2425-089

Rackenford & Creacombe Parish Council

Tel: 07768 82951 email: parish.clerk@rackenfordpc.com Website: www.rackenford-devon.co.uk/parish-council

There was a Rackenford & Creacombe Parish Council Meeting on Wednesday 4th February 2025 at 7.30pm held in Rackenford School.

Members Present: Parish Councillors Scott Ware, Peter Jones, Stuart Warne, Fred Phillips, Jenny Cox, Pete Grugeon & Sarah Child.

Also Present: County Cllr. Jeremy Yabsley

In attendance: Rob Martin, Clerk

Others: Three members of the general public

MINUTES

2425-067 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies had been received from Cllr. Lamb and these were accepted by the council.

2425-068 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY)**

Cllr. Child declared a personal interest as a member of the village shop committee.

2425-069 **MINUTES**

Cllr. Child referred to **minute 2425-034** of the meeting on 3rd September 2024 and wished to clarify how the council's support for the access agreement was going to be actioned. On a proposal by Cllr. Child, seconded by Cllr. Phillips, it was **Resolved** that the agreement for finalised proposal for the access would be delegated to the clerk, in conjunction with the Chairman.

On a proposal by Cllr. Cox, seconded by Cllr. Warne, it was **Resolved** to approve, as a correct record, the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 5th November 2024.

2425-070 **CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE**

The clerk reported on:

- A debit card application to allow in order to allow him to purchase parish council items online, rather than having to use his own credit card and then claim back. This was agreed and signed ready for submission to Lloyds Bank.
- The replacement gazebo had been purchased and would be available from Cllr. Cox when needed for parish council events.
- His personal situation involving family illness which would mean he had to be under the radar for a while until it was resolved.

The Chairman suspended the Parish Council meeting to hear presentations, reports from District and County Councillors and take questions from members of the public.

2425-071 **PUBLIC AND OTHER BODIES' SESSION**

District Council

Cllr. Jones explained that a development of 155 houses had been approved for Witheridge on the basis that the District Council did not have a 5-year list of approvals in place. 77 of these properties would be a mixture of Social and Affordable rent properties, with priority being given to people with a local connection. People with a

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local connection had to apply through the 'Devon Choice' website and be in need of housing locally. Cllr. Jones stressed that the local definition now included surrounding parishes, such as Rackenford and he was publicising this through social media.

Cllr. Jones raised the subject of the Government's 'Devolution' proposal involving a mixture of county-level Unitary Authorities and Regional Mayoral areas covering a number of unitaries. Change will come, but it would depend on the awaited government answer to DCC's application to be in the first tranche of new unitary authorities.

There would be some devolution from the districts to town councils and some parishes but the extent of this was unknown.

County Council

Cllr. Yabsley also outlined the county's perspective on the devolution proposals with Devon, Plymouth and Torbay all wishing to be unitary councils. The expected date of the first tranche decision was expected to be the next day.

A number of local highway maintenance issues were discussed with Cllr. Yabsley advising that the Highway reporting web page should be used to request repair, and to make numerous reports of the same potholes if there was one already.

The clerk would write a letter to Donna Manson Devon CC CEO expressing concern about how long repairs to the road from Elderley Cross over Elderley Bridge were taking, as it was in very poor condition and was dangerous.

Public

The number of dog poo bins in the village was questioned and the chairman answered that there were two, one of which was only yards from where discarded waste had been located. It was considered that there was no excuse for this and that installing further bins would make no difference. District Cllr. Jones indicated that there was a process for reporting fouling incidents, either by contacting him or using the link on the district's website.

2425-072 **STAG INN WORKING PARTY**

On a proposal by Cllr. Grugeon, seconded by Cllr. Jones, it was **Resolved** to adopt the working party Terms of Reference, as presented.
On a proposal by Cllr. Cox, seconded by Cllr. Grugeon, it was **Resolved** to allocate £300 to cover any incidental costs of the steering group.

The Chairman reconvened the meeting

2425-073 **THE COMMON**

To receive updates on the progress of maintenance work on the Common.

a) Clearance Working Party – no report
b) Maintenance Contract Review – nothing to report

2425-074 **EVENTS COMMITTEE**

The chairman questioned whether a separate committee was necessary. After a great

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deal of discussion, on a proposal by the Chairman, it was **Resolved** that an ad hoc Events Committee be formed with Cllrs. Ware, Warne, Jones, Grugeon & Cox being the initial members.

2425-075 RACKENFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Cllr. Child had circulated a report on the future of the school, as follows:

Major reorganisations of maintained school systems have been going on for the last 15 years or so. They continue as financial pressures increase. In 2011 it was calculated that only a school with at least 140 on roll could afford a non-teaching head, and only then if it abandoned school dinners and most TA posts. Two years later, our last non-teaching head left to run Two Moors in Tiverton; at that point we had 73 on roll, in 3 classes. We were facing a financial crisis, unable to afford a replacement, but were rescued by Tiverton High School, which offered us a management partnership under which they provided a share in an executive head and a business manager. Asked why he was being so helpful, Andrew Lovett, then THS head, said it had long puzzled him as to why it was that it was so often ex-pupils of Rackenford that filled the posts of head boy and girl at THS, and he wanted to find out what was so special about a very small school.

Heathcoat Primary then joined in, and in 2017 we formed a Federation of these three schools. This had been expected to be much larger, but various Tiverton primaries decided not to join it for the time being. Most of these then became academies, joining up with several other schools in multi academy trusts (MATs), which are independent of the Local Authority. It has proved possible for very large and imaginatively run MATs to find extra funding for posts which smaller groupings cannot afford. The governors of our small federation had begun to see this as an attractive option when Covid arrived and put all further change on hold.

RPS and HPS have survived with much support from THS, and especially its last head, Sammy Crook, who decided to resign in November following a bad Ofsted result. This was largely due to difficulties in recovering from Covid effects. It meant that THS now has to join a MAT, so the Tiverton Federation ceased to exist from January 27 2025. It was agreed with the Devon LA and the Diocese that the two primaries should continue to be federated for the time being. The two schools are happy to work together, each keeping their own head teachers and sharing a governing body which has been put together from the governors of the previous board. This will be looking for a MAT to join. It has arranged meanwhile to buy in support from Ventrus, a MAT which includes 5 local primaries among its 20 or partners.

The main problem for most primaries is falling numbers, the result of a drop in the birth rate some 12 years ago, so far unaltered, and RPS is no exception. With a roll currently down to 56 and assisted by the flexi policy we are lucky in being able to maintain small classes, some exceptional teaching and a very effective head in Emily Budden and must hope for a rising intake over the next year or two.

2425-076 ROAD WARDEN SCHEME

The clerk explained that the DCC Road Warden scheme allowed local people to be trained under section 8 of the traffic signs manual and to undertake some highway maintenance work for their parish. There would be a need to recruit a small number of people willing to undergo online training so that they, with a maximum of two other volunteers each, to undertake such works.

In addition, the county highways team have grant funding available to purchase necessary equipment so that there would be little or no cost for the parish council to

find.
It was **agreed** to seek people from the parish to take the initiative and get themselves trained and to review matters when this has been achieved.

2425-077 **NORTH DEVON COUNCIL – COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW**
The chairman circulated a map of the parish boundary and made some suggestions for changes to it. Councillors would contact the chairman and/or clerk with their thoughts on the suggested changes.

2425-078 **BUDGET & PRECEPT 2025/2026**
In the postponement of this meeting from 28th January, there was a need to notify NDC of the precept requirement for 2025/2026 before this meeting after consulting the chairman, the precept request remained the same as the current year, £15,900 resulting in a small reduction in the Band D charge.

2425-079 **PUBLIC BENCH**
It was **agreed** that the new bin would be installed opposite the pull-in, towards the cross. Cllr. Phillips would arrange to get the bench concreted in.

2425-080 **BANK RECONCILIATION**
The bank reconciliation as at 31st January 2025 was **agreed**.

2425-081 **RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS TO DATE COMPARED TO BUDGET**
The statement of Receipts and Payments compared to Budgets for the period from 1st April 2024 to 31st January 2025 was noted and **agreed.**

2425-082 **PAYMENT SCHEDULE**
On a proposal by Cllr. Grugeon, seconded by Cllr. Child, it was **Resolved** to approve the payment of the invoices on the schedule below for the period since the last meeting:

Payee	Services	Month or Ref.	Amount £	Payment No.
2024/2025				
RJ Martin	Salary	Feb 2025	316.63	2425-25
HMRC	Tax Deduction	Feb 2025	79.00	2425-25
RJ Martin	Salary	Mar 2025	316.43	tbc
HMRC	Tax Deduction	Mar 2025	79.20	tbc
East Worlington Hall	Event Hire	D-Day	80.00	2425-21
Starboard Systems t/a Scribe	Scribe Accounts System	Annual Charge	331.20	2425-21
Toolport t/a House of Tents	Replacement Gazebo	German Bank	625.50	2425-23
Lloyds Bank	Bank Charges	Transfer Charge	15.00	2425-23
RJ Martin	Dropbox Subscription	Rob's Card	95.88	2425-24

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Tims Garden Rescue Service	Tree Planting	INV 0010	198.72	2425-26
Stuart Warne	Pump Repair		42.99	2425-27

RECEIPTS

Received from	Services	Amount £	
2024/2025			
None			

2425-083 **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

To consider the following Planning Applications and to agree comments:

Reference	Location	Proposal
79764	Barn at West Hilltown Rackenford Tiverton Devon	Prior approval for change of use of agricultural building to x2 dwellings (class Q a & b) **Decision: No Comment**

2425-084 **COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

a) **Chairman's Report**

The chairman had applied to the Batsworthy grant fund for £100 towards the purchase of basketball hoops and 5-a-side football goals for the MUGA. The clerk and chairman would arrange for this.

He had also sent some notes to landowners where hedges needed to be cut back before the end of February.

b) **Reports from Other Councillors**

Cllr. Grugeon asked whether the minutes of the Community Engagement group meetings could be published. The chairman would ask the group whether they would agree to publish them, as they were not necessarily in the public domain.

2425-085 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next Meeting of Rackenford & Creacombe Parish Council is on Tuesday 25th March 2025, at 7.30pm in Rackenford School.

2425-086 **MEETING CLOSURE**

The meeting closed at 9.30pm

Chairman's Signature:

Date:

2425-099

18 March 2025 (2024 - 2025)

Rackenford Parish Council

Prepared by: RSMcK. Date: 18/3/25

Name and Role (Clerk/RFO etc)

Approved by: _____ Date: _____

Name and Role (RFO/Chair of Finance etc)

	Bank Reconciliation at 28/02/2025			
	Cash in Hand 01/04/2024			28,897.13
	ADD			
	Receipts 01/04/2024 - 28/02/2025			23,421.16
				52,318.29
	SUBTRACT			
	Payments 01/04/2024 - 28/02/2025			30,792.65
A	**Cash in Hand 28/02/2025** (per Cash Book)			**21,525.64**
	Cash in hand per Bank Statements			
	Petty Cash	28/02/2025	0.00	
	Lloyds Treasurers Online	28/02/2025	21,525.64	
				21,525.64
	Less unpresented payments			
				21,525.64
	Plus unpresented receipts			
B	**Adjusted Bank Balance**			**21,525.64**
	A = B Checks out OK			

2-125.099

LLOYDS BANK

07 March 2025

Rackenford Parish Council
14 STATION ROAD
YEOFORD
CREDITON
DEVON
EX17 5HU

Your Account

Sort Code 30-90-89
Account Number 39081463

COMMUNITY ACCOUNT

01 February 2025 to 28 February 2025

Money In	£0.00	**Balance on 01 February 2025**	£22,515.87
Money Out	£990.23	**Balance on 28 February 2025**	£21,525.64

Your Transactions

Date	Description	Type	Money In (£)	Money Out (£)	Balance (£)
04 Feb 25	RACKENFORD PRIMARY 100000001493954952 EVENT	FPO		300.00	22,215.87
04 Feb 25	RJ MARTIN 100000001493983885	FPO		95.88	22,119.99
11 Feb 25	TIM'S GARDEN RESCU 400000001511651187 INV-0010	FPO		198.72	21,921.27
20 Feb 25	RJ MARTIN	BP		316.63	21,604.64
20 Feb 25	HMRC - ACCOUNTS OF	BP		79.00	21,525.64

Transaction types

BGC	Bank Giro Credit	**BP**	Bill Payments	**CHG**	Charge	**CHQ**	Cheque
COR	Correction	**CPT**	Cashpoint	**DD**	Direct Debit	**DEB**	Debit Card
DEP	Deposit	**FEE**	Fixed Service	**FPI**	Faster Payment In	**FPO**	Faster Payment Out
MPI	Mobile Payment In	**MPO**	Mobile Payment Out	**PAY**	Payment	**SO**	Standing Order
TFR	Transfer						

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2025-100

Rackenford Parish Council

18 March 2025 (2024 - 2025)

Summary of Receipts and Payments

All Cost Centres and Codes

Administration

Code	Title	Receipts Budgeted	Receipts Actual	Receipts Variance	Payments Budgeted	Payments Actual	Payments Variance	Net Position +/- Under/over spend
1	Precept	15,900.00	15,900.00					(0%)
2	Grants							(N/A)
3	Donations							(N/A)
6	Interest Received							(N/A)
9	VAT Refund							(N/A)
21	Clerk's Salary				4,750.00	4,351.95	398.05	398.05 (8%)
22	Clerk's Expenses				150.00	142.41	7.59	7.59 (5%)
23	IT Equipment							(N/A)
24	Website & Email				520.00		520.00	520.00 (100%)
25	Insurance				1,000.00	967.77	32.23	32.23 (3%)
26	Room Hire				100.00	300.00	-200.00	-200.00 (-200%)
27	Subscription DALC				150.00	138.99	11.01	11.01 (7%)
28	Subscription SLCC				70.00	43.00	27.00	27.00 (38%)
29	Internal Audit				240.00	195.00	45.00	45.00 (18%)
30	External Audit				210.00	210.00		(0%)
31	Subscription ICO							(N/A)
81	Elections							(N/A)
103	Parish Online Mapping					30.00	-30.00	-30.00 (N/A)
105	ICO					35.00	-35.00	-35.00 (N/A)
107	IT Software					355.90	-355.90	-355.90 (N/A)
	SUB TOTAL	**15,900.00**	**15,900.00**		**7,190.00**	**6,770.02**	**419.98**	**419.98 (1%)**

The Common

Code	Title	Receipts Budgeted	Receipts Actual	Receipts Variance	Payments Budgeted	Payments Actual	Payments Variance	Net Position +/- Under/over spend
41	Common Grass Cutting				1,800.00	1,740.00	60.00	60.00 (3%)
42	Common Maintenance				2,200.00		2,200.00	2,200.00 (100%)
	SUB TOTAL				**4,000.00**	**1,740.00**	**2,260.00**	**2,260.00 (56%)**

Village Maintenance

Code	Title	Receipts Budgeted	Receipts Actual	Receipts Variance	Payments Budgeted	Payments Actual	Payments Variance	Net Position +/- Under/over spend
5	PROW Grant							(N/A)
51	Grass Cutting							(N/A)
52	Playground Inspection				120.00	82.00	38.00	38.00 (31%)
53	Playground Maintenance							(N/A)
54	Playground Equipment							(N/A)
55	Sports Equipment							(N/A)
61	MUGA Maintenance							(N/A)
62	MUGA Refurbishment				3,500.00	13,526.25	-10,026.25	-10,026.25 (-286%)
71	Salt Spreading & Snow Ploughin				2,000.00	300.00	1,700.00	1,700.00 (85%)
75	Trinity Well Maintenance							(N/A)
91	PROW Expenditure							(N/A)
102	Benches					532.00	-532.00	-532.00 (N/A)
104	Highway Maintenance					1,305.00	-1,305.00	-1,305.00 (N/A)

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Rackenford Parish Council

Summary of Receipts and Payments

All Cost Centres and Codes

106	Tree Replacement			273.72	-273.72	-273.72 (N/A)
	SUB TOTAL			**5,620.00**	**16,018.97**	**-10,398.97**	**-10,398.97 (-185%)**

Village Services

Code	Title	Receipts			Payments			Net Position
		Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
4	Events Income		1,078.86	1,078.86				1,078.86 (N/A)
7	MUGA Charges	400.00	200.00	-200.00				-200.00 (-50%)
82	Event Expenditure					80.00	-80.00	-80.00 (N/A)
92	Defibrillator Maintenance				500.00		500.00	500.00 (100%)
93	Community Equipment					1,241.25	-1,241.25	-1,241.25 (N/A)
100	Community Grants					700.00	-700.00	-700.00 (N/A)
101	Churchyard Grant					300.00	-300.00	-300.00 (N/A)
	SUB TOTAL	**400.00**	**1,278.86**	**878.86**	**500.00**	**2,321.25**	**-1,821.25**	**-942.39 (-104%)**

Summary

NET TOTAL	**16,300.00**	**17,178.86**	**878.86**	**17,310.00**	**26,850.24**	**-9,540.24**	**-8,661.38 (-25%)**
V.A.T.		6,242.30			3,942.41		
GROSS TOTAL		**23,421.16**			**30,792.65**		

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