

West Down Annual Parish Meeting, West Down Parish Hall, Wednesday 14th May 2025 at 6.45 p.m.

Present: Cllrs S Ayre (Chair), M Reeves (Vice-Chair), R Kenshole, S Tanton & T Verney. Also present: D Cllr D Wilkinson, 5 members of the public. and Daniel Bleasdale (Clerk)

100/25 Apologies were received from Cllrs S Whitby, H Knight, I Lavender and C Cllr A Davis.

101/25 Sign the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on the 1st May 2024: Approval proposed by Cllr Reeves, seconded by Cllr Verney, approved unanimously.

102/25 Questions / Statements from the Public.

Cllr Ayre welcomed the members of the public and asked if they had any questions or statements: None

103/25 Report from the Chairman of the Parish Council: Cllr Ayre report: Starting with farewell statement, as she was standing down as Chair for the Parish Council and wanted to extend her heartfelt thanks to each and every one the Councillors and the wider community of West Down, it had been a honour to serve the village and Cllr Ayre is incredibly proud of what we have achieved together. Over the past five years the Parish Council has faced challenges, made progress and continued to keep the interest of West Down at the heart of everything we do, from a practical to a personal point of view the journey has been tough at times; developing and maintaining the emergency plan ensuring that our village is prepared for unexpected events; installing our reactive speed signs very soon to promote safer driving through our parish; securing various funding opportunities from North Devon Council to support local activities, which total nearly fifteen thousand pounds in the last year, which is incredible. We finalised the lease of the car park preserving an essential amenity for our village. We have supported the air ambulance, which we are all proud to back. We have carried out important footpath work including a new bridge on footpath 12, improving access and safety for its users. We set up the community land trust, laying the groundwork for affordable housing for people in the village. We have worked through the relocation of the Post Office providing a vital village service. We faced the ongoing challenges around Lower Broad Park which we have strived to reach the best outcome. We have installed new benches to provide locals

and visitor a place to rest. We have welcomed in new dynamic Councillors bringing fresh ideas and energy to the benefit of all our community. We have marked significant national events, including the death of the Queen, a moment that touched all corners of the UK including our own Parish. We have also supported the long-awaited reduction of the speed limit on A361 improving road safety for all. Cllr Ayre stated that she started as Chair sorting out issues regarding dog fouling and in true full circle fashion will end on the same note.

Being the Chairman of the Council has been a privilege, it has not been easy, but it is always worth it when it is in service of a place of such special interest as West Down. Cllr Ayre thanked everyone for their support, passion, belief and what we have achieved together.

Cllr Verney thanked Cllr Ayre for her hard work over the past 5 years.

D Cllr Wilkinson stated that he has worked with many Chairmen over the last 20 years and what he admires most is that they have cut the chaff, focusing on the salient points.

Cllr Reeves reiterated the sentiment of the other Councillors, adding that they have had a good working relationship as well as a good working relationship with the other councillors. A lot of things have been achieved smoothly by tackling them in the right way and contacting the right people to get things done. We have achieved a lot with grants over the last five years, benefitting the Community Park, Village Hall, the Shop plus the forthcoming reactive speed sign. If we see a funding opportunity we go for it. Cllr Reeves then thanked Cllr Ayre for all her hard work.

Cllr Kenshole thanked Councillor Ayre sincerely.

The meeting closed at 7 p.m.