

WEST DOWN PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES  
West Down Parish Hall  
Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023 at 7.00 p.m.

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

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

Apologies/Approvals.

Cllr T Verney sent his apologies due to medical reasons. Accepted. C Cllr A Davis and D Cllr M Wilkinson.

5114. Declarations of Interest

None.

5115. Public Participation

None.

5116. Approve & Sign Minutes of the 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023 Meeting of the Parish Council.

The Minutes had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. **Cllr Ayre proposed that the Minutes of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> November 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 1<sup>st</sup> NOVEMBER 2023 PARISH COUNCIL MEETING BE APPROVED AND THEY WERE DULY SIGNED**

5117. Matters Arising

5084. Public Participation. Cllr Davis sent an email after the last meeting about heavy goods vehicles using Stang Lane. She thought there was a sign but she will check. She also gave links for the public to contact the Sat Nav companies. A copy of this email will be sent to Cllrs. Discussion took place about signs being in place but the one facing down the hill from the village is in a poor state. However, a sign is really needed further back from the junction with the A361 to give prior warning to HGV drivers about the road being unsuitable for them.

5087. Matters Arising. (4929) Parish Council Vacancy. One vacancy remains and continues to be advertised. (5013) Community Councillor Grant. £405 received from NDC. (5035). AOB. b) Mobile Homes in gateways. This will be discussed later in the meeting about the action required following the map being given to the Clerk at the end of the last meeting. c) The Clerk had sent a second letter to Mr Belton about the blue pipe going into the stream and about Footpath 15 needing to be rectified to the correct width. (5041). County Councillor's report. The Clerk had emailed Mr Emery for an update on the gateway type feature for traffic calming on Ilfracombe Hill. This needs to be followed up.

5090. District Councillors report. Cllr Wilkinson had called in Planning Application 77772 - Erection of a dwelling at Teasel Cottage.

5101. Small Grant Funds. The successful applicants had been contacted. The editable pdf application form will be put on the website in time for next year's applications.

5103 – Parish Hall Representatives. The Clerk had emailed Terry King to say the Parish Council could provide two representatives but not Committee Members or

Trustees. Terry King felt this was disappointing.

5108 – Post Office Outreach Service – An email was sent to Terry King regarding the Parish Council agreeing to pay the shortfall in hire charges for another year. Terry King thanked the Councillors for this decision.

5109. Finances. d) Asset Register - this needs a few amendments.

5110. Correspondence. b). SW Heritage Trust. The Clerk will find out when the contribution is due. SW Heritage store the Parish Council archived documents.

5118. Police Report

**Monthly Crime Figures.**

The crime figures for October 2023 for Morteheo, Woolacombe & West Down (including Mullacott & Bittadon) were:-

Violence less Serious	3
Criminal Damage (Inc Arson)	1
Other Notifiable Crime	1

For November 2023

Violence less Serious	2
Theft (Other)	3
Criminal Damage (Inc Arson)	1

5119. Report from County Councillor.

C Cllr Davis provided a report (see Appendix A). She sent her Apologies as she was delayed due to her rail journey being disrupted.

5120. Report from District Councillor.

D Cllr Wilkinson had sent his Apologies for this meeting in November as he had to attend a meeting in London.

5121. Climate & Ecology Bill

This bill had its second reading in Parliament on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2023. Cllr Knight had not been able to find any more information on this so there was no further update.

5122. Parking around the Island in the village

The Parish Council had been contemplating a letter or leaflet drop regarding the parking around the island but there had been a significant improvement so this will just be monitored for now.

5123. Planning Decisions

**76395 - The Brackens, West Down, Ilfracombe, Devon, EX34 8NU.** Withdrawn.

**77557 - Hay Bale Barn West Down Ilfracombe Devon EX34 8NX.** Approved.

5124. Planning Applications

**a) Applications on the Agenda.**

**77834 – Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for the proposed siting of a mobile home caravan within the garden for the purposes of ancillary accommodation at Teasel Cottage, West Down, Ilfracombe, Devon, EX34 8NT.**

Cllr Reeves felt it looks like this application is well within the planning requirements, with the mobile home being within the curtilage of the garden. As long as this

accommodation is ancillary to the main house in its use and not used as separate accommodation he did not have any concerns. Cllr Kenshole felt there was a need to request assurances from Planning that this is the case. **Cllr Kenshole proposed that this application be approved as discussed, which was seconded by Cllr Reeves.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

**RESOLVED – THAT THE PARISH COUNCIL RECOMMENDS APPROVAL OF PLANNING APPLICATION 77834, WITH THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT TO BE CONTACTED TO REQUEST ASSURANCE THAT THE MOBILE HOME WILL ONLY BE USED AS ANCILLARY ACCOMMODATION TO THE MAIN HOUSE, NOT AS SEPARATE ACCOMMODATION.**

**PLANNING APPEAL REGARDING APPLICATION 76269.**

**Appeal Reference APP/X1118/X/23/3331786.**

**Bay View Farmers Caravan and Camping Sites, Turnpike Cross, Woolacombe, Devon, EX34 7HG.**

**Application for a lawful development certificate for proposed siting of 167 touring caravans, static caravans, camper vans and tents, with the proportion of each type unrestricted, for tourist accommodation.**

Discussion took place about this not being in the Parish of West Down but in Mortehoe. West Down Parish Council were not consulted on the original application so it was not felt there was a need to get involved.

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

**77977 – Conversion of a redundant rural building to one dwelling and associated works at Barn C, Greenpark Farm, West Down, Ilfracombe, Devon, EX34 8NW.**

There were two Consultees who had not had a chance to comment. As the application only came in two days before the meeting it was decided to request an extension to comment after the January 2024 Parish Council Meeting. **Cllr Reeves proposed this course of action which was seconded by Cllr Squire.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

**RESOLVED – THAT THE CLERK WILL REQUEST AN EXTENSION FOR THE PARISH COUNCIL TO COMMENT ON APPLICATION 77977 UNTIL AFTER THE NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING ON THE 10TH JANUARY 2024.**

5125. Flashing Speed Signs

The Clerk had written to C Cllr Davies about Braunton turning their sign around and to ask if this would count as a mobile speed sign. The Clerk will write to C Cllr Davis to see if she can give an update at the January 2024 Parish Council meeting.

5126. Footpaths

**a) To receive Tenders received for outstanding footpath works.**

One tender had been received from Mr Gareth Hookway. He provided a breakdown of the costs, with the total quote being £1,035 plus VAT. He also provided information about the removal of waste. **Cllr Whitby proposed that Mr Hookway be instructed to carry out this work which was seconded by Cllr Ayre.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

**RESOLVED – THAT MR HOOKWAY BE AWARDED THE TENDER FOR OUTSTANDING FOOTPATH WORKS AND BE INSTRUCTED TO PROCEED WITH THE WORKS.**

**b) Any other footpath matters.**

The Clerk had received a telephone call from Mrs Watts in response to the letters sent to homeowners regarding Footpath 16 and the No Entry sign that had been put up. Mrs Watts explained the situation about vehicles using the footpath and then getting stuck. Information circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting. Cllr Kenshole had obtained prices for an alternative sign saying No Entry to Vehicles. Following discussion the Parish Council agreed to pay for the new sign.

**RESOLVED – THAT THE CLERK WILL WRITE TO MR & MRS WATTS TO SAY THE PARISH COUNCIL ARE HAPPY TO PAY FOR A NO ENTRY TO VEHICLES SIGN ON FOOTPATH 16 AND ENSURE THEY ARE HAPPY FOR THIS SIGN TO REPLACE THE ORIGINAL NO ENTRY SIGN.**

A Footpath & Bus Shelter Cleaning Report had been received from Alwaysthere. This was circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting

**c) P3 Footpath Survey**

The Clerk had received the Footpath Comments sheets for footpaths 5, 9, 10,11,15 16 and 20. The outstanding forms need to be returned to the Clerk so that she can complete the P3 Footpath Return when it is received. Cllr Whitby had located the missing bench on Footpath 16. This is rotten but in a nice position. Cllr Ayre had tried to talk to Mr Hunt (Alwaysthere) about this and other matters and will contact him again. The Clerk will chase the outstanding Footpath Comment Sheets.

A letter had been received from Richard Walton, Public Rights of Way & Country Parks Manager, thanking the Parish Council for all their support in looking after public rights of way. He gave a brief update on consultation arrangements for the Parish Paths Partnership (P3) Scheme. Circulated to Cllrs on 9.11.23. Information will be sent soon about the annual return.

**5127. Emergency Plan**

Cllr Kenshole had a copy of the draft Final Emergency Plan. The review of this by the committee will be on 8.12.2023 and once finalised it will go out to the Public Meeting in January 2024, with Desk Top Trials of emergency situations in March 2024 where it is hoped the Air Ambulance will come in to see how they get on. Andy Odell is working with the school to get the questionnaire out to everyone in the village including wording about vulnerable people.

With regards to the application for additional funding, Cllr Kenshole should find out more about this on Friday regarding the cost of equipment and how to apply for the second grant.

**5128. Car Park - Lease**

Cllrs Ayre and Reeves and D Cllr Wilkinson had attended the meeting with Mr Triggs on the 10<sup>th</sup> November 2023. Mr Triggs sent an email on the 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023 giving draft Heads of Terms options which had been circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting.

Cllr Reeves reported that there is no option of having no lease at all. Option 1 is a peppercorn rent of £1 p.a. for 21 years, with the Parish Council being responsible for the upkeep of the car park, own legal costs and business rates. This would include upkeep of the shrubbery, space markings, drainage and resurfacing.

However, the car park is in quite a good condition and the surface should be good for another 20 years and the markings for five to ten years. Cllr Reeves had checked the current cost of resurfacing which would be approximately £8,750 so at least £500 p.a. would need to be put aside for this. Option 2 was a 7 year lease for £700 p.a. fixed for 5 years with a five year review in line with the RPI. North Devon Council would carry out all the maintenance of the car park for 7 years but the Parish Council would still be liable for their own legal costs and for business rates. Car Parks are exempt from Small Business rate relief.

The Clerk had checked the insurance position on the Parish Council taking over the lease on the car park, with there being no extra charge for this as it is included in the policy.

Cllr Reeves will research the legal costs involved with taking over the lease on the car park.

Cllr Reeves referred to Mr Triggs mentioning the re-introduction of the NDC Climate & Environmental Grant available during the 2024/25 financial year. There will be two bouts of funding, with £20,000 in each. Mr Triggs seemed favourable to the suggestion of the Parish Council tapping into this funding for electric car charging points once the lease is in place.

Mr Triggs would like the Parish Council to pay the outstanding bills for the car park. Cllr Reeves suggested that the first bill be paid but there is still the need to know why VAT was added onto the second.

The Clerk needs to ask the following questions of Mr Triggs:-

- a) Rent Review on Option 2. The Parish Council need to understand how the rent will go up.
- b) The Parish Council will pay the first invoice for £800 but still need to know why VAT was added to the second.

The Clerk will confirm to Mr Triggs that:-

- a) The Parish Council are covered under their existing Insurance Policy for Public Liability once they take over the lease.
- b) The Parish Council hope to make their decision on which option to go for at the January 2024 Parish Council meeting.

**Cllr Reeves proposed that the above action be taken which was seconded by Cllr Squire.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

**RESOLVED – THAT THE CLERK WILL WRITE TO MR TRIGGS REGARDING THE RENT REVIEW ON OPTION 2 OF THE DRAFT HEADS OF TERMS IN RESPECT OF THE CAR PARK LEASE, ASK WHY VAT WAS ADDED ON TO THE SECOND INVOICE FOR THE CAR PARK AND ADVISE HIM THAT THE PARISH COUNCIL ARE COVERED FOR PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE AND HOPE TO MAKE A DECISION ON WHICH OPTION TO TAKE AT THE JANUARY 2024 PARISH COUNCIL MEETING.**

5129. Air Ambulance Light

Cllr Ayre had not heard back from Mr Coates. She will chase him so that information can hopefully be available at the January 2024 Parish Council meeting.

5130. Small Grant Fund

a) **To discuss the application received from WDVGFA (West Down Village Green Field Association) for funding towards the cost of Insurance and fuel for grass cutting.**

The Clerk had sent an email to John Stainer following the last meeting. His reply dated 2 December 2023 had been circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting. Discussion took place about his comment that WDVGFA do their own fund raising as no money could be seen coming in.

It was agreed that the park is a valuable community asset and the committee members work hard on a voluntary basis. Although the grant funding is not usually used for running costs, the expenditure quoted looks correct and it reflects on the village if the park is not maintained. **Cllr Reeves proposed that the Parish Council pay the grant funding requested of £1,000 which was seconded by Cllr Knight.** There was a majority agreement to this proposal with one abstention. **RESOLVED – THAT THE PARISH COUNCIL AWARD GRANT FUNDING OF £1,000 TO WDVGA IN LINE WITH THEIR APPLICATION FOR ASSISTANCE WITH THEIR INSURANCE AND TOWARDS FUEL FOR GRASS CUTTING.**

5131. Partner Consultation – Dog Related PSPO (Public Spaces Protection Order)

Cllr Ayre had amalgamated the information received onto one document which was circulated to Cllrs. There were no additions or alterations suggested at the meeting. Cllr Reeves will look at the form and streamline this. **Cllr Ayre proposed that the document, once amended, be submitted to NDC which was seconded by Cllr Squire.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

**RESOLVED – THAT THE DOCUMENT GIVING THE PARISH COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE DOG RELATED PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER BE SUBMITTED TO NDC ONCE IT HAS BEEN STREAMLINED.**

5132. King Charles III Coronation Bench

The Parish Council needed to formally agree to gift the King's Coronation bench to the Parish Hall and ask them to insure this. Mr Hookway will move this to the Parish Hall when convenient to him and the Parish Hall. **Cllr Squire proposed that the King Charles III Coronation Bench be gifted to the Parish Hall which was seconded by Cllr Knight.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

**RESOLVED – THAT THE CLERK WILL WRITE TO THE PARISH HALL COMMITTEE ADVISING THEM THAT THE PARISH COUNCIL WILL GIFT THE KING CHARLES III CORONATION BENCH TO THE PARISH HALL.**

**- THAT THE PARISH HALL NEED TO INSURE THE BENCH ONCE IT IS IN POSITION.**

**- THAT THE CORONATION BENCH WILL BE REMOVED FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL ASSET REGISTER.**

5133. Tenders for Parish Grass Cutting and Cleaning of the Bus Shelters for 2024.

A Resolution was made at the last meeting to amend the Grass Cutting and Bus Shelter cleaning work schedule to include picking up grass and removing. Cllr Ayre informed the meeting that she had found out that a licence is required for disposal of waste. **Cllr Ayre proposed that the schedule of works be amended to blow grass cuttings rather than pick up which was seconded by Cllr Squire.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

**RESOLVED – THAT THE GRASS CUTTING SCHEDULE WILL BE AMENDED TO**

**BLOW GRASS CUTTINGS FROM GARDEN LANE AND THE TRIANGLE RATHER THAN PICK UP AND REMOVE.**

**- THAT THE CLERK WILL SEND MR HUNT, ALWAYS THERE, A REVISED GRASS CUTTING WORK SCHEDULE AND REQUEST HIS CONFIRMATION THAT HIS QUOTATION STILL STANDS.**

The Tender was then discussed and **Cllr Ayre proposed the quotation from Always there be accepted, subject to confirmation that the quotation still stands, which was seconded by Cllr Kenshole.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

**RESOLVED – THAT THE QUOTATION FROM ALWAYS THERE, ONCE CONFIRMED THAT IT STILL STANDS, BE ACCEPTED AND THE TENDER FOR THE GRASS CUTTING AND BUS SHELTER CLEANING FOR 2024 BE AWARDED TO ALWAYS THERE.**

5134. Finances

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

Balance in the Treasurer's Account as at 30.11.2023	£16,133.39
Balance in the Business Account as at 30.11.2023	£ 4,847.65

**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	
	Additional Hours	£134.50	
	Admin Charge	£ 7.72	£504.99
Mrs V Ford	Printer Ink		£ 17.38
Parish Hall	Shortfall in Hire Charge (PO)		£ 103.00
	(October)		
	(November)		£ 102.00
North Devon Council	Car Park contribution (2021)		£ 800.00
	<b>Total Payments</b>		<b>£1,527.37</b>

**Cllr Whitby proposed that the invoices totalling £1,527.37 should be paid which was seconded by Cllr Squire.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

**RESOLVED – THAT THE INVOICES TOTALLING £1,527.37 SHOULD BE PAID**

**c) To approve the Budget for the financial year 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 and fix the Precept.**

The Clerk had circulated figures to Cllrs prior to the meeting. The Clerk had received the form to be used for requesting the precept for 2024/2025. This needs to be returned by the 18<sup>th</sup> December 2023.

Discussion took place about the amount to put in the budget for the Car Park as discussed under Minute Number 5128 above. It was agreed that £1,500 for the next financial year would cover either option including business rates of £800.

**Cllr Reeves proposed that the precept be set at £20,000 which was seconded by Cllr Whitby.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

**d) Annual Pay Award 2023/2024 for Clerks of Parish Councils**

Following agreement by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services, the Clerk's salary increased from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 from £13.95 ph to £14.95 ph and authorisation to backdate this needed to be agreed and notification sent to payroll.

**Cllr Ayre proposed that the Clerk's salary be increased from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 from £13.95 to £14.95 in line with the NJC agreement.**

Also, additional hours for the Clerk had been paid at £13.45 ph. This should have been paid at £13.95 ph as per the salary agreed last January. This will now need to be backdated to the new amount of £14.95 ph.

Cllrs Ayre and Reeves will prepare an email to send to payroll regarding the above and also circulate this to Cllrs.

5135. Parish Council Meeting Dates

To set the dates for Parish Council meetings for 2024 and to consider moving January meetings to the second Wednesday of the month each year. Discussion took place about the January meetings being too early in the month when held on the first Wednesday. It had already been agreed that there will be no August Parish Council Meetings, unless there are any urgent planning applications to discuss.

**Cllr Ayre proposed that January Parish Council meetings be moved to the second Wednesday of the month which was seconded by Cllr Squire.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

**RESOLVED – THAT THE JANUARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS BE HELD ON THE SECOND WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH RATHER THAN THE FIRST.**

**- THAT THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING FOR JANUARY 2024 WILL BE HELD ON THE 10TH JANUARY 2024.**

**- THAT ALL OTHER MEETINGS WILL BE HELD ON THE FIRST WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH APART FROM AUGUST WHEN NO MEETING WILL BE HELD (UNLESS URGENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS NEED CONSIDERATION).**

5136. Correspondence

a) Devon County Council (A361), Knowle) (50 mph Speed Limit) Order 2023. Information circulated to Cllrs. Works have already been undertaken.

b) Parish Council Grant for churchyard grass cutting. A letter had been received from David Ravenscroft (Treasurer of St Calixtus West Down PCC) thanking the Parish Council for the grant of £650 being the second payment for 2023/2024. An email was also received thanking the Parish Council for their successful grant fund application for 2024/2025.

c) Priorities & Budgets – Devon County Council. Cllr Ayre registered for the online sessions with Cllr John Hart, Leader of Devon County Council on the 29<sup>th</sup> November 2023. She was unable to log in but the recording of this meeting will be sent to Cllrs.

d) Lower Broad Park. An update had been received from Avice Yeo. Things are moving forward.

e) Peninsula Transport – Alternative fuels for road freight. Information circulated to Councillors.



- f) DALC News Bulletin. Information about precept levels sent to Cllrs.
- g) Airband Community Internet Ltd – Prior notification information regarding Higher Cheglinch Lane, Cheglinch, West Down, EX34 8NW and the installation of two 10.5 m wooden poles. Circulated to Cllrs.
- h) Village Forum – Information regarding the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> November circulated to Cllrs.
- g) Make the Vision Zero Road Safety Pledge. Information from Councillor Advocate had been circulated and is on both websites.
- h) Elizabeth Harrison – Research Project – Professor in School of Global Studies. Cllrs Ayre and Reeves had received an email from Professor Harrison who is looking at completing some work about wind farms. She wondered if the Parish Council can help her regarding the wind farm at West Down. She wants to meet people who were affected by the wind farm, both negatively or positively. Cllr Ayre will circulate the email to Cllrs.
- i) SW Water – Road closure in the village in March 2024. Cllr Ayre will let the Clerk have information on this nearer the time.

5137. Unresolved Questions  
None.

5138. Items to be added to the next meeting Agenda

- a) Complete P3 Footpath Survey.
- b) Advertise for tenders for Footpath work (if required).
- c) Annual Review of Clerk's salary.
- d) Annual Review of Equal Opportunity Policy.
- e) Community Land Trust (CLT).
- f) Flashing Speed Sign.
- g) Emergency Plan.
- h) Car Park Lease.
- i) Air Ambulance Light.

5139. Any Other Business

a) Cllrs Reeves and Squire attended the Parish Hall AGM and Committee Meeting. Cllr Reeves informed the meeting that he had been thinking of joining the Parish Hall Management Committee for some time and made the decision to do so that evening. The Parish Council just need to endorse Cllr Reeves as their Parish Hall Committee Member/Trustee. If Cllr Reeves cannot attend meetings he will let Cllr Squire know as she was appointed the original representative from the Parish Council. The Parish Councillors were very happy with Cllr Reeves being the Parish Council Committee Member/Trustee of the Parish Hall Management Committee.

The meeting closed at 21.46 pm