pension and other expenses</u> <u>Paid</u> Adjusted figures for February after running PAYE Tools: Clerk's salary for February £666 minus Pension employee contribution of £64.53 = £601.47 paid by BACS. No Income tax due for February. Employer's NI contribution to HMRC for February £37.35 BACS</p> <p><u>To be paid</u></p>	<p>Make payments in Unity Trust Bank</p>	<p>Clerk</p>

<p>Clerk's salary March minus tax (£0) and employee's Pension contribution to NEST (£64.53) £601.47 BACS HMRC tax and NI for March c.£37.35 BACS (subject to running PAYE Tools) Clerk's Pension employer contribution to NEST March £4.38 DD ICO fee due 16/03/2026 £52 by DD ROSPA fee for play park inspection March 2026 £83 plus VAT - BACS <u>Recurring payments</u> Clerk's homeworking expenses - £6 per week SO Clerk's SIM and data plan - £3.99 per month recurring payment on BPC CC HP Instant Ink £4.49 now by BPC CC CC monthly fee £3 by DD to Lloyds Bank (for Unity Trust) Unity Trust Bank service charge £6 per month by DD</p> <p>Bank reconciliation and statement and Unity Trust Bank and CC statement for February 2026 supplied Council to resolve to accept the accounts – all agreed and resolved to accept</p>		
<p>9) Planning Dartmoor National Park has asked for observations from the Parish Council on the following planning applications: <u>Applications</u> 0035/26 - Full Planning Permission for excavation of field to create agricultural storage area and infill two pits at Barytes, Bridford – no objections DOC/0150/25 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 - Siting of a temporary rural workers' mobile home, extension to agricultural building; retention of track (retrospective) and yard (revised proposals) Coombehead Farm, Bridford – as stated previously, the Parish Council presumes that DNPA would apply the functional and financial criteria for such a proposal <u>Decisions</u> None this month</p>	<p>Send comments to DNPA</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>10) Churchyard closure- closure notice received from Privvy Council and circulated prior to the meeting – resolve to request transfer of responsibility to Teignbridge District Council (TDC) for the maintenance and responsibilities of looking after the churchyard. Clerk to inform TDC legal department and PCC in writing of resolution. Resolved to request the transfer of the responsibility to TDC – all agreed and resolved.</p>	<p>Inform Legal department at TDC and PPC</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>11) Play park costings – details circulated prior to the meeting. The issues, budget and timeframe for the eventual replacement of the play park equipment were discussed. Discussion covered the possibility of applying for development money under Section 106 (a Section 106 agreement is a legally binding obligation under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 that requires developers to make financial contributions or provide infrastructure) from Oxenpark development, if still available, or any other current local developments, how well used the play park is to justify the expenditure of c.£50 000+ for full replacement of equipment and surfacing, what the current state of the equipment is (ROSPA annual inspection due March 2026) and</p>	<p>Put Play Park consultation opportunities on April agenda QR code for consultation on park gate</p>	<p>Clerk Cllr. Gallagher</p>

<p>other issues that might impact the future of the play park such as Local Government Reorganisation and the potential effect on the lease of the land (currently on peppercorn lease from TDC). It was agreed that consultation of parishioners, including children, is important to ascertain current and projected usage and inform the design of the play park. Once consultations complete and land issues known, budget for the next five years needs to then be agreed. It was agreed that the Parish Council would address any safety issues in the short term whilst carrying out consultation in various ways and creating a financial plan for the next five years. Grants would need to be applied for nearer to the time of replacement as the money needs to be used within a set timeframe. PC to do as little as possible, as slowly as possible, aside from urgent safety issues. C.£700 in the pot from ringfenced Fete donations over the past three years for urgent repairs.</p>	<p>Find out if development funding from Oxenpark is still available</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>12) 20's plenty signs – discussed and agreed whether to replace old signs with new versions from school children and where funding will come from - £40 per sign previously and 8 signs in place. Could swap with Christow's old signs or buy new or could just swap round existing ones. Can only be put on private property. Also need putting up. Sign blindness an issue. What is the evidence? Highways recommended changing every year. Banner has been put up and a few stickers on bins. Do we think it's worth keeping signs in the village – all agreed to keep. Do we think it's worth changing the current signs round – all voted no. Do we think it's worth changing the location of the current signs? Also no as struggled to find locations for current ones. Pound Lane – need an additional sign. At Pooks turn? Hedgehog signs have been proven to be the most effective in other locations at making drivers slow down; agreed worth trying here.</p>	<p>Hedgehog signs to be trialled</p>	<p>Cllr. Marriott</p>
<p>13) Highways (standing item) – discussed latest issues and agreed actions – pothole by phone box has been filled. Back lane between Christow and Bridford still closed and no action as yet. Barton lane up from Swanaford turn – road apparently is in a terrible state. Agreed Clerk to contact DCC Highways.</p>	<p>Check progress and timescale on back lane repairs with Highways and report Swanaford Road again</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>Clerk's report for information only Road warden scheme – Clerk following up with insurers regarding personal injury cover and volunteers ready to undertake training once insurance cover confirmed, DCC Highways (as above), ROSPA annual play park inspection due March 2026</p>		
<p>Councillor's reports/training/Out and About in the Community (for information only) Cllr. Acheson - New Councillor training – now can't attend training on March 10th unfortunately so will try and reorganise</p>	<p>Reorganise training with DALC</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>Email information</p>		

DALC bulletins - up to #11 and NALC bulletins DNPA Planning applications DCC Highways updates Village Hall registration updates Churchyard closure updates		
<p>Meeting finished at 8.58pm</p> <p>Items for Information - The next council meeting will be on Monday 13th April 2026 at 7pm in the Village Hall. Note that the following meeting will be held on Monday 11th May (these two meetings are not on the usual first Monday of the month due to Bank Holidays). The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Thursday 7th May at 6pm in the Village Hall; refreshments and nibbles will be served and all parishioners are very welcome to attend.</p>		

Signed:

Date:

Chair of Bridford Parish Council

DRAFT

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

There have been several consultation opportunities re LGR. We are lucky to have District Cllrs Purser and Swain to keep us informed. I recently attended training run by the new Strategy and Leadership Team at Teignbridge District Council (TDC) Teignbridge. Key points were:

- New group there to listen and support us. I explained we were under impressed as a PC with the new policy of not allowing PCs to apply for funding directly, I felt there was a lack of understanding of the way small parishes work and the role the PC could play as facilitators – they said there were opportunities to apply by other routes and said they could talk to us outside of the meeting.
- They talked about a new Emergency Plan support initiative. I said we already had one; they said we could run it by them to see if there were any tweaks we could make. The recommendation was to add a household Emergency Plan Update which I will do when we review our Emergency Plan: they have a template for this. Other ideas were to ensure through advertising that our vulnerable residents are all signed up to the Priority Services Register.
- There is a new Clerk's concerns Form
- Waste Transfer station in Newton Abbot being done up
- Training opportunities: Anti – social Behaviour - 17th March 3.30
Community Safety Partnership – March 25th 10am
Drop in to talk to Team – October 13th Chudleigh Town Hall
Devon C/ty Resilience Forum Emergency Planning drop in TVCH – March 26th 10am (I will go to this)

Local Leaders Update Training

Information about funding and new ways of working, lessening full reliance on our precept alone for income

Parish Plan Meeting

In view of the two training sessions I have been on I suggest we discuss these issues as councillors when we have our Parish Plan Meeting on March 12th also bearing in mind agenda item 11

VH Meeting

I attended a Village Hall meeting as an observer. The Village Hall trustees are looking to kickstart the village hall and to work towards it being more of a village hub than it currently is. I assured the trustees that the Parish Council would be able to support ideas/suggestions/manpower/contacts, etc but that what we didn't have were any funds

County Councillor Richard Keeling's Report March 2026

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you to all the Councillors I have spoken to over the last month with their concerns in their areas. This report covers mainly the new budget at Devon County Council which was passed with unanimous support - 52 in favour.

Key Headlines

Highways

The budget puts an extra £19 million into roads to fix potholes and highways drainage.

There's an extra £500,000 to improve quality assurance on the work done.

It's the first Liberal Democrat budget since last May's elections and in a full-on display of your councillors working together and putting aside politicking - the budget was voted for by Green, Independent, Conservative and Reform councillors. Just two councillors decided not to vote and abstained.

Libraries

Libraries Unlimited was supported with a grant of over 7 million pounds with an increase in the book purchases to £500,000. A planned £650,000 efficiency saving was cancelled and then money put back in the budget along with a new £1m transformation reserve. To be clear not 1 of the 50 libraries are being closed; we are investing more, because we are listening to residents.

Budget For Residents

The budget focuses on the services residents rely on most, particularly support for children, vulnerable adults, the condition of our roads and your concerns. One of the biggest concerns as well as potholes was that the libraries were supported. I spoke out at Cabinet and voted to support the investment into our libraries which are our community hubs, the additional 1 million transformation fund will help with libraries being able to open longer by introducing technology.

So at the Full Council meeting (Tuesday 24 February) it was agreed that a 4.99 per cent increase on our council tax share, this amounts to £89.91 a year (£1.73 a week) for a Band D property for the county council's share (precept).

This would result in a council tax requirement for the authority of just over £610 million for 26/27. To balance the position, the authority has to deliver £38.98 million of savings, alternative funding or additional income. The budget explains how the council will continue to support local services at a time when costs are rising and demand for help is increasing.

The council will spend £839.2 million on daytoday services next year. This is £33.2 million more (4.1 per cent) than in 2025/26.

Councillors also agreed a £770.6 million capital investment programme covering the five years from 2026/27 to 2030/31.

This money will be used for major projects such as road repairs, new school places, support for children with special educational needs, and improvements to council buildings across Devon.

Roads and transport

Spending on highways maintenance will rise to £32.4 million in 2026/27, an increase of £2 million. Full Council also agreed an additional £4 million investment for highways maintenance over the next financial year.

This will pay for more road repairs, better drainage, clearing roadside gullies and protecting Devon's road network.

This is all part of the Climate Change, Environment and Transport budget of £96.9 million. Additionally, over the next five years, £546.1 million in total will be invested in highways. This includes an extra £55 million over five years for preventative maintenance.

Children and families

The Children and families budget will see the largest increase in funding across the council. Spending will rise to £268 million in 2026/27, an increase of £19.1 million. This reflects growing pressure on children's social care, early help for families, and support for children who cannot live at home.

Children and families – capital investment

A total of £76.5 million will be invested over five years in children's homes, school expansions and specialist education provision.

Helping children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities remains a key priority. Over the next five years, £25.8 million will be spent on new and expanded specialist schools to create more places for children who need extra support.

Adult social care

Adult social care continues to be the council's biggest area of spending.

The budget for adult social care will rise to £395.9 million in 2026/27, an increase of £9.9 million, or 2.6 per cent. This helps cover rising costs, including higher wages for care staff.

The council will also invest £51.6 million over five years to help adults live independently, including adaptations to homes and investment in care facilities and equipment.

Public health, communities and libraries

The council will receive £37.7 million to support public health services, including help with drug and alcohol misuse and stop smoking services.

Spending on community services and libraries will total £14.4 million in 2026/27.

As I mentioned in the headlines we agreed additional funding of £225,000 to restore the book fund to £500,000 and an extra £425,000 to support general library delivery during transition.

Together, these total £650,000, and reverses the proposed efficiency saving within the original libraries budget resulting in a libraries budget of more than £7 million.

In addition, a £1 million reserve for Libraries and Rural Hubs will be established to support genuine transformation and community led improvement.

Additional funding

The council also approved targeted funding which reflects priorities that have arisen through meetings of the council's scrutiny committees, community feedback and consultations with businesses and voluntary organisations. These include an additional £600,000 to improve the speed in which Education Health Care Plans are delivered; £300,000 additional foster care support; £106,000 to strengthen domestic abuse provision; increase of each councillor's locality budget to £10,000.

There is also an additional £500,000 for post-16 and foster care transport.

Potholes

Please note that you can report online and track your issue quickly: [Report a problem - Roads and transport](https://www.devon.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-a-problem/) <https://www.devon.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-a-problem/>

District councillor's report, Andy Swain, February 2026

This week saw Teignbridge pass the budget for the next year. <https://news.teignbridge.gov.uk/council-approves-budget-for-20262027/> For years we have talked about the shortfall in future years for the Teignbridge finances, caused by decades of austerity policy and eye-watering cuts to the revenue councils used to get from central government through revenue support grant, new homes bonus and other streams which once delivered much of the council income alongside the modest share of council tax. Most of our council tax goes to Devon County council. Those cuts were delivered very suddenly and there has been much uncertainty in replacement revenue from government which meant previous budgets had to cover that risk.

The situation has changed significantly this year in various ways. The local government review means that TDC Finances will be merged with neighbouring councils, most of whom have much higher levels of debt than Teignbridge. A priority now is to safeguard assets for the community for example looking for new homes for services such as public toilets and Teignmouth Lido, which will likely be seen as non-statutory losses by the new unitary. We are starting to see real savings from the program of changes we put in place to close the budget gaps. Improvements in online systems mean more interactions can be automated, reducing costs and creating capacity on manual systems for residents unable to work online. Other savings have included reducing office space, with more mobile working practices. The Climate change measures to decarbonise Forde House and the leisure centres, and electrifying the vehicle fleet where possible, are paying back now and improving the revenue budget, so the shortfall covered by earmarked reserves is only 1 million, compared to several million in previous years. The budget includes a 2.99% increase in council tax (an extra £6.05 for Band D). Non-statutory services that we are still protecting include: 100% council tax support for those who need it most. Support for local voluntary and community organisations such as Citizens Advice, with core grants rising by 4% for the next three years. The councillors' community fund will continue at £1,000, helping small local projects and groups across the district. Continuing investment in supporting improvements to essential local infrastructure. Continuing to invest in affordable housing, town centre regeneration, environmental improvements and reducing carbon emissions. Reducing the use and cost of temporary accommodation by increasing the supply of council-owned homes. An increase in the approved borrowing to fund employment sites in the area if suitable proposals come forward. In the past this feature has been underused, but there are now more projects in the wings which are likely to come forward. Another opportunity to fix good things in place before dissolving into the unitary.

I am pleased to see so many of the non-statutory benefits provided by Teignbridge, being protected despite the central government funding cuts. The improved clarity on funding is welcome, and I am pleased we will continue the work on decarbonising and delivering council housing.