

Instow Parish Council Minutes – 20 February 2025

Instow Village Hall 19:00 pm

Attendees: - Cllrs: Cllrs Arthur, Bunclark, Foster, Hopkins, McCrum, Scott.
C Cllr Biederman, D Cllr Coombs.

Parish Clerk J-A Middleton, 8 members of the public.

Apologies: - Cllrs: Johnson.

126 The meeting was opened at 19:00 by the Chair

The Chair read out an updated statement from Cllr Johnson who is engaging as duty liaison with all parties from Beach Management group. *See Appendix 2* and Parish Council Website

The Chair read out information regarding the Car Park on Marine Parade – Maintenance and Expense Management – *See Appendix 3* and parish Council Website

Cllr. Johnson has been instrumental in progressing the process of obtaining a granted license to enable removal of sand in the approved area This process involved meetings with various agents. Cllr. Johnson also took responsibility for guiding future communications related to this license and the future works. The Chair and Cllr. Biederman are acknowledging and appreciating Cllr. Johnson's work.

127 **Councillors Disclosure of Interest** – Cllr. Arthur – Yelland development

128 **Public Session** –

A member of the public Mr Coles & Mr Goeman asked for an update on the Sand Management and costing to for removal of sand, and prevention in the future.

The Chair read out the statement form Cllr Johnson who is engaging as duty liaison with all parties from Beach Management group. *See Appendix 2* and Parish Council Website.

The chair read out information on Marine Parade Car Park: Maintenance and Expense Management of the car park after the public asked if the IPC could pay towards the sand clear up and prevention. *See Appendix 3*

129 County & Ward Members *See Appendix 4*

130 Confirmation of Minutes from 17 January 2025 – Approved

131 Any matters arising

Councillors to be informed by the clerk of training available via Devon Association of Local Councils Clerk (DALC) The Clerk will keep a record of training undertaken

132 Tracker update – see separate spreadsheet also available on IPC website

133 Correspondence

- a. email dated 09/02/2025 Anthony Barnes – Cost of the sand clearance – *Responded*
- b. email dated 08/02/2025 Jacqui Poole – Incident on the evening of 07/02/2025 Near the Instow arms / Bus Stop - *Responded*
- c. email dated 07/02/2025 Proposal for change of parish boundaries Yelland -. Quay Development - Community Governance Review NDDC - Discussed and responded
- d. email dated 28/01/2025 - Layby at Marshfield *Actioned Clean – up 3rd & 12th February 2025*
- e. email dated 23/01/25 Instow Sand & Flooding Action Group Email from the Chair Carolyn Maynard - Noted

134 Finance

All listed finances shown in appendix 1 – Approved.

For info. Car Parking machine had to have a new battery.

Possibility of a second payment machine – not approved although RL to obtain a cost for IPC records

135 Planning

- a. 77576 - Request for consultation on 77576 at White Cross Offshore Windfarm (Onshore Project) no update.
- b. 79518 at Instow Methodist Church Anstey Way Instow Devon - *Material info up-date only*
- c. 79519 at Former Instow Methodist Church Anstey Way *Material info up-date only*
- d. 79320 at Instow Marine Parade Lock-up Garages Marine Parade Car Park Instow Devon EX39 4JA - *Work starts 3 March 2025 for 10 weeks – subject to weather.*
- e. 79635 at 2 The Balconies Marine Parade Instow Devon EX39 4JA – *No Objections*
- f. 79721 at Sandhills Car Park Instow Devon EX39 4LF – *respond 21.02.2025*
- g. Xlinks Morocco-UK Power Project Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project –
*You can now register to [have your say](#). The deadline to register is **Thursday 13 March 2025 By 11:59***
2. h. Adopting the old telephone boxes in Instow £1.00 per Telephone box. *IPC agreed to pay the nominal fee, and tasked the clerk with handling the necessary paperwork and coordination with BT. Clerk confirmed BT will disconnect the phone*

136 AOB as raised by Chair Clerk to obtain update information for the next meeting on using RingGo

137 Additional Agenda items for March meeting

Budget for Sand Management

138 Next meeting – Thursday 20 March 2025, 19:00 - Instow Village Hall

Meeting closed – 20:32

Appendix 1**February Meeting 2025 - Finance – Invoices etc**

1. North Devon Council (SD11583938) – Clerk’s salary JAM	£ 1059.82
2. Locam Clerk RL	£ 421.20
3. Reimbursed Locam Clerk RL New Battery – Car Park Machine	£ 73.24
4. Peter Parker – January / February Bus shelters	£ 180.00
5. Flowbird (UI00015208)	£ 144.58
6. Dave Budd – Cutting and removal Branch Down near Military Camp	£ 40.00
7. Reimbursed MJ Scott M Williams – Notice boards & Benches back 10/02	£ 52.50
8. Reimbursed MJ Scott M Williams – Slee Corner 12/02	£ 75.00
9. Reimbursed MJ Scott M Williams – More Benches back 05/02	£ 120.00
10. Reimbursed MJ Scott M Williams – Slee Corner 03/02	£ 120.00
11. Reimbursed MJ Scott M Williams – New Bench – Fixing Notice Board	£ 22.50
12. Reimbursed MJ Scott Supply & Instal 4 pieces of safety Lexon to bus shelters	£ 763.00
13. Reimbursed MJ Scott Commodore Hotel 'Thank you' event bill – costed under Section 137	£ 593.40
14. Paul Fletcher – Pavement Cleaning	£ 663.52
15. Clerks monthly expenses (JAM)	£ 50.00
16. Reimburse Clerk (JAM Heating)	£ 10.00
17. Julie Braddick – Toilet Block, Bus shelters	£ 746.80
18. Community -Heartbeat Annual Support Year 10	£ 162.00
19. Total	£3786.54

Direct Debits – already paid

1. AIMBS	£ 223.35
2. HMRC	£2385.28
3. Total	£ 2608.63

Total Outgoings **£6395.17**

Monies In	Card Payments	£ 2481.00
	Cash (>18 January 2025)	£ 626.90
Total In		<u>£ 3107.90</u>

Bank Accounts	Treasurers	£73590.17
	Business	£ 9473.76
	Deposit	£43000.00

Appendix 2

Cllr Johnson Report

Approvals update

Since the original meeting was held the applications have been submitted to NE and Assents have been received to: -

1. CDE to relocate sand from the beach to in front of the current Dunes.
2. Highways to return and sand cleared from the pavements and road back onto the beach.

However, it should be remembered that we are still dealing with multiple agencies requiring continued various inputs and checks.

Beach side of the wall

CDE update.

In parallel with the submission of the application the methodology and cost of clearing the sands have been developed and reviewed by CDE.

Their original plan was to remove the sand up to 2m away from the wall to a depth of 0.5m below the drainage channels and clear the drainage area opposite the Boathouse. Contractors and the Marines were asked to review the proposed sand removal and comment / quote.

The Marines, via IPC liaison, stated their willingness to assist. However, during discussion they noted that they would not be able to take on the whole operation. This is because they do not have all the necessary equipment nor the ongoing availability of their own kit due to training commitments.

Three contactors have also been contacted to review the proposed work. Two of these have provided quotes. On comparison like-for-like operation gave costings of over £200k and vat. They are awaiting the third quote.

It should be noted that although the value of the quotes submitted were markedly different when they were adjusted to reflect an equivalent volume of sand to be removed their projected costs were not that different. NB: The variation in volume of sand to move was due to some sand being washed out in the two days between visits!

Outcome

Based on the costs received and the limit of the Marines support, the size and scale of the sand removal is being reviewed by CDE. CDE are also looking into how the project could be managed as they do not currently have resources available in-house.

Nature

It should also be noted that at the end of the month and start of next we have several high tides – a couple over 8m – so we will hopefully see a further removal of sand as we did on the last set of high tides.

Land side of the sea wall

Devon Highways Sand Clearance

Devon Highways have received approval from NE to place sand back on the beach rather than having to clear it to another site. To ensure it does not blow back onto the road the sand will be relocated in front of the dunes as per the CDE sand movement.

Community Sand Clearance

The approval from NE to Devon Highways only covers their work to move sand – **NOT** anyone else. However, although NE would likely turn a blind eye, I am also engaging with Devon Highways to have them 'sanction' the local community to move sand on their behalf and they would then be covered.

Appendix 3 From the Chair on

Car Park: Maintenance and Expense Management

Car Park Handover: The council must return the car park and toilets in good condition by March 31, 2033, incurring significant costs for resurfacing and repairs. Maintenance of infrastructure such as car parks will be a concern, with the need to save funds for future resurfacing projects. The council is managing these expenses within their budget constraints. Projected inflation of 3-5% annually will increase the cost of resurfacing the car park to an estimated £125,000.

Appendix 4

Report January Meeting 2025

Monthly Briefing Paper –Feb 2025 – C Cllr Becky Coombs

My e-mail details are now available. Becky.coombs@northdevon.org.uk.

Message from the Chief Executive NDC:

Dear all,

There has been a lot written about devolution and local government re-organisation recently so I thought I would write to provide an update from the District Council's perspective.

The English Devolution White Paper was issued just before Christmas on the 16th of December. The White Paper covers a whole range of prospective changes but the ones that are the focus of this email are devolution and LGR and I'll try and cover both off separately, although they are clearly related.

Devolution

The devolution agenda involves the passing of powers currently exercised by central government down to a local area. The government aim is to have elected mayoral arrangements, similar to Greater Manchester etc, across the whole country and the new powers would then vest with the Mayor and with new Strategic Authorities. The Strategic Authorities would cover populations of around 1.5m people and would cover areas that have common economies and communities etc. The powers that will be given to the new Mayors and Strategic Authorities will cover issues such as strategic economic regeneration, strategic transport, adult skills and much more. In the main, these would be powers that are currently exercised by government and not by any current layer of local government. The intention would also be to provide Mayors with an integrated funding settlement, and it would then be for the Mayor and the Strategic Authority to decide how that funding should be spent.

Local Government Reorganisation

Government has also said that they wish to see the current two-tier system of local government changed and replaced by unitary councils. If you look across the southwest, Devon stands out as the only area where the two-tier system still exists and so it is a reasonable assumption to make that this is likely to change in these reforms.

At the same time as the White Paper was issued, the Minister wrote to all councils affected to advise that he would be writing again in January to invite councils to submit proposals for devolution and LGR. The only criteria for the new unitary authorities that has so far been set out by government is that populations of the authorities should be 500k although government says that it will look at proposals that include a smaller population if there are grounds for doing so. We think that letter will be issued just before the end of the month, and we also think that government will ask for draft proposals to be submitted by a date in March. We hope that more detail on the criteria to be considered will be included within the letter. The government are creating a Devolution Priority Programme for those areas that are ready to move at pace with their proposals and have also invited county councils that are due to have elections in May to apply to postpone these to allow devolution to take place. Applications to postpone the elections had to be received by 10th January to allow time for the necessary legislation to be introduced and if the 2025 elections are postponed it is likely that elections to the new Strategic Authority will be held in May 2026.

Government has indicated that it would like councils in an area to work together on proposals with the aim of submitting one agreed suggestion.

Locally

The above sets out the national picture as we know it so far. Locally, Devon County Council resolved to apply to postpone their elections in May, but all District Councils objected to this. We presume that we will hear whether the application has been approved or not later this month. At the same time, Devon, Plymouth and Torbay resolved to support the creation of a new Strategic Authority, with an accompanying elected Mayor which is suggested to comprise Devon, Cornwall, Plymouth and Torbay. At the current time, it is not clear whether Cornwall will agree to form part of that authority.

In relation to LGR, the Leader of DCC has indicated his preference for a single unitary authority covering the current administrative boundaries of Devon and Torbay but all of the Devon District Councils have stated that they are opposed to that. Both Plymouth and Exeter have indicated that they wish to expand their boundaries but have not yet been

specific as to which areas they would like to incorporate. Exeter have also indicated that it is likely to submit a bid to become a unitary authority on its own with expanded boundaries.

Quite clearly, those proposals all conflict with each other and so discussions are now starting to see if an agreed solution can be found.

The Councillors in North Devon and I am sure in Torrridge, are very much alive to the fact that Northern Devon should not be seen as the poor relation. Whilst various Districts and other authorities may well have preferences as to how the county should be split, any proposals have to work for the whole of the area and the Leaders of both of the northern Devon Districts will be reinforcing that in the forthcoming discussions.

Whilst the discussions are now starting, it is fair to say that until we all receive the letter later this month, the criteria that will be adopted by government, and the exact timetable, are unknown and so that letter is clearly absolutely vital in setting how we now proceed.

I am sure that you will have lots of questions and so I am more than pleased to try to answer them if you wish to contact me. We could also look at holding an online Parish Forum once the letter has been received if you would find that useful.

Ken Miles (he/him), Chief Executive North Devon Council

Note: DCC elections will now go ahead in May 2025

Annual Performance report

The Annual Performance report was approved by the Strategy and Resources Committee 3rd February 2025

It will shortly be going out for public engagement. It will also be presented to Council at the next meeting on 26 February 2025 so that Members can discuss the Corporate Plan and performance to date.

The Chief Executive highlighted the following:

- This would be a regular annual update reviewing the Council's performance against the Corporate Priorities.
- Five priorities had been agreed by Full Council in February 2024, these were:
 - Ø Achieving Financial Security
 - Ø Housing
 - Ø Climate and Environment
 - Ø Pride of Place and Prosperity; and
 - Ø People Matter
- To achieve financial security, a balanced budget had been set, the commercialisation strategy had been reviewed and refreshed, financial plans were continually reviewed, and services had been reviewed to ensure they were efficient. Property had been purchased to help ease the burden of temporary accommodation placement costs, Green Lanes was providing an additional income, and we were always looking at ways to share services such as the Joint Building Control services with Mid-Devon council.
- To achieve our Housing provision, £800,000 in funding had been secured to provide affordable housing in rural areas through a Community Land Trust.
- Land had been purchased in Braunton to help ensure affordable housing was available as part of a new development.
- To help residents in need of temporary accommodation, 13 properties had been purchased. £1.7 million had been secured from the Local Authority Housing Fund.
- £2 million funding had been secured for the Ilfracombe Healthy Homes project.
- 180 homes were to be developed on the site of the old Leisure Centre at Seven Brethren, 54 of these would be affordable.
- We continued to work with local landlords to improve property standards in the private rental sector.
- To achieve our Climate and Environment priorities, a new section of woodland had been planted at the community woodland near Frankmarsh.
- Exploring options to install solar panels on the Ilfracombe swimming pool and the North Devon Crematorium.
- Investment into the recycling facilities would ensure we can recycle more waste efficiently as well as offering the opportunity for third parties to recycle with us.
- Options to make the vehicle fleet more environmentally friendly were continually reviewed.
- Funding had been secured to carry out energy efficiency improvement works at Brynsworthy Environment Centre and the Landmark Theatre, Ilfracombe.

- The priority of Pride of Place and Prosperity had seen us complete the Ilfracombe Watersports centre.
- Further works were due for completion along Ilfracombe Sea front in Spring 2025.
- The £12 million Barnstaple market quarter project was underway, this included the completed works of the refurbishment of the Pannier Market and Guildhall, the redevelopment of Queen Street and Bear Street car parks, the renovation of a grade II listed building at 36 Boutport Street into a cultural hub for North Devon was progressing.
- An economic strategy for North Devon and Torridge had been delivered.
- Reviewed and refreshed our strategies for car parking and asset management.
- To fulfil our People, Matter priority a community hub was being developed in Green Lanes shopping centre, giving greater access for residents and extending our face-to-face offer.
- A behaviour framework, developed by staff, had been implemented and recruitment was undertaken using this framework. Working to achieve making North Devon Council an employer of choice.
- For the sized authority we are an impressive range of projects had been undertaken such as building a new leisure centre, to extending the museum, from redeveloping Seven Brethren and to the purchase of Green Lanes shopping centre.

Parish Forum:

12 March 2025 (6:30pm – 8:30pm): In person Parish Forum - regarding Emergency Planning. If your town/parish clerks and councillors wish to attend this they will need to confirm attendance by 28 Feb 2025 – and state whether they wish to attend in person, or virtually.

Consultations:

North Devon Council is inviting people to have their say on a new draft Housing Strategy, which sets out a high-level vision and objectives as to how the council plans to try and meet the housing needs and hopes of our communities.

The Housing Strategy will guide the Council's activities in delivering and discharging its housing functions and responsibilities, whilst ensuring that resources and efforts are best directed to tackle the housing challenges that the area faces. It was compiled following the publication of the Devon Housing Commission [report](https://news.exeter.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/2024EI047-Devon-Housing-Commission-Final-Report-v8.pdf) in July 2024, championed by Lord Best.

The draft Strategy has been prepared in full consultation with a working group of elected Members, who have been involved through a dedicated workshop and feedback sessions. It is built on a foundation of three themes:

- * Prevent Homelessness: Preventing homelessness by supporting citizens to stay in their current home if they have one, but if this isn't possible/or they are already homeless seek to help them find alternative solutions.
- * Provide New Housing Supply: Supply new housing to meet social demand, delivering affordable & sustainable healthy homes wherever possible.
- * Make Homes Healthy: Improving the quality of existing homes making them safe and healthy, in turn making their occupants healthy too.

The Council recognises the value of gaining different perspectives and insights and therefore inviting you to submit your views. The draft strategy is available for wider consultation for a period of seven weeks from Monday 10 February 2025 to Monday 31 March 2025.

You can view the draft strategy and find out more by visiting the Council's website at Let's Talk North Devon letstalk.northdevon.gov.uk/

The survey should take less than 10 minutes to complete, and your views and feedback are valued.

The Council is using a new IT platform for consultation and engagement and you are invited to register to be kept up to date with opportunities to have your say and get involved with shaping the future of North Devon Register | Let's Talk North Devon letstalk.northdevon.gov.uk/register

Thank you for your time when the survey closes the results will be summarised and presented to the Strategy and Resources Committee on 12 May 2025. You can find Committee agendas and reports on the North Devon Council Committee Meetings webpage. Browse Meetings, 2025 | North Devon Council democracy.northdevon.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?Categories=