

WEST DOWN PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES
West Down Parish Hall
Wednesday 1 June 2022 at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Cllrs S Ayre (Chair), M Reeves (Vice-Chair), K Oades, S Squire, J Robinson and District Councillor M Wilkinson.

Also present: 3 members of the public and Val Ford (Clerk).

Apologies/Approvals.

Apologies were received from C Cllr A Davis and Cllrs R Kenshole, R Drew and T Verney.

4671. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Squire declared an interest in planning applications 75179 and 75364.

4672. Public Participation

Hannah Knight and her husband Jon, talked about planning application 75179 – Development of a glamping site with four bespoke, partial underground warrens at Higher Aylescott, Aylescott Lane. The proposal is to diversify Hannah's parents existing business, support them with the land and the 16th century property. The warrens will help their wilding project and they are working with an ecologist to mitigate any disturbances during the build. They have advised the neighbours about the application, have their own entrance already and their own power and water. Hannah referred to living at Higher Aylescott all of her life and her husband for 11 years. They want to protect and maintain the site and invited anyone to come and look at what they are trying to offset.

4673. Approve & Sign Minutes of the 4 May 2022 Parish Council Meeting.

The Minutes had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. **Cllr Reeves proposed that the Minutes of the meeting held on 4 May 2022 be accepted as a true record which was seconded by Cllr Robinson.** There was unanimous approval to this proposal.

RESOLVED – THAT THE MINUTES OF THE 4th MAY 2022 PARISH COUNCIL MEETING BE APPROVED AND THEY WERE DULY SIGNED.

4674. To check for accuracy the Minutes of the West Down Annual Parish Meeting dated the 4th May 2022.

These will not be signed until the Annual Parish Meeting in 2023. **Cllr Squire proposed that the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 4 May 2022 be accepted as a true record, which was seconded by Cllr Robinson.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

RESOLVED – THAT THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 4TH MAY 2022 BE APPROVED AS A TRUE COPY.

-THAT THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 4TH MAY 2022 BE SIGNED AT THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING IN 2023.

4675. Matters Arising

4648 – Matters Arising. (4557) Disabled bay in village car park. An email had been received from NDC to say that the engineers had inspected the car park but did not deem the work as urgent as the lines are still visible. They are going to monitor the situation. It was agreed at the meeting that this response is not acceptable, particularly as the Parish Council pay £800 p.a. towards the car park. The Clerk will

contact Jon Triggs at NDC about this. (4659) Removal of the hedge at Teasel Cottage. The Clerk had circulated the email from the Enforcement Officer to Councillors prior to the meeting. Enforcement have been monitoring the site, with a new visit scheduled to take their investigations to the next step. (4602) District Councillors Grant. The Parish Council had been successful in their application for grant funding for the wrought iron bench to go round the Platinum Tree. The bench had been ordered and D Cllr Malcolm Wilkinson was thanked for this funding. The Clerk will arrange for the claim form and receipt to be submitted so that this funding can be paid. There is a 12 to 14 week lead time on the bench. (4627) Dog poo sign. This has now been replaced. (4629) CLT. Apart from a few "tweaks" the forms are nearly complete. (4633) Litter Bins. The map had been updated. (4642) Correspondence. The invoice had now been received for the confidential waste removal.

4656 - The Small Grants Policy had been amended.

4659 – Platinum Tree. The balance of the monies from the plaque had been paid to WDVGFA towards the oak tree.

4676. Police Report

Monthly Crime Figures. The newsletter had not been available for the June meeting. Figures will be given at the July meeting.

4677. Report from County Councillor.

C Cllr Davis had sent her apologies. No report had been received.

4678 Report from District Councillor.

D Cllr Wilkinson referred to the gas problem last night at Woolacombe. An excavator went through the gas main at Tranquility Park which left approximately 1,000 homes without gas.

He was delighted that North Devon had been awarded the World Surfing Reserve Award. This is a recognition of all of the hard work and brings all sorts of benefits, particularly tourism, to the whole of North Devon.

With regards to the Community Land Trust, D Cllr Wilkinson will be attending a Strategy & Resource Committee meeting on Monday the 6th June 2022. A recommendation will be made for S106 funding for 21 units in Woolacombe consisting of one bed flats and two and three bed accommodation. The National Trust have come on board, with a strong caveat that they must be for affordable rent in perpetuity. There have been extensive meetings with AOB, the National Trust and Highways.

Maria Bailey from Planning has now left NDC, as has the Planning Officer from Torridge. This has now left the Planning department understaffed again.

4679. Signage in the Village

To discuss the request made for signage in the village. This will be moved to the July meeting so that C Cllr Davis can comment on this.

4680. Footpath 12 / Footpaths

The Chair referred to a telephone conversation with the owner of Little Comfort Farm regarding problems with cyclists using the footpaths and a couple of near misses with his holiday makers. He was concerned that the footpath is being used by sturdy bikes and horses.

The Tender Specification for Footpath 12 had been received from Simon Houghton and was circulated to councillors. An application can be made to DDC for funding for this work. The permission of the landowner is required in the first instance. Cllr Oades will endeavour to contact the landowner via the existing tenant. The Parish Council have already received £2,000 for Footpath 12. Suggestions for footpath 12 included a walkway down to the field, with shale on top. It was suggested that if the kissing gates are reinstated the issue at Little Comfort Farm may not reoccur. The Tender document will need to be brought back to the July meeting.

£820 had been received for P3 maintenance of footpaths, which is very positive, and the Parish Council need to consider how to use this. Work is required on Footpath 16, with lots of finger posts down as well as at the end of Footpath 12. Strimming is required at No Man's Land and also work is required on Footpath 17. The Clerk will look at the last Footpath Audit and make a list of jobs required.

An email had been received from the owner of Lower Aylescott in response to the letter regarding ownership of footpaths. The area they own is in the parish of Braunton, not West Down.

String had been put across Footpath 17 at Aylescott Corner. The Chair had taken this down.

4681. 20 mph Speed Limit in the village

The Chair and one other volunteer had carried out the training for the Community Speed Watch. This needs to be circulated again at the Village Forum Meeting to get more people to come forward. Without this group the 20 mph speed limit cannot be progressed. This is to be discussed again at the July meeting.

4682. Road Warden Scheme

Information had been circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting. The Clerk will put in an Expression of Interest regarding this scheme and bring this back to the July meeting.

4683 Community Land Trust

Susy Forbes, Secretary of West Down CLT, had made a request at the time of the last meeting to see if the Parish Council would consider making an application for a Housing Needs Survey. There is funding available for this survey. The last survey was in 2011 and is needed to give an accurate number of houses required. **Cllr Reeves proposed that the Parish Council make the application for the Housing Needs Survey on behalf of the CLT which was seconded by Cllr Robinson.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

RESOLVED - THAT THE PARISH COUNCIL WILL MAKE AN APPLICATION FOR THE HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY TO BE CARRIED OUT ON BEHALF OF THE CLT.

-THAT THE CLERK WILL WRITE TO SUSY FORBES, SECRETARY OF WEST DOWN CLT, TO ADVISE HER THAT THE PARISH COUNCIL ARE HAPPY TO ASSIST.

-THAT THE CLERK WILL CONTACT ALISON WARD FROM MIDDLEMARSH TO GET THE APPLICATION FORMS FOR THE HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY.

4684 NDC Climate & Environmental Grant for 2022/2023

Applications for the first round of this money need to be in by the end of August, with the second round ending on the 31st January 2023. It was agreed that the Clerk would write to the Village Hall Committee and West Down Village Green Field

Association to see if they have any projects in mind for this funding. This will be put on the August Agenda.

4685. Community Award

The Clerk had written to the nominees for the Community Award and thanked them for their invaluable contribution to the community of West Down. It was agreed that this award needs further consideration. This is to be put on the August or September Agenda.

4686. Parish Council Insurance

The Parish Council Insurance was renewed with Community First on the 23rd May at an annual premium of £314.22. Confirmation had been received to say the payment had been received and the policy renewed. The Clerk had sought alternative quotations, with only one being received which was more expensive.

4687. Review of Standing Orders

The Clerk had circulated information to Cllrs prior to the meeting. This needs to be reviewed on an annual basis. **Cllr Squire proposed that the Standing Orders stay as they are, which was seconded by Councillor Oades.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

RESOLVED – THAT THE STANDING ORDERS WILL STAY AS THEY ARE AND WILL BE REVIEWED ON AN ANNUAL BASIS.

-THAT THE CLERK WILL PUT THE STANDING ORDERS ON THE NEW HEADER WITH THE MINUTE NUMBER.

4688. Review of Statement of Internal Control

Cllr Reeves had made amendments to this document which was circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. **Cllr Oades proposed that the amended document be adopted, which was seconded by Cllr Ayre.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

RESOLVED - THAT THE REVISED STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL SHOULD BE ADOPTED.

-THAT THE CLERK WILL PUT THE STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL ON THE NEW HEADER WITH THE MINUTE NUMBER.

4689. General & Financial Risk Assessment

Cllr Reeves had drawn up a General & Financial Risk Assessment which had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting **Cllr Ayre proposed that this document be adopted, which was seconded by Cllr Squire.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal

RESOLVED – THAT THE GENERAL & FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT SHOULD BE ADOPTED.

-THAT THE CLERK WILL PUT THE GENERAL & FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT ON THE NEW HEADER WITH THE MINUTE NUMBER.

4690. Parish Council Diary

The Clerk had circulated the updated Diary to Cllrs prior to the meeting. The Internal Control Document and the General & Financial Risk Assessment need to be added to this document. **Cllr Oades proposed that the Diary, once amended, be**

accepted. Cllr Squire seconded this proposal. There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

RESOLVED – THAT THE PARISH COUNCIL DIARY WILL BE AMENDED TO INCLUDE THE INTERNAL CONTROL DOCUMENT AND THE GENERAL & FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT.

4691. Parish Council Laptop

The Clerk had expressed concern prior to the meeting that the laptop was becoming increasingly unreliable, making her work difficult to carry out. Funding opportunities towards this replacement laptop were being sought from Devon Association of Local Councils. Following discussion regarding the best way forward, **Cllr Robinson proposed that a replacement laptop be purchased, which was seconded by Cllr Squire.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal. It was agreed that a maximum budget of £1,000 be allocated to this new laptop. Advice will be sought from Cllr Kenshole as to the best laptop to buy with the correct storage capacity.

RESOLVED – THAT THE CLERK WILL PURCHASE A NEW LAPTOP FOR A MAXIMUM BUDGET OF £1,000.

-THAT ADVICE WILL BE SOUGHT FROM CLLR KENSHOLE IN RESPECT OF WHICH LAPTOP TO PURCHASE.

-THAT THE CLERK WILL CONTINUE TO LOOK FOR FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES TOWARDS THIS LAPTOP.

4692. Village Emergency Planning

Information had been circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting. Cllr Reeves had carried out some work on this and Cllr Ayre had discussed this with Cllr Kenshole. It is an onerous task and it was agreed that another Councillor needed to come on board for the initial phase before starting to involve the wider community. Cllr Squire agreed to take on this responsibility. This needs to be kept on the Agenda.

4693 Finances

a) To receive the balance in the bank accounts.

Balance in the Business Account as at 31/5/22	£8,931.32
Balance in the Treasurers Account as at 31/5/2022`	£4,808.59
£608 had been received from NDC on 3.5.22 – Balance of CEG Grant	
£820 had been received from DCC on 25.5.22 – P3 Footpath Grant 2022/23	

b) To receive and agree the invoices received for payment.

The Clerk had emailed a list of payments to the Councillors prior to the meeting.

North Devon Council	Clerks Salary	£323.70
	Admin Charge	£ 7.72 £331.42
Hire of Parish Hall	NDC Training	£ 15.00
Devon Business Solutions	Confidential Shredding	£ 66.00
Julie Snooks	Audit Fee 2021/22	£175.00
Black Country Metalworks	Wrought Iron Bench	£403.75

Total Payments £991.17

Cllr Squire proposed payment of these invoices, which was seconded by Cllr Reeves. There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.
RESOLVED – THAT THE INVOICES TOTTALLING £991.17 SHOULD BE PAID.

Payment was made on the 23rd May for the Parish Council Insurance in the sum of £314.22 (agreed at Minute No. 4663)

Payment was made on the 23rd May to WDVGFa in the sum of £45.01 in respect of the balance of the monies from the plaque for the Platinum Tree (Minute No. 4659).

c) To receive the Parish Council Accounts for 2021-22

The Parish Council Accounts were agreed at the April meeting (Minute No. 4639)

d) AGAR (Annual Governance Accountability Return)

(i) To receive the Internal Auditors Report

The Clerk had submitted the accounts to the Internal Auditor (Julie Snooks) on the 23rd May and collected them on the 31st May. The Internal Auditor had provided a full report which was summarized at the meeting. Everything had been signed off ready for the External Auditor. The fee for next year's audit, based on this year's activity, would be £325 but the Internal Auditor was prepared to give the Parish Council a £100 discount. The Clerk was thanked for her work on the audit.

RESOLVED - THAT THE CLERK WILL CIRCULATE THE INTERNAL AUDITORS REPORT TO COUNCILLORS AND PUT THIS ON THE WEBSITE

-THAT THE CLERK WILL WRITE TO THE INTERNAL AUDITOR TO THANK HER FOR HER REPORT AND FOR THE OFFER OF THE DISCOUNT FOR NEXT YEAR.

(ii) To complete and sign the Annual Governance Statement 2021/2022

The Clerk had circulated this statement to Councillors prior to the meeting. Cllr Ayre read out the statements which were duly completed and the form was signed by the Chair and the Clerk.

(iii) To complete and sign the Accounting Statements 2021/2022

The completed statement had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. There was unanimous agreement that these figures were correct and the form was signed by the Chair and the Clerk.

(iv) To discuss the External Auditors Report by PKF Littejohn

There is a deadline of the 1st July for the completed forms to be received by the External Auditor. The Clerk was in the process of getting everything ready for the External Auditor and will send these off next week.

4694. Planning Decisions

74802 – Land at Easter Hill View, Aylescott Lane – Withdrawn

75071 – Old Railway Yard, Willingcott – Withdrawn

75266 – Foxhill Farm – Prior Notification – Decision not required.

4695. Planning Applications:

a) To comment on the following Planning Applications

73569 – Conversion of the public house into two residential units and to replace the bungalow with a single detached residential unit (amended description) at Foxhunters Inn, West Down, Ilfracombe, Devon, EX34 8NU.

Apart from an online comment about the road and speed, no concerns were raised. **Cllr Robinson recommended approval of this application which was seconded by Cllr Reeves.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

RESOLVED – THAT THE PARISH COUNCIL RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF PLANNING APPLICATION 73569

75266 – Prior Notification for erection of general purpose agricultural building at Foxhill Farm, West Down, Ilfracombe, EX34 8NF.

Following the decision recorded above, this application was not discussed.

b) To comment on any planning applications received after the Agenda was published.

75179 – Development of glamping site with four bespoke partial underground warrens at Higher Aylescott, Aylescott Lane, West Down, Devon, EX34 8NJ.

Cllr Squire declared an interest in this application and left the room.

No concerns were raised about this application. **Cllr Oades proposed approval of this application which was seconded by Cllr Reeves.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

RESOLVED – THAT THE PARISH COUNCIL RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF PLANNING APPLICATION 75179.

75364 – Change of use of land from agricultural to residential garden and erection of a timber outbuilding at land adjacent to Easter Ground Barn, Aylescott Lane, Ilfracombe, Devon, EX34 8NJ.

Cllr Squire returned to the room.

Discussion took place about the address not being correct. An email had been received from Mr and Mrs Tanton who had advised the Planning Department of this error. The previous applications were referred to (73731 – Easter Ground Barn) (74802- Easter Hill View)

Cllr Squire declared an interest and left the room.

Objections to this application were read out. Following discussion, it was felt that Planning need to be contacted to ask for clarification on all of these applications and ask for an extension.

RESOLVED – THAT THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT WILL BE CONTACTED DUE TO THE DISCREPANCIES ON THE ADDRESS OF THIS APPLICATION AND PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS 73731 AND 74802.

-THAT THE CLERK WILL REQUEST AN EXTENSION TO COMMENT ON THIS APPLICATION.

Cllr Squire returned to the room.

4696. Correspondence.

Correspondence raised at the meeting:-

- a) David Ravenscroft from West Down PCC had sent a thank you for the grant payment which is much appreciated by the Church.
- b) West Down Parish Hall had sent an invite to their Open Afternoon on Thursday 2nd June 2022 to view their new extension and total refurbishments as well as to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.
- c) David Ayre, Treasurer of the Parish Hall, had sent a letter expressing their sincere thanks for the grant which will be used towards grass cutting and the removal of the trees that have ash dieback at the Parish Hall.
- d) A letter had been received from Councillor Roy Drew tendering his resignation due to ill health. Cllr Ayre read out this letter and it was agreed that this was very sad to receive. The Clerk will write to Councillor Drew to thank him for his long service and all he has done, particularly in respect of his role as Tree Warden and Joint Footpath Co-ordinator. The Clerk will contact NDC due to the vacancy that has now occurred. Cllr Drew will need to be removed as a signatory at the bank.

4697. Unresolved Questions

None

4698. Items to be added to next meeting Agenda.

- a) Footpaths and Tender for Footpath 12.
- b) 20 mph speed limit.
- c) Road Warden.
- d) Community Land Trust.
- e) Replacement Laptop.
- f) Village Emergency Plan.
- g) Salt Bags.
- h) Payment of £800 to NDC for Car Park.
- i) Parish Councillor Vacancy
- j) Signage in the Village

4699. Any other business.

Val Ford, Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer, was appointed by West Down Parish Council in August 2021, with her commencement date being the 1st October 2021. The auditor had picked up that this was not minuted.

Cllr Robinson reported that everything was set up for Saturday's party in the Park for the Platinum Jubilee. Everyone in the village was sent a Flyer and there will be a central point where those attending can get a free raffle ticket and voucher for the free cream tea.

Cllr Squire requested that the Parish Council Meetings be held in the small hall due to the acoustics of the large hall.

Meeting closed at 22.13 pm