

WEST DOWN PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES
West Down Parish Hall
Wednesday 1st May 2024 at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Cllrs S Ayre (Chair), M Reeves (Vice Chair), R Kenshole, T Verney and H Knight,

Also present: C Cllr Davis, D Cllr Wilkinson, Val Ford (Clerk) and 2 member of the public.

Apologies/Approvals.

Apologies were received from Cllrs S Whitby & S Tanton which were accepted.

5230. Election of Chairman 2024-2025.

Cllr Ayre thanked all of the Councillors for their support as she stood down as Chair.

Cllr Reeves (Vice-Chair) asked Cllr Ayre if she would consider standing as Chair again for another year as she had done a fantastic job. Cllr Ayre was happy for someone else to take on the position of Chair but agreed to do this for one more year if no one else came forward. **Cllr Reeves proposed that Cllr Ayre be put forward as the Chair for the next financial year which was seconded by Cllr Verney.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

RESOLVED – THAT CLLR AYRE WILL TAKE ON THE POSITION OF CHAIR OF WEST DOWN PARISH COUNCIL FOR THE NEXT FINANCIAL YEAR.

Councillor Ayre signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office form which was witnessed by the Clerk.

5231. Declarations of Interest

None.

5232. Public Participation

None.

5233. Approve & Sign Minutes of the 3rd April 2024 Meeting of the Parish Council.

The Minutes had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. **Cllr Kenshole proposed that the Minutes of the meeting held on the 3rd April 2024 be accepted as a true record which was seconded by Cllr Reeves.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

RESOLVED – THAT THE MINUTES OF THE 3rd APRIL 2024 PARISH COUNCIL MEETING BE APPROVED AND THEY WERE DULY SIGNED

5234. Matters Arising

5210. Matters Arising. (5196c). Planning Applications. Tracey Blackmore had been booked to attend the June 2024 Parish Council meeting to give a presentation about barn conversions and “fallback”. It was decided that the June meeting would start at 6.45 p.m. so that this presentation could be put at the start of the meeting. The Clerk will contact Tracey Blackmore to advise her of the start time and ask her how long she needs for the presentation and what equipment she needs.

5220. Parish Councillor Vacancies. West Down Parish Council are still carrying one vacancy. This needs to be kept under consideration as filling this vacancy would help spread the workload. Feelers need to continue to be put out.

5226. Correspondence. (g). The Clerk had completed and returned the DALC renewal Membership Form for 2024-2025.

5235. Election of Officers 2024-2025

a) Vice Chair

Cllr Ayre felt that Cllr Reeves had done a sterling job as Vice-Chair in the last year and has been a pleasure to work with. She asked him if he would consider standing for this position again or whether anyone else wanted this position. Cllr Reeves confirmed that he would consider this and had quite enjoyed it. If circumstances arose where Cllr Ayre could not Chair the meeting he would be happy to step up. Cllr Kenshole concurred with Cllr Ayre that Cllr Reeves had done a good job as Vice-Chair. **Cllr Ayre proposed that Cllr Reeves be put forward for the position of Vice-Chair for the next financial year which was seconded by Cllr Kenshole.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

RESOLVED – THAT CLLR REEVES WILL TAKE ON THE POSITION OF VICE-CHAIR FOR THE 2024-2025 FINANCIAL YEAR.

b) Joint Data Protection Officers

Cllr Ayre thanked Cllr Kenshole for the work he had carried out as Data Protection Officer with lots of improvements being made. She asked him if he would consider carrying on with this role. Cllr Kenshole confirmed that he would be happy to continue and suggested this be altered to one officer rather than a joint role. **Cllr Ayre proposed that Cllr Kenshole be put forward for the role of Data Protection Officer which was seconded by Cllr Reeves.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

RESOLVED – THAT CLLR KENSHOLE WILL TAKE ON THE POSITION OF DATA PROTECTION OFFICER FOR THE 2024-2025 FINANCIAL YEAR.

c) Parish Council Internal Auditor

Cllr Verney has been the Parish Council Internal Auditor for the last financial year and looks at the books every three months. Cllr Verney was happy to take on this role again unless anyone else wants to do this. **Cllr Ayre proposed that Cllr Verney be put forward for the role of Parish Council Internal Auditor which was seconded by Cllr Knight.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

RESOLVED – THAT CLLR VERNEY WILL TAKE ON THE ROLE OF PARISH COUNCIL INTERNAL AUDITOR FOR THE 2024-2025 FINANCIAL YEAR.

d) P3 Scheme Co-ordinator

Cllr Verney had taken on this role previously but was happy to pass this on to someone else as he is not spending as much time in the village as previously. Cllr Verney explained what the role entailed and said he would take on this role if no one else wants to take this on. **Cllr Ayre proposed that Cllr Verney be the P3 Scheme Co-ordinator for the next financial year which was seconded by Cllr Knight.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

RESOLVED – THAT CLLR VERNEY WILL TAKE ON THE ROLE OF P3 SCHEME CO-ORDINATOR FOR THE 2024-2025 FINANCIAL YEAR.

Cllr Davis will provide the email address of the new P3 Co-ordinator at Devon County Council. Cllr Verney referred to a member of the public (John) having a lot of finger signs that the Parish Council can have.

f) Parish Hall Representative.

Cllr Reeves had already been appointed to this role which was Minuted at the December 2023 meeting (Minute No. 5139). Cllr Reeves stated that officially there should be two representatives from the Parish Council which can be revisited once the Parish Councillor vacancy is filled.

5236 Police Report

Monthly Crime Figures.

As the Police are no longer able to submit a report, Cllr Ayre checked the Police website. Crimes for Morteheo and Woolacombe (the map includes West Down) were:-

Violence & sexual offences – 5

Burglary – 4

Criminal damage & arson – 4

Anti social behaviour - 1

D Cllr Wilkinson mentioned that it is the start of the tourist season to put this into context.

The Clerk will look at the Devon & Cornwall Police website prior to the monthly meetings to get the monthly crime figures going forward.

5237. Report from County Councillor.

C Cllr Davis referred to photos she had taken of poles for the flashing speed signs. Devon County Council do not own the land up the road in Ilfracombe Hill but do own one of the other verges. She added that the flashing speed sign kit is quite deep so care needs to be taken of anyone walking into this. She felt a better suggestion was just outside the school by the car park which she thought would be worth asking the landowner if a pole can be put there. There is a possible position within the 30 mph sign on Dean Lane that belongs to North Devon Homes. Cllr Reeves felt something in the corner of the Parish Hall ground may be suitable if it is tall enough to detect vehicles coming down Ilfracombe Hill. Cllr Kenshole felt Ilfracombe Hill is the critical one and he expressed concern about whether the sign would be too high. Someone will need to speak to the Parish Hall, School and North Devon Homes. C Cllr Davis stated that three sites is the bare minimum but if one is unsuitable another can then be looked for. There will then be a need to know what services are under the ground which can take a long time. Cllr Ayre felt that the Parish Council might be able to find someone to put the poles up. C Cllr Davis has the data for the kit and prices and she will help fund this. She will find the information and send this to the Clerk who can phone up for prices as this will be West Down's kit.

Cllr Kenshole queried the repairs on the A361 up to Mullacott. C Cllr Davis said that Highways are doing a big drainage scheme with no dates as yet. They will continue doing safety defects. Cllr Ayre referred to a deep one between Twitchen Farm and Mullacott roundabout. Cllr Kenshole was concerned that there was no protection now the railings have been removed.

Cllr Ayre had received an email from a parishioner who raised concerns about the Tarka Trail and the crossing and construction on the A361. Cllr Ayre will circulate this information and also copy in C Cllr Davis.

5238. Report from District Councillor.

D Cllr Wilkinson referred to an email he had received from Elizabeth Harrison regarding the research project on the Wind Farm in West Down. She is coming up at the end of the month. There was an anti wind farm group but she cannot find anyone to talk to from this group.

D Cllr Wilkinson thanked the Clerk for sending out information on the Community Councillor Grant to the groups in the village. He has received an application from the Village Shop but no costings as yet.

D Cllr Wilkinson referred to the email from Richard Slaney (Leisure & S106 Public Open Space Officer) which he had sent to the Clerk who circulated this to the Parish Councillors. He felt something should be coming from Mullacott about this. Linked to this he referred to an interesting meeting with Byron Development who put in an application to change their S106 commitment for affordable housing.

The National Trust have said there is no chance of Woolacombe Parish Council keeping the lease on Marine Drive. The ramifications of this are enormous as the Parish Council have run this and been paid 33% of the gross takings. They will potentially lose £60,000 a year and just to stand still the precept will need to be raised by a huge amount. This was discussed at an Extraordinary Finance meeting on Monday with it being a worrying time for a relatively small Parish.

5239. Flashing Speed Signs

This was discussed under the C Cllr Report (Item 5237).

5240. Planning Decisions

78417 – Barn at Higher Stowford Farm, Hore Down Gate, Ilfracombe, Devon, EX34 8PH. Approved.

Alleged Breach of Condition 4 attached to planning permission 66175 at Lynchs Barn, West Down, Ilfracombe, Devon, EX34 8NH.

Information had been circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting. The breach has been remedied with off street parking now provided in accordance with the approved plans which includes up to 4 spaces.

5241. Planning Applications

a) To comment on the following planning applications.

None.

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

None.

5242. Car Park Lease

The Clerk had contacted Jon Triggs about a site meeting at the village car park. Cllr Ayre liaised with Mr Triggs about this meeting being required as Good Practice. Mr Triggs was going to discuss this with the Property Team but has yet to come back with a date.

The Clerk had also contacted Samuels Solicitors following the last meeting. Laura Mather replied on the 8th April 2024 to say they had not received anything substantive from the legal team at North Devon Council so she had emailed them to chase up the draft lease. She felt it was sensible to have requested a site inspection.

Cllr Reeves mentioned the shrubbery around the car park. This was quoted for £105 per visit by NDC, with Cllr Ayre suggesting that the Parish Council can look

into who cuts this.

Cllr Ayre proposed that the Clerk chase Mr Triggs and advise him that the Solicitor is keen to progress the lease and that the Parish Council want a site meeting as soon as possible. This proposal was seconded by Cllr Verney. There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

RESOLVED – THAT THE CLERK WILL CONTACT MR TRIGGS (NDC) AND ADVISE HIM THAT THE SOLICITOR IS KEEN TO PROGRESS THE LEASE SO CAN HE ASK NDC’S LEGAL TEAM TO CONTACT THEM AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

- THAT THE CLERK WILL CHASE MR TRIGGS FOR THE SITE MEETING AT THE CAR PARK.

5243. Air Ambulance

Cllr Ayre was waiting for Nigel Tinsley-Such to come back from holiday so that they could have a get together. The Air Ambulance crew provided information on what needed to be done and Mr Tinsley-Such was going to get prices. The LED flood light specification from the Air Ambulance had been emailed to him. Clarification is needed as to whether Mr Tinsley-Such is still acting for West Down Village Green Field Association (WDVGFA) Committee with the Chairman also needing to be involved. The Memorandum of Understanding had been received from the Air Ambulance Service and been sent to WDVGFA.

Cllr Reeves referred to the annual re-survey that should have been done by Graham Coates on the 25th April 2024. Cllr Ayre thought this had been carried out.

5244. Footpaths

a) To receive any update on the P3 Grant Funding Application submitted.

The Clerk had received an automatic email confirming receipt of the P3 Grant Funding application. She chased for an update on the 8th April 2024 to see if the papers were in order and when the P3 grant would be confirmed but nothing had been received to date.

b) Any other footpath matters.

Cllr Ayre will text Gareth Hookway for the invoice regarding work he has carried out.

There was no report from Mr Hunt (Always there).

5245. Small Grant Fund

a) To carry out the annual review of the Grant Fund Policy.

Cllrs were asked to look at this policy online prior to the meeting. The Policy was reviewed last year and Cllr Kenshole will let the Clerk have the interactive form for the website for 2025-2026. **Cllr Verney proposed that the Grant Fund Policy does not need altering this year which was seconded by Cllr Reeves.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

RESOLVED – THAT THE SMALL GRANT FUND POLICY WILL REMAIN AS IT IS APART FROM THE CLERK UPDATING THE FRONT PAGE.

- THAT CLLR KENSHOLE WILL PROVIDE THE CLERK WITH THE INTERACTIVE GRANT FUND APPLICATION FORM FOR 2025-2026

b) To confirm the first instalments of the Grant Fund payments.

The Parish Council had received the first precept payment for £10,000 from NDC.

The first instalments of the grant can now be paid as follows:-

St Calixtus PCC	£700.00
West Down PTFA	£332.50.
West Down Parish Hall	£250.00
WDVGFA	£500.00

Cllr Reeves proposed that these payments should now be paid which was seconded by Cllr Kenshole. There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

c) To receive any reports in respect of the grant funding received for 2023-2024.

A report had been received from David Ravenscroft, St Calixtus PCC, to say the grant of £1,300 was used towards the grass cutting in the churchyard, the total cost being £1,800. Without the grant the Parochial Church Council would be unable to afford to cut the grass very frequently so they were very thankful for the grant. A signed receipt was attached from Mark O'Halloran for the work carried out.

Cllr Ayre will share the photos sent to her by the school regarding the equipment the School bought with their grant. The lady who deals with receipts had been on holiday but this will be forwarded shortly.

Invoices had been received from John Stainer, WDVGFA, for the contribution towards putting in trenching for the emergency landing light cables to be put underground and fund a new electricity supply to the landing light. The invoices totalled £7,998.48 incl. VAT. Cllr Reeves observed that the three invoices came to well over the £500 WDVGFA received but evidence is required to show at least one invoice has been paid for the audit. The Clerk will deal with this matter.

5246. Emergency Plan

Cllr Kenshole was waiting for forms from Andy Odell and will contact him now he is back. Cllr Kenshole felt the plan was nearly there, with Andy Odell to do an annual review. Cllr Reeves referred to extra funding that could possibly be applied for from Devon Communities Together (DCT) in respect of the walkie talkies which Andy Odell can hopefully look into.

DCT had held an Emergency Planning zoom meeting yesterday. Cllr Ayre stayed logged on to this for an hour and a half with a lot of people being nowhere near where West Down are with their plan. There is a lady called Alex Wild for North Devon who Cllr Ayre will contact.

5247. Review of Code of Conduct & Discuss Training

a) To carry out the annual review of the Code of Conduct.

The Clerk had asked the Cllrs to look at this document online prior to the meeting. This was the one produced by NALC which was discussed and agreed at the May AGM in 2023, Minute No 4946. Cllr Reeves had reviewed this document which **Cllr Ayre proposed be accepted as correct which was seconded by Cllr Reeves.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

RESOLVED – THAT THE CODE OF CONDUCT DOCUMENT BE ACCEPTED AS CORRECT.

- THAT THE CLERK WILL UPDATE THE FRONT PAGE WITH THE DATE AND MINUTE NUMBER FROM THE AGM LAST YEAR AND THE DATE AND MINUTE

NUMBER OF THIS REVIEW.

b) To discuss the Code of Conduct Training for Town & Parish Councils. DALC have online training on the 22nd May 2024 from 6.00 – 8.00 pm. They also have training on the 23rd September 2024.

RESOLVED – THAT THE CLERK WILL CIRCULATE DATES OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT TRAINING TO THE COUNCILLORS SO THAT ANYONE WHO WANTS TO ATTEND CAN BE BOOKED ON AND IN PARTICULAR THE NEW COUNCILLORS WHO HAVE NOT DONE THIS TRAINING.

5248. Parish Council Insurance

The Parish Council Insurance renewal had been received from Community First underwritten by Zurich. The premium for 2024-2025 is £369.87 on the 3 year long term agreement or £389.32 for one year. (Last year the premium was £320.21 on the LTA). The Parish Council had budgeted £400 for this renewal for 2024-2025. The Clerk had also received a quotation from Clear Councils for £570.95. Community Action Suffolk were unable to offer a competitive quotation. These documents had been circulated to the Councillors prior to the meeting.

Cllr Kenshole proposed that the Parish Council accept the renewal quotation from Community First for the 3 year LTA which was seconded by Cllr Verney. There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

RESOLVED – THAT THE CLERK WILL CONTACT COMMUNITY FIRST TO RENEW THE EXISTING PARISH COUNCIL INSURANCE ON THE 3 YEAR LTA AND PAY THE ANNUAL PREMIUM OF £389.32.

5249. SW Heritage Trust

The Parish Council had budgeted a figure of £100 as a donation for storage of Parish Council documents for 2024-2025. **Cllr Verney proposed that a donation of £100 should be made to SW Heritage which was seconded by Cllr Kenshole.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

RESOLVED – THAT THE CLERK WILL PAY THE DONATION OF £100 TO SW HERITAGE FOR STORAGE OF PARISH COUNCIL DOCUMENTS.

5250. Finances

a) To receive the balance in the bank accounts.

Balance in the Treasurer's Account as at 30.04.2024	£20,649.09
Balance in the Business Account as at 30.4.2024	£ 4,873.95

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

North Devon Council Clerks Salary	£395.53	
Admin Charge	£ 7.72	£403.25
Julie Snooks – Internal Auditor		£250.00
North Devon Council - Dog Bin Emptying Jan – Mach 2024		£195.00
Devon Communities Together – Membership renewal.		£ 50.00
Andy Odell – Items for the Emergency Plan:-		
High Viz Jackets	£212.52	
Small OS maps (large ones to follow)	£ 10.00	
Lunch for the Table Top Exercise	£ 58.04	£280.56

Parish Hall – Post Office Room Hire 3 sessions 23.1.24 to 6.2.2024	£ 21.00
South West Heritage – Storage of PC documents.	£100.00
Devon Association of Local Councils Membership Renewal	£265.83
Community First - Renewal of Parish Council Insurance	£369.87
Total Payment	£1,935.51

Cllr Verney proposed that these invoices should be paid which was seconded by Cllr Kenshole. There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

RESOLVED – THAT THE INVOICES FOR £1,935.51 SHOULD BE PAID.

The first precept payment of £10,000 had been received by the Parish Council so the Small Grant Fund payments listed under Min. No 5245 (b) were also agreed to be paid. **£1,782.50**

c) AGAR (Annual Government Accountability Return).

(i) To receive the Internal Auditors Report.

This report had been circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting. The report was generally satisfactory but the Asset Register needs more information on the basis of valuation or cost. The Clerk will look at The Practitioners Guide for guidance on this. There were also minor amendments to Section 2 of the AGAR due to rounding's. These amendments were made and initialled by the Chair. Online payment authorisations will be dealt with by the Clerk.

(ii) To receive information on the External Audit.

The AGAR had been sent to PKF Littlejohn on the 25th April 2024 with an automatic reply received. The date for the Notice of Public Rights has been set for Monday 3rd June 2024 to Friday 12th July 2024.

d) Devon Communities Together Membership.

The renewal for this year's membership is £50.00. **Cllr Ayre proposed that this payment be made which was seconded by Cllr Reeves.** There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

RESOLVED – THAT THE MEMBERSHIP OF DEVON COMMUNITIES TOGETHER BE RENEWED IN THE SUM OF £50.

The VAT Return had been sent off to HMRC.

Cllr Ayre had looked into the forms required to remove Cllr Squire from the cheque signatory list. Lloyds Bank provided her with the relevant forms. One other signatory is required to sign the form. The signatories had been Cllrs Ayre, Reeves, Squire and the Clerk.

Consideration was given as to whether another signatory is required who can also authorise online payments. Cllr Kenshole offered to be a signatory so Cllr Ayre will drop the forms off for him to sign.

5251. Correspondence

- a) Email received from Jan Oades, Chair of the West Down Gardening Club. She thanked the Clerk for information on the Community Councillor Grant but confirmed they will not be applying for this grant.
- b) Email received from Councillor Adrian Bryant from Braunton Parish Council regarding the Tarka Trail from Willingcott to Knowle. This had been circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting. He requested help in putting pressure on Devon County Council to convince them to finish the missing link of the Tarka Trail. Following discussion it was agreed that the Clerk should send an email to Cllr Bryant thanking him for including West Down Parish Council in the email which is noted. Also that the Parish Council are in regular contact with their County Councillor about this.
- c) Email received from D Cllr Wilkinson regarding S106 Public Open Funding Guidance to Councillors. This had been circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting.

5252. Unresolved Questions

None.

5253. Items to be added to the next meeting Agenda

- a) Tracey Blackmore, Planning Officer at NDC will give a presentation on barn conversions and fallback.
- b) Review of Financial Regulations and cheque signatories.
- c) Review of Standing Orders.
- d) Review of Statement of Internal Control.
- e) Review of General & Financial Risk Assessment
- f) Updated Diary to be circulated to Councillors
- g) Flashing speed signs.
- h) Car park lease
- i) Air Ambulance
- j) Footpaths
- k) Emergency Plan

5254. Any Other Business

- a) Cllr Knight gave her apologies for the June 2024 Parish Council meeting. A copy of the power point presentation by Tracey Blackmore will be requested to send to Cllr Knight.
- b) Cllr Reeves, who also sits on the Parish Hall Committee, referred to the new TV at the Parish Hall (supplied by the Parish Council in Room 2000 for use in emergencies). If the Parish Council or Parish Hall want to use the TV for live events they would have to pay the licence fee.
- c) The Clerk had received the framed picture of Kings Charles III. Cllr Reeves suggested that an email be sent to the Parish Hall offering it to them in the first instance as the Parish Council use the hall for their meetings. There was unanimous agreement to this suggestion.
- d) Cllr Reeves informed the meeting that the NDC Climate & Environment Grant is active again. There are things that the Parish Hall are looking at, such as planting around the car park, and he has also seen the Ecology report from the Community Park. There is a fair bit of money in the pot, with the first tranche needing to be applied for by the end of August. Cllr Reeves wondered if a combined application could be put in to benefit the Parish Hall and the Park and he was happy to get the ball rolling on this with the two organisations. Cllr Knight referred to the sustainable business resource, Plastic Free North Devon. Cllr Knight will look into this.

- e) Cllr Ayre had received an email from the Secretary of the PCC at Heanton. This included an invite for Monday the 17th June 2024 at 7.30 pm at St Augustine's Church, Heanton Punchardon for the Licensing of Revd. Glyn Lewry as Priest-in-Charge of the Benefice by the Bishop of Crediton, the Rt. Revd. Jackie Searle.
- d) An invite had been received from Watermouth Castle for the opening of their new Adventure Play Village on Tuesday 21st May 2024 which had been circulated to Cllrs.

The meeting closed at 20.55 pm