

Draft

**Minutes of the Meeting of Shirwell Parish Council
held on the
10th April 2025 in the Village Hall, Shirwell**

Present

**Cllr J Friend (Chairman)
Cllr J Watts
Cllr E Abretti
Cllr Mrs S Pine**

Also in attendance 3 members of the public

Officer

G Dwyer

Apr 25/1 Apologies for Absence

**Cllr R Pelling, Cllr S Shortridge, Cllr Mrs Pollard County Councillor A
Davis and District Councillor J Hunt**

Apr 25/2 Public Question Time

- **A member of the public expressed concern at a recent poaching incident and the safety issues it raised. The matter had been reported to the Police and the photographs taken at the time made available to them. Incidents such as this should be reported through the emergency 999 number.**
- **Reports had been made of cars speeding through the village. RESOLVED Cllr Abretti in his role as the Councils Police advocate to report the matter to the police.**

A copy of his report is given below.

At a recent Parish Council Meeting it was reported that cars were travelling far too fast through the Village on the road that passes the school towards the A39.

We have purchased a speed awareness sign and this will be installed in the near future, in the meantime as this road passes the school can the Police do anything to make drivers aware that this is a 30 mph area, particularly important at school drop off and collection times.

- **Concern was expressed at the intrusion onto to the highway of roadside hedges at Burrridge and Park View. RESOLVED the matter be reported to Devon County Council via the website**

Apr 25/3 Minutes of the Meeting held on the 13th March 2025

RESOLVED that the minutes as previously circulated be approved

Apr 25/4 Matters arising from the minutes

See agenda item 13. (Speed Awareness monitor)

Apr 25/5 Inspection of Defibrillator

The defibrillator has been inspected and cleaned.

Apr 25/6 Report of the County Councillor

The County Councillor had apologised for her non-attendance and a copy of her report is attached to these minutes

Apr 25/7 Questions to the County Councillor

There were no questions.

Apr 25/8 Report of the District Councillor

A copy of her report as lead member for waste and recycling at North Devon District Council was distributed as part of the correspondence file.

Apr 25/9 Questions to the District Councillor

There were no questions

Apr 25/10 Correspondence

The following correspondence had been distributed in advance of the meeting.

District Councillor's report

DALC invoice

Police Press release entitled 'boots on the ground'

Apr 25/11 Planning Applications

- Planning Application: 79984 Blatchford House Pilton West Barnstaple Devon EX31 4EU Listed building consent for internal alterations including restoration and replacement of some windows and doors. It was RESOLVED to recommend APPROVAL**

Apr 25/12 Cheques for Payment

A cheque to G Dwyer for salary £150 was signed at the meeting but the invoice for DALC annual membership was not approved as the recent

increases in the annual membership cost was not considered as value for money.

Apr 25/13 Speed Camera Monitor

The Council thanked County Councillor Davis for the grant contribution towards the speed monitor. It was RESOLVED that the Clerk investigate the position vis a vis insurance

Apr 25/14 Reports from Councillors

Councillors expressed concern at the amount of canine excrement on Strawberry Lane. RESOLVED the matter be reported to NDC Environment Officer

Apr 25/15 Clerks Report

The Clerk had nothing to report

Apr 25/16 Public Questions regarding business on this agenda

There were none

Apr 25/17 Urgent Business

There was none

The meeting closed 7.45 pm

Chairman:

Dated:.....

**Shirwell Parish Council
County Councillors report
April 2025**

Bray Valley

Many of you will know I've been campaigning for the road to be repaired for many months, it is not in the area I represent but it is a vital road for many of us accessing the A361 North Devon Link Road.

The road will be repaired under a full closure, subject to weather and any extenuating circumstances overnight Monday 7th April to Wednesday 16th April 7pm-06.00am

Local Government Reorganisation

The update is that Devon County will have a full council meeting last month councillors voted on the County Submission: several options have been submitted so that the new council after May 1st can work on what is the best option for the whole of Devon.

Link to the report; [Agenda for Council on Thursday, 20th March, 2025, 2.00 pm - Democracy in Devon](#)

Background below;

The English Devolution White Paper was published just before Christmas.

Extract from the ministers letter probably gives some explanation as to where we are heading as residents in a two tier area;

Local government reorganisation My intention is to formally invite unitary proposals in January 2025 from all councils in two-tier areas, and small neighbouring unitary councils. In this invitation, I will set out further detail on the criteria I will consider when taking decisions on the proposals that are submitted to Government. I intend to ask for interim plans by March 2025. As set out in the White Paper, new unitary councils must be the right size to achieve efficiencies, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks. For most areas, this will mean creating councils with a population of 500,000 or more. However, there may be exceptions to ensure new structures make sense for an area, including on devolution. Final decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis. We will ask you to work with other councils in your area to develop unitary proposals that are in the best interests of the whole area, rather than developing competing proposals.

Statement from Andrea

Following publication of the Governments Devolution White paper it is clear that considerable change is going to happen in Local Government in Devon.

We have two options;

1. Do nothing and the government will impose changes
2. Engage with government to get the best result for the residents of Devon.

I believe that engagement with the government is the best option. While I may not agree with all the government's proposals, I need to do everything I can to ensure that the changes will make local government sustainable for the long term and able to withstand shocks like the pandemic and the world financial crisis. At the heart of all this must be a

stronger voice to inform the government of the issues my residents in Combe Martin Rural and the residents in the wider area of Devon face.

Update 05.02.25- The Government has turned down Devon County Council's request to postpone its elections in May.

This afternoon Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government Angela Rayner announced that the council's request was among those which have been rejected, meaning that the council's May elections will proceed as planned.

The announcement coincides with confirmation that the Government has signed the necessary legislation to bring the Devon and Torbay's Combined County Authority (CCA) into being.

The Devon and Torbay CCA is the governance needed for devolved decision-making powers and funding to flow from Whitehall to local decision-makers in Devon and Torbay. Through the Devon and Torbay CCA, it means that decisions that were previously made in Whitehall will now be made locally on priority issues including housing, jobs and skills, transport and economy.

Letter received from minister Wednesday 5th February

We ask for an interim plan to be submitted on or before 21 March 2025, in line with the guidance set out in the attached Annex. My officials will provide feedback on your plan to help support you to develop final proposals. I will expect any full proposal to be submitted by 28 November. If I decide to implement any proposal, and the necessary legislation is agreed by Parliament, we will work with you to move to elections to new 'shadow' unitary councils as soon as possible as is the usual arrangement in the process of local government reorganisation. Following submission, I will consider any and all proposals carefully before taking decisions on how to proceed.

The DCC website is very useful for reporting highway problems and the reports go straight to the contractor. [Report a problem - Roads and transport](#)

Alternatively, the highway contact number is 0345 155 1004

If it's a river flooding the environment agency can be contacted on 0345 988 1188

Winter road updates; <https://www.devon.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/safe-travel/winter-travel/>

Travel Devon website; [home - Travel Devon](#)

Finally from me a personal note;

Thank you for being such a lovely Parish Council and residents, I've had a great time coming to the meetings and meeting so many of you, I hope to be back after May 1st but if I'm not re elected I want to wish you well for the future.

Andrea Davis

County Councillor

Combe Martin Rural Division

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