

**WEST DOWN PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES**  
**West Down Parish Hall**  
**Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2025 at 7.00 p.m.**

**Present:** Cllrs M Reeves (Chair), S Ayre (Vice Chair), R Kenshole and I Lavender

**Also present:** C Cllr Davis, John Barnett (Clerk) and 1 member of the public.

**Apologies for absence:** D Cllr Malcolm Wilkinson, Cllr Verney and Cllr Whitby due to work commitments. Cllr Knight & Cllr Tanton due to illness. (Apologies accepted).

**225/25 Declarations of Interest**

None

**226/25 Public Participation**

None

**227/25 Approve & Sign Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2025.**

The Minutes had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. Cllr Lavender proposed that the Minutes of the meeting held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2025 be accepted, subject to a minor grammatical and descriptive change in the last paragraph on page 1, as a true record which was seconded by Cllr Kenshole. There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

RESOLVED – THAT THE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THE 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2025 BE APPROVED AND THEY WERE DULY SIGNED.

**228/25 Matters Arising**

Reference minute 198/25 of the September meeting :

- a) Note of thanks to Cllr Kenshole for cutting down the overgrowth around the sign at the top of Ilfracombe Road.
- b) Cllr Kenshole has contacted the previous clerk and requested written confirmation that he has deleted all data relating to West Parish Council business from any electronic devices in his possession. To-date there has not been any response.
- c) Cllr Kenshole recommended that the Clerk email and Website Passwords be changed. Cllr Reeves proposed and Cllr Ayre seconded, agreement was unanimous.

**229/25 Police Report**

**Monthly Crime Figures.**

The crime figures for July 2025 for Morteohoe, Woolacombe, & West Down (including Mullacott & Bittadon) were:-

|                              |    |
|------------------------------|----|
| Violence and sexual offences | 20 |
| Shoplifting                  | 2  |
| Anti-Social behaviour        | 4  |

Of these 28 crimes 5 were in the West Down Parish; 4 Violence and sexual offence and 1 theft.

### **230/25 Report from County Councillor.**

C Cllr Davis provided a written report. Copy attached Appendix A.

C Cllr Davis noted the council's concerns regarding the following matters :

- a) Cllr Reeves commented that the reactive speed sign placed at Foxhunters has now been missing for about 12 months following damage by vandals. In addition he stressed that the trees will need to be pruned to ensure the reactive speed sign can be seen before it returns.
- b) Missing yellow lines present on Ilfracombe Road in 2009 are now completely worn out and also the 30 mph sign on the road too. C Cllr Davis will follow up with Highways, including the Stang Lane road markings at the junction by the school and with Ilfracombe Road (the Square) and the Dean Lane junction with Ilfracombe Road.

C Cllr Davis indicated that DCC discussions about introducing 20 mph speed limits had gone quiet.

### **231/25 Report from District Councillor.**

D Cllr Wilkinson was absent from the meeting.

### **232/25 Reactive Speed Signs**

Cllr Reeves had recently spoken with Chris Wallace (chosen poles installer) reference placement of the signs. Cllr Reeves expects to get two signs positions active by end of half term.

Cllr Reeves continues chasing full responses from utilities providers, especially in relation to the location near Dean View on Ilfracombe Road. Cllr Reeves will contact Chris Wallace and advise we are looking to go ahead with at least 2 of the sites in October.

Cllr Reeves recommended the Parish Council commence discussion with locals, including the school, regarding the positioning of the Reactive Speed Signs. He also mentioned that there was a need to test out the kit i.e. charge the batteries and test the Speed Sign.

It was agreed that Cllr Reeves and Cllr Ayre would create a list of neighbours and addresses that need to be contacted to discuss the plan and the positioning of support poles (initially on Dean Lane and School area, and Ilfracombe Road later when position finalised).

A Residents letter has been prepared and circulated to Cllrs for comment. Cllr Lavender proposed that the letter be approved for distribution, seconded by Cllr Kenshole, decision unanimous.

The letter will be distributed shortly. (Approx 18 copies covering the first 2 sites)

### **233/25 Planning Decisions**

Approved

80555 proposed equestrian sand school & septic tank at Land Adj B3343, West Down EX34 8NY

## **234/25 Planning Applications**

**a) To comment on the following planning applications.**

**80784 Commercial Point Ilfracombe Devon EX34 8FH**

**Variation of condition 2 (Approved plans) 4 (Use class), 6 (Parking Provision) ,7 (Landscaping), & 8 (bird Box) attached to planning permission 79400 (Erection of buildings to create 7 Industrial units & associated parking) to allow for amended plans and additional B1 use**

Cllr Kenshole proposed the Council recommend support for this planning application which was seconded by Cllr Reeves. Decision unanimous in favour.

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

**None**

## **235/25 Footpaths**

**a) Review Grass Cutting & Bus Shelter cleaning schedule.**

This was last updated in June 2025; Cllr Kenshole requested that the village sign at the top of Ilfracombe Road be added to the work schedule.

Cllr Reeves wrote to DCC to request clarification as to whether Dave Trickett is contracted by DCC to maintain footpath 3 and the conclusion was that it was preferable for West Down Parish Council to take over responsibility for maintaining this footpath from now on.

Consequently Cllr Reeves requested FP3 be added back to the schedule. Cllr Reeves will speak to the owner of land crossed by FP3 at Stocklands Hill Farm to confirm this plan.

Cllr Ayre asked whether the grass triangle area by the Church was maintained by the Church or whether the Parish Council should include this in the schedule of works under the grass cutting contract. The Clerk will investigate and the Council can discuss at the November meeting.

Cllr Reeves suggested that a draft revised schedule of works be created for review at the next meeting after which quotations can be sought for work in 2026. Schedule to be drafted by Cllr Verney & Cllr Reeves.

**b) Update on both new and outstanding P3 grant claims.**

The outstanding P3 sum of £220 has been received.

Clerk to follow up on P3 grant funding process and how to claim for this year.

**c) Any other footpath matters. (Including National Grid/Hi-Line Tree work in Garden Lane.)**

In the absence of Cllr Verney the following 2 items from 177/25 c) remain open until the next meeting :

1. Cllr Ayre suggested Mr Knight give the Parish Council a figure for the outstanding work (repair Pulland bridge stonework and clear entrance to f/p 12 at Aylescott Lane), with other

quotations not being required if the cost is under £500. Cllr Verney will speak to Mr Knight about this on this coming Saturday.

2. Cllr Verney referred to hedges overhanging Footpath 12 in Garden Lane. Cllr Ayre has the letter sent to landowners in the past. Cllr Verney will provide addresses in this respect and an appropriate letter will be sent to them reminding them of their responsibilities.

The Clerk spoke with Wayne Gostling at Hi-Line on 30<sup>th</sup> September and Hi-Line are still waiting for National Grid to advise date for the power to be switched off so that work can be undertaken along Garden Lane. Wayne will be meeting National Grid engineers on 2<sup>nd</sup> October and he will ask them to expedite asap.

Cllr Ayre & Cllr Reeves will create a list of additional work (at 2 bridges) including strimming the entrance to FP12 and then ask Jon Knight for a quotation.

Contractor Jon Knight has asked about the use of weed killer. Cllr Reeves will enquire what the local authority use along with any guidelines.

Footpath survey forms will be available shortly for path checking during the next 2 months.

**236/25 Road Warden Scheme:** To discuss the next steps, including Road Warden Training.

E-training to be booked for the Highway Safety Awareness course. This will be important since Cllr Verney will be changing the batteries in the Reactive Speed Sign and rotating the sign around the chosen sites.

Postponed until next meeting when Cllr Verney available.

#### **237/25 Review of Quotation and Tender Policy**

Last policy review was in Oct 2024 – Cllr Reeves has reviewed and suggested that no changes were required. Cllr Ayre proposed that just the review date be added and the Policy uploaded to the website and this was seconded by Cllr Kenshole. Decision unanimous.

**238/25 Bus shelter:** Foxhunters Replacement update on wooden shelter & Paint the interior of the other 3 bus shelters.

Cllr Ayre advised that Jack Dabney (Devonshire Makers, for fencing and garden building services) has sent a revised estimate, total price £3,015 all inclusive.

There is a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) grant available from DCC of 50% which can be reclaimed after the project has been completed. Proposed recommendation to accept Devonshire Makers estimate by Cllr Reeves seconded by Cllr Ayre to go ahead subject to confirmation of BSIP grant funding. (The bus shelter will be built at his workshop so minimum time on-site for practical and safety reasons.)

Cllr Verney previously offered to paint the other bus shelters so await his update next meeting.

**239/25 Car Park Lease:** To receive an update on the Village Car Park weed control

See above [235/25 c)] and will be added to the work schedule for 2026 pending further information and discussion.

Per the West Down Parish Council Diary the contract and schedule will be reviewed and agreed at the November meeting.

#### **240/25 Internal Quarterly Audit arrangements.**

Scheduled for October.

#### **241/25 External Audit – details of final report.**

Final outcome from Auditors – now certified and details have been displayed on the PC Notice Board and website.

#### **242/25 Insurance:** To receive an update on the Insurance.

##### **a) Update on notifying insurers of additional items for cover, particularly the car park.**

Cllr Reeves sent NDC a copy of the insurance schedule as requested and their Manager of Insurance requested inclusion of a specific value for the car park. The Clerk has requested NDC provide a valuation so that we can obtain quotes from Underwriters. We await a response from the Property & Estates Team at NDC.

#### **243/25 Purchase of Poppy Wreath & order Salt supplies - updates**

The Clerk confirmed that the Poppy Wreath has been purchased.

Orders for Salt will be accepted from mid-October. One tonne (40 bags) will be ordered.

#### **244/25 Finances:**

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

##### **Balances at 30/09/2025**

##### **Treasuries Account**

|           |                   |
|-----------|-------------------|
| Opening   | £19,972.31        |
| Received  | £12,579.68        |
| Outgoings | <u>£12,746.64</u> |
| Closing   | £19,805.35        |

##### **Business Bank Account**

|           |               |
|-----------|---------------|
| Opening   | £ 4,939.90    |
| Received  | £10,004.05    |
| Outgoings | <u>£ 0.00</u> |
| Closing   | £14,943.95    |

Councillors discussed adjusting the balance between the accounts so that more interest could be earned via the Business Account.

Cllr Reeves proposed that the sum of £10,000 be transferred from the Treasurers Account to the Business Account and Cllr Ayre seconded, decision unanimous.

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

| Creditor                                                 | Invoice number | Amount           |
|----------------------------------------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| North Devon Council (Non-Domestic Rates - Car Park)      | 93625504       | £115.00 (via DD) |
| J P Knight (Footpath & Bus Shelter works September 2025) | 0123           | £323.33          |
| Lloyds Bank - Account Charges                            | 465953397      | £4.25            |
| PKF Littlejohn                                           | SB20251695     | £252.00          |
| J Barnett - Expenses - RBL Poppy Wreath                  |                | £24.49           |
| North Devon Council Clerks Salary (J Barnett)            | SD11630282     | £410.20          |
| NDC Admin Charge                                         |                | £7.72            |
| Total Payment                                            |                | <u>£1,136.99</u> |

Cllr Reeves proposed that these invoices should be paid which was seconded by Cllr Kenshole. Decision unanimous.

RESOLVED – THAT THE INVOICES TOTALLING £1,136.99 SHOULD BE PAID.

**c) To agree payment of 2<sup>nd</sup> element of Small Grant Funds of 2025-2026.**

|                       |        |
|-----------------------|--------|
| St Calixtus           | £ 700  |
| Village Hall          | £ 385  |
| WDVGFA                | £ 500  |
| West Down School PTFA | £ 350  |
| Total                 | £1,935 |

Cllr Reeves proposed that these amounts should be paid which was seconded by Cllr Kenshole. Decision unanimous.

**245/25 Correspondence:** To receive items of correspondence received since the last meeting:

- a) Email on 16<sup>th</sup> September from member of the community regarding the worn road markings and lack of STOP or GIVE WAY sign at the junction of Stang Lane and Ilfracombe Road making the junction dangerous.
- b) This was reported to Devon County Council Highways on 16<sup>th</sup> September on-line by the Clerk and Cllr Ayre confirmed that she also reported this problem back in May and reported the worn road markings at the junction of Dean Lane with Ilfracombe Road.

- c) David Ayre emailed to draw our attention to a series of Coffee Mornings “Winter Chatty Cafe” to be held at the Parish Hall - 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 6<sup>th</sup> November and 4<sup>th</sup> December 10.00 am – 12.00 noon. All welcome £3.00 all you can eat and drink, and free raffle ticket included.
- d) Cllr Reeves is booked on the Writing Grant Applications and Sourcing Funding training webinar course with DALC on 15<sup>th</sup> October.
- e) Cllr Reeves confirmed that the new Clerk had provided satisfactory details of his house insurance policy as required by his terms of employment.
- f) Rebecca Walker has been appointed CEO of DALC; a well deserved promotion.
- g) Devon Highways will be carrying out patching work on the Road from West Hill Farm to Beara Down, West Down, between Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> – Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2025. Cllr Reeves will post on Facebook and the clerk will request Ronnie Maidment post on the Village website.
- h) SW Heritage Head of Devon Archives and Local Studies has written to West Down Parish Council to invite contributions to their finances. Clerk to write and confirm that West Down Parish Council will contribute next May as per recent years, with the amount to be determined nearer the time.
- i) North Devon Council have released publication of the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) report which forms a key part of their on-going work to prepare an update to the joint North Devon and Torridge Local Plan
- j) North Devon Council have put out a “Call for Sites” as potential housing developments. They want to hear about a range of different types of potential opportunities, including brownfield land, potential sites to deliver local needs housing, and locations which might offer the prospect of larger-scale sustainable development.

More details can be found here:-

Councils invite communities to identify land for potential development in new local plan | North Devon Council

#### **246/25 Unresolved Questions:**

**a) West Down Postal delivery service** – no further action necessary as most Councillors felt that deliveries were currently regular and reliable.

#### **247/25 Items to be added to the next meeting Agenda.**

The next meeting will be Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> November. Items for the Agenda so far include:-

- a) Prepare the budget
- b) Obtain a copy of Parish Hall insurance certificate as West Down Parish Council is a Custodian Trustee
- c) Update on receipt of any Small Grant Fund applications (Clerk to send each separately to Cllrs prior to meeting)
- d) Reactive Speed Sign
- e) Footpaths, including P3 Funding & Walking of Footpaths (October to December)
- f) Road Warden Scheme – Training
- g) Bus shelters
- h) Insurance – car park

- i) Review the grass cutting and bus shelter cleaning contract items and schedule.
- j) Emergency Plan review update

**248/25 Any Other Business:**

1. Cllr Lavender reported that a power cable appears to be broken at Beara Down: National Grid to be informed – however this location is outside West Down Parish perimeter.
2. North Devon Council Planning have old clerk address on planning letter notifications – Clerk to request amendment.
3. Cllr Ayre reminded everyone that the Air Ambulance need to be kept informed each time the Community Field gate access code is changed. (Clerk to remind Susi Batstone.)

**Part B: Confidential Matters:**

**249/25 Any Matters deemed too confidential for part A:**

None

The meeting closed at 21.42 pm