

**Minutes of the Fremington Parish Council Meeting
Held on Monday 1st September 2025 at 7pm at the Beechfield Centre,
Beechfield Road, Fremington**

Present: Cllrs S Kingdom (Chairman), S Adams, F Biederman, J Bridgeman, J Cann, D Dixon, S Haywood, H Walker, D Harris, B Sherborne and E Smlatic

Mrs J Wood, Administration and Projects Manager

2509/08

Apologies

Cllrs Denton & Cllr Tamlin.

2509/09

Declarations of Interest

Cllr Walker declared a personal interest in item 2509/16 as member of North Devon Council Planning Committee. Cllr Biederman declared a Personal interest in 2509/16 as the landowner is known to him.

2509/10

Chairman's Announcements

None

2509/11

Public Participation Period

None

2509/12

Minutes

It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 16th June 2025 as a correct record.

2509/13

Committees

To receive, and adopt the minutes, and note the decisions therein, of the following Committee meetings:

- Finance & Personnel Committee meeting held on 24th June 2025
It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to adopt the minutes and note the decisions therein of the minutes of the Finance & Personnel Committee Meeting held on 24th June 2025.
- Planning Committee meeting held on 26th June 2025
It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to adopt the minutes and note the decisions therein of the minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 26th June 2025.
- Environment & Community Committee Meeting held on 26th June 2025
It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to adopt the minutes and note the decisions therein of the minutes of the Environment & Community Committee Meeting held on 26th June 2025.
- Tews Lane Committee Meeting 26th June 2025
It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to adopt the minutes and note the decisions therein of the minutes of the Tews Lane Committee Meeting



held on 26th June 2025.

- Finance & Personnel Committee meeting held on 22nd July 2025
It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to adopt the minutes and note the decisions therein of the minutes of the Finance & Personnel Committee Meeting held on 22nd July 2025.
- Planning Committee meeting held on 24th July 2025
It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to adopt the minutes and note the decisions therein of the minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 24th July 2025
- Environment & Community Committee Meeting held on 24th July 2025
It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to adopt the minutes and note the decisions therein of the minutes of the Environment & Community Committee Meeting held on 24th July 2025.
- Fremington Quay Management Committee Meeting held on 24th July 2025
It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to adopt the minutes and note the decisions therein of the minutes of the Fremington Quay Management Committee Meeting held on 24th July 2025.

2509/14

County and District Councillors' Reports

Cllr Biederman - Fremington Ward and Devon County Council

Cllr Biederman provided an update on the Local Government Reorganisation; although Devon County Council's position is still unknown, the North Devon Council has signed up for 1-4-5 model. Exeter has decided to pursue unitary status independently and make themselves a "special case". Plymouth, which is already a unitary authority, is taking in around 18 Parishes from South Hams. It has been noted that if Exeter becomes a unitary authority a large part of Devon would not be economically viable and options to address this are limited with what the Government would agree. Cllr Biederman raised concerns that the smaller the unitary authority is the more it will struggle financially as the cost of delivering services in a rural area will be higher. Exeter will have much younger population within a condensed area with all the economic income. Cllr Biederman was aware that the independent group was proposing to spend £150,000 on consultants to put together a case for a Northern Devon Council, however, there would be no guarantee that the Government would accept the proposal.

Cllr Biederman spoke about transport for School children; he had received a lot of emails over the summer from parents about not being able to get free passes for the school bus. Everyone has a choice when choosing a secondary school, however, if you do not choose the closet secondary school then you are not entitled to a free bus pass. He asked that if perhaps any other Councillors are approached about this; they could make parents aware of the requirement.



Cllr Biederman spoke about Lagoon View Community Orchard, and the possibility of it being closed off for development. He explained that anyone can apply for planning permission but until such time as this happens it cannot be contested. The original planning permission has the area as an open space/children's play area, until an application is submitted North Devon Council are not able to seek legal advice. Cllr Biederman expressed disappointment with the local company that is seeking to develop the land and that they would be taking away a community asset. Cllr Biederman, MP Ian Roome and the Community Group have a meeting scheduled to discuss next steps to help protect the area.

Cllr Biederman is pleased to see all the new bus shelters being put in by Devon County Council but was disappointed to see that one had already been graffitied.

Cllr Walker/Cann - Bickington Ward

Cllr Walker stated in relation to the Local Government Reorganisation that anybody that has read the article, which she believed was in the Gazette, on Devon Live and in the Weston Morning News, should be made aware that the article is incorrect. There has been no agreement to spend £150,000 pounds of taxpayers' money to look at the Northern Devon option for the government reorganisation. There were two things in the motion that were passed through; one was to allow the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council to have discussions with other leaders, particularly the leader of Exeter City Council and the Chief Executive of Exeter City Council to discuss a way forward; the other was to say that we do not want a Devon single authority.

Cllr Walker spoke about the travellers that had taken up unauthorised residency on a piece of land in Roundswell for around three days. The land ownership is under dispute; North Devon Council's legal department is working to resolve ownership of the land so that the area can be secured to prevent unauthorised access and encampments in the future. The area was left in a mess with rubbish on site, but it was attended to quickly and Cllr Walker would like to thank North Devon Council's Parks Team for removing the mess. There is an area that has been designated at Severn Brethren for travellers to use whilst they are in the area but are not keen to use the area as there is no grass.

Cllr Cann echoed Cllr Walker's comment and added that they may consider putting boulders in as they have done in Tews Lane to secure the area in Roundswell further. Cllr Cann did not feel that the site at Severn Brethren was appealing and felt North Devon Council might need to investigate more appealing sites to prevent unauthorised access and encampments.

Cllr Walker added that resolving these situations was easier and quicker working as a team with the County Councillor.

Cllr Cann spoke about the for-sale signs appearing all over the ward again, it has been reported back to the Legal department, and they will be sending out letters to the relevant estate agents. If Councillors see any boards left



in place or attached to road signs to please report it back to Cllrs Cann & Walker.

2509/15 **Cllr Resignation**

Members noted the resignation from Cllr Butler for personal reasons.

2509/16 **North Devon Council - Planning Applications**

North Devon Council, the determining Authority, has asked for comments from this Parish Council on the following applications:

It was formally noted that participation of the Councillors who are also members of NDC in both the debate and subsequent vote (in respect of any of the below), were preliminary and on the basis that the views expressed were made on the information available at the time to the Parish Council. The District Councillors were reserving their final views on the application until they were in full possession of all the relevant arguments for and against.

80058 Proposal: Outline application for erection of up to 450 dwellings, a local centre of community, retail convenience space, and associated development (with appearance, landscaping, layout and scale reserved) – EIA development

Location: Land at Brynsworthy, Brynsworthy, Barnstaple, EX31 3QQ

Applicant/Agent: Wessex Strategic Ltd

Cllr Bridgeman asked for an update on the position of the 5-year housing land supply, it was noted that currently there was not a 5-year housing land supply, however, it was believed that sufficient development had been recently approved to meet the requirement.

Members discussed the application and the implications of overdevelopment of the parish. It was felt that the area has been the subject of overdevelopment and broken infrastructure that can no longer cope. It was also noted that the proposed development was outside of the local plan, however, some members also felt that this would remove further development from the B3233.

After much discussion Cllr Biederman proposed REFUSAL which was seconded by Cllr Cann, when put to the vote the vote was tied with five votes in favour, five votes against and one abstention, the proposal was lost on the Chairman's casting vote.

Cllr Kingdom felt that the B3233 could not cope with any further development and that this development would be better placed for the road network and the parish, therefore, Cllr Kingdom proposed APPROVAL which was seconded by Cllr Adams, when put to the vote there were five votes in favour, five against and one abstention the proposal was won on the Chairman's casting vote and it was:



RESOLVED, with five votes to the contrary and one abstention, to recommend APPROVAL.

2509/17 **Terms of Reference and Scheme of Delegation**

It was noted that members had agreed to review the terms of reference for all Committees as it was felt that the current Committee structure was not working and noted that Committee meetings have not been well attended at the Annual Parish Council Meeting in May. Options for consideration were circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr Biederman would like to see the Committees restructured to reduce the number of Committees and provide a larger remit for the remaining Committees. Members discussed the allocation of responsibilities and after discussion it was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to review the terms of reference for all of the Committees and to consider updated draft terms of reference at the next Finance & Personnel meeting.

2509/18 **Membership of Committee**

Cllr Tamlin nominated himself for the position of substitute member for the Finance & Personnel Committee.

It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to appoint Cllr Tamlin as the substitute member for the Finance & Personnel Committee.

2509/19 **Parish Council Representatives**

The Chairman asked for a nomination for a representative to Earth Action North Devon (formerly plastic Free North Devon). No nominations were received.

2509/20 **Proposed Parish Changes in North Devon**

Information relating to the Community Governance Review and proposed boundary changes were circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr Walker informed members that so far there had been 26 responses to the consultation. She has arranged for the creation of a leaflet to deliver to those areas most affected, in the hope of encouraging more responses to the consultation. Councillors all agreed to help with the distribution of the leaflets. Cllr Biederman suggested that the Parish Council write to Barnstaple Town Council to express its disappointment in the proposals to split up Fremington Parish and ask that they respectfully withdraw their proposal, it was agreed for Councillors to deliver the letter at the next Town Council meeting on the 15th September 2025.

It was **resolved** with no votes to the contrary, for:

1. Cllr Walker to arrange the distribution of the leaflets;
2. The Administration & Projects Manager to write the letter to Barnstaple Town Council for Cllrs to deliver to the meeting;
3. The Administration & Projects Officer to post the consultation on social media and arrange for posters to be placed on the Parish Council's noticeboards.



2509/21

Councillors Questions

Cllr Smlatic asked who was responsible for the small patch of grass between Woodville and Lynhurst Avenue. Cllr Smlatic has asked contractors to cut when they have been on site, but they have not done as it is not their area. Cllr Kingdom said that is used to be cut by a resident, but they no longer do this. Cllrs asked if the Office could check who is responsible for the area and ask that it be cut.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.12pm

Signed 

Dated 6.10.25