**Churchstow Parish Council**

**Minutes**

of the meeting held on Monday 22nd September 2025

Held at Churchstow Church Hall @ 7:30pm

**Present:** Cllrs Stewart (Chair), Hind, Woodley, Green, Barrett-Burn and Bromfield. Louisa Pepperell (Clerk). Cllr Louise Wainwright (DCC).

**Apologies:** Cllr Williams. Cllr Bonham (SHDC).

**Chairman’s Welcome.**

**10 Minute Public Forum.**  No members of the public attended.

**Minutes from the last meeting (15/07/2024):** These were signed by Cllr Stewart.

**DCC Cllr Report:**  Cllr Wainwright spoke to the PC about the local government reorganisation and the importance for all residents to complete the survey on the SHDC website [Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution | South Hams District Council](https://www.southhams.gov.uk/your-council/local-government-reorganisation-and-devolution) to have their chance to say what they would like to come from the reorganisation, she supports the 1,4,5 model that is suggest and would encourage residents to also do so to save the risk of Plymouth and Exeter taking encroaching on the South Hams area. The Clerk is to share the link for the survey with all Cllrs, on facebook and in the minutes, Cllr Barrett-Burn is to make a poster for the shop and the notice board.

Cllr Wainwright also encouraged anyone who is interested in joining to attend the River Summit at Kingsbridge Community College on the 4th October (9:30am registration for 10am prompt start) to have your say in matters relating to our water courses, sewerage, planning, flood management plans. There will also be the opportunity to put in requests to be included in a bif for funding.

**SHDC Cllr Bonham Report:** Cllr Bonham had sent the following report: There seems to have been some unfortunate noise disturbance following the music event on 1 st – 2 nd August near Bantham roundabout, which was registered through a Temporary Event Notice. SHDC will take note of this for future applications. Following emails I have been in touch with DCC and SHDC staff about the problems in Pooly Lane, and replies from SHDC have been copied to the Clerk.

A reminder that South Hams is holding a series of consultation events on Local Government Reorganisation including at Kingsbridge Community College on 2 October and at Cliff House, Salcombe on 7 October. Book at <https://www.southhams.gov.uk/lgr-events> Devon CC are also holding a number of engagement events on this topic. Sustainable South Hams is organising an Energy Assembly on 18th October at Kingsbridge Community College which could be of interest to Parish Councillors and residents.

**Matters arising from last minutes:**

**S106 Gate & Clearing.** Cllr Hind reported that the person due to help with the gate had been ill. Cllr Hind is to purchase a post and organise the new post and gate to be put in asap as school children are now having to climb the gate which becomes more hazardous over winter.

The Clerk had had an email from a company who advertised clearing recreational spaces, it was agreed that the Clerk would ask the company to quote for clearing the S106 land. Cllr Woodley is to also ask a contact he has to quote also. The quotes can then be discussed at the next meeting.

**Clerk’s Report:**

***Invoices Payable.*** Payments were agreed for Clerk salary £475.54.

Cllr Stewart reported that the VAS sign by the church is periodically not working, he is to check the batteries but requested if he finds them to be faulty that he can purchase replacements, this was agreed.

**Smithy Lease Payment.** The Clerk clarified with Cllr Stewart that he will be paying £45 to DCC for their filing the land registry for the Old Smithy Land. Cllr Stewart is to action this.

**Clerk Salary.** The Clerk informed the PC of the NALC Clerk pay award increase and agreed back pay to 1st April. This will mean an increase in Clerk salary of 56p per hour. It was agreed that the Clerk would instruct SHDC Payroll to action this.

**Turbine.** The Clerk informed the PC that the wind turbine planning application in neighbouring Thurlestone parish had been withdrawn.

**Knotweed.** The Clerk confirmed that following a recent alert to there being Japanese Knotweed next to a footpath in the parish that she had reported it to DCC, Devon Biodiversity and Highways who had forwarded it to PROW (public rights of way) department.

**Event Debrief.** This item is relating to the same event as mentioned above in Cllr Bonham’s report. The Clerk confirmed their had only been one confirmed complaint to the PC, she has asked SHDC to confirm if they received any further complaints but had not been informed of any. The licence for this type of event means the PC have no say in whether the licence is granted or not, SHDC have and will deal with any for future events.

**Additional Matters:**

**Highways / Lengsthman.** Cllr Stewart and Cllr Green had met with the lengthsman Ian in the village and shown him around the parish and to all the areas of concern regarding flooding and drainage etc. A discussion was had and it was agreed that employing the lengthsman to attend to these areas and maintain them is a good idea. Cllr Stewart is to speak with the lengthsman and ask how many hours he feels is needed to firstly address the problem areas and then how many hours monthly / annually to maintain them. This information can then be discussed at the next meeting.

Cllr Woodley had received a request from a farmer in the parish asking if the PC could request that Highways clear the mud which had built up on the road between Elston Cottages and the first corner of the lane heading towards Thurlestone, also on the road after Bantham Cross heading towards Bantham. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact Highways requesting this be done.

The Clerk reported that she had contacted Highways regarding the flooding at the top of AG Hill, Highways said they had cleared the ditch but it may be the gulley that is causing the flooding, Highways confirmed that this would be Highways responsibility if they determine it to be a defect.

Follwing a suggestion at the on site Highways meeting the Clerk had asked Highways if making Pump Lane a no entry from Elston could be possible, Highways confirmed it may be if there was local support and funds available, a discussion was had and it was agreed that this would not be the preferred way to address the rat run of Pump Lane as it was felt that once drivers knew there would be no oncoming traffic that they may even increase their speed. It was agreed that a chicane(s) would be a preferable way of slowing traffic, especially once the S106 land is developed. Cllr Stewart also raised the desire to have a table top crossing from the S106 land over Pump Lane, it was discussed and recalled that Highways had felt a table tops were not popular anymore due to increased noise from vehicles travelling over them, the PC would like to discuss the options further with Highways and Cllr Stewart requested the Clerk contact Highways to request a meeting to discuss chicanes, table tops, crossing from S106 land, extra signage for Pump Lane. The Clerk is to action this.

The Clerk had recently provided video and photo evidence to Highways and Planning of water run off exiting South Hams Business Park on to Pooley Lane via a pipe in the bank, causing flooding on Pooley Lane. Planning were going to reinvestigate. Highways had been in contact with the business park to inform then that this was not acceptable, the business park confirmed they have plans to redirect the water and a meeting has been arranged for all parties to meet at the business Park in October to discuss.

**Planning Applications 1673/25/HHO & 1674/25/LBC – Fleur Cottage – Office.** The Clerk apologised as the above applications had not been forwarded to the Cllrs due to the August sabbatical, she had contacted Planning and requested they postpone the decision date to allow them to be discussed at the September meeting but this was not agreed and the applications had at the time of the meeting been granted. The Clerk showed the plans to the Cllrs so they were aware of what was to go ahead and it was agreed they would have supported the applications anyway.

**S106 Committee & Meeting.** The Clerk provided latest drawing from Ian Pepperell for the S106 Land showing proposed gabion with planters to create 2 levels on the land, also re-routing the footpath as requested by the PC so it does not cut straight across the land but will provide sufficient gradient and access for wheelchair / buggy users. The PC agreed the drawings are of a suitable nature to take to Planning for their approval in principle, the Clerk is to do this. Once this agreement is received a committee can be formed to then look in to the design and detail of plans more and move this forward to public consultation.

***Councillor Advocate Scheme.***  Cllr Williams was not present to report.

**Any Other Business:** Cllr Woodley had received notice of some land development / building works that had been carried out in the parish that do not seem to be part of a nearby planning application. The Clerk is to contact Planning to ask if they can check if the works being carried out require planning permission.

Cllr Green asked the Clerk if there was any response regarding the rerouting request of the 164 bus to include Churchstow. The Clerk had not had a response and was to forward her request to a different email address given by Cllr Wainwright for her attention.

Cllr Barrett-Burn asked for confirmation of date for the Christmas Lights Switch On Party this year. Cllr Woodley is to speak to Mike and confirm back to the Cllrs.

The meeting closed at 9:10pm.

**The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 21st October 2025 @7:30pm in Churchstow Church Hall.**