

WEST DOWN PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES  
West Down Parish Hall  
Wednesday 5 October 2022 at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Cllrs S Ayre (Chair), R Kenshole, K Oades, S Squire, J Robinson, T Verney, H Knight, D Cllr M Wilkinson and C Cllr Andrea Davis.

Also present: Val Ford (Clerk) and one member of the public.

Apologies/Approvals.

Apologies were received from Cllr M Reeves (Vice Chair) due to personal reasons.  
Apologies accepted.

Cllr Ayre sent everyone's best wishes to Cllr Reeves and his wife.

4772. Declarations of Interest  
None.

4773. Public Participation  
None.

4774. Approve & Sign Minutes of the 14<sup>th</sup> September 2022 Parish Council Meeting.  
The Minutes had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. **Cllr Squire proposed that the Minutes of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2022 be accepted as a true record which was seconded by Cllr Verney.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.  
**RESOLVED – THAT THE MINUTES OF THE 14<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2022 PARISH COUNCIL MEETING BE APPROVED AND THEY WERE DULY SIGNED.**

4775. Matters Arising

4751. Matters Arising. (4659) Teasel Cottage. (See report from D Cllr M Wilkinson).  
(4705) Flashing Speed Sign at Foxhunters. The Clerk had reported to Mr Bird that the sign was not working properly coming from Braunton to West Down after it had been cleaned and also that the one on the other side was covered by a tree. Information was received at the meeting to say that the sign was now working.

(4741). Parish Council Property. The Clerk had altered the Asset Register. Once Cllr Oades has signed this it will be put on the website.

4758 – Footpaths. b). Ros Davies (P3) raised an order for the work to Footpath 14. The Clerk subsequently sent an invoice to Devon District Council to enable them to reimburse the Parish Council. The Clerk had emailed Simon Houghton about getting a new kissing gate on the footpath at Little Comfort Farm. The Clerk had written to the landowners regarding Footpath 15 being neglected and overgrown.

4760. IT/GDPR/Councillors Equipment. The questionnaire had been sent to Councillors to fill in and return to the Clerk. The Clerk had added this to the diary which will be circulated once it has been reviewed and updated.

4762 – The Clerk had contacted RBL about purchasing the poppy wreath by BACS. She was informed that this needs to be by debit or credit card. It was agreed that the Clerk will purchase the wreath and be reimbursed.

4763 – London Bridge Down – The wrought iron bench was chased. There had been a delay in Black Country Metalworks getting this product. This will be despatched at the end of October and will be delivered to Cllr Ayre.

4764 – Car Park. An update was awaited from Mr Triggs (NDC).

4770 – A.O.B. - a) Salt – The Clerk had ordered this online. b) Bradwell Mills. Cllr Ayre had been to look at the property and this was reported online. Planning Enforcement are looking into this. g) Storage of historical Parish Council documents. The Clerk still needs to investigate this.

4771 – Parish Councillor Vacancy – Hannah Knight had been welcomed on to the Parish Council and sent the relevant documents.

4776. Police Report

**Monthly Crime Figures.** The newsletter was unavailable but PC Grantham reported that the figures were as follows:-

Stalking & Harassment – 1

Burglary (Non dwelling) – 1

Road related Vehicle Offence - 1

4777. Report from County Councillor.

C Cllr Davis referred to her report (see Appendix B).

With regards to the flooding on the road to Higher Aylescott, this has been going on for years. The drain was jetted and the Highway Officer was hoping to meet the Contractor on site. Cllr Kenshole stated that some work had been carried out locally, and the drain should now work. The road needs a good clean. Cllr Knight added that work on this included a huge pipe being put in.

4778. Report from District Councillor.

D Cllr Wilkinson referred to Teasel Cottage. This application is going to be withdrawn and resubmitted. He will put in a request for it to go to the full Planning Committee. NDC have a Planning Consultant now (Mr Mike Kelly). He is the retired Chief Planning Officer for North Devon.

D Cllr Wilkinson referred to attending the Strategy & Resources Meeting. The Government have approached NDC to say they have to take 88 Refugees (asylum seeking families). It is a concern that this was done without consultation. There is a serious homeless problem in North Devon and despite sympathy for the families it needs to be balanced.

D Cllr Wilkinson went to an AONB meeting on Monday. One of the items was an update on the Whitecross Floating Wind Farm. The only concern is how the cabling will come ashore which has yet to be decided. He felt this can be solved but is a real issue due to the recent World Surfing Awards. He felt the wind farm needed to be supported.

At the Full Council meeting last Wednesday, D Cllr Wilkinson took a motion about the banning of lanterns with candles from North Devon District land. These are dangerous to fish and animals and cause fires.

North Devon Council are balancing the books at the moment but he said to “watch this space financially”.

4779. Planning Decisions

75796 – Foxhunters Inn. Discharge of conditions 4 and 5. **Approved**

4780. Planning Applications

None.

b) To comment on any planning applications received after the Agenda was published.  
None.

4781. Tender Document

The draft Quotation and Tender document prepared by Cllr Reeves was circulated to Councillors after the last meeting. **Cllr Oades proposed that this document be adopted which was seconded by Cllr Robinson.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal. Thanks need to be given to Cllr Reeves for the extensive research he undertook to prepare this document.

**RESOLVED – THAT THE NEW QUOTATION AND TENDER DOCUMENT BE ADOPTED.**

**- THAT THE CLERK WILL PUT THIS DOCUMENT ON THE NEW HEADER AND PUT THIS ON THE WEBSITE.**

4782. Footpaths

**a) To discuss the Specification and Tender Document for Footpath 12.**

The walkway across the footpath from the gate in the Community Field is “squidgy”. The P3 Team are happy to support funding for this. The Parish Council already have £2,000 towards this work and the tentative agreement of the landowner. It is the wrong time of year to start this work now so this will need to be started in the Spring. Cllr Verney offered to look at this work in more detail and put something together. He will also cut the brambles back. He referred to the landowner putting a temporary gate up which says it is electrified but this relates to the fence. Cllr Ayre stated that an application will need to be put in for the money.

**b) To discuss the Specification and Tender Document for other Footpaths**

An assessment on footpaths is undertaken each year. This is then looked at by the P3 Team and they give money if work is required. The Clerk had made a list of work required from the last assessment which can now be progressed with the new tender document.

Footpath 15 being neglected was brought up by member of the public. The Clerk had written to the landowners. It was pointed out that farmers only cut at certain times of the year which is coming up now.

The Clerk had written to Simon Houghton requesting a Kissing Gate for the footpath at Little Comfort Farm. Cllr Oades will provide Mr Houghton with the grid references. This gate will then need to be put up. Cllr Knight said that her husband can assist if needed.

**c) P3 – Walking of Footpaths (October to December)**

It had been decided to bring forward the walking of footpaths to enable the paperwork to be completed in time. Between now and December the Parish Councillors will need to walk the footpath(s) they are responsible for.

Cllr Verney reported that the P3 Workshop scheduled to be held at West Down had been cancelled due to the lack of people attending. Cllr Verney had hoped to discuss matters with Ros Davies at the workshop. Ros Davies had said she would come back to Cllr Verney about the workshop so he will contact her.

4783. Community Land Trust

Cllr Verney had sent an email but had not heard anything from the CLT. Cllr Ayre

reported that at the last meeting they were discussing the possibility of holding a public meeting. A lot of paperwork had been received regarding the Housing Needs Survey which had been circulated to the Parish Councillors. Cllr Ayre had spoken to the lady at Communities Together who is dealing with this. She was very helpful and the survey will include a section for people who used to live in West Down but cannot afford to live there. The Parish Council have been given the money for this survey which will need to be passed on. Cllr Ayre felt Communities Together needed to be allowed to get on with the survey and people need to be encouraged to take part.

4784. Small Grant Funding

To pay out the second instalments of the Small Grant Funding now that the second precept payment has been received.

WDVGFA	£625.00
WD Parish Hall	£500.00
WD PTFA	£300.00
WD PCC	£650.00

**Cllr Squire proposed that the payments above be paid which was seconded by Cllr Verney.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

**RESOLVED – THAT THE SECOND INSTALMENTS OF THE SMALL GRANT FUNDING SHOULD BE PAID.**

4785. Emergency Plan

Training was offered but cancelled due to it clashing with the Queen’s funeral. This is to be rescheduled and will be left on the Agenda.

4786. Finances

**a) To receive the balance in the bank accounts.**

Balance in the Treasurers Account as at 30.9.2022	£16,878.44
Balance in the Business Account as at 30.9.2022	£ 4,809.03

Payment of £3,562.80 received from NDC for the Housing Needs Survey.

This will need to be paid over to Communities Together.

Payment of £8,000 received from NDC for the second precept payment

**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
Community Land Trust Set Up Costs			£440.00
Mrs V A Ford	Black & Colour Ink		£ 36.82
W.D Village Green Field Ass.	Second Grant Payment	£625.00	
W.D. Parish Hall	Second Grant Payment	£500.00	
W.D. PTFA	Second Grant Payment	£300.00	
W.D. PCC	Second Grant Payment	£650.00	

**Total Payments** **£2,883.24**

**Cllr Squire proposed that these invoices should be paid which was seconded by Cllr Oades.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.  
**RESOLVED – THAT THE PAYMENTS TOTALLING £2,883.24 SHOULD BE PAID.**

The payment of the invoice for the Car Park has still not been paid as the Parish Council are awaiting information from Jon Triggs.

**c) Out Turn/Mid Term Accounts.**

The accounts had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting (See Appendix A). Miscellaneous repairs/maintenance/AED/Stationery had increased due to the purchase of the new laptop.

There was a balance of £46.25 available from the purchase of the wrought iron bench out of the District Councillor Grant. Cllr Verney will look into using this appropriately.

4787. Correspondence.

Correspondence raised at the meeting:-

a) Letter received from David Ayre, Treasurer of West Down Parish Hall Management Committee. The committee will not be making an application for the West Down Parish Council Small Grant Fund this year. They are very appreciative of the support they have been given in the past but were aware that the Parish Council incurred additional costs by handling the S106 monies on behalf of the community. The Parish Council felt this was very fair of them and the Parish Council will be happy to support an application from them in future years. The Clerk will write to Mr Ayre accordingly.

b) Minutes of the Braunton Forum meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2022 and invite to Cost of Living Forum. Circulated to all. First meeting on Zoom on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2022.

c) Braunton Forum Cost of Living Group Minutes. Circulated to all.

c) Devon Communities Together. Information had been circulated to Councillors about the Devon Emergency Resilience Fund.

d) Letter from John Stainer, Parish Hall Management Committee, requesting an urgent meeting to discuss the issues threatening the Post Office Outreach Services. Circulated to all. Cllr Ayre suggested that Mr Stainer be invited to speak at the beginning of the next meeting which will commence at 7.00 p.m. **Cllr Squire proposed that this course of action be taken which was seconded by Cllr Verney.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

**RESOLVED – THAT MR STAINER, PARISH HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE, BE INVITED TO SPEAK AT THE START OF THE NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING WHICH WILL START AT 7.00 P.M. REGARDING THE THREAT OF CLOSURE OF THE POST OFFICE OUTREACH SERVICE.**

**- THAT THE CLERK WILL WRITE TO MR STAINER TO ADVISE HIM OF THIS COURSE OF ACTION AND TO REQUEST INFORMATION ABOUT THE RISK.**

e) Letter from John Stainer, WDVGFA, about a Parish Grant Application & Ongoing Support. He was asking whether the Parish Grant could be used for some funding support towards alterations to the cabling, supporting pole and power supply to the Night Landing Light (possibly removing the cabling and pole and putting them underground). If a new power supply to the light is installed this will create a yearly standing charge (currently it is connected to a private supply). Mr Stainer queried if this could be supported by a precept charge. The letter had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting.

**Cllrs Verney and Oades stated that they would not participate in the discussion.**

Issues raised about this were as follows:-

- (i) No information had been provided about what the costs would be.
- (ii) The Air Ambulance do not have an issue with landing in the field. The field was inspected five or six years ago so unless things have changed this is not an issue.
- (iii) The landowner for the electric does not have any issues.
- (iv) Is the intention to have night time functions?
- (v) It is not thought that any fund raising has been undertaken by the WDVGFA for some time. It was suggested that some self help is required.

**RESOLVED – THAT THE PARISH COUNCIL WILL GO BACK TO MR STAINER AND ADVISE HIM THAT WDVGFA ARE WELCOME TO PUT A GRANT APPLICATION IN FOR ALTERATIONS TO THE NIGHT LANDING LIGHT WITH A LIST OF COSTINGS WITH THEIR ACCOUNTS.**

- f) Bev Triggs – Cost of Living Crisis. Circulated to all.
- g) Copy of the Insurance renewal for the Parish Hall emailed to the Clerk by David Ayre.
- g) A list of bus alterations and cancellations had been circulated by the Clerk.

4788. Unresolved Questions

None

4789. Items to be added to next meeting Agenda.

- a) Post Office – Concerns of closure. 7.00 p.m. public meeting.
- b) Community Land Trust.
- c) Emergency Planning.
- d) Budget.
- e) Parish Hall Insurance. To agree level of insurance cover is adequate and ensure the premium has been paid.
- f) Tender for Grass Cutting and Cleaning of Bus Shelters. (Need to use new Tender Policy).
- g) Footpath surveys (already underway).
- h) Small Grant applications. To discuss and decide on applications received.
- i) Review of Health & Safety policy and IT policy.

4790. Any other business.

- a) Cllr Kenshole referred to proposals to shut down some Parish Councils in Mid Devon and the amalgamation of others. It was agreed to ask D Cllr Wilkinson about this when he attends the next meeting.
- b) The Clerk will look at training for Cllr Knight from DALC and advise her accordingly.
- c) Cllr Robinson referred to a For Sale sign outside the Foxhunters Pub. It was felt this might be for the properties which are not yet built.
- d) Cllr Verney referred to children riding bikes along Garden Lane and almost knocking people over. This is a footpath and bikes should not be ridden. Cllr Ayre felt the best way forward was for a letter to be sent to the Parish Council if parishioners are concerned.
- e) Cllr Ayre reported that the Defibrillator was taken from the shop for a potential emergency. It was put back by the Ambulance Service and fortunately was not required but it is good that people know it is there.

f) Cllr Verney advised the Parish Council that of the 45 fruit trees planted in the park only two did not survive. Cllr Oades kindly watered these throughout the summer, The two failed plants are going to be replaced by the company who supplied them. The bog plants unfortunately died as it was too dry. Cllr Verney felt that the Environmental Grant could be looked at again to purchase more bog plants.

**PART B – THE PUBLIC & PRESS ARE EXCLUDED FROM THIS PART OF THE MEETING.**

4791. Clerks Appraisal

Cllr Reeves had sent an email as he could not be at the meeting. He felt that the Clerk had grown into the role and proved to be efficient and eager to learn as well as getting on with everyone. He understood that the Clerk did not want her hours increased but preferred to receive overtime when appropriate. He added that he would support an increase to her salary at the appropriate time. There was unanimous agreement that the Clerk had done a good job and it was agreed that her salary should be reviewed in January.

The Clerk confirmed that she was happy for her hours to remain as they are and overtime to be paid when workload demands. She also confirmed that she was happy in her role and did not have any issues.

Meeting closed at 9.20 pm