

Combe Raleigh Parish Meeting
Minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 17 July 2024

Present:

Mr T Dezell - Chair
Mrs S Sexton – Vice Chair
Mrs J Wardle – Clerk

Together with 33 local government electors of the Parish:

Mr M Moran	Mrs V Moran	Mrs M Rickson	Mr D Staff
Mrs J Horne	Mr M Horne	Mr I Downs	Mrs E Downs
Mrs C Thompson	Mr SW Thompson	Mr D Rosewell	Mrs C Turner
Mr L Clarke	Mrs L Clarke	Mr J Palmer	Mrs C Kemp
Mrs A Groombridge	Mrs J Edwards	Mrs H Trim	Mr C Kemp
Mr R Sexton	Mrs C Padget	Mr C Padget	Mrs Å Bylander
Mr A Joules	Mrs M Joules	Mrs G Jackson	Mr D Jackson
Mr B Churchill	Mrs K Churchill	Mrs G Compton	Mrs V Brabrook
Mr J Brabrook			

19/2025 Apologies for Absence

Cllr Y Levine – EDDC	Cllr C. Brown – EDDC	Mr T Trim	Ms N Salter
Mr B Trim	Mr J Twaddle	Mrs E Twaddle	

20/2025 Visit by PCSO Darren England

The scheduled visit did not take place. *Action: Clerk to rearrange visit by PCSO England.*

21/2025 Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 16 May 2024

Minutes of the Meeting held on 16 May 2024, which had previously been circulated, were proposed by S Sexton and seconded by V Brabrook to be an accurate record of the meeting. They were approved by a majority of those present. Comment was made that they did not include the names of Proposers and Seconders for the elections at Minutes 4-6/2025; this oversight did not affect the accuracy of the Minutes. Future Minutes will include the names of Proposers and Seconders.

22/2025 Matters arising

- a) Edwards Close – the Chair outlined a proposed solution to widen the road opposite Edwards Close. The solution, agreed in principle with owner of the bank opposite, will involve removing a portion of the bank and then laying reinforced concrete on the ground and up the bank. The landowner also has kindly offered to help to undertake the works. Cllr Brown (EDDC) has confirmed that Highways responsibility is limited to the tarmac road surface and, as the existing gully which lies below the bank is on private land, permission for the work is not required from Highways. If the hedgerow is trimmed on the Edwards Close side, it is estimated that a width of just less than 5m can be achieved. It is recognised that expert advice and guarantees on the use of reinforced concrete will be required. **Resolution: to approve the outline solution to widening the road opposite Edwards Close subject to getting expert advice and guarantees on the use of reinforced concrete.** Proposed by V Moran; seconded by C Kemp; approved by a majority of those present. *Action: Chair to get advice on the use of reinforced concrete and further develop the proposal for road widening at Edwards Close for approval by the Parish Meeting.*

- b) Parish Boundary Walk – a successful ‘Beating the Bounds’ Walk was held on 15 Jun 2024. The Chair thanked the organisers; all those helping with lifts and refreshments enroute and at the finish; and the landowners who allowed access to private land. After costs are deducted, the organizer reported a surplus of c£60 which the meeting agreed should be donated to St Nicholas Church.
- c) Election of the Parish Meeting Chair – concerns were raised that the correct procedure had not been followed at the Annual Parish Meeting on 16 May 2024 and it was suggested that an apology be made to the previous Chair. The Vice Chair responded saying that the rules for a Local Government election process had been followed: the existing Chair and Vice Chair step down; the Clerk (or an EDDC Councillor) asks for nominations, proposers and seconders, and then takes a vote. There is no requirement to give advance notice of a nomination. At the May 2024 election, there was only one nomination, and that candidate was duly voted in. This procedure will be followed at future elections and will be publicised in advance. The previous Chair commented on his surprise at what occurred but said that he bears no grudge and hopes that the village will be united moving forward. The new Chair thanked him for his comments.

23/2025 Planning

- a) 24/0673/Out – Coryhill Combe Raleigh – outline planning permission has been refused as the site is within the countryside (and specifically the National Landscape) where residential development is restricted in accordance with the spatial strategy. The Chair suggested that future consideration might be given by the Parish Meeting to updating the Parish Plan which lapsed in 2020.
- b) EDDC Local Plan Member Working Party – the Clerk and Vice Chair plan to attend a meeting on 2 Aug 2024 to discuss potential allocation sites (for development) in the Honiton ward, and the Dunkeswell and Otterhead ward. No decisions will be taken at this meeting which is not open to the Public; it is to discuss issues which can then inform officer recommendations to the Strategic Planning Committee. Further details will be circulated on receipt. *Action: Clerk to circulate details of Local Plan meeting (2 Aug 2024) on receipt and ask for comments and issues to be raised.*

24/2025 Parish Meeting Powers and Duties to spend

- a) The Chair recalled that, at the Parish Meeting on 16 May 2024, requests for grant funding (under section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 [the 1972 Act]) were made by two local charities. Additionally, St Nicholas Church requested funding for maintenance of the church building. Following a discussion, it was agreed that advice should be taken from the Devon Association of Local Councils (DALC) and NALC (the national association) on the ability of the Parish Meeting to make grants to charities and to the church.
- b) The legal advice from NALC/DALC is that the statutory functions, powers and rights of notification or consultation of a Parish Meeting are limited compared with those of a Parish Council (see Annex A). There is no specific power for a Parish Meeting to contribute to church building repairs. Nor does Section 137¹ apply to a Parish Meeting.
- c) To better manage finances for the benefit of the community, NALC have suggested that the Parish Meeting may wish to apply to EDDC for an order (under s109 of the 1972 Act) to confer the function(s) of a Parish

¹ Section 137 is the power of last resort, allowing a council to spend money where there is no other power available as long as the community benefits. The amount of money that can be spent annually is capped at an amount (£10.8 in FY24/25) per elector. Any expenditure incurred under s137 must be listed separately in the council’s accounts to enable the council to track how much it is spending using s137.

Council on the Parish Meeting. NALC have confirmed that granting these functions on the Parish Meeting would not change the status as a Parish Meeting. For example, this means there would be no need for councillors, and legislation applying to Parish Councils would not apply. The NALC suggestion is to work out what functions are needed, and then work with the EDDC to determine the content of the order.

- d) The Chair, Vice Chair and Clerk have worked through the possible functions and selected those that would be potentially useful including the use of s137 – these are shown for information at Annex B. Additionally, it was pointed out by the Parish Meeting that Section 137a should be included in any requests to increase functions; and that advice from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities regarding parish councils funding the maintenance and upkeep of churches and other religious buildings should be clarified. **Resolution: to approve seeking additional functions from EDDC for the Parish Meeting.** Proposed by S Sexton; seconded by I Downs; approved by a majority of those present. *Action: Clerk to clarify outstanding issues and then contact EDDC re additional functions for the Parish Meeting.*
- e) Subject to additional functions being approved, the Chair said that the intention is to prepare a clear policy and procedure for grant applications/award which would be put forward for discussion and approval by the Parish Meeting. He suggested that for larger grants, a secret ballot with one vote per household be used; the view of the meeting indicated that one vote per elector would be preferred.

25/2025 Finance:

- a) **Resolution: to approve retrospective payment to Community First Trading Ltd – Annual Insurance – of £122.7.** Proposed by J Palmer; seconded by A Joules; approved by a majority of those present.
- b) **Resolution: to approve the Financial Report (Annex C).** Proposed by S Sexton; seconded by I Downs; approved by a majority of those present.
- c) Lloyds Bank have declined to change the signatories on the existing current account, so a new current account (Treasurer’s Account) is required. **Resolution: to approve the Chair (Tony Dezell), Vice Chair (Serena Sexton) and Clerk (Jill Wardle) as signatories on the new Lloyds Bank current account with 2 out of 3 acting together to be authorised to operate the account.** Proposed by S Sexton; seconded by A Joules; approved by a majority of those present.
- d) Skipton Building Society have declined the recent application (approved at Minute 29/2024) for a new savings account (Community Saver account), so a new application is required. **Resolution: to approve the Chair (Tony Dezell), Vice Chair (Serena Sexton) and Clerk (Jill Wardle) as Trustees of the new Skipton Building Society account with 2 out of 3 acting together to be authorised to operate the account.** Proposed by S Sexton; seconded by R Sexton; approved by a majority of those present.

26/2025 Questions and items for the next meeting

- a) Craft and Produce Show will be held on 28 Jul 2024 – entries are encouraged, and all are welcome.
- b) New emails have been set-up for the Chair (chair.comberaleigh@gmail.com); Vice Chair (vicechair.comberaleigh@gmail.com); and Clerk (clerk.comberaleigh@gmail.com) for Data Protection and ease of transfer to subsequent holders of these positions.
- c) The Village Email Group exists to communicate Parish information using BCC email addresses. If you wish to be added to this group email, please contact the Clerk.
- d) Concern about the overgrown verges between the village and Clapper Lane which are obscuring visibility for vehicles, riders and pedestrians has been reported to DCC. The DCC replied: ‘A Highway Officer visited this site on 11/07/24. While some vegetation growth was noted this

would be as expected of a rural road during the summer months, with visibility being as expected on a rural county road such as this. Landowners will often undertake vegetation cutting towards the end of summer/autumn months. No further immediate action will be taken at this location.' A report has also been made to the National Trust owners of Combe Woods. The Parish Meeting described several reports of near misses between vehicles, pedestrians and riders with risk to life. It was suggested that a contractor be employed to clear the vegetation, but the Vice Chair advised against taking action on property owned by others because of legal liability. *Action: Clerk to report to DCC again about concerns of overgrown vegetation near Combe Woods in particular.* Post-meeting note: the National Trust replied 18 Jul 2024 advising that they will send a Ranger out to assess the situation.

- e) Notification of a Planning appeal (Barn Close Kennels) has been received. A Parish Meeting will be held on 12 Aug 2024 to seek views.
- f) Brian Churchill thanked the village on behalf of himself and his wife, Kay, for the party and gifts given to celebrate his work as Chair.
- g) Chris Padget thanked the village on behalf of himself and his wife, Caroline, for the support given in their recent planning application.

27/2025 There being no other business the meeting closed at 2035.

Tony Dezell - Chair

Annex A - Statutory functions, powers, and rights of notification or consultation of Combe Raleigh Parish Meeting

- Allotments: may hold and administer allotments for cultivation
- Burials: may provide burial grounds and may contribute towards the cost of burial facilities provided by others.
- Cemeteries and crematoria: may adopt byelaws made by a district or unitary council.
- Charities: may appoint trustees to parochial charities.
- Closed churchyards: liability to maintain a closed Church of England churchyard may be transferred to a parish meeting.
- Land: has no general power of acquisition but may acquire land to exercise its allotments or burial powers.
- Lighting: may light roads and other public places in the parish.
- Rights of Way: is entitled to be notified of a proposal to declare unnecessary highway to be not maintainable at public expense; a public path creation order or extinguishment order; a stop up or diversion order.
- Village Greens: may prosecute a person who damages or encroaches upon a village green.
- War Memorials: may maintain, repair or protect any war memorial.

Annex B – Recommended additional Parish Council Powers that Combe Raleigh Parish Meeting could request from EDDC

Note: the list includes some items that may be beneficial in the future

Clocks	Power to provide public clocks
Crime Prevention	Power to spend money on crime detection and prevention measures
Ditches and ponds	Power to drain and maintain ponds and ditches to prevent harm to public health
Environment	Power to issue fixed penalty notices for litter, graffiti and offences under dog control orders
Highways	Power to enter into agreements as to dedication and widening
	Power to complain to district council about the protection of rights of way and roadside waste
	Power to provide certain traffic signs and other notices
	Power to plant trees and shrubs and to maintain roadside verges
Neighbourhood Planning	Powers to act as lead body for a neighbourhood development plan or a neighbourhood development order
Newsletter	Power to provide information relating to matters affecting local government Power to receive and retain
Parish property and documents	Duty to deposit certain published works in specific deposit libraries
Public buildings and village hall	Powers to acquire and provide buildings for public meetings and assemblies

**Right to
nominate and
bid for assets of
community value**

The right to nominate assets to be added to a list of assets of community value and the right to bid to buy a listed asset when it comes up for sale

**Town and
Country
Planning**

Right to be notified of planning applications if right has requested

Traffic Calming

Power to contribute financially to traffic calming schemes

Transport

Powers to spend money on community transport schemes

Water

Power to utilise wells, springs or streams for obtaining water

Websites

Powers for councils to have their own websites

Also:

Section 137

Section 137a – advice on this is being sought from DALC/NALC.

Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities advice regarding parish councils funding the maintenance and upkeep of churches and other religious buildings to be clarified.

Annex C - Combe Raleigh Parish Meeting –17 July 2024

Financial Report 2024/2025

General Fund

	£	£
Balance as at 1 April 2024		15,016.98
Plus Receipts:		
East Devon District Council		1,111.00
Less Payments:		
B. Churchill – Annual Meeting refreshments	65.29	
J. Brabrook – reimbursement of DALC subscription	26.71	
Community First Trading Ltd – insurance	122.76	
Combe Raleigh Newsletter	<u>600.00</u>	<u>814.76</u>
-		
Balance as at 17 July 2024		<u><u>15,313.22</u></u>

Community Infrastructure Levy – Combe Raleigh CIL

	£
Balance B/fwd 1 April 2024	3820.42
Payments	<u>nil</u>
Balance as at 17 July 2024	<u><u>3820.42</u></u>

Represented by:

		£
Lloyds Bank	16,464.09	
Less unrepresented cheques	<u>722.76</u>	15,741.33
Scottish Widows Bank		<u>3392.31</u>
Total		<u><u>19,133.64</u></u>