

WEST DOWN PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES
West Down Parish Hall
Wednesday 3rd June 2026 at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Cllrs M Reeves (Chair), T Verney, and I Lavender.

Also present: C Cllr Davis, John Barnett (Clerk) and 2 members of the public.

131/26 Apologies for absence: D Cllr Wilkinson, Cllr Ayre (Vice-Chair), Cllr Whitby, Cllr Kenshole due to work commitments and Cllr Tanton due to road flooding. (Apologies accepted).

132/26 Declarations of Interest. None

133/26 Public Participation. None

134/26 Minutes:

a) To approve and sign the Minutes of the West Down Parish Council AGM dated the 6th May 2026.

The Minutes had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting.

Cllr Verney proposed that the Minutes of the AGM held on the 6th May 2026 be accepted as a true record which was seconded by Cllr Lavender. There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

RESOLVED – THAT THE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL AGM HELD ON THE 6th MAY 2026 BE APPROVED AND THEY WERE DULY SIGNED BY THE CHAIR AFTER THE MEETING.

b) To approve the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting dated 6th May 2026. (These do not get signed until the Annual Parish Meeting in 2027.)

The Minutes had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting.

Cllr Lavender proposed that the Minutes of the meeting held on the 6th May 2026 be accepted as a true record which was seconded by Cllr Verney. There was unanimous agreement to this proposal.

RESOLVED – THAT THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON THE 6th MAY 2026 BE APPROVED.

135/26 Matters Arising: To discuss matters arising from the Parish Council meeting held on 6th May 2026.

C Cllr Davis confirmed that following the road safety inspection on 19th May there are no particular issues with respect to planting perennials at any of the four sites under consideration by the Parish Council. (Top of Ilfracombe Road, A361 end of Dean Lane, Coronation Triangle, and the grass area near Pulland Bridge.) The only observation was that the Parish Council should plant behind the visibility splays where relevant.

136/26 Report from County Councillor.

C Cllr Davis provided a written report (Appendix A).

Cllr Lavender raised the question of poor road markings at several locations within the village and the Clerk agreed to report these via the Highways website.

The Clerk will post details of the Childcare Survey outlined in C Cllr Davis's report on the Parish Council website.

137/26 Report from District Councillor.

D Cllr Wilkinson was unable to attend the meeting due to other work commitments.

138/26 Resignation of Cllr H Knight.

Cllr Reeves noted the resignation of Cllr Knight and wished to record the Parish Council's thanks for her efforts in supporting the community over the last 4 years and that she would be welcomed back if she wished to offer her services at another time in the future.

The Clerk reported that the Notice of Vacancy of a Councillor had been placed on the Parish Council's website and notice board, and NDC Electoral Division had been informed. If there are less than 10 Parish electors' requests for an election before 8th June then the Parish Council can look to co-opt a Councillor.

139/26 Reactive Speed Sign.

a) To receive an update on the Reactive Speed Sign (RSS) statistics and to discuss action required for potential publication to the Community.

Cllr Reeves proposed that the Council complete data collection for a full month from facing traffic approaching the village from Ilfracombe Road, review at the next meeting, then place a short report on the website with a link from Facebook. This proposal was seconded by Cllr Verney, decision unanimous.

b) Review draft RSS Risk Assessment Policy.

A copy of the draft RSS Risk Assessment Policy had been circulated before the meeting.

Cllr Reeves commented that it was a very good document and thanked Cllrs Kenshole, Ayre and the Clerk for their efforts in producing it. However, he had a couple of minor points to clarify, so a further review at the next meeting would be ideal when Cllrs Kenshole, Ayre, Whitby and Tanton are likely to be present to comment.

Cllr Reeves proposed the next location of the RSS to be on Ilfracombe Road facing the village square with the switch in a week's time. Cllr Lavender seconded with the decision unanimous.

c) Update on purchase of items to minimise the risk when re-locating the speed sign between sites.

Ongoing – wait to see what ladder required on uneven ground, to be reviewed at the next meeting.

140/26 Planning Decisions.

Approved/Refused/Withdrawn :

81597 Extension to dwelling at Hillview Bungalow Ilfracombe Devon EX34 8NY

Grid Ref: 250081; 144118 Approved 13th May 2026

141/26 Planning Applications.

a) Received before Agenda was published :

81815 Retrospective application for re-positioning of agricultural access and associated works for highway safety at Land at West Down Ilfracombe Road Devon EX34 8ND

Cllr Lavender proposed support for this application which was seconded by Cllr Verney, decision unanimous in favour.

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

81800 TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 Demolition of barn and erection of a single dwelling and detached carport/bin store (utilising fallback position of Class Q approval 79026) at Stowford Plantation Lynton Cross West Down Ilfracombe EX34 8PH Grid Ref: 253755; 143145

Cllr Verney noted that whilst the entrance was in the Parish of West Down, the dwelling was outside the Parish. Consequently, when considering the original planning application 79026 it was decided that the council would not comment on any aspect of the dwelling but West Down Parish Council looked at the entrance to the track leading down to the barn conversion on the Prixford Road and deemed it to have a safe vehicle access and egress. No comments were made on the actual barn conversion.

Cllr Verney proposed same comment as before when the Parish Council considered application 79026 Cllr Reeves seconded, decision unanimous.

142/26 Footpaths.

a) Update on outstanding P3 grant claim.

The Clerk reported that the revised bid for Seasonal Strimming (£1140) had been submitted and the Parish Paths Partnership Team had acknowledged receipt. The P3 team also confirmed that they expect to raise a purchase order for the Basic Grant shortly, and will arrange an on-site visit of FP15 soon.

b) Any other footpath matters, including outstanding extra work required.

Cllr Verney reported that he is to seek an additional contractor quotation to repair Pulland Bridge.

143/26 Road Warden Scheme: Update by Road Warden Cllr Verney on further training and future plans.

Cllr Verney suggested postponing this item to the next meeting as he is hopeful of a discussion with the Neighbourhood Highway Officer to discuss training.

144/26 To review Standing orders.

Cllr Reeves reported that he had reviewed the Standing Orders and did not see any changes necessary. There being no further comments Cllr Reeves proposed that they remain unchanged, seconded Cllr Verney, decision unanimous.

145/26 To review The Statement of Internal Control and General & Financial Risk.

The Statement of Internal control had been reviewed by Cllr Reeves and he suggested an amendment in the financial control to reflect the move to an electronic General Ledger. There being no further comments Cllr Reeves proposed this change and Cllr Verney seconded, decision unanimous.

Cllr Reeves reviewed the General & Financial Risk document and concluded that no changes were required. There being no further comments Cllr Reeves proposed this change and Cllr Verney seconded, decision unanimous.

146/26 To Review the Financial Regulations and to check and approve authorised Signatories.

Cllr Reeves had reviewed the Financial Regulations and proposed to remove the Signature Box at the end as redundant, and to update the date of review and Minute number. Also to postpone the review and approval of authorised signatories until the next meeting because 2 signatories were not in attendance. There being no further comments Cllr Verney seconded this proposal and the decision was unanimous.

147/26 Car Park Lease: To receive an update on the Village Car Park, post lease agreement.

a) Update on communications from Samuels Solicitors regarding Correspondence Address on Lease and at Land Registry.

Samuels Solicitors confirmed that the Parish Council does not need to update the Lease document but that the address for service should be updated on the Land Registry title. They are happy for us to use Samuels as a c/o address on the Land Registry entry for service and that this would be free of charge. Samuels also offered to add the clerk@westdownparishcouncil.org.uk as a secondary address.

Samuels asked whether they should maintain our enquiry about car park insurance active on their prospect list.

Cllr Reeves proposed acceptance of Samuels offer and to advise them to remove the car park insurance question for the moment. Cllr Lavender seconded with a unanimous decision.

148/26 Quarterly Audit: To make arrangements to complete the quarterly audit.

Cllr Lavender and the Clerk have scheduled 1st July afternoon to conduct the internal quarterly audit.

149/26 To Review and Update the Parish Council Diary.

Cllr Reeves proposed that this item be postponed to next meeting when more Councillors are likely to be in attendance. Cllr Lavender seconded with the decision unanimous.

150/26 Finances:

a) To receive the balance in the bank accounts.

Balances at 31/05/2026

Community Account

Opening	£12,963.71
Received	£ 0.00
Outgoings	<u>£ 4,002.98</u>
Closing	£ 8,960.73

Treasuries Account

Opening	£10,002.50
Received	£ 4.32
Outgoings	<u>£ 5,000.00</u>
Closing	£ 5,006.82

Notice Account

Opening	£15,120.45
Received	£ 5,000.00
Interest	£ 39.19 **
Outgoings	<u>£ 0.00</u>
Closing	£20,159.64

Grand Total £34,127.19

** Interest received during the month determined on the last day of each month.

Cllr Lavender suggested that a table summarising the amounts ring fenced for specific budget items should be included in the Minutes. The most significant changes will be in April and September when the Precept amounts are received and the relevant amounts are accrued. Cllr Reeves suggested that the Air Ambulance Lighting and Car Park maintenance budget amounts be ring fenced per the budget but with 50% in April and 50% in September.

Cllr Verney proposed acceptance of these suggestions and Cllr Lavender seconded with the decision unanimous.

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

<u>Creditor</u>	<u>Invoice number</u>	<u>Amount</u>
North Devon Council (Non-Domestic Rates - Car Park)	93625504	£ 91.00 (DD)
Lloyds Bank - Account Charges	485789544	£ 4.25 (DD)
NDC 3 x Dog Waste Bin Collection Oct-Dec 2025	11674084	£169.10
NDC 3 x Dog Waste Bin Collection Jan-Mar 2026	11674144	£169.10
North Devon Council Clerks Salary & NDC Admin charge	SD11674888	£405.58
Devon Communities Together (Annual Membership Fee)	n/a	£ 50.00
K J Snooks - Internal Audit	2025-2026	£250.00
Jon Knight (Grass cutting/FP & Bus Shltr maint - June)	0156	<u>£208.33</u>
Total Payment May 2026		£1,347.36

Cllr Reeves proposed that these invoices should be paid which was seconded by Cllr Verney, decision unanimous. RESOLVED – THAT THE INVOICES TOTALLING £1,347.36 BE PAID.

c) Parish Online annual subscription due.

Invoice due – see diary.

d) Confirm ring fencing of funds to cover any potential future maintenance costs for the Air Ambulance Landing Lights and the Car park.

As per Budget, Cllr Reeves proposed ring fencing £100 p.a. to cover the cost of Air Ambulance Lighting maintenance, and £1000 p.a. to cover the cost of the car park future maintenance seconded by Cllr Verney, decision unanimous.

151/26 Internal Auditor report: Feedback by the Chair including arrangements prior/post audit.

The Internal Audit report had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Cllr Reeves reported all sections of the audit achieved “Satisfactory” status. In particular, the auditor recommended the following areas for the Parish Council to address :-

- a) Implement a formal Leave Request process for the Clerk to book holiday.
- b) Clearly Minute the earmarking of reserves as well as noting in the Budget lines.
- c) Investigate the whereabouts of licences for the bus shelter sites and ensure that these are stored in a fireproof container along with other significant council documents.

152/26 Asset Register: Presentation of further update for review and approval.

During the Audit process the auditor requested additional details, specifically columns indicating asset “acquisitions” and “disposals” during the year. The Clerk provided these details. Cllr Reeves proposed acceptance of the revised Asset Register total asset value of £32,830 and Cllr Lavender seconded with unanimous agreement.

153/26 AGAR (Annual Governance and Accountability Return): To Complete and sign the form for Annual Governance and Accounting Statements.

- a) Cllr Verney proposed approval of the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) which was seconded by Cllr Lavender, approval unanimous.
- b) Cllr Verney proposed approval of the Accounting Statements (Section 2) which was seconded by Cllr Lavender, approval unanimous.

Cllr Reeves duly proceeded to sign the AGAR Form and the Statements will be minuted in order of approval above.

154/26 Ideas to support possible NDC Climate & Environment Grant application.

At present there are 4 sites within parish that could benefit from planting of perennials and the Council will continue to seek other opportunities for use of grant monies.

155/26 To Review draft Holiday Leave Booking procedure for Clerk.

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated a draft Holiday Leave Booking Form for Clerk holiday.

Cllr Verney proposed acceptance of the form and Cllr Reeves seconded, with acceptance unanimous.

156/26 Correspondence: To receive items of correspondence received since the last meeting:

7/5/26 Jon Trigg email ref asset transfer.

7/5/26 Heritage Trust email thanking the PC for the new increased donation.

8/5/26 NDC email requesting confirmation of Parish Councillor Directory entries on NDC website.

9/5/26 WDPH David Ayre Letter of thanks for PC Grant Part 1.

10/5/26 St Calixtus David Ravenscroft email of thanks for PC Grant Part 1.

10/5/26 WDVGFA Chris Batstone email of thanks for PC Grant Part 1.

12/5/26 Ian Roome TARKA Trail project update Agenda & Documents in readiness for Teams Meeting on 14th May.

13/5/26 Torridge District Council Survey on Infrastructure – primarily Internet communications – nothing to add.

14/5/26 Cllr Knight email resignation.

27/5/26 Terry King email reference lack of Post Office service over recent weeks.

1/6/26 Plants out of Place Interim report.

3/6/26 Andy Odell regarding West Down War Memorial restoration project plus additional names.

157/26 Unresolved Questions: None

158/26 Items to be added to the next meeting Agenda.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 1st July 19:00 pm. Items for the Agenda so far include:

1. Order Salt Bags (subject to amendment of Diary)
2. Review of GDPR Policy

3. Review of General Privacy Notice & Privacy Notice for Councillors, Staff & Role Holders
4. Review the Role of Data Protection Officer
5. Remind CERT Co-ordinator of annual review of Community Emergency Plan in September

159/26 Any Other Business:

1. Tarka trail meeting; a short summary.

Cllr Reeves and the Clerk attended a Teams Meeting on 14th May arranged by Ian Roome, MP, to provide an update on the progress for completing the Tarka Trail.

Phase 0 – Willingcott Holiday Village through route of the Tarka Trail – (need is to lay final top surface when it will be ready to connect to the fenced off section (Phase 1)).

Phase 1 – Willingcott Holiday Village to Buttercombe Lane – completed 2023/24

Phase 2 – Buttercombe Lane to Foxhunters – completed 2024

Phase 3 – Foxhunters to Spreacombe Junction – costed but completion unknown

Phase 4A - Spreacombe Junction to North Buckland Hill – expected early 2027

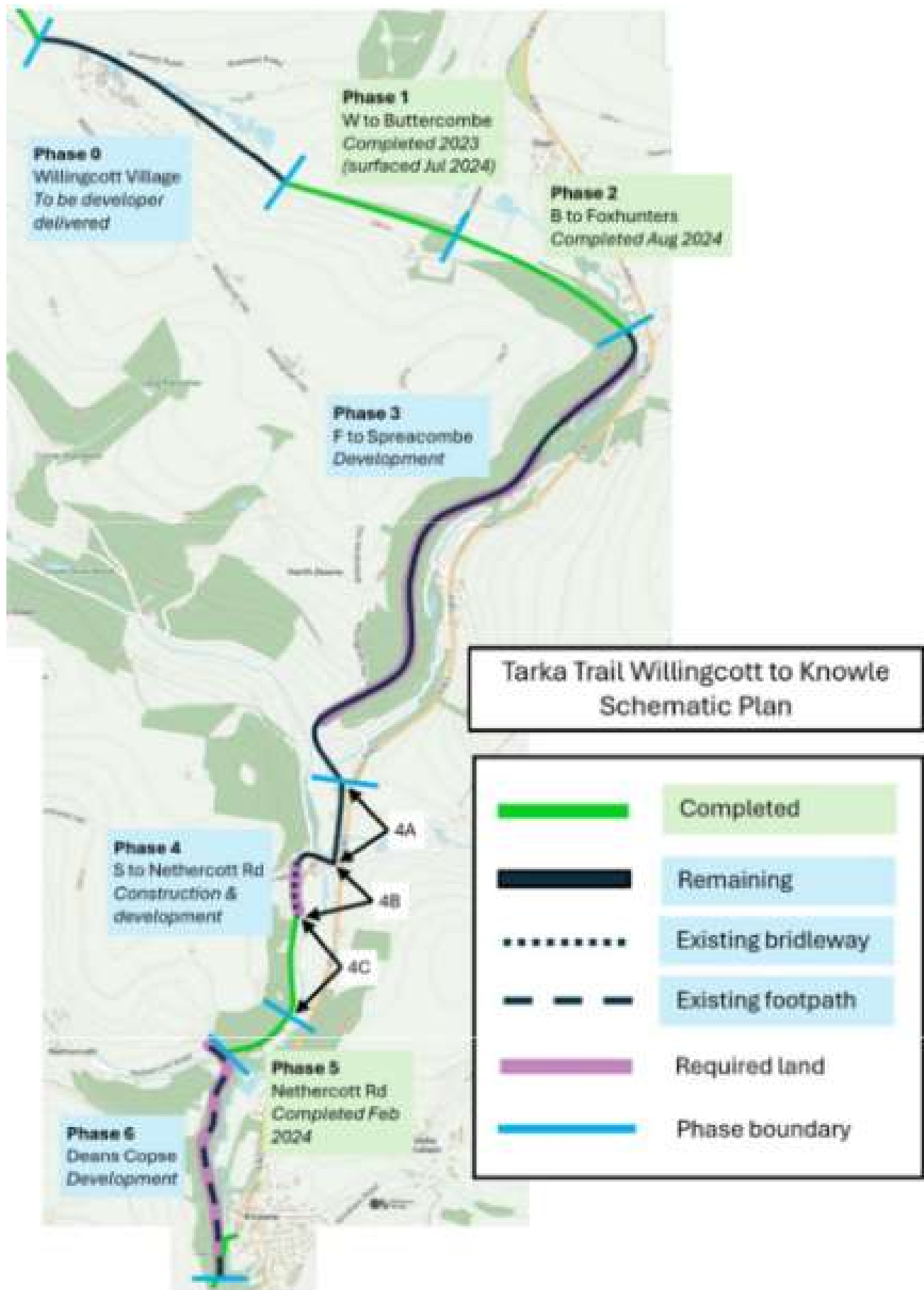
Phase 4B – North Buckland Hill to Cottages – expected Summer 2026

Phase 4C – Cottages to Northcott Road – remaining work expected Autumn 2026

Phase 5 – Nethercott Road – completed 2024

Phase 6 – Deans Copse (Knowle Woods) – expected Autumn 2027

See drawing below. (Apologies for the quality of the reproduction.)



2. Readers can view the latest regional Crime Statistics on the website www.police.uk
3. A resident has informed the Parish Council about the lack of a proper Post Office service due to frequent equipment failures over recent weeks. Cllr Reeves proposed that, initially, the Clerk call Matthew Walls, a previous PO contact, to express the Parish Council's disappointment at the lack of service and to remind them of their duty to provide the service, and to request an explanation. This proposal was seconded by Cllr Verney, decision unanimous. Further discussion and representation may be required on this depending on the response received.
4. War Memorial restoration project to be included on the July Agenda.

Part B: Confidential Matters:

160/26 Any Matters deemed too confidential for part A:

1. Clerk holiday leave and additional hours worked.

Cllr Reeves noted that the Clerk had not taken any of his leave entitlement (apart from statutory days) during the last financial year to 31st March and proposed that the Parish Council agrees to carry over 20 hours to this year, to be taken by end March 2027. Cllr Verney seconded this proposal, decision unanimous.

As the recent few months had been extremely busy, the Clerk was asked to provide a note of any additional hours worked at the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 21:38 pm