Quethiock Parish Council
Minutes of the Meeting held on 19th May 2025
at Quethiock Parish Hall at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors: John Blatchford (Chair), John Warren, Chris Healey and Alison Jeffrey. Clerk: Matthew Wald.

Apologies: Councillor Hobbs

In Attendance: Two members of the public

1. **Councillors' Acceptance of Office:** The councillors present signed their forms of acceptance of office.

2. **Appointment of Officers:** The following were elected:

   Chairman: Cllr Blatchford (*proposed Cllr Healey, seconded Cllr Jeffrey*)
   Vice Chairman: Cllr Jeffrey (*proposed Cllr Warren, seconded Cllr Healey*)
   Responsible Financial Officer: Matthew Wald (*proposed Cllr Warren, seconded Cllr Healey*)

3. **Declarations of Interest:** None

4. **Minutes of meeting on 3rd March 2025**

   The Council approved the draft minutes of the previous meeting (proposed Cllr Healey, seconded Cllr Warren)

5. **Matters Arising from meeting of 3rd March 2025**

   Quethiock News distribution (minute 3.3): Cllr Jeffrey said that she had spoken to some thirty people who would prefer to receive QN in paper form. She proposed that we should revert to printing a substantial number of copies for manual distribution in the three villages. The Clerk reported that he had received no requests for paper copies at all, despite various advertisements inviting parishioners who were unable to receive email to contact him. Cllr Warren said that if parishioners had not asked for paper copies he could see no need to deliver them. Cllr Blatchford said that he considered the case for email delivery to be compelling and disagreed with Cllr Jeffrey's proposal.

   Following further discussion it was agreed that the Clerk should repeat the previous advertisement inviting those unable to receive email to contact him, both in QN and on noticeboards (and in big print !)

6. **Finance:**

6.1 The Clerk had circulated a note of the current balances (attached as Appendix 1).

6.2 The Clerk noted that Included in the current account above is £156.09 which sum had until recently been held in an account for the former Blunts Village Hall. That account had been closed by its bank, and the balance had therefore, for lack of anywhere better to put it, been paid into this Council's account.

The Clerk has been provided by the Chairman with paperwork relating to the Blunts Village Hall from which it is clear that those funds must be used only for the purpose of

"*provision of a recreation ground or a village hall*" for the inhabitants of the Parish. He added that the documents also disclose that the site of the former village hall, title to which is formally vested in the Official Custodian for Charities, must similarly be used only for those purposes.

6.3 The Clerk reported that difficulty has been experienced in registering Cllrs Warren and Hobbs for internet banking with Lloyds. The problem appears to have arisen because they are not yet on the (paper) bank mandate, and that this has to be changed before the bank's computer system will allow them access. He has the necessary forms (which are much more voluminous and complex than before) and this will be addressed as soon as all those involved can be brought together to sign the paperwork.

The Clerk said that it is clear this is likely to be an issue which will recur, because every time a new councillor becomes a bank signatory there will be a hiatus while the paperwork goes back and forth so that the bank can make the change.

6.4 For that reason, and also because having an alternative bank might be useful should our current bank decide (as seems to be the fashion amongst high-street banks) to close down the sort of accounts we use, the Clerk is coming round to the view that it would be prudent to have an account with another bank as well. Unity Bank has an account designed for parish councils etc. Adam Sturtridge (a member of the public who was in attendance) said that St Mellion PC use Unity, and the Clerk will contact St Mellion's clerk Ren Jackaman to discuss.

6.5 The Clerk reported that he has prepared the Annual Accounts and Annual Governance Return paperwork, which he will deliver to our internal auditors following this meeting. The External Auditors, BDO, require the council to confirm that it has no conflict of interest with that firm, and the Council did so resolve (proposed Cllr Healey, seconded Cllr Blatchford)

7. Community Benefit Fund:

There were no applications for funding. See also minute 9.1 below.

8. Planning:

The Council considered application PA25/03136 (First floor extension to rear of Hammett Cottage, Quethiock)). This was supported.

9. Parish Hall:

9.1 Cllr Jeffrey referred to a request from the Hall Committee for a portable metal ramp suitable for wheelchairs, cost circa £189. It was resolved to acquire this, to be funded in part by the Blunts Village Hall money referred to at minute 6.2 above, the balance to come from the Community Benefit Fund.

9.2 It had also been suggested that it would be desirable to appropriate part of the school playing field as car parking for the Village Hall. This land is leased to the School whose consent would be required – the Clerk said that he thought that it was unlikely that the school would agree to it. The Chairman pointed out that the Neighbourhood Development Plan (policy C3) designates the playing field as green space. Councillors recognised that further parking space would be useful but this particular proposal was not supported.

The Clerk added that he and the Chairman had previously thought about this issue – the

ideal solution would be to acquire some land adjacent to the Hall as a car park. However, this would involve significant cost (land being c. £12-15,000 per acre, plus planning and legal costs and construction work) which the Council is not at present able to afford. It would also depend on either there being a willing seller or the viability of compulsory purchase.

10. Public Participation:

A member of the public referred to the Neighbourhood Development Plan. She noted that this is being kept under review [*see minute 4.2 of the meeting on 13th January 2025*] but asked what are the prospects of better public transport and/or a community shop.

Various members of the Council responded, as follows:

(i) Public transport has declined from the daily bus service mentioned in the NDP to a once-weekly service. It is unlikely that there will be any improvement in the foreseeable future.

(ii) A community shop also seems unlikely. The parish population is small (about 400-500) and most parishioners have access to a car and can access village shops in Menheniot and Pensilva, as well as supermarkets etc in the local towns. There is also widespread use of home deliveries,. It was noted that the mobile Post Office is due to close in June, and does not generate enough trade to be viable.

11. Any other business:

Cllr Warren said that Sam Wilkinson had expressed concern that a tree opposite his house was overhanging the road and might fall onto the road or his property.

The Chairman said that this was not a matter for the Parish Council. As to the road, Sam should report it on the Cornwall Highways website. As to a threat to this property, that was a matter between him and the owner of the land on which the tree is growing.

There being no other business, the meeting concluded at about 9.00 pm.

Next meetings: Monday 23rd June 2025 (*to sign off Accounts AGAR etc*) and 28th July 2025 (*full Agenda*), at 7pm in the Parish Hall.

Signed Chairman……Dated……

Appendix 1: Financial:

Current financial position as at 15th May 2025:

i. Instant Access [deposit] account:	**£17,343.97** as at 9th April 2025
ii. Community [current] account:	£8,271.03 as at 30th December 2024
Less payments due or paid, cheques drawn but uncleared, and STOs due, to 31st May£	(573.44)
Net	**£7,697.59**
iii. Community Benefit Account:	**£9,318.41** as at 22nd April 2025*
Total:	**£34,359.97**

iv. Overall position

Included in the current account above is £156.09 derived from the Blunts village hall, and which is to be used only for the provision of a village hall and/or recreation facilities in the parish, so the total precept funds, after allowing for accruals this month, are **£24,885.47**.

This is much the same as it was when I last calculated the position in January.

Unallocated Community Benefit funds are **£8,324.41**