

WEST DOWN PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES  
West Down Parish Hall  
Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2023 at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Cllrs S Ayre (Chair), M Reeves (Vice-Chair), R Kenshole, H Knight, T Verney, S Whitby and C Cllr M Davis.

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

Apologies/Approvals.

Cllr Squire sent her apologies due to illness. Accepted. D Cllr Wilkinson.

Cllr Whitby signed her Declaration of Acceptance of Office which was witnessed and signed by the Clerk.

5061. Declarations of Interest

None

5062. Public Participation

None.

5063. Approve & Sign Minutes of the 30<sup>th</sup> August 2023 Meeting of the Parish Council.

The Minutes had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. The spelling of Lynch's Barn was amended on page 10. **Cllr Reeves proposed that the Minutes of the meeting held on 30th August 2023 be accepted as a true record which was seconded by Cllr Knight.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal. **RESOLVED – THAT THE MINUTES OF THE 30TH AUGUST 2023 PARISH COUNCIL MEETING BE APPROVED AND THEY WERE DULY SIGNED.**

5064. Matters Arising

5037. Public Participation. A copy of Alison Shelley's report regarding the extension to the Tarka Trail was sent to C Cllr Davis who advised Ms Shelley to put her comments on the online planning portal.

5039. Matters Arising. (4929) Parish Council Vacancy. One vacancy remains and continues to be advertised. (4999). Queen's Green Canopy Plaque. Cllr Ayre had put the replacement plaque back in place. Cllr Verney will find the allen key and put the legs on. (5013) Community Councillor Grant 2023/2024. The Coronation Bench had been purchased and was awaited. (5018). Post Office Outreach Service. Email received from Terry King. (See Correspondence Item 5079). This will be revisited at the November Parish Council meeting. Cllr Ayre understands that the hire charges for the Parish Hall are up to date. (5035). AOB. b) Mobile Homes in entrances. Cllr Knight had looked at Parish Online and Cllr Kenshole is liaising with Cllr Squire so she can pinpoint where they are. c) The Clerk had sent a letter to Mr Belton about the blue pipe but had not received a reply as yet.

5041. County Councillor Report. There had been no feedback on the gateway type features for traffic calming on Ilfracombe Hill. The Parish Council had been informed that these should have been put in following the original planning permission for Lower Broad Park. The Clerk will contact Mr Emery for an update.

5042. District Councillors Report. D Cllr Wilkinson had sent the crib sheet regarding Declarations of Interest which had been circulated to Councillors prior to

the meeting. The Clerk had received an email from Paul Grantham regarding Police presence at Parish Council meetings. He said to leave the issue with him and he will find out the current position and come back as soon as possible.

5048. North Devon Coast Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty- Sustainable Development Fund. Cllr Knight had spoken to Andy Bell to get an understanding of the AONB connectivity as a village.

5053. Poppy Wreath. This had been ordered.

5059. AOB. a) D Cllr Wilkinson had been contacted about the camper van in the village car park. Cllr Ayre informed the meeting that the camper van has now gone following her discussion with the owner. b) Plastic Free North Devon. Cllr Ayre will give Cllr Knight the details for advertising this. c). Parking on the Island in the village. This remains a significant problem. The Clerk had contacted the Enforcement department regarding the Alleged Breach of Condition on Lynch's Barn. A photo of the vehicles parked there was also sent to them. Discussion took place about whether double yellow lines could be put in place. C Cllr Davis said there would be a minimum wait of 18 months for yellow lines and she expressed concern about the lack of enforcing them. C Cllr Davis said if vehicles are causing an obstruction it is a Police matter. **Cllr Ayre proposed that the Police be contacted about this matter which was seconded by Cllr Kenshole.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

**RESOLVED – THAT THE CLERK WOULD CONTACT PC GRANTHAM REQUESTING THE POLICE LOOK INTO THE MATTER OF PARKING AROUND THE ISLAND IN THE VILLAGE WHICH IS A SIGNIFICANT CAUSE FOR CONCERN AS IT IS AN ACCIDENT WAITING TO HAPPEN.**

5060. Parish Councillor Vacancy. Cllr Whitby was coopted on to the Parish Council.

#### 5065. Police Report

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

The crime figures for August had not been available at the last meeting.

Crimes reported for August 2023 for Morteohoe/Woolacombe & West Down (includes Mullacott and Bittadon) were:-

Violence less Serious	12
Vehicle Crime (Theft of and from)	1
Criminal Damage (Inc. Arson)	3
Theft (Other)	2
Fraud & Forgery	1
Other Notifiable Crime	3

Although more crimes of violence are recorded for August, most of these were as a result of domestic assaults amongst visitors on the holiday parks.

For September 2023:

Violence Less Serious	4
Criminal Damage (Inc Arson)	3
Theft (Other)	1
Other Notifiable Crime	3

5066. Report from County Councillor.

C Cllr Davis provided a report (see Appendix A). This had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. The North Devon Link Road will be partially closed for a month from Wednesday 11 October 2023 to allow for essential maintenance work to go ahead.

The extension to the Tarka Trail had got planning permission. C Cllr Davis thanked the Parish Council for their help. Unfortunately the extension cannot open yet as the developers at Willingcott have got their plant across it whilst putting in holiday homes.

5067. Flashing Speed Sign (brought forward from Item 5070)

C Cllr Davis referred to the Locality Budget. C Cllr Davis said she would not have enough funding for the whole sign at West Down but she was happy to help fund it. Discussion took place about the sites for this as the Parish Council had been told the success of a flashing speed sign being installed relies on West Down having two or three sites for the mobile sign. Nowhere appropriate within the 30 mph limit had been identified apart from Ilfracombe Hill. C Cllr Davis said she will go out with the Highway Officer to have a look and she will also contact Bratton Fleming about their poles. The flashing speed sign will need to be moved around. C Cllr Davis will provide the form for the Parish Council to complete. She added that the signs work well with the Community Speed Watch scheme.

Cllr Kenshole referred to Stang Lane being unsuitable for heavy vehicles. C Cllr Davis stated that Highways do not put signs about this anymore.

C Cllr Davis left the meeting.

5068. Report from District Councillor.

D Cllr Wilkinson sent his apologies due to work commitments.

5069. Planning Decisions

**77531 – Former Railway Land between Buttercombe Land & Foxhunters, Nr West Down, Ilfracombe, Devon.** Observations.

(Following the Parish Council sending a letter of support, Steve Emery (Planning Officer) said the Local Planning Authority have raised no objections to this application).

Planning Decisions for Gillards Barn and Green Park will be noted at the November meeting.

5070 Planning Applications

**a) Applications on the Agenda.**

**77616 – Prior approval for change of use of agricultural building to dwelling house Class Q (a)(b) at Barn at Rock Hill, West Down, Ilfracombe, Devon, EX34 8NH.**

Cllr Reeves stated that as this is Class Q there is not much the Parish Council can do. It is claimed the building is redundant and on agricultural land.

The owners of Little Comfort Farm were concerned about bats but the Wildlife Report claim this is not an issue. This will be up to the planning officer to decide.

Concerns were raised about the road being narrow, in a poor state with potholes

and prone to flooding at the entrance. **Cllr Reeves proposed that the application be recommended for approval with comments about flooding and the state of the road. Cllr Whitby seconded this proposal.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

**RESOLVED – THAT THE PARISH COUNCIL RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF PLANNING APPLICATION 77616.**

**- THAT THE PARISH COUNCIL ADD A COMMENT REGARDING FLOODING OF THE LANE AND IT BEING IN A POOR STATE.**

**77662 – Single storey extension to dwelling at White House, road from Willingcott Bridge to Dean Cross, Ilfracombe, Devon, EX34 8NS.**

Cllr Reeves did not have any objections to this application. Cllr Ayre added that it is at the rear of the property. **Cllr Verney proposed that this application be approved which was seconded by Cllr Kenshole.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

**RESOLVED – THAT THE PARISH COUNCIL RECOMMENDS APPROVAL OF PLANNING APPLICATION 77662.**

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

None.

5071. Footpaths

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

The Tender Notice had been put up with a closing date of 25<sup>th</sup> October 2023. One application for more information had been received and details of the work had been sent to him.

**b) Any other footpath matters.**

Cllrs Verney and Knight were going to have a walk around the footpaths shortly. Cllr Whitby was invited to join them and will be given responsibility for one of the footpaths. Cllr Verney added that he has finger post stickers to put on.

Cllr Ayre had walked the footpath at Stocklands last week. She had seen the new gateway that Mr Hookway had put in and where he had replaced some of the bigger fence posts that the kissing gates hang on. There is a new kissing gate where the horses are in the first field and they all have small locks on now. The top one is still quite tight. There is a pillar with a finger post buried and the seat has been downgraded to a D on the Asset Register as it is wobbly and will probably need to be replaced at some point. Cllr Ayre had also walked Pembroke footpath and could not find the seat as it is in the brambles and bracken and inaccessible. Cllr Ayre had asked the current contractor to provide quotations for some additional work but she had not heard back from him. This may need to be looked at again at the November meeting.

Cllr Ayre referred to putting photos on the website of footpaths but she was asked to take these down by a member of the public and was advised that she should be reminding users not to approach or feed horses and to close the gates. Cllr Ayre will liaise with Ros Davies (or her replacement) and Simon Houghton (DCC Public Rights of Way Officers) and seek their advice on dealing with this matter.

Cllr Ayre referred to the list of footpath responsibilities and will let the Clerk have a

new list for circulation. Cllr Kenshole has the criteria for the footpaths. The Clerk will see if she has a copy and circulate to the other Councillors.

Cllr Reeves referred to Footpath 16 and the start off Rockhill. On the signpost which says Public Footpath, someone has nailed a No Entry sign on it. It was agreed that the Clerk would report this to Simon Houghton from the P3 Team at Devon County Council.

5072. Community Land Trust

Cllr Ayre had circulated the Housing Needs Survey to the Councillors prior to the meeting as well as to Steve at Middlemarch and the CLT group.. The Clerk will send a copy of this to Cllr Whitby.

Cllr Ayre referred to the CLT meeting on Thursday of last week. The CLT group have identified some land and are going through the process to get to the next stage. Funding has now run out for CLT's, with South Molton getting the last amount from the pot of money. Steve from Middlemarch will approach a Housing Association to see if they will support the project. They specialise in rural projects so it is hoped they will become involved and fund the groundwork. A public meeting will be set up once there is information from the Housing Association.

5073. Emergency Plan

Cllr Kenshole referred to the meeting held on 26 September 2023. A few Parish Councillors attended as well as some other individuals. A lot of information had been taken from the Braunton Plan, which Cllr Kenshole had rewritten for West Down. The Clerk had prepared a questionnaire. Everything has been sent to Andy Odell who has taken over the Coordinator role. He has a deputy called Nigel Tinsey-Such, both being ex Metropolitan Police officers. They are going to send a new meeting invite out. Mr Odell wants to bring risk assessments into the plan. Cllr Kenshole thought that within the next two meetings the Emergency Plan will be set up and equipment can be put in place. The next step is to get the questionnaire out to the village and find out who the vulnerable people are in the village.

Cllr Ayre thanked Cllr Kenshole for his help with this plan. Cllr Kenshole praised those on the team and felt they had a good level of experience.

5074. Car Park

A meeting date was still awaited from Jon Triggs (NDC) to try and find a way forward with the lease for the Car Park. The Clerk will chase Mr Triggs for some dates and also why VAT was added to this year's invoice. It was agreed that Cllrs Ayre and Reeves would go to the meeting with Mr Triggs as well as D Cllr Wilkinson.

5075. Air Ambulance Light

Cllr Ayre had contacted Graham Coates to update his contact list for the Parish Council. This will be Cllr Ayre and the Clerk. Mr Stainer is the contact for the Community Park. Mr Coates said there is no reason that the Air Ambulance cannot land at the moment in West Down. He is going to arrange a site visit as they cannot turn the lights on remotely from the Air Ambulance. He will bring a technical person with him. Mr Coates will give the date for this meeting to Cllr Ayre. Cllr Ayre will talk to him about responsibility for the light at this meeting.

5076. Small Grant Fund

**a) To Pay out grants following the second precept payment.**

WDVGFA	£ 250
WDPTFA	£ 325
WDPCCC	£ 650
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,225</b>

**Cllr Ayre proposed that the small grant sums be paid which was seconded by Cllr Verney.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.  
**RESOLVED – THAT THE SECOND INSTALMENTS OF THE SMALL GRANT FUND SHOULD BE PAID.**

**b) To look at creating an editable pdf application form.**

Cllr Kenshole will have a form ready by the time of the next meeting.

5077. Partner Consultation – Dog Related PSPO (Public Spaces Protection Order)

Information had been circulated to Cllrs prior to the last meeting. The Clerk had requested an extension to provide a response which NDC said was not a problem as the deadline was due to them needing to provide some feedback to their S&R. Cllr Knight was concerned about the amount of dog poo bags being left around the village, which she thought would have been in this Order, or at least have to be compostable. The Parish Council will need to provide their comments to this consultation by December 2023. The Clerk will share the original information with Cllr Whitby and also let Cllr Squire know the decision to comment by December.

5078. Review Quotation & Tender Policy

Councillors had been asked to look at this policy online. Cllr Kenshole noticed the font needed to be amended but otherwise the content was agreed to be fine. **Cllr Verney proposed that the content of the Quotation & Tender Policy stay as it is with the font to be changed by the Clerk, this was seconded by Cllr Reeves.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

**RESOLVED – THAT THE CLERK WILL AMEND THE FONT ON THE QUOTATION & TENDER POLICY.**

**- THAT THE CLERK WILL AMEND THE FRONT PAGE & COUNCILLOR KENSHOLE WILL AMEND THE FOOTER.**

5078. Finances

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

Balance in the Treasurer's Account as at 30.9.2023	£22,720.01
Balance in the Business Account as at 30.9.2023	£ 4,837.85

**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

Parish Hall	Shortfall in Hire Charge (PO)	£ 51.00
Parish Hall	Hire for Emergency Plan Mtg	£ 19.00
Western Web	Renewal of Cloud email account	£ 86.00

St John's Ambulance Adult Padi Padz	£ 216.00
Devon Communities Housing Needs Survey (the funding for this had already been received)	£3,564.00
<b>Total Payments</b>	<b>£4,306.89</b>

**Cllr Reeves proposed that the invoices totalling £4,306.89 should be paid which was seconded by Cllr Verney.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

**RESOLVED – THAT THE INVOICES TOTALLING £4,306.89 SHOULD BE PAID**

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).

Remittance received on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2023 from NDC for the second instalment of the precept for £9,000.

Small Grant Fund to be paid following receipt of second precept payment (See Item 5076 above)

WDVGA	£ 250
WDPTFA	£ 325
WDPCC	£ 650
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,225</b>

### **c) Mid Term Accounts September 2023**

Figures were circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting. It was agreed that the Mid Term accounts reflect that things are well on track. **Cllr Ayre proposed that the Mid Term Accounts for September 2023 be accepted as a true record which was seconded by Cllr Verney.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

**RESOLVED – THAT THE MID TERM ACCOUNTS FOR SEPTEMBER 2023 BE ACCEPTED.**

**- THAT THE CLERK WILL PUT THE MID TERM ACCOUNTS ON THE PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE.**

### 5079. Correspondence

a) Email received from Terry King, Parish Hall, following their meeting when they discussed the conditions to enable the Parish Council to continue paying towards the cost of keeping the Post Office in the village. (Circulated to Cllrs on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2023).

b) Email received from Adrian Bryant, Braunton Parish Council, regarding an online course – Radical Adaptation for Parish & Town Councillors – Creating Green and Resilient Communities. This had been circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting).

c) Email received from the Neighbourhood Highways Officer to say DCC can provide 3 shovels, 1 high vis jacket (marked with Snow Warden) and 2 high vis volunteer vests. It is best to fill in the form and request the PPE. Cllr Ayre confirmed that Alex, Neighbourhood Highways Officer, had said that the Parish Council can have all of these items and he will bring them to her house.

Cllr Ayre referred to being well ahead with ordering of the salt. Mr Hookway is happy to put 10 bags of salt outside the shop (if they are happy with this) so people

can pick one up or Mr Hookway is happy to deliver it. He would rather people go through Cllr Ayre or the Clerk and they can then liaise with him. There is also a tonne of salt at Mullacott Industrial Estate. Cllr Reeves offered to liaise with the shop about the salt bags and he thanked Mr Hookway and the contact at Mullacott. The key to access the grit spreader will be required. Cllr Ayre confirmed she knows where there is a key. Cllr Ayre is the Snow Warden for West Down.

- d) Reminder sent from Rebecca Walker (DALC) regarding their AGM on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2023. Circulated to all on the 12<sup>th</sup> September 2023.
- e) Email received from Mrs Davidson-Grant about the large metal container behind Bakers Cottage and large trees overhanging their garden. The Parish Council requested permission to forward this on to WDVGFA, which was given, and they are looking into these concerns.
- f) Introductory Email received from Devon County Council Stakeholder Liaison Team. Circulated to all on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2023.
- g) Email received from 20's Plenty for Devon. DCC Cllr Jacqi Hodgson had tabled a motion for the next Council meeting on the 7<sup>th</sup> September asking DCC that where communities/parishes have joined the 20's Plenty campaign and want a 20mph zone through their locality that they are supported by Devon County Council to get it. Email sent to all on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023.
- h) Newsletter sent to the Village Shop, the Parish Hall, the Community Park and the Church regarding the Community Ownership Fund mentioned in the Grants & Community Newsletter sent to Cllrs on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2023.
- i) Dental Petition received from Selaine Saxby. Circulated to all on the 12<sup>th</sup> September 2023. Cllr Ayre signed this petition and also circulated this on her Facebook page and that of West Down. She felt it was important to spread the word as people are struggling to get dental support.
- j) Peninsula Transport. Email received which was sent on behalf of C Cllr Davis regarding Technology and Zero-Emission vehicle study for the South West. Circulated to Cllrs.
- k) Email received from the D Cllr regarding contact details for Police Officers in communities. Circulated to Cllrs.
- l) Email received from the Elections Team regarding the Review of Polling Districts & Polling Places/Stations 2023. This had been sent to Cllrs prior to the meeting. The Clerk will put this on the Parish Council noticeboard.

5080. Unresolved Questions  
None.

5081. Items to be added to the next meeting Agenda
- a) Prepare Budget for the financial year 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 with a view to setting the Precept.
  - b) Parish Council to have received by now the Buildings & Contents Insurance Schedule from the Parish Hall Management Committee and a copy of the receipt to prove payment. Councillors to agree level of cover is adequate.
  - c) Advertise for Tenders for Parish grass cutting and the cleaning of the bus shelters for the following calendar year.
  - d) Start P3 Footpath Surveys.
  - e) Discuss Small Grant Fund applications and decide on funding awards.
  - f) Annual Review of Health & Safety Policy & IT Policy.
  - g) Revisit the Post Office Outreach Service Funding.

Continued ...



- h) Asset Register
- i) Car Park Lease
- j) Community Land Trust
- k) Flashing Speed Sign
- l) Emergency Plan
- m) Air Ambulance Light.
- n) Partner Consultation – Dog Related PSPO (Public Spaces Protection Order).
- o) Parking around the Island in the village.

5082. Any Other Business

a) Peards House. The recent planning application (76661) was for an additional bedroom for the dwelling. This room is now being advertised as an Airbnb which is in breach of the planning permission.

**RESOLVED THAT THE CLERK WILL CONTACT PLANNING ENFORCEMENT ABOUT THE BREACH OF PLANNING PERMISSION (76661) FOR PEARDS HOUSE.**

b) Cllr Whitby now has a Parish Council email address. Cllr Kenshole apologised for the recent email problems due to him not being notified that this was part of the server upgrade by Western Web. Cllr Oades' emails have now been deleted and the Clerk needs to write to Mr Oades to remind him to delete any Parish Council work from his computer.

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

5083. Clerk's Appraisal

Cllr Ayre thanked the Clerk for doing a grand job and she had no issues.

The Clerk had given her Time Sheet book to Cllr Ayre with an additional 43 hours being worked between May 2023 and the end of August 2023. **Cllr Verney proposed that these hours be paid which was seconded by Cllr Reeves.**

There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

**RESOLVED – THAT 43 ADDITIONAL HOURS WILL BE PAID TO THE CLERK, SPREAD OVER FOUR MONTHS AT HER REQUEST.**

The Clerk did not want her hours increased and discussion took place to see if anything could be done to reduce her workload. A key was given to Cllr Reeves for the Parish Council Noticeboard so that one of the Councillors could put Agendas or Notices up if the Clerk could not get to West Down. The Clerk suggested not having a Parish Council meeting in August each year. **Cllr Ayre proposed that the August Parish Council meetings no longer take place which was seconded by Cllr Reeves.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

**RESOLVED – THAT THERE WILL BE NO AUGUST PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS GOING FORWARD APART FROM A PLANNING MEETING IF NECESSARY.**

**- THAT THE CLERK WILL ASK FOR ASSISTANCE IN PUTTING NOTICES AND AGENDAS UP IF SHE IS UNABLE TO GET TO WEST DOWN.**

The meeting closed at 9.30 p.m.