

WIDECOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

held in Leusdon Memorial Hall on

Thursday 5 June 2025 at 7.30pm

Members present: Councillor Y Elliott (Chair), J Bibby, D Edwards & C Partridge

Also attending: District Cllr Rogers, County Cllr Morgan

Members of the Public: Two

Clerk: Suzanna Hughes

5134 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- Cllr Guest
- Cllr Raynor
- District Cllr Nutley
- District Cllr Major

5135 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

Members were reminded of their responsibility to continually update their Notice of Registerable Interests and invited to state whether they have any interest in the items to be discussed during this meeting in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct.

Unforeseen requests for a Dispensation to be considered at this point only if there was no way a Councillor would have been aware of such before the meeting.

5136 OPEN FORUM

An observation was made that the Annual Parish Meeting, held upstairs in Church House, had made it difficult/impossible for those with a disability to attend and, in the future, consideration ought to be given to holding it in a venue which provides easy access for all.

5136 RATIFICATION OF MINUTES

Members received the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 1 May 2025 which were approved

as a true and correct record.

5137 REPORTS

(a) County Councillor

Cllr Morgan introduced herself as the newly elected County Councillor. She thanked and expressed her appreciation of the work of her predecessor, Goerge Gribble, during his 16 years of service. She also expressed her fond memories of the late Roderick Newbolt-Young with whom she was involved in the Tetra mast. It is early days for the new administration but they are looking at bringing some services back in-house so that they have more control over what happens. Priorities will be highways and vulnerable people (particularly children). She will

concentrate her time on looking after her division and her work as a DNPA member. She advised that highways issues are emailed to her so that they can be logged on the members' portal as well as on the 'Report a Problem' page on DCC's website.

Cllr Partridge suggested that potholes and road defects should be separated on the reporting system. Cllr Morgan advised that there is also a thought to review the criteria.

(b) District Councillors

Cllr Rogers advised that he has met with Cllr David Palethorpe about the playpark. He has committed to seeing what he can do. With regards to the Household Support fund (excluding the winter fuel payment), DCC Cabinet is meeting on 25 June and will let TDC know when funds will be available. It is unknown, as yet, what will happen about free school meals during the holidays. The consultation on public toilets will be discussed in July's Full Council meeting. The new Ring and Ride service will continue to be communicated; they still need volunteer drivers. The Post Office van will be at Widecombe Fair for cash withdrawals.

Confirmation was sought about whether there was any progress securing approval from TDC for Widecombe Fair to use the car park on Fair Day. Cllr Rogers will continue to follow this up with Cllr David Palethorpe.

A question was asked about whether there is a time-line for playpark improvements. The Chair also asked Cllr Rogers to copy in Cllr Partridge on any matters relating to the playpark as she is a Trustee of the Widecombe & District Sports Group.

(c) DNPA Representative

No report.

(d) Police Report

In the period 1 – 31 May 2025, there were 6 criminal offences recorded for this area.

All of the crimes relate to theft from vehicles which occurred between 12 and 19 May. These occurred mainly around 'Beachy Corner' Hemsworthy Gate, Cold East Cross and Haytor.

A common factor between these crimes appears to be people visiting the very popular Bluebell site at Holwell Lawn. Suspects appear to have targeted older style vehicles by various means of entry from smashing windows, forcing doors and tailgates, possibly watching walkers leave their vehicles to see what they do before leaving. Extra patrols and signage were put in place, Dartmoor Rangers were alerted and a Facebook post generated to warn the public. There have been no further thefts since 19 May.

There were 2 non- crime incidents across the area which included Firearms Licensing checks and road-related incidents.

(e) Delegate Reports

None

5138 PROJECTS AND ESTATES

(Cllrs Raynor and Edwards)

- **Parish Field**

- The income and expenditure report was noted.
- Sheep are now grazing in the field.
- **Widcombe Fair**

It was agreed that the fee to let the green to Widcombe Fair would remain at £1300 and the same agreement, with no amendments, would be issued.

- **Village Strimming/Weed spraying**

Geoff Partridge has sprayed the nettles. The only other spraying required would be around the cobbles of the Widcombe Fair 'monument' to keep them clear. A fee of £100 was agreed. Council can review whether further tidying is required before Widcombe Fair.

- **Village Walkabout**

It was agreed to have an evening walk during the first week in August. The Chair will suggest some dates.

5139 PLANNING/LOCAL LIAISON

(Clls Bibby, Partridge & Guest)

- **New planning applications/appeals**
- 0169/25 – Mill House, Widcombe-in-the-Moor

Single storey pitched roof extension

Members agreed to support this application. They approved the design which will allow more light into the main house. It is also noted that the owners are not trying to blend the extension in with the existing property which members also supported.

- (ii) 0170/25 – Bowden Barn, Widcombe-in-the-Moor

Replacement garden store and construction of a parking/turning area

Members agreed to support this application. It was noted that the shed will be more secure and weatherproof and constructed with materials which are in-keeping. The buildings will occupy a similar footprint and will have a similar roof height. There are also no objections to the construction of a parking area.

- **Planning Decisions/Withdrawals**

- (i) 0146/25 & 0147/25 – Jordan Manor, Widcombe-in-the-Moor

Partial dismantling and rebuilding of a section of dry-stone granite boundary wall to facilitate remedial excavations following a heating oil leak

Members noted that DNPA has granted conditional consent.

5140 FINANCE & GOVERNANCE

- (a) **Payments**

Members approved the following payments:

- Clerk's salary & disbursements – £299.07
- Refreshments Annual Parish Meeting (reimbursed to clerk) – £63.44

5141 HIGHWAYS

(a) Road Warden Scheme:

Cllr Raynor requested approval for some additional items:

- A 25 litre tub of Leotak sealer which is a bitumen based paint that helps with the longevity of the repairs (Highways will not pay for this). It costs around £48 and should last for at least 3 sessions. This price including delivery and VAT and ideally two tubs are needed so there is enough to last up until the summer holidays.
- A second wheelbarrow @ £90

The Parish Council currently holds a surplus of funds of £81.77; approval was sought for the balance.

It was suggested that County Cllr Morgan might follow up with Highways the funding of the Leotak sealer, otherwise this will be an ongoing cost for the Parish Council. In the meantime, when the grant scheme is open for applications, she offered a grant from her Locality Budget to cover the cost of the sealer for at least 12 months. She suggested that costings etc are sought for a bulk purchase and confirmed that an application for the grant can be made retrospectively.

Potholes and other highways maintenance issues can be reported direct to DCC:

Online: <https://www.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/>

Telephone: 0345 155 1004

Email: customer@devon.gov.uk

5142 CORRESPONDENCE

(a) Members received an email from DNPA with information relating to phone box removals/landline dependency. It was agreed that this information should be shared as widely as possible in the community.

(b) Members received a response from Highways about the 12-car Navigational Event organised by Plymouth Motor Club advising that they had not been contacted with regards to this event. However, events of this nature, including cycling events, are not required to contact them. Drivers and the event organisers are responsible for their own behaviour on the public highway including driving within the speed limit and with due consideration to other road users.

Motorsport UK has also acknowledged receipt of the Parish Council's correspondence and will send a more comprehensive response once investigations have been completed.

It was also noted that the Dartmoor Classic is being held on 22 June.

5143 MEMBERS' ITEMS FOR INFORMATION OR GENERAL DISCUSSION, FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS AND/OR ITEMS REQUIRING URGENT ATTENTION

Members are reminded that they have not received the statutory notice of this business to be transacted and should therefore recognise that any decision made may be taken to be unlawful if challenged in the future

It was noted that the £1 peppercorn rent for Widecombe Pre-school's use of part of the parish field for the outdoor classroom is now due. The clerk will follow this up.

It was agreed that members would cast an eye over the outdoor classroom during the August walkabout, including the overhanging tree limbs.

5144 NEXT MEETING

To confirm that the next Parish Council meeting will be held on 3 July 2025 in Church House, Widecombe

Signed Dated