

PETROCKSTOWE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held in the Baxter Hall
on Tuesday 20th May 2025 at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllrs M Busby (Chair), A Hunkin, I Fisher (Vice-Chair), J Richards, M Thompson, M Goaman

In attendance: Parish Clerk - F Lowe, DCllr C Wheatley, 2 members of the public

Public Question Time [Public Bodies \(admissions to meetings\) Act 1960 s1 extended by the LG Act 1972 s100](#). The members of the public raised planning application ref 1/0338/2025/FUL and gave the PC background information and assurances that the new development will be completed by different builders if approved. They advised that the entranceway will be rectified and that sewerage capacity is confirmed by SWW to be adequate for the proposed dwellings.

Report from County/District Councillors

DCllr Wheatley – gave a summary of his written report, which is attached as an appendix.

DCllr Cottle-Hunkin - sent a report, which is attached as an appendix

1. **Election of Chair & Vice Chair.** Councillor Busby was proposed as Chair by Councillor Hunkin and seconded by Councillor Richards. Councillor Fisher was proposed as Vice-Chair by Councillor Hunkin and seconded by Councillor Richards. **Unanimously agreed** and Declarations of Acceptance of Office completed and signed.
2. **Acceptance of apologies for absence.** [Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972](#) requires a record to be kept of the members present and that this record form part of the minutes of the meeting. [Members who cannot attend a meeting should tender apologies to the Parish Clerk as it is usual for the grounds upon which apologies are tendered also to be recorded. Under Section 85\(1\) of the Local Government Act 1972, members present must decide whether the reason\(s\) for a member's absence are accepted.](#) Cllr J Brasier and DCllr C Cottle-Hunkin. Apologies accepted
3. **Declarations of interest.** Members to declare any interest they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the relevant authorities ([Disclosable Pecuniary Interests](#)) [Regulation 2012 \(SI 2012/1464\)](#) (NB this does not preclude any later declarations). **None further declared at this meeting.**
4. **Approval of Minutes.** To receive and sign the minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council of 18th March 2025, and the Annual Parish Meeting of 18th April 2025. [LGA 1972 Sch 12 para 41\(1\)](#). **Resolved:** that they were a true record of the meetings decisions and signed as such.
5. **Annual Governance & Accountability Return 2025** – To resolve to approve and sign the annual accounts. All documents previously emailed to all Councillors
 - a. **Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2023/24** - this was read out by the Clerk and unanimously agreed. **Signed by the Chair and Clerk**
 - b. **Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023/24** – this was acknowledged and agreed by all. **Signed by the Chair**
 - c. **Certificate of Exemption** – this was acknowledged and agreed by all. **Signed by the Chair and Clerk**
 - d. **Receive the Annual Internal Auditors Report** – there was a query on the response regarding internal control. **In future this will be minuted to reflect that it has been completed quarterly.**
6. **Current Business** –
 - a. **SLCC Membership** – payment of £80.00 was unanimously agreed. The benefits of the SLCC membership and the DALC membership were discussed.

Initials of Chair

- b. **Neighbour Priority Statement** – following a discussion, it was agreed that this would be useful to have because of the impact of Devolution. The cost and time to produce it is currently prohibitive. Item closed.
- c. **Parking and The Square and surface repair** – there have been complaints of an untaxed van parking on The Square. The cost to the PC to remove this is prohibitive. The surface of The Square is deteriorating and will need to be included in the budget proposal/precept for 2066/2027.
- d. **Bus Stop Painting** – Councillor Busby will request quotes from local trades to repaint – **Cllr Busby**
- e. **Rec Ground** – following a discussion, it was decided not to proceed with a DD. By supplying monthly readings, the usage is regularly checked and excessive use/leaks would be highlighted more quickly. It is hoped that a new tariff for low usage, which is free of standing charge, will be introduced and can be adopted by the RG.
- f. **Dates for 2025-2026** – All Councillors have received and acknowledged these.

7. **Matters arising from previous minutes.**

- a. **Recreation Ground Signs** – these have been installed – item closed.
- b. **Outstanding planning/enforcement issues within the village** – Enforcement have advised that they will not comment on enforcement issues; they do not update the PC on the ongoing status or advise on the decision once their investigation is complete.
- c. **Rec Grd Fete** – After much discussion it was felt more information was needed from the Rec committee with regard to The 'Fayre'
 - Bouncy castle information
 - Estimate of revenue for the day
 - Budget of costs for the day
 - Projected profits for the day
 - Revenue to-date
 - Costs to-date
 - Risk assessment for event

8. **Planning**

Council is asked to discuss the below planning application/s and inform the Clerk of its comments to forward to Torridge District Council. Any planning applications received after the distribution of this agenda will also be considered.

- a. **Application Ref:** 1/0327/2025/FUL Date: 11th April 2025 Proposal: Erection of grain store Location: Land At Grid Reference 251396 110549, Petrockstowe, Devon. Closing date of 5th May and Clerk responded under delegated duties - *Comments sent to Planning: Petrockstowe Parish Council have no objections to this application.*
- b. **Application Ref:** 1/0338/2025/FUL Date: 16th April 2025 Proposal: Construction of 3no. dwellings. Location: Land At Grid Reference 251114 109537, Petrockstowe, Devon. Following a lengthy discussion, the majority decision was to object to this application. There were 2 abstentions from Councillors Goaman and Thompson. The Clerk was instructed to send the following comments:

Petrockstowe Parish Council object to the above application on the following grounds:

In response to the Statement made by the applicant

1.6 The village is not on a regular bus route and has one bus per week.

2.7 The proposed houses are quite large and similar to those already constructed (2 of which are still on the market) and therefore do not contribute to "a range of housing types and tenures that will help meet needs of single, young family and older person households"

4.1 *The present access is unsuitable for the existing houses. One has to pull almost right across the road in order to see traffic coming from your left. Highways are investigating this. (The builder has advised that he would remove some of the bank, however the bank below the adjoining property contributes to a large extent to the lack of sight, and is outside the bounds of the applicant/ developer). The access is unsighted and dangerous.*

4.3 Para 116 *This proposal will at least double the current level of traffic. It is stated that the site had a previous commercial use. It did not, it was grazing.*

4.4 Para 112 a) *Poor access*
 b) *no mix of use*
 c) *virtually no public transport.*

4.6/7 *The existing point of access has poor visibility and impacts seriously on the highway.*

4.10 a) *access - unsuitable*
 b) *virtually no public transport*
 d) *virtually no pavements*

2) *The original objections to building on this plot still stand. They are accessible on application 1/0246/2020/OUT.*

3) *Planning creep - on the original application for 3 houses, the PC was assured that there would not be additional applications/properties considered for this site, and that as the driveway/road ended at the 3rd house, it would not be possible. The driveway has been built to allow further properties in contravention of that.*

4) *Planning for approx.14 houses agreed – this village would seem to be supplied with dwellings for well into the future.*

5) *Sewer problems - the sewerage pipes that would service these properties do not have sufficient capacity. We understand that the capacity of the new pipes is sufficient until it connects with the existing pipes.*

6) *Access – the original objection will be aggravated with additional 3 houses. Already a number of minor accidents have occurred, with a serious accident waiting to happen. This is a junction onto the main road through the village. Highways have advised that the current entrance has not been completed correctly to the previous application which is exacerbating the issue. However, the original plans encroach on a neighbouring property (to reduce the bank and increase the sight line). The splay on the left hand side from the proposed development is not sited correctly. The bin store has not been built for the existing properties, and no provision is made for the new properties.*

7) *Since 2004 there has been 34 new houses built in the Parish. If the 14 houses that currently have planning approval are built, it will mean that in under 25 years, 48 houses will have been built which equates to almost 25% of the total dwellings in the Parish . The area is classed as rural and this is a large percentage for a small village to assimilate.*

8) *There are no footpaths in the village, making it dangerous to walk to the church and village hall. There are very poor public services and the doctor's surgery is 7 miles distance. The village has very little infrastructure. The pub is closed, almost certainly permanently, despite village efforts and St. Petroc's church is closed.*

Council is asked to receive planning application decisions made by Torridge District Council. Council is asked to note the below decisions:

a. **none**

9. **Correspondence.** Cllrs agreed that they had received the correspondence as listed in the agenda from 13th March to 13th May 2025 inclusive, and had no comments.

10. **Re-adoption of Council Documents** Councillors need to review, amend if necessary and readopt the Council documents as below. Current versions available on the website.

- a. The Code of Conduct – no changes - **readopted**
- b. Data Retention Policy – no changes - **readopted**
- c. Model Standing Orders – no changes - **readopted**

11. **Clerk/Parish Councillors Reports**

a. **Highways Report** – The Neighbourhood Highways Officer responded as shown in italics below:

- 1. The route of the pipework to egress from the 2 drains (one on either side of the road) between the nature reserve and the farm buildings (Varney's) requires identification. *This diagram is taken from our system:*



- 2. Contact should be made with SWW regarding possible leak from pipework supplying the farm buildings mentioned above, as next drain north appears to be continually flowing for no other reason. *This has been raised with South West Water*
- 3. Remedial work needed on erosion potholes immediately adjacent to the drain mentioned above (2). *These were repaired on March 28th*
- 4. The landowner (Aish Barn) should be approached regarding a possible blockage to the outflow from the 2 drains (one on either side of the road) to the south of Aish Cross. *A letter has been sent to the property owner, bringing the potential blockage to their attention*
- 5. The verges in and around Petrockstowe (damaged by excess traffic during the A386 closure) to be re-instated rather than road being edged with tarmac. *We are currently in discussion with our contractor regarding the best way to remedy the damage. Work will be carried out in due course.*
- 6. Drainage around Rowan Farm to be investigated to prevent flow across the highway and ice in cold weather. A minor drainage scheme has been drawn up and if budgets allow, work will be carried out this summer.
- 7. *3 drains on Aish Hill to be cleared (I think this is already scheduled but I include it to remind everyone that they are blocked solid). Orders to clear these gullies and jet the outfall*

Initials of chair

Minutes 20th May 2025

pipework have been raised with our contractor. They are working through a large backlog of similar work and these gullies will be attended as soon as practicable.

Councillor Richards advised that part of the Tarka Trail had been resurfaced near Mere River and that the footpath through Patchill had been ploughed up again without being reinstated/identifiable as a footpath.

12. **Finance**

- a. **Petrockstowe Year End summary 2024-2025** – for information
- b. **Reserve Account balance as at 13/05/25 – £7676.57** (£2,000 earmarked for PlayPark)
- c. **To note receipt of income since 10/03/25: £3,619.50**
 - 11/03/25 – VAT reclaim – £154.50
 - 01/04/25 – Compensation HugoFox - £100.00
 - 17/04/25 – National Grid compensation - £365.00 (RG)
 - 30/04/25 – TDC Precept - £3,000.00
- d. **Previously approved expenditure since 10/03/25: £1,711.76**
 - 10/03/25 – HugoFox - .gov - £11.99
 - 27/03/25 – HugoFox – website - £11.99
 - 28/03/24 – Hire of Hall (2024-25) – 90.00
 - 28/03/24 – Chairman’s Allowance - £25.00
 - 29/04/24 – HugoFox – website - £11.99
 - 08/04/25 – HugoFox - .gov - £11.99
 - 09/04/25 - Clerks Salary & Payroll expenses – £1,524.82
 - 27/04/25 – HugoFox – website costs - £11.99
 - 08/05/25 – HugoFox - .gov - £11.99
- e. **Payments to approve: £80.00**
 - 01/06/25 - SLCC Membership - £80.00
- f. **Previously approved payments to be made – £47.96**
 - 08/05/25 – HugoFox - .gov - £11.99
 - 27/05/25 – HugoFox – website - £11.99
 - 08/06/25 - HugoFox - .gov - £11.99
 - 27/06/25 – HugoFox – website - £11.99

Previous Current Account Balance: £ 3,223.31

Receipts between 10/03/25 and 13/05/25 – £3,619.50

Payments between 10/03/25 and 13/05/25 - £1,711.76

Account Balance: £5,143.04

(agrees with Bank statement as at 13/05/24)

Within the bank accounts £2,379.84 is earmarked for the Rec Grd and £2,222.70 is earmarked for the Play Park

Date of next meeting

The next Parish Council Meeting was confirmed as Tuesday 15th July 2025 at 7.30pm in Baxter Hall. A Planning meeting will be held on Tuesday 17th June 2025 if required.

With no further business, the Chairman thanked all for attending and closed the meeting at 9.16pm

Chairman Date

Initials of chair