

WEST DOWN PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES  
West Down Parish Hall  
Wednesday 30th August 2023 at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Cllrs S Ayre (Chair), M Reeves (Vice-Chair), R Kenshole, H Knight, S Squire and D Cllr M Wilkinson.

Also present: Val Ford (Clerk) and 4 Members of the public.

Apologies/Approvals.

Cllr Verney sent his apologies due to work commitments. Accepted. C Cllr Davis also sent her apologies.

5036. Declarations of Interest

Cllrs Ayre and Squire declared an interest in Planning Applications 77468 and 77469 (Gillards Farm).

5037. Public Participation

Alison Shelley read out her report outlining her concerns about the extension to the Tarka Trail. She wondered if Devon County Council have any plans to take advantage of the publicity this will inevitably generate and incorporate some reminders to all users of their expected conduct on the trail, especially now that horse riding will be permitted on certain sections.

The Clerk will forward a copy of Ms Shelley's concerns to C Cllr A Davis.

5038. Approve & Sign Minutes of the 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2023 Meeting of the Parish Council.

The Minutes had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. **Cllr Reeves proposed that the Minutes of the meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2023 be accepted as a true record which was seconded by Cllr Kenshole.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

**RESOLVED – THAT THE MINUTES OF THE 2<sup>nd</sup> AUGUST 2023 PARISH COUNCIL MEETING BE APPROVED AND THEY WERE DULY SIGNED.**

5039. Matters Arising

5009. Matters Arising. (4929) Parish Council Vacancy. The two vacancies are as yet unfilled. However, this is on the Agenda. (4999). Queen's Green Canopy Plaque. The replacement plaque had been received. Cllr Verney will be asked if he can put this back in place. (4987). Cllr Ayre will chase up the Community Speed Watch. (5005). AOB. Parish Online. Cllr Knight will look at this shortly.

5013. Community Councillor Grant 2023/2024. The application for funding for the King Charles III Bench had been approved and the Agreement Form had been signed and returned to NDC. The bench now needs to be purchased and received before the claim form is sent back to receive the funds. When the bench is received, NDC requested a photo of it, possibly with D Cllr Wilkinson insitu.

5015. Air Ambulance Light. Cllr Wilkinson advised that the Air Ambulance have their own landing lights on the underside of the helicopters so do not need a landing light on the ground now. Cllr Ayre will contact Graham Coates at the Air Ambulance service to see what he says and also advise him of the contacts at West Down.

5018. Post Office Outreach Service. Terry King (Parish Hall Management Committee) had sent an email thanking the Parish Councillors for their very kind

offer to continue helping them bear the cost of the Post Office so that it can continue to benefit the people of West Down. Mr King will come back to the Parish Council after their September committee meeting to confirm the conditions. This item will be revisited in November.

5025. 20's Plenty for Devon. A letter had been sent to Cllr Hughes (DCC) requesting Devon County Council change their default speed limit policy to 20 mph on urban and village roads. A copy was sent to Devon's 20's Plenty campaign group who thanked the Parish Council for doing this. They will update their spreadsheet to reflect this.

5026. Annual Inspection of Property. Cllr Ayre had checked the Asset Register, with a couple of items outstanding. Once complete this will be put on the Agenda.

5027. Small Grant Fund. A notice had been put up on the website and noticeboard publicising this.

5028. Review of GDPR Policy. The Clerk had contacted the Elections Team for a copy of the Electoral Roll. They can provide an electronic encrypted copy or a hard copy which can be picked up from Lynton House. After discussion, it was decided that a copy will be requested if and when it is needed. The Clerk will alter the GDPR policy to reflect this. D Cllr Wilkinson stated that he has a copy if necessary.

5035. AOB. b) Mobile Homes in entrances. Cllr Kenshole will liaise with Cllr Squire about this once Cllr Knight has looked at Parish Online to see if she can get into the map. c) The Clerk will get on to doing a letter to Mr Belton about the blue pipe.

#### 5040. Police Report

##### **Monthly Crime Figures.**

The crime figures for August were not available. These will be read out at the October meeting.

#### 5041. Report from County Councillor.

C Cllr Davis had sent her apologies for the meeting. She stated that she had a lovely afternoon walking the Tarka Trail route in the Parish which is amazing. With regards to the planning applications for Lower Broad Park, she had received a response back from the Highways Planning Officer who cannot find any requirement for the two gateway type features on Ilfracombe Hill. She will ask them to have another look if the specific planning application number can be given to her.

Cllr Reeves referred to the email from Stuart Bryant to Steve Emery with details on where this could be found. Mr Emery was going to list the enforcements on Lower Broad Park and D Cllr Wilkinson was going to be the central person for him to come back to so that he in turn could contact the Parish Council. D Cllr Wilkinson had not heard anything yet and will chase Mr Emery.

Cllr Kenshole referred to the flashing sign which has gone up in Braunton which seems to be working well. It indicates actual speeds and says thank you if people are within the correct speed limit.

#### 5042. Report from District Councillor.

D Cllr Wilkinson referred to the online Bathing Water Quality meeting he attended as part of the LGA Coastal Issues group he sits on. It is not a surprise that it is not

just the local authority having trouble with water quality. One thing that came up was that testing needs to be done for twelve months of the year now, not just seasonally, to cover cold water swimming. The threshold of when they test is if there are more than 100 bathers a day. This figure may not be low enough for the little coves. A response is being generated on this. Another problem is that the testing they use only covers bacteria – not microplastics at all. This is a major problem, particularly as washing machines have no filtration and the particles can potentially be carcinogenic.

D Cllr Wilkinson referred to the Strategy & Resources meeting coming up on Monday. A request has been made from people with licences for HMOs (Housing in Multiple Occupation) to allow them to do short term lets. D Cllr Wilkinson will be anti this all the way through as he feels Airbnb's are taking away the housing stock for people who cannot afford to buy.

D Cllr Wilkinson referred to Declarations of Interest being rejigged again which have got to be more specific and say how and why it would affect a decision. He will send a crib sheet from Simon Fuller on this for circulation to the Parish Councillors.

D Cllr Wilkinson referred to an issue about police presence at meetings being raised at Woolacombe Parish Council's meeting last week. Tony Davis said two or three years ago that they would have police presence at Parish Council meetings at least twice a year. It seems that this has not happened since pre covid which needs to be addressed.

**RESOLVED – THAT THE CLERK WILL CONTACT TONY DAVIS ASKING FOR POLICE PRESENCE AT WEST DOWN PARISH COUNCIL'S MEETINGS TWICE A YEAR AS A MINIMUM.**

The meeting being arranged with Jon Triggs, NDC, about the Car Park lease was raised. Mr Triggs has not come back with a date as yet. D Cllr Wilkinson was happy to attend this meeting but not the week of the 11<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

D Cllr Wilkinson left the meeting.

5043. Planning Decisions

**77118** – Barn at Darragh Lodge, Heddon Mills, Braunton, Devon, EX33 2NQ.

**Approved.**

**77337** – Foxhill Farm Road from West Down School to Winsham Down House, West Down, Ilfracombe, Devon, EX34 8NF. **Prior Approval not required.**

**77518** – Lower Twitchen, Mullacott Cross, Ilfracombe, Devon, EX34 8NP. **Prior Approval not required.**

5044. Planning Applications

**a) Applications on the Agenda.**

**77531** – Application under Regulation 3 of the T & CP General Regulation 1992 notification by Devon County Council in respect of Construction of 700 metres of 3.5 metres wide multi-use path at Former rail line between Buttercombe Land and Foxhunters, West Down, Ilfracombe, Devon.

Cllr Ayre stated that West Down Parish Council have previously supported the applications for the Tarka Trail. **Cllr Reeves proposed that the Parish Council**

**send a copy of the letter of support to the Planning Officer. This was seconded by Cllr Kenshole.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.  
**RESOLVED – THAT THE CLERK WILL SEND A COPY OF THE LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR THE EXTENSION TO THE TARKA TRAIL TO MR EMERY, PLANNING OFFICER AT NDC.**

**77468 – Creation of field access & associated works at Land at Gillards Farm, West Down, Ilfracombe, Devon, EX34 8NH.**

**Cllrs Ayre & Squire had declared an interest in this application and left the room. Cllr Reeves took over as Chair for this part of the meeting.**

Cllr Reeves referred to some of the Parish Councillors visiting the site. Cllr Kenshole could understand the reasons for the field access. He also understands it is for agricultural use and the fields are to remain for agricultural use. He felt it would be a Highways decision in the end as when prior approval for access through the hedge was applied for previously for housing, Highways did a report to say it was not suitable access. However, in this case if deemed field access and for agricultural use or for maintaining fields, then Cllr Kenshole felt there was not an issue with this. He saw the hedge and how it will be maintained and he felt the amount of traffic going through it would be minimal.

Cllr Reeves referred to the general layout for the other applications, with the access being awkward and no other way of getting to the field site. Bearing in mind there will be dwellings there now and not a farm any more it would not be appropriate to use the same entrance as eventually a lot more people will be living there. The new entrance will not get a lot of use. It is in a narrow lane and the Heritage Officer made a comment saying the amount of traffic involved to maintain the four acres will be quite minimal. The Heritage Officer's response made reference to the visibility splay but this will be a Highways decision. There was one objection to the entrance from a nearby dwelling but they might not know about how the access was before. In the past there was a lot more traffic from Easterground Farm than there is recently. **Cllr Kenshole 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 77468.**

**77469 – Conversion of redundant rural building to dwelling & associated works at Barn 6, Gillards Farm, West Down, Ilfracombe, Devon, EX34 8NH.**

Cllr Reeves referred to this being on the left on entering the site. He had no issues with this. He wondered why this was not Class Q. It is definitely a redundant barn conversion but thought maybe it is because the footprint extends beyond the original barn. Cllr Kenshole referred to this being a single residential dwelling and he liked the fact that the ramstone pillars will be kept. On looking at the plans, it looks like this conversion will maintain the character of the area. With regards to parking, the Councillors were shown the designated area. This is an open area with no garages. Cllr Kenshole's only issue was opposite the entrance way and how it comes out on a sharp bend as parking in that area is an issue. **Cllr Reeves proposed approval of this application with a comment to say there is concern about parking around the entrance area that could be a safety concern. Cllr Kenshole seconded this proposal.** There was unanimous agreement to this

proposal.

**RESOLVED – THAT THE PARISH COUNCIL RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF PLANNING APPLICATION 77469.**

**- THAT THE PARISH COUNCIL WILL ADD A COMMENT TO SAY THERE IS CONCERN ABOUT PARKING AROUND THE ENTRANCE AREA THAT COULD BE A SAFETY CONCERN.**

**77337 – Prior Notification for erection of one general purpose agricultural building, Foxhill Farm Road, from West Down School to Winsham Down House, West Down, Ilfracombe, Devon, EX34 8NF.**

See above Decision.

**77518 – Prior Notification for creation of slurry store, Lower Twitchen, Mullacott Cross, Ilfracombe, Devon, EX34 8NP.**

See above Decision.

**77493 – Prior Approval for change of use of agricultural building to dwelling house Class Q (a)(b) for conversion of redundant agricultural barn into one dwelling with private amenity space and parking at Barn A, Greenpark Farm, West Down, Ilfracombe, Devon, EX34 8NW.**

Cllr Reeves referred to this being for a four bedroom dwelling with ensembles. Environmental Health picked up that there are buildings in close proximity, some not in the applicants ownership and they want it confirmed that the other owners are happy.

**77494 – Prior Approval for change of use of agricultural building to dwelling house (Class Q(A)(B) at Barn E at Greenpark Farm, West Down, Ilfracombe, Devon, EX34 8NW.**

It was noted that this is Class Q.

**77501 – Prior Approval for barn conversion to two dwellings Class Q (a)(b) at Barn D, Greenpark Farm, Cheglinch, West Down, Ilfracombe, Devon, EX34 8NW.**

It was noted that this is Class Q. One agency queried an attachment being demolished but this is nothing to do with the Parish Council.

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

None.

5045. Flashing Speed Sign

Cllr Reeves had been unable to see anywhere suitable for the mobile flashing speed sign within the 30 mph speed limit on Dean Lane and Stang Lane. Coming up to the junction people slow down anyway. C Cllr Davis had stated that more than one site will be needed. Ilfracombe Hill is the main area of concern. It was agreed that a discussion needs to be had with C Cllr Davis about this to seek clarification regarding the criteria Highways work to. This will be put on the next Agenda.

5046. Footpaths

**a) To discuss the Tender for outstanding footpath works.**

Cllr Verney had been extremely busy with work commitments so Cllr Ayre had

worked on this and sent Cllr Verney a copy of her findings regarding work required on footpaths. Cllr Ayre outlined the areas that need attending to at the meeting. Garden Lane is not part of the footpath network. Mr Hunt, Always there, had trimmed this pathway.

The Clerk was to check the Quotations and Tender policy to check what is required when the work is advertised.

Cllr Ayre referred to the work to be completed by the current contractor, which she was happy to speak to him about.

**b) Any other footpath matters.**

None.

5047. Community Land Trust

Cllr Ayre referred to receiving a second draft of the Housing Needs Survey last week. The time had been extended to give the opportunity for those who had not sent in their response to take part. Seven more were subsequently received. The final touches need to be made to this survey and then the final copy will be sent to the Parish Council. Once this is received it will be circulated to the Parish Councillors and the CLT. Cllr Ayre will chase this up again.

The Community Land Trust have had their AGM with everything being fine. They are just waiting for the Housing Needs Survey.

5048. North Devon Coast Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty – Sustainable Development Fund.

The Parish Hall were thinking of applying for this funding but were told as the Parish Hall is outside the area of AONB they could not apply. Cllr Knight had encountered a similar problem. She had looked on the website to get more information and discovered there needs to be connectivity to wildlife or people related to AONB. Cllr Reeves pointed out that on the original email offering this funding, it said that West Down was included.

5049. Emergency Plan

Cllr Kenshole referred to the meeting yesterday evening. It was not as well attended as the last. Three out of the four attendees were Parish Councillors.

The agreement from the start had been to take the Braunton Plan and amend it to West Down's needs. The Risk Assessment was done and last night's meeting was to look at where control points will be and evacuation areas. A questionnaire will be sent out to households including asking what skills they can offer in the case of an emergency. This will be put out to the rest of the group that came to the first meeting and will be progressed at the next meeting on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2023 at 7.00 p.m. Andy Odell is being looked at as the main coordinator. He is ex Metropolitan Police and has a good interface with emergency services.

5050. Car Park

A reply had been received from The Crown Estate following the Freedom of Information request. They have checked their records and do not believe that The Crown Estate had any involvement on this, rather the property was the subject of a

vesting order by the Court. They suggested NDC be approached directly. The Clerk sent a Freedom of Information request to NDC who replied and sent a copy of the Court Order which vested the land to the claimant (NDC) which is how it came to be in the Authority's ownership. They cannot confirm that there are no restrictions or covenants as there is not a deed transferring ownership of the land. Whatever restrictions or covenants were present on the title when it was owned by the developer would remain to be complied with, but it is unknown what they are. Cllr Reeves felt the Parish Council have to assume there are not any.

An email had been sent to Jon Triggs (NDC) requesting a meeting to get round the table and hopefully find a satisfactory conclusion. Two dates were given to Mr Triggs who was going to liaise with the other parties involved. No reply had yet been received. A reply was also awaited about why VAT had been added to this year's invoice.

This will be put on the next Agenda. Cllrs Reeves and Ayre were happy to attend the meeting with Mr Triggs, as was D Cllr Wilkinson. Cllr Reeves stated that the Parish Council will go with the stance that they will not accept a Repair & Maintenance Lease. A Maintenance agreement might be acceptable but there would be a need to know what this would entail.

5051. Air Ambulance Light

Daniel Bleasdale (Parish Clerk at Morteheo) had sent an email to say they do not have any equipment to lower their Air Ambulance light, all they do is check that none of the electric switches have tripped once a week. They have not had any bulbs go, but they think the Air Ambulance are responsible for the replacement of bulbs, although they do look like they open with a triangular key. He provided some information on these as well as the contact details for the Air Ambulance service. He requested the Parish Council let him know what happens as it will only be a matter of time before one of their bulbs go.

The Clerk had received an email from the Landing Site Manager asking who the contacts should be in West Down for the landing site. Previously it had been Keith Oades and Carole King. They require a minimum of two contacts with email addresses and phone numbers. They also want to be notified when the bulbs have been fixed.

Cllr Ayre had had a conversation about the landing light with John Stainer (WDVGFA). He had one of the triangular keys referred to but it does not work. He was going to check with other landing sites about whether they had a kit to lower the pole. If not, this could be a problem with the installers.

5052. Pay Parish Hall Management Committee for hire of the hall for meetings (6 months in advance)

See Finances below.

5053. Poppy Wreath

The Clerk informed the meeting that a medium poppy wreath from RBL is £19.99.

**Cllr Squire proposed that the Clerk purchase the wreath which was seconded by Cllr Kenshole.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

**RESOLVED – THAT THE CLERK WILL PURCHASE A MEDIUM POPPY**

**WREATH FROM RBL.**

**- THAT CLLR REEVES WILL LAY THE POPPY WREATH AND HE WILL ENQUIRE IF HE WILL BE ASKED TO READ THE TRADITIONAL POEM FOR THE FALLEN.**

5054. Partner Consultation – Dog Related PSPO (Public Spaces Protection Order)

Information had been circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting. The Clerk had requested an extension for a response to be sent. Cllr Squire felt it was important that the Parish Council respond to this consultation.

**RESOLVED – THAT THE CLERK WILL ASK IF AN EXTENSION CAN BE GRANTED TO THE PARISH COUNCIL TO COMMENT ON THE PARTNER CONSULTATION – DOG RELATED PSPO.**

Cllr Knight referred to dog bags being left around and she was unsure why this is not in the consultation.

5055. Finances

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

Balance in the Treasurer's Account as at 30.8.2023	£15,469.82
Balance in the Business Account as at 30.8.2023	£ 4,883.33

**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	£362.77	
	Admin Charge	£ 7.72	£ 370.49

(Invoice not received as yet)

Parish Hall	Shortfall in Hire Charge (PO)	£ 66.00
Parish Hall	2 x Hire for Emergency Plan Mtg	£ 38.00
Parish Hall	Hire of Hall for Parish Council meetings (6 months in advance)	£ 114.00

Mrs S Ayre	Refreshments (Emergency Plan Meeting)	£ 9.40
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Mrs V Ford	Printer Ink	£ 17.92
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G J Hookway	Work on Footpath 3	£1,134.00
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**Total Payments £1,749.81**

**Cllr Squire proposed that the invoices totalling £1,749.81 should be paid which was seconded by Cllr Reeves.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

**RESOLVED – THAT THE INVOICES TOTALLING £1,749.81 SHOULD BE PAID (THE CLERK WILL PAY NDC ONCE THEIR INVOICE IS RECEIVED).**

The 2022/2023 invoice for £800 for the Car Park had still not been paid and the further invoice for this year's Ground Maintenance Service of £960 was also unpaid. See Item above regarding the Car Park.

5056. Correspondence

- a) An email had been received from Councillor Advocate OPCC. Their third seminar will be held on the Police & Crime Commissioner's priority of 'Violence' on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023 at Exeter Racecourse. Information circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting.
- b) An email had been received from Baileys Barns Limited inviting Councillors to see the proposed work at Gillards Farm.
- c) An email had been received from Cara Stobart (DALC) sending an invitation to DALC's AGM on the 27<sup>th</sup> September 2023 at Exeter Racecourse. Information circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting.
- d) An email had been received from C Cllr Davis regarding parking on the triangle.
- e) An email had been received from Councillor Advocate (OPCC) regarding a survey to help shape how Police care for crime victims. This had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting.

5057. Unresolved Questions

None.

5058. Items to be added to the next meeting Agenda

- a) Out-turn/Mid Term Accounts as at the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023.
- b) Pay out grants following the second precept payment and Grant Receipt for the financial year.
- c) P3 – Walking of Footpaths (October to December).
- d) Clerk's Appraisal (Part B).
- e) Review Quotation & Tender Policy.
- f) Flashing Speed Sign.
- g) Footpaths.
- h) CLT.
- i) Emergency Plan.
- j) Car Park.
- k) Air Ambulance Light.

5059. Any Other Business

a) Cllr Squire referred to a camper van being in the village car park for months with a flat tyre. This is taking up space. Cllr Squire's understanding is that a vehicle has to be SORN unless it is on private land.

**RESOLVED – THAT THE CLERK WILL EMAIL D CLLR WILKINSON TO SEE WHAT HE THINKS ABOUT THE CAMPER VAN BEING LEFT IN THE VILLAGE CAR PARK FOR MONTHS TAKING UP SPACE.**

b) Cllr Knight queried advertising Plastic Free in Devon. They do repairs, with the closest one in Ilfracombe, and they are looking to reach a wider audience. Cllr Ayre referred to the Village Website. She will give Cllr Knight details of the administrators.

c) Cllr Kenshole referred to the issue of parking around the island in the village. C Cllr Davis had responded to say there was no chance of yellow lines being put in place. It is so bad now that cars cannot come up the little road down to London House. When cars are parked on the island, cars coming past are forced to come round on the wrong side of the road, which is an accident waiting to happen. Part of the planning agreement for London House was for two extra parking spaces behind the barn but vehicles are still parking outside. Cllr Kenshole did not feel it was the fault of the people living in London House as they have nowhere else to park.

Cllr Reeves added that if enforcement action is sought it would refer to the barn conversion, Lynchs Barn. **Cllr Reeves proposed that enforcement action be sought on Lynchs Barn which was seconded by Cllr Squire.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

**RESOLVED – THAT THE CLERK WILL CONTACT THE ENFORCEMENT DEPARTMENT AT NDC TO REQUEST ENFORCEMENT ACTION BE TAKEN ON LYNCHS BARN REGARDING PARKING ON THE ISLAND.**

d) Cllr Ayre referred to going to look at the bench near Pulland Bridge and observing a lot of dog poo, which she picked up. She put this on Facebook to try and urge dog owners to pick up.

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

### 5060. Parish Council Vacancies

An email had been received from Sarah Whitby applying for one of the vacant positions on West Down Parish Council. A copy of her information had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. **Cllr Ayre proposed that Mrs Whitby be co-opted on to the Parish Council from the October 2023 meeting which was seconded by Cllr Reeves.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

**RESOLVED – THAT SARAH WHITBY WILL BE CO-OPTED ON TO WEST DOWN PARISH COUNCIL FROM THE OCTOBER 2023 PARISH COUNCIL MEETING.**

**- THAT THE CLERK WILL WRITE TO MRS WHITBY TO CONFIRM HER CO-OPTION AND SEND HER ANY NECESSARY DOCUMENTATION.**

**- CLLR AYRE WILL DROP THE CO-OPTION FORM OFF TO MRS WHITBY FOR HER TO COMPLETE.**

The meeting closed at 9.34 p.m.