

MEVAGISSEY PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at the Mevagissey Activity Centre
On Thursday 17 April 2025 at 7pm

Present Cllrs. M Roberts (Chairman), G Barham, J Brown, L Burdett, B Collins, J Gann, J Morgan, K Prynn, G Shephard, P Simpson, J Whatty, G Williams.

In Attendance Capt. Hugh Bowles (Harbour Trustee), Jon and Jill Mitchell (owners of Meadow Court), Cornwall Cllr. J Mustoe (Ward Member), P Howson (Clerk to the Council), 8 members of the public.

UNRATIFIED UNLESS SIGNED

1. Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr. Facey.
Cllr. Morgan would have to leave at 9pm. Cllr. Mustoe would be arriving late (arrived 7.35 pm).
2. Cllr. Collins declared an interest in agenda item 13b (PA25/02014).
Cllr. Brown declared an interest in agenda item 13d (PA25/02624).
3. Capt. Hugh Bowles, on behalf of the Harbour Trustees, summarised the reasons for the stalling of the Harbour Resilience Project, designed to protect and preserve the North Pier by placing rock armour on its seaward side. Grant applications had been made to the Shared Prosperity Fund, administered by Cornwall Council (CC), in 2023/4 and 2024/5, neither of which had been successful. The first application failed because the Marine Licence had not been issued by the MMO; the cost had risen from £1.5M to £4M; a condition of the grant was that the project would have to complete by the end of March 2025, which was not feasible; and matched funding from the Environment Agency's (EA) Grant in Aid (GiA) scheme could not be carried into the next year and was thus considered insecure by CC. The Marine Licence was finally issued on 23rd February this year, and one of the conditions was that, to protect overwintering birds, no placing of rock armour could take place between 1st October and 31st May, which would have made the original application impossible. The second application failed because the Marine Licence had at that time still not been issued, and there was no GiA funding from the EA for 2025-26 (although it later emerged that the EA had £1M which could have been used for matched funding). All the planning and design work is still valid, and the Marine Licence is valid for 2 years, so everything is in place to restart as soon as funding becomes available. Unfortunately, it is not known when this might happen, and meanwhile costs continue to increase, sea levels continue to rise, and the frequency and severity of extreme storms is increasing. Should the North Pier fail, the consequences, not just for the harbour, but for the historic centre of the village, would be dire.
4. Jon and Jill Mitchell, owners of Meadow Court and former landlords of the Model Railway, explained that they had bought Meadow Court in 2020 and are focussed on providing decent, reasonably priced, long-term accommodation for people with a local connection. Now that the model railway has closed for good they have been considering possible uses for the building, and concluded that the only viable option is to convert it into flats. They anticipate a total of 5 flats, although the design is still in progress. They will keep the Council informed of progress and would welcome any suggestions. The Chairman thanked them for their presentation and recommended that they initially make a Pre-Application to the Local Planning Authority (LPA). Cllr. Gann said that as Chair of the Housing Working Group he would be happy to be their point of contact, and also that he could link them up with CC's Rural Housing Enabler.
5. Public participation.

Mark Sweeney spoke on agenda item 23 (request from the Mevagissey Activity Centre (MAC) to realign previously agreed matched-funding). He said that bookings and gym membership were up, they were now open at 6am, and would be opening on Sundays from the end of May on a trial basis. The Community Levelling Up Programme was massively oversubscribed and they had decided to make just one application, and the Multi-Purpose Games Arena would provide the greatest community benefit. They are waiting to hear about funding for the sports hall.

Neil Mitchell spoke on agenda item 13b (planning application PA25/02014), explaining the reason for the application and addressing concerns raised by neighbours. He asked that the application be supported so that he could park his two cars safely off the road.

Sarah Thompson spoke on agenda item 13a (planning application PA25/01859), referring to neighbours' objections and the planning agent's responses. She said that sound insulation could be installed and the proposed balcony had been positioned to minimise invasion of privacy. She invited members to visit the site.

Ian Lobb spoke on agenda item 13d (planning application PA25/02624). He said that the proposed car park was unnecessary, unsightly and dangerous, for the following reasons:

- Unnecessary: the long term lease between Heligan Gardens and the Lobbs for the overflow car park had expired two years ago and because they have been unable to agree the terms of a new lease they have had to install parking meters. They are also planning to upgrade the car park.
- Unsightly: the proposed car park would be highly visible from the road and from Pengrugla, and there would be lots of headlights during night-time events.
- Dangerous: a new access is proposed between two bends on what is already a hazardous stretch of road. A large number of vehicles would be arriving and visitors would be unsure which entrance to use.

6. Proposed by Cllr. Gann, Seconded by Cllr. Prynn that the second sentence from minute 13 of the meeting held on 20 March 2025, which reads 'He expressed concern that the Council's response to two of the sites was not wholly aligned with the position he had taken during his previous conversations with the owners of those sites', should be replaced with 'He expressed concern that the Parish Council's response to two of the sites was not aligned with the position that the Parish Council's Housing Working Party had taken, with the agreement of the Parish Council, during previous conversations with the owners of those sites', and that the minutes of that meeting should then be accepted.

Carried with 4 votes and 8 abstentions.

7. Proposed by Cllr. Shephard, Seconded by Cllr. Simpson that the minutes of the planning meeting held on 21 March 2025 be accepted. Carried.

8. The Clerk reported that:

- Angela Blamey had thanked the Council for the grant towards the St Andrew's Church flower festival to be held during Feast Week;
- He had received a Notice of Intention to close Church Street from 6-10 October, for 24 hours daily, for works by National Grid. The one-way system will be suspended for the duration;
- The Cornwall ALC Board has appointed Lee Dunkley as the new Cornwall County Executive Officer, taking over from Sarah Mason from April 1st. Sarah will be reducing her hours and moving to a new role of Assistant County Officer supporting Lee over the next 12 months and will continue to deliver training, support and advice for council members and staff;
- The monthly update on works from Ocean Housing was received and circulated and a choice of dates has been offered for the promised Wesley Court site meeting with Ocean's MD;
- The Spring Community Area Partnership Event is on Wednesday 23rd April, 6-8pm, at St Austell Arts Centre. Details were circulated and all are invited;
- He had advised CC's Licensing Officer that the Council supported the Mevagissey Bay Hotel's application for a licence variation (LI25_001711) to allow non-residents to enter the premises and purchase a drink at the bar;
- The Highways Manager is not willing to take any action over the alleged clutter towards the lower end of Cliff Street. She had emailed: 'Having reviewed the photographs provided to me by staff, I can't see anything along the street that is causing a significant safety hazard to highway users. There is clearly a range of different items in place along the road and as mentioned previously, we are not in a position to request removal of some items but not others, and for some properties but not others. I can only suggest that if the Parish sees it as a local priority to resolve, then they could consider an informal letter or note to residents, to request they are more considerate about leaving items out on the highway and that perhaps small plants are acceptable but not larger items such as rubbish bags, bins or storage boxes etc. A heavy handed and 'zero tolerance' approach from the highway authority is unlikely to be seen favourably, and will likely lead to reputational damage and negative press' [The Council agreed that a leaflet drop might be appropriate and this will be on the next agenda, also to include consideration of the obstructions caused by A-frame signs in Fore Street];
- The annual internal audit of the Council's procedures and operational controls is scheduled for 21st May;
- On 6th May it will be 100 years since the land for Cliff Park was donated by Howard and May Dunn.

9. The Ward Member presented his monthly report which can be seen on the Council's website.

10. To approve the monthly finances.

Bills to Pay	Hire of mobile planetarium (paid)	£	850.00
	Annual subscription to Cornwall ALC and National ALC (paid)	£	915.61
	Valley Rd PC electricity 02/03/25 - 01/04/25 (paid)	£	40.14
	West Wharf PC electricity 02/03/25 - 01/04/25 (paid)	£	52.55
	Valley Rd PC water 04/03/25 - 01/04/25 (paid)	£	331.89
	West Wharf PC water 04/03/25 - 01/04/25 (paid)	£	141.87
	Replacement door handle and lock for West Wharf PC paid)	£	55.08
	IT support April 2025	£	54.86

Operate Valley Rd PC April 2025	£	1,457.97
Operate West Wharf PC April 2025	£	1,432.88
March staff costs	£	1,758.29
Stationery	£	4.96
TOTAL	£	7,096.10

Accounts	Amount available to spend as of last meeting	£	109,054.49	
	Expenditure last month	£	8,871.66	
	plus Mevagissey Jubilee Hall (hire for defibrillator training)	£	25.00	
	St Andrew's Church (grant towards flower festival)	£	300.00	
	Replacement VE/VJ memorial bench	£	895.00	
	Room hire for March meetings	£	113.70	
	Bank charges	£	8.40	
	Bank interest	£	740.28	Received
	Available to spend	£	99,581.01	
	Bank Statements (31/03/2025)			
	Current Account	£	32.12	
	Deposit Account	£	99,548.89	
	TOTAL	£	99,581.01	

Proposed by Cllr. Williams, Seconded by Cllr. Prynn that the monthly finances be approved and the bills paid.

Carried.

11. Proposed by Cllr. Prynn, Seconded by Cllr. Barham that the 2024/25 Q4 Statement of Accounts be accepted.

Carried.

12. Proposed by Cllr. Prynn, Seconded by Cllr. Barham that the 2024/25 End of Year Accounts Summary be accepted.
Carried.

13. Planning and Enforcement.

13a. PA25/01859 : Extensions and refurbishment to existing semi-detached house and grounds. 19 Kiln Close Mevagissey St Austell Cornwall PL26 6TP

Proposed by Cllr. Gann, Seconded by Cllr. Barham that the Council seeks a site meeting, preferably with the planning case officer, to look at the height differences and assess the impact on neighbours.

Carried.

13b. PA25/02014 : The construction of a subterranean garage with excavation material covering, tree planting and landscaping with gravel forecourt. Land North Of 22 Portmellon Park Portmellon Park Mevagissey Cornwall PL26 6XD. Cllr. Collins withdrew for this item, having declared an interest.

Proposed by Cllr. Shephard, Seconded by Cllr. Barham that the Council makes no objection.

Carried.

13c. PA25/00219 : Garage conversion into ancillary annexe accommodation, one main room and one bathroom. 51 Portmellon Park Mevagissey St Austell Cornwall PL26 6XD (amended description).

Proposed by Cllr. Barham, Seconded by Cllr. Gann that the Council makes no objection, conditional on the annexe being subject to a principal residence requirement under NDP Policy HO1.

Carried.

[Cllr. Morgan left the meeting at this point.]

13d. PA25/02624 : Formation of new visitor parking area of 241 spaces including 20 electric vehicle charging points with associated landscaping, drainage, vehicular access and pedestrian footpaths. Island Field The Lost Gardens Of Heligan Pentewan St Austell Cornwall PL26 6EN. Cllr. Brown withdrew for this item, having declared an interest. Proposed by Cllr. Shephard, Seconded by Cllr. Prynn that this is the wrong type of development in the wrong place, representing increased hazards to traffic during the season, ruining the natural character of the location, and raising concerns about surface water run-off onto the road.

The motion received 4 votes in favour and 4 against. The Chairman used his casting vote in favour.

Carried.

13e. A brief update was given on planning enforcement cases.

13f. The following planning decisions have been received (included for information only):

PA25/01212 : Demolition of existing extension/ sheds, construction of new single storey extension, alterations and replacement of existing windows and doors to existing dwelling. 9 Church Lane.

APPROVED

PA24/00955 : Conversion of the existing Tall Trees (The Hollies) to residential accommodation and a proposal for a new residential building resulting in a total of up to 12 units of residential accommodation within the site area, together with the provision of a parking area, hard and soft landscaping and repair of an existing outbuilding and cob boundary wall (description of development approved 26/05/2023 under NMA PA23/03072), with variation of condition 2 (plan numbers) of original decision PA15/10218 dated 31/03/2016. 2 Church Lane.

APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS

- 13g. There were no other planning matters.
14. Public Toilets.
- 14a. Gary Farr had completed repairs to the West Wharf toilets following vandalism.
- 14b. To receive an update on matters pertaining to the recent letter received from the Clerk to the Harbour Trustees regarding the conveyance on the West Wharf toilet block between Cornwall Council and the Trustees, and to agree any further action. It was noted that Cornwall Council had denied all knowledge of the alleged negotiations. Proposed by Cllr. Brown, Seconded by Cllr. Prynn that a further letter be sent to the Trustees. Carried.
15. There was nothing to report from the Housing Working Group.
16. Cllr. Burdett provided the following report from the Climate Action Group:

Next "Ask an expert" event – POSTPONED from Wed 23rd April, 6pm at MAC (new date TBA) to allow greater opportunity /more time for event promotion – Format to be a broad spectrum overview of local & National Planning policy for Community Energy, to be presented by Duncan Tilney (Partner of Planning) & Stephens Scown LLP. Cornwall Climate Care Films – #Climate Scam? & Living on the Edge (double-bill) / Where? -Social club function room / When? 5th May (bh holiday Monday), 6.30 arrival for 7pm screening (approx. 30min per film). Event promotion well underway & to continue over next few weeks by all group members via physical posters / FB event posts. You all may have noticed the posters in MAC & Social club already... Request approval for spend request from CAG budget of £86.77 for Jemma Knowles from Cornwall Climate Care (CCC) attending the event for film introduction & post-film Q+A session – we aim to do this as a "one-off" for our 1st screening only, learning from it ourselves for future screenings Immersive Experiences - Climate film showing within their 360 degree Mobile planetarium dome, which is to be hosted within the school hall. – Date Change from Fri 13th June > Mon 9th June due to a clash detected by myself with the Yr5 & Yr6 residential trip. Promotion of the Public / community participation element of this event (inc. Booking) to intended to start early May. Films: Earth & Me (KS1) / Climate Change (KS2 & Adults) As part of school 'Climate Change day' & during national Great Big Green Week
17. Cllr. Shephard had nothing to report from the Asset Working Group, but proposed a vote of thanks to Cllr. Burdett for the full programme of climate activities he had produced. Cllr. Burdett thanked him and replied that it was the work of the whole Climate Action Group.
18. Proposed by Cllr. Shephard, Seconded by Cllr. Barham that Standing Orders be suspended to allow the meeting to continue beyond three hours. Carried.
19. There was no update on negotiations for a devolution package.
20. To receive an update on plans to commemorate 'VE Day 80' on 8th May. Cllr. Facey had confirmed that Paula and Simon Dunn had agreed to arrange an event.
21. To agree the future use of the public payphone in Market Square once it has been adopted by the Council, including any physical changes to the fabric of the structure. It was noted that because the phone box is Listed, some works such as external signage or internal fixings might technically need consent from the Historic Environment Planning team. Proposed by Cllr. Brown, Seconded by Cllr. Gann that the payphone should be converted for use as a book exchange. Carried.
22. Proposal to record Council meetings using a secure AI tool provided by Microsoft (Cllr. Brown). It was noted that recordings of public meetings remain in the public realm, and that Standing Orders stipulates that 'upon a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, the draft minutes or recordings of the meeting for which approved minutes exist shall be destroyed, along with contemporaneous notes taken'. Cllr. Brown will investigate whether such a tool is used by other local councils.
23. Proposal to form a Business Liaison Working Group to engage with the Mevagissey business community and ensure that their interests are represented (Cllr. Brown). It was agreed to defer this item to the next meeting.
24. To consider a request from the Mevagissey Activity Centre to realign the total matched funding of £20,000 agreed at the extraordinary meeting on 26/02/2025 so that it would all be for the Multi-Purpose Games Arena (ie the 4g pitch).

Cllr. Shephard expressed concern about the ongoing cost of maintaining the proposed new asset.
Proposed by Cllr. Barham, Seconded by Cllr. Prynne that the previous Letters of Intent should be rescinded and a new Letter of Intent to commit £20,000 for the proposed Multi-Purpose Games Arena should be provided. Carried.

25. Proposal to actively encourage / raise awareness of the current vacant place on the Parish Council (Cllr. Gann).
The Clerk will establish whether there is existing publicity available for this.
26. Proposal to contact Cornwall Council on behalf of a resident of the Old Post Office to organise a solution for their rubbish collection (Cllr. Gann). Cllr. Barham offered to take this on.
27. To consider a grant application from Wild Wonder and Wisdom CIC for £1,000 towards the cost of delivering an affordable programme of water-based activities at Portmellon for various local groups this summer.
Proposed by Cllr. Barham, Seconded by Cllr. Shephard that a Letter of Intent be provided to show a commitment to granting £1,000 on receipt of evidence that the remaining £4,000 required had been secured. Carried.
28. The meeting ended at 10.35 pm. Dates of next meetings: 15 May 2025 (to follow the 6pm Annual Meeting of Electors and the Council's AGM) and 16 May 2025 for planning issues.

Signed

Dated