

Marhamchurch Parish Council

Tuesday 20th January 2026

The meeting of Marhamchurch Parish Council was held on the above date at 7:30pm, in Marhamchurch Sunday School Rooms.

Councillors Present:

Vice-Chair Cllr Edwards, Cllr Biddick-Bray, Cllr O'Sullivan, Cllr Polkinghorn.

Also in attendance: County Councillor Nicky Chopak & Clerk E Hawkins.

2 members of the public were present for the meeting. In the absence of the Chairman, Vice Chair Cllr Edwards chaired the meeting. Cllr Edwards opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

Record and Approve Apologies.

26/01

Chairman Cllr Perry sent his apologies due to being unwell. Cllr Burnett sent his apologies due to work commitments. It was resolved to approve the apologies. Proposed Cllr Biddick-Bray. Seconded Cllr Polkinghorn. Unanimous.

Confirm Minutes from the 18 November 2025 meeting and 4 December 2025 Extraordinary meeting and ratify all decisions taken therein.

26/02

It was resolved to approve the minutes from both meetings and ratify all decisions made at both meetings held on Tuesday 18 November 2025 and the Extraordinary meeting held on 4 December 2025. Proposed Cllr Biddick-Bray. Seconded Cllr Polkinghorn. Unanimous. Vice-Chairman signed them as correct records.

Declarations.

26/03

None.

Dispensations.

26/04

- a) To note approved dispensations relevant to items on the agenda:
 - (i) None.
- b) To review new dispensations requests.
 - (i) No new dispensation requests.

Matters Arising – for report only.

26/05

- (i) Marhamchurch Speed Visor in place and active. – thank you to Cllr Perry for installing. Cllr Edwards to monitor, change batteries and collate data.

Public Open Session.

(To receive statements, questions, and answers from the public on an agenda item)

26/06

No comments.

Correspondence.

Signed: _____ Chairman. 17/02/2026

25/07

Circulated via email.

(i) Off Street Parking Order- 2026 Consultation. Response deadline 4th February.

Proposed Introduction of charges to:

- Viewing Point North, Widemouth car parks.
- Howells Bridge, Stratton.

Discussions held around how it will be enforced, and whether locals might be eligible for a parking permit.

MPC directed the Clerk to comment on the consultation, querying the potential possibility of a levy from income of parking fees as well as potential parking permits for locals, which will be beneficial for the local community. Proposed Cllr Edwards. Seconded Cllr O’Sullivan. Unanimous.

(ii) CIL Fund Round 5

The fifth CIL Fund round opened on Friday 16 January 2026, enabling groups to bid for between £20,000 and £100,000. Funding is available to support local infrastructure projects which help to either alleviate the impact of development on an area, or help development to come forward. Any eligible group or organisation that would like to apply for CIL funding, needs to submit an Expression of Interest form. This needs to be submitted by **3pm on Friday 27 February 2026.**

A suggestion was made that the Parish Council fund a parishioner survey to support the Marhamchurch Village Hall (The Bray) to establish whether or not there is support from parishioners for the Parish Council to actively involve itself in the efforts to raise the funds to refurbish The Bray.

Queries raised around whether the Committee had been consulted, and whether they wanted the PC to fund a survey. Suggestion that an online survey (google forms) could be set up.

Following a detailed discussion, it was unanimously agreed that the Parish Council write a letter of support to Marhamchurch Village Hall (The Bray) to support their application to secure funds. Clerk to make contact with Committee. Proposed Cllr Biddick-Bray. Seconded Cllr Edwards.

(i) Request to fly the Ukrainian flag – 4th anniversary of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine

The Ukrainian community in Cornwall, representing around 800 families, and the Ukrainian–Cornish social club Sunflowers & Choughs, request that the Ukrainian flag be flown to mark the fourth anniversary of Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine on 24 February.

As the Parish Council does not own any buildings it was agreed not to look into this matter any further.

Planning.

26/08

a) **Decision Notices/Updates:**

- (i) PA25/08526** | Non-Material Amendment in relation to Decision Notice PA19/04184 dated 17th February 2020 as set out in the accompanying cover letter | Whalesborough Farm Marhamchurch Bude. Approved Unconditionally.
- (ii) PA25/08438** | Proposal Works to trees within a conservation area. T1 - Beech - Reduce in height by 1m - reduce western side by up to 1m - reduce eastern side by up to 3m - shape in rest of tree to match | Leaferne Hobbacott Lane Marhamchurch Bude. For information only. No Tree Protection Order made.

Signed: _____ Chairman. 17/02/2026

(iii) **PA25/08556** | Proposed extension to existing house | 29 Pinch Hill Marhamchurch.
Approved.

b) **Planning Applications/Appeals:**

Any late planning applications received will be discussed but not decided under this section.

(i) **PA25/09675** | Replacement garage | Longdown Marine Drive Widemouth Bay Bude.

The application was reviewed and discussed.

Cllr O’Sullivan proposed No objections to the application. There was no seconder. Motion not passed. Cllr Edwards proposed Objection to the application based on concerns around increased height, and change of use. The PC would like to ensure the replacement garage is not converted and sold separately but that it is continued to be linked to the existing property. Seconded Cllr Biddick-Bray. 3 in favour. 1 against.

To receive oral or written reports and authorise any action

26/09

a) Chairman.

N/A

b) Cornwall Councillor.

Budget – public consultation is online and open. There was a £50m shortfall which has now reduced to £13m shortfall. Still significant and anticipated cuts are expected. Health and Adult Social Care budget has increased slightly which is positive.

Community Area Partnership Housing Meeting, held in December, was well attended. Likely to run another face-to-face meeting later in the year, with focus on ‘Young People’. Hoping to engage with Youth Council at Budehaven School.

Community Highways Improvement Program – noted this is listed as agenda item.

c) Playpark.

(i) Thanks to Cllr Perry and Cllr Edwards for fixing the back gate which had been broken open and posed a safety risk to young children using the Playpark.

d) The Clerk.

Taking a breath after an incredibly busy end to the year, but very pleased we managed to complete the purchase of Hele Valley Trail before Christmas.

Portfolio Holder Review.

26/10

To be allocated:

Bude Canal – Cllr Polkinghorn.

Bus Shelter

Defibrillator

Emergency Planning

Hele Valley Trail - Cllr Polkinghorn & Cllr O’Sullivan.

Signed: _____ Chairman. 17/02/2026

Marhamchurch Primary School
Parish Cemetery
Planters
Public Toilet

Due to low numbers of Cllrs, it was not possible to fill all the Portfolio Holder vacancies. Cllr Chopak mentioned that Week St Mary were having same issues, and are in process of drafting something for their website. Clerk to look into.

The Hele Valley Trail

26/11

Clerk updated the following:

- (i) Reporting to Community Ownership Fund – required fortnightly as we have now received formal confirmation of extension to 31 March 2026.
- (ii) Cornwall Council Climate and Nature Fund Grant through Crowdfunder requires that reporting form be submitted within 2 months of project completion.
- (iii) Insurers notified of purchase – Clerk checked with them re signage requirements from insurance perspective. Feedback was no specific wording, however requested that MPC ensure the council complies with regular tree inspections in accordance with industry regulations & carries out risk assessments.

A detailed additional debate was held around risk assessments, tree surveys but the Chair moved the discussions along to next update.

- (iv) Woodland Scheme – required to register within 12 months of taking ownership of land. Clerk has notified Forestry Commission of purchase and has been sent through paperwork to complete. Clerk requested an inspection is conducted – which has been forwarded to relevant Woodland Officer, awaiting contact. Have also received original contract from Forestry Commission which was circulated today and copy printed for file.
- (v) Signage and plaque – Clerk to ensure MPC meet obligations set by funders, this includes a plaque to be installed along with relevant wording on all signage. Would be good to liaise with Portfolio Holders to confirm meeting requirements based on information circulated from COF.

Proposed wording for signage was circulated to Cllrs ahead of meeting. It was agreed to keep the wording concise. Clerk to draft another edit and circulate. To also check signs at Stratton Woodland area for comparison.

- (vi) Approval of outstanding payment to Solicitor.

This was noted and will be approved at the Finance and Legislation section.

- (vii) Any other matters for discussion.

Woodland Management Plan – to delay any progression on this until Forestry Commission has completed inspection of the site.

Signed: _____ Chairman. 17/02/2026

Community Highways Improvement Programme.

26/12

The CHIP programme offers an opportunity to:

- Address local concerns such as speeding and road safety
- Support Cornwall Council's wider transport and sustainability priorities, in line with national policy objectives

If PC wishes to request work, then EOI must be submitted by end of February.

No requests to submit.

Grant Applications 2025

26/13

Section 137 expenditure limit for parish and town councils announced for 2026/27.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has updated an increase in the Section 137 expenditure limit for parish and town councils in England for the 2026/27 financial year. The new limit is £11.60 per elector, up from £11.10 in 2025/26.

Section 137(4)(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 states funds should only be granted for any purpose which, in the Council's opinion, is in the interests of, or will directly benefit the area or its inhabitants. Maximum permitted is £11.60 per electorate, which currently sits at 679. A maximum of £7876.40 can be allocated. There are other Local Government Statutory Acts which cover parish council grants and S137 must not be used as the statutory power to expend grants if there is another statute that covers. The 2025/26 budget is £900 for annual grants.

Grant Requests received from:

1. **Marhamchurch Pre-school** to assist with replacement of water damaged roof. Quotes to replace/repair £8000-£15,000. Requesting as much as possible to help. ALLOCATED: **£600**
2. **Marhamchurch PSFA** to facilitate a talk/visit to show children process of apples from tree to juice. £250 requested of £500 expected costs. ALLOCATED: £0
3. **Snooker Club** purchase of second-hand table iron to keep table cloth in good condition and purchase extra cues for younger members to use. £250 requested of £300+ expected costs. ALLOCATED: £0 – due to hall being closed currently and hoped that Village Hall funds will be allocated to users of the hall when reopened.
4. **Holworthy Rural Community Transport** to assist with ongoing costs to meet demands and ensure support is offered to those in need of services. 5 users in Marhamchurch access the service currently. £300 requested of £250 each trip / £140,000 annual costs. ALLOCATED: £50
5. **The Bray** to assist with ongoing significant maintenance costs on the Grade II Listed building. One section is closed on safety grounds, overall cost expected to be between £50,000-£100,000. Requesting as much as possible to assist. ALLOCATED: £250
6. **Christmas Tree Committee** to assist with purchase of large Christmas Tree for the village. £100 requested of £450-£500 expected costs. ALLOCATED: £0

It was agreed to add into the Budget an annual contribution to the Christmas Tree Committee of £150.

Signed: _____ Chairman. 17/02/2026

It was resolved to approve the Grant payments as listed above, and to add an annual contribution of £150 to the Christas Tree Committee. Proposed Cllr Biddick-Bray. Seconded Cllr Polkinghorn. Unanimous.

Digital and Data Compliance Update.

26/14

Emails are up and running and information has been circulated to Cllrs detailing how to log in. Website still under construction. Clerk and Cllrs need to start using new account, and to ensure only use new emails by 31 March 2026. Cllrs need to start making note of what needs to be changed re log in etc.

Cllrs agreed to bring forward Agenda Item 18: Review of Contract between MVSL & MPC.

Review of Contract Agreement between Marhamchurch Parish Council & Marhamchurch Village Shop Ltd.

26/18

Following a detailed discussion regarding this matter, it was agreed to request a meeting with the Committee to review the contract. Cllr O'Sullivan and Cllr Biddick-Bray expressed an interest in attending. Clerk to make contact.

Budget 2026/27 & Precept 2026/27.

26/15

- (i) Clerk made amendments as requested at November meeting, the amended draft budget and precept were circulated before the meeting for any suggestions / queries. Following a discussion, it was agreed to unanimously approve the 2026/2027 budget, including the additional £150 budget towards Marhamchurch Christmas Tree Committee. Proposed Cllr Biddick-Bray. Seconded Cllr Polkinghorn. 3 in favour. 1 abstained.
- (ii) It was unanimously agreed to select Option 2 of the Precept proposal £32,840.88 for the 2026/27 financial year. Proposed Cllr Edwards. Seconded Cllr Biddick-Bray. Unanimous.

Clerk to submit to Cornwall Council as priority, deadline for submission is 31 January 2026.

Light in Bus Shelter.

26/16

Decided not to pursue further at this time.

Community Chest Grant 2026.

26/17

Suggestion of applying for a bench for HVT through Community Chest. Cllr Chopak to send through application form.

Code of Conduct Training 2025.

26/19

To note who has completed training and who is yet to attend.

Cllr Burnett attended training in November. Cllr Polkinghorn to attend in February.

Policy Reviews

26/20

- (i) **Freedom of Information Policy**

Signed: _____ Chairman. 17/02/2026

Clerk updated that she needs to review and update policies. Starting with Freedom of Information Policy. Will update with new email and web address.

Cllr O’Sullivan informed that there is some online training on Friday 23rd, should the Clerk wish to attend.

Finance & Legislation.

26/21

- a) Approval of payments as per schedule (£5579.52) and consider payment of urgent accounts presented by the date of the meeting. Proposed Cllr Biddick-Bray. Seconded Cllr Edwards. Unanimous.
- b) To note Income & Bank Balances as per the schedule. Noted.
- c) To note Bank reconciliations. Noted.

Parish Matters – Agree action and authorise associated expenditure.

26/22

None.

Urgent Matters raised with the Chairman since the Agenda was published.

26/23

None.

Date of next meeting and note items from Councillors for the Agenda.

26/24

Tues 17th February

Meeting closed at: 9:20pm

PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) Act 1960 S1(2) & S1(6)

During the meeting it may arise that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential or special nature of the business to be transacted and the press and public will be instructed to withdraw.

When this arises, the Chair will recommend to consider passing the following resolution: “to resolve that in view of the confidential or special nature of the business to be discussed, the public are excluded and instructed to withdraw.”

Signed: _____ Chairman. 17/02/2026