Cotleigh Parish Council

Minutes of the Cotleigh Parish Council Meeting held in Cotleigh Village Hall at 7.30pm on Wednesday 14th January 2026

Present: Cllrs: Nigel Young (Chair), Chris Henley, Bob Carter, Sophie George, EDDC Cllr Yehudi Levine and Sam Holland Evans (Clerk)

26/01/01 Apologies: EDDC Cllr Colin Brown, Cllr Martyn Broom, Helen Gwinnett (Footpath Warden) and PCSO Darren England

26/01/02 Declarations of Interest on Agenda Items: No interests were declared.

Meeting suspended for comments and questions to be received from the public: Nothing was raised.

26/01/03 Agreeing Minutes of: The Minutes of the Cotleigh Parish Council Meeting held 12th November 2025 were reviewed and signed by the Chair as a true record of the meeting.

26/01/04 Matters Arising from Minutes of 12th November 2025

a. – Displays

Cllr Carter presented two further display boards for the Village Hall, one relating to Cotleigh Church and the other to the Village Green. The total cost of the two displays was £220, which was partially funded by Devon County Councillor Cathy Connor.

Cllr Carter advised that he could produce one further small display at an estimated cost of £88.

It was AGREED to approve the production of the additional display at the estimated cost of £88.

b. – Residents' Survey

The Clerk presented the findings of the recent residents' survey. It was noted that the condition of roads and potholes was the primary concern raised by residents, with other themes including winter gritting, footpaths, dog waste provision, local infrastructure issues and general awareness of the Parish Council's role.

A detailed discussion took place regarding the issues raised and the actions already undertaken by the Council. Councillors noted the Council's ongoing efforts in relation to reporting and following up potholes with Devon County Council, identifying and rectifying missing road markings, liaising with South West Water regarding water supply issues, arranging dog waste bins and their ongoing maintenance, monitoring footpaths, and contacting National Grid in relation to recent power outages.

The survey responses also included comments about making greater use of the Village Hall and the Village Green. Councillors noted that these facilities are not owned or managed by the Parish Council. It was suggested that information about the Village Hall, including its hire costs and value compared to other local venues, could be publicised to encourage wider use.

Councillors also noted that a map showing local public footpaths has been displayed in the Village Hall, which may be of particular use to walkers and dog owners.

Comments were also noted by the Council regarding roadside vegetation affecting visibility. It was noted that this falls within highways responsibilities and would be monitored.

It was AGREED that the Clerk would prepare a written response addressing the key themes raised in the survey. This document will include an explanation of the Parish Council's role and responsibilities, together with examples of recent actions taken by the Council in response to local issues. The completed document will be published on the Council's website and signposted via the Council's Facebook page.

c. – Power Supply Issues
The Clerk reported that the response received in relation to recent power supply issues was from National Grid, requesting further details of specific addresses affected. Councillors noted that there had been no further power supply problems reported since the last meeting.
It was agreed that, as no further issues had arisen, the matter was now resolved.

26/01/05 Planning: There was none

26/01/06 East Devon Heritage Strategy Consultation: After consideration, the Council agreed not to submit a response.

26/01/07 Matters raised by the Chair:
The Chair reported on correspondence received from a resident regarding the lack of reports from the Community Police Officer and concerns about the condition of potholes in the parish. The Chair confirmed that he had replied to the resident, advising that the Police Community Support Officer is Darren England, and that although the officer is routinely invited to meetings, attendance has been limited. It was noted that the PCSO had recently advised that he was unable to attend the current meeting due to an unavoidable delay but would endeavour to attend a future meeting.

The Chair and councillors discussed ongoing frustration with the condition of potholes in the parish. Councillors reported that a significant number of potholes had been reported in recent weeks, many of which were either deemed below the repair threshold or could not be located by repair teams, despite the provision of photographs and location details. It was noted that only a small number had been repaired. These concerns were reported to and discussed with EDDC Councillor Yehudi Levine at the meeting.

It was agreed that the Clerk would write to Devon County Council to raise concerns regarding the standard of repairs, remind them of their statutory responsibilities, and seek guidance on the most effective way to communicate pothole locations to ensure future repairs can be carried out promptly.

26/01/08 Councillors Reports:
Cllr Carter advised that he had intended to raise matters relating to potholes; however, this issue had already been discussed earlier in the meeting. No further reports were received.

26/01/09 County Councillors Report:
A written report from Devon County Council for January 2026 was received and noted. The report included updates on fostering in Devon, warm homes grant funding, proposed changes to library services, police governance changes, and wider local government funding and reorganisation matters.

26/01/10 District Councillors Reports:
A verbal report was received from Cllr Yehudi Levine (East Devon District Council). It was noted that a survey into mobile and broadband coverage across the district had identified a need for improvement, and that East Devon District Council has written to Members of Parliament and relevant government departments regarding this issue.

Funding constraints across a range of services were noted, with council tax increases expected. It was reported that councils will be able to retain less income from business rates than previously, and that the introduction of a new fairer funding formula is expected to result in reduced funding for East Devon District Council next year. As a result, challenges in maintaining services were anticipated.

It was further noted that it is not yet clear whether local government reorganisation will improve the situation, although significant work is underway to harmonise practices across councils in preparation for any transition. It was also reported that the volume of consultation surveys is generating a high level of correspondence, and that artificial intelligence is being utilised to help manage the workload.

26/01/11 Community Police Officer's Report: No report was received from the Community Police Officer, who was unable to attend the meeting due to an incident requiring attention.

26/01/12 Footpath Warden Report: A written report was received from the Footpath Warden. No issues or problems with footpaths had been reported. It was noted that a local walking group has been established and meets weekly

26/01/13 Clerk's Report: The Clerk advised the Council of a new AGAR requirement for 2025/26 (Assertion 10) relating to digital systems, data protection and the use of email for council business. It was noted that further guidance and a short policy will be brought to a future meeting.

26/01/14 – Budget and Precept
The Council considered the budget for the forthcoming financial year. The budget was APPROVED.
The Council then considered the setting of the precept and RESOLVED that the precept would remain unchanged at £3,600.

26/01/15 Accounts to be paid:

The following payments were agreed:
Cheque number 200097 Clerks wages £637.37
Cheque number 200098 Clerks expenses £5.94
Cheque number 200099 Displays for village hall £220
Cheque number 200100 Liners for dog bins £7.06

26/01/16 The Council considered the transition to online banking and the use of direct debit for authorised payments, while retaining the ability to use cheque payments where appropriate.
It was RESOLVED to approve the use of online banking and direct debit for authorised payments, with cheque payments retained where necessary, in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.

26/01/17 The Council considered a proposal to change the Clerk's pay frequency from quarterly to monthly.
It was RESOLVED to approve the change of the Clerk's pay frequency from quarterly to monthly, with effect from February 2026.

26/01/18 The Council considered the updated Financial Regulations, including provision for online banking and direct debit.

It was RESOLVED to approve and adopt the updated Financial Regulations, including provision for online banking and direct debit.

26/01/19 Highways: The Council noted a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order relating to the Road from Three Mariners Cross to Royal Oak Cross, Cotleigh, in connection with the renewal of potable water mains. The temporary road closure is scheduled to commence on Monday 2 February 2026, with an anticipated completion date of Friday 13 February 2026. It was noted that details of the closure had been displayed on the village notice boards.

26/01/20 Correspondence: Correspondence was received from East Devon District Council regarding the Tree Champions initiative. The Council considered the information and agreed not to take this forward.
An offer from Devon Wildlife Trust relating to the provision of a tree for the village was also considered. The Council agreed not to accept the offer.

26/01/21 Website: Nothing to report.

26/01/22
Date of future meetings:
Wednesday 11th March

Proposed dates for future meetings were agreed, subject to the availability and booking of the Village Hall.

The meeting ended at 9.02pm

Signed Chair……..11th March 2026