

## **WIDECOMBE PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

held in Leusdon Memorial Hall on

Thursday 4 September 2025 at 7.30pm

**Members present:** Councillor Y Elliott (Chair), J Bibby, D Edwards, T Guest, C Partridge, S Raynor, A Fitzpatrick and J Welby

**Also attending:** District Cllr Rogers, District Cllr Nutley and District Cllr Major

**Members of the Public:** None

**Clerk:** Suzanna Hughes

### **5157 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

- County Cllr Morgan

### **5158 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.

There were no declarations of interest or requests for dispensation.

### **5159 OPEN FORUM**

Ashburton Postmaster/District Cllr Rogers raised the following points:

The Household Support Fund is now live. If any residents are digitally excluded, they should contact Cllr Rogers for help.

In respect of the use of the car park on Widecombe Fair day, he will liaise with senior officers about correspondence from the Parking Services Manager and the requirement for a licence to be granted. The Chair requested that a concern is raised about Devon County School Transport; secondary school pupils are marked as absent if children do not attend, but the school buses can't run on that day. Cllr Rogers will liaise with County Cllr Morgan.

Devon County Council has agreed to submit a green paper response to the government about the importance of rural Post Offices. Five Post Offices on Dartmoor are at risk of closure.

Another issue raised at County Hall was superfast broadband. It was noted that parts of Widecombe still do not have broadband. County Cllr Morgan intends to follow this up.

### **5160 RATIFICATION OF MINUTES**

Members received the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 3 July 2025 which were approved as a

true and correct record.

## **5161 REPORTS**

### **(a) County Councillor**

Cllr Morgan was unable to attend the meeting. She will be meeting with Cllr Dan Thomas (Highways portfolio holder) next week to discuss issues in this county division. She is also working with DNP and TDC to find solutions to toilet issues in the parish of Widecombe. Cllr Rogers added that Patrick Simpson has agreed to meet Cllr Rogers and Rob Steemson to try and work out a solution for Newbridge. (Patrick Simpson owns the land on which the toilets are sited.)

### **(b) District Councillors**

Cllr Major advised that the Employment Youth Hub is running at Newton Abbot library on Mondays and Tuesdays.

Recycling trials will be opening up again for plastic cellophane. Results will be shared in November. A Tetra pack trial has also recently concluded; all Teignbridge will have kerbside Tetra pack collection from March 2026 at the latest.

The District Councillors' community fund is open for applications from community groups.

### **(c) DNPA Representative**

No report.

### **(d) Police Report**

No report has been received for August.

In the period 1 – 31 July 2025, there was 1 criminal offence recorded for this area:

1 x Fear or provocation of violence (between neighbours)

There were 10 non-crime incidents across the area which included Firearms Licensing checks and road-related incidents.

### **(e) Delegate Reports**

The Chair advised that she had attended a drop-in event about the Local Government Reorganisation. The government has invited district councils, along with Devon County Council, Plymouth City Council and Torbay Council to submit a proposal for reorganisation. The deadline for this is 28 November.

## **5162 PROJECTS AND ESTATES**

*(Cllrs Raynor, Edwards and Fitzpatrick)*

### **• Public Toilets**

Members thanked the Chair for representing the views of the parish at a meeting at TDC regarding the future of the public toilets. The following was agreed:

1. Ensure the continued provision of public conveniences until April 2027.
2. With immediate effect start consultation with the ten Towns/Parishes to transfer toilets by April 2027 to enable continued provision of facilities and avoid cessation of services. The

Head of Assets in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Assets and Environmental Services to transfer facilities as agreed with town and parish councils.

3. Where towns and parishes are unable to fund /resource provision of public conveniences the Head of Assets will consult with other interested parties to transfer facilities on the proviso that they continue to be provided as public conveniences for the foreseeable future.

4. Ensure resources are devoted to achieving agreement with Towns/Parishes at the earliest opportunity to enable precepts to be increased if necessary.

As yet, no further information has been shared with parishes.

- **Village Walkabout**

It was agreed to discuss agreed actions at next month's meeting. To add to the action list, it was noted that the fence at the entrance to the car park was rotting. The clerk will report this to TDC.

(c) **Widcombe Fair**

A request has been made by the Widcombe Fair Committee to ensure that the Village Green is clean and free of animal droppings before Fair Day. It was agreed that members would meet on Sunday 7 September at 4pm with buckets and Cllr Partridge will do a final check before the Fair Day.

(d) **Parish Council Logo**

It was agreed to consider a logo for the Parish Council. Cllr Edwards agreed to draft some options for consideration at the next meeting.

(e) **Parish Field**

The income and expenditure report was noted.

## **5163 PLANNING/LOCAL LIAISON**

*(Cllrs Bibby, Partridge, Guest & Welby)*

- **New planning applications/appeals**

- 0262/25 & 0263/25 – Higher Tor Farm, Poundsgate

Variation of condition 2 of approved planning ref: 0131/24 for internal remodelling of existing farmhouse, replacement windows and replacement of existing corrugated metal cladding. Refurbishment of existing cottage. Internal alterations to existing barn to create private yoga studio. Ancillary works to existing garage to create plant room and store. Landscape enhancement

Members agreed not to comment.

(ii) 0271/25 – Land to the North of Sharp Tor, Widcombe

Temporary use of land for film-making with associated temporary sets, supporting facilities vehicles, access, parking and storage

Members agreed not to comment. It is believed that this will go to the Development Management Committee for decision.

- **Planning Decisions/Withdrawals**

- 25/0039 – The Old Inn, Widecombe

Works to trees in Conservation Area

Members noted that DNPA has granted consent.

- 0248/25 – Blackslade Manor, Widecombe-in-the-Moor

Erection of agricultural storage building (Prior Approval)

Members noted that DNPA has determined that Prior Approval is not required.

- 25/0051 – Kiosk Car Park, Widecombe-in-the-Moor

T1 Sycamore – Remedial works

Members noted that DNPA has granted consent.

## **5164 FINANCE & GOVERNANCE**

*(Cllrs Bibby, Partridge, Guest & Welby)*

(a) Members noted that the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) has reached an

agreement on the new rates of pay applicable from 1 April 2025 (+3.2%). Clerk's salary will be backdated accordingly.

(b) **Payments**

Members approved the following payment:

- Clerk's salary & disbursements – £338.27 (September, including back pay)

## **5165 HIGHWAYS**

(a) Road Warden Scheme:

Cllr Raynor reported the team has had a break over the summer but would be restarting on Friday 12 September.

(b) There were no other matters.

***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](mailto:customer@devon.gov.uk)*

## **5166 CORRESPONDENCE**

(a) The Dartmoor Devil Cycle Ride – members noted that the annual cycle ride will be passing through the parish (twice) on Sunday 26 October

(b) Devon Partnership Plan 2021-2026 Review

Survey deadline: 14 September

Members agreed to comment as individuals.

**5167 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*

Cllr Edwards advised that Leusdon Memorial Hall is considering another defibrillator training session. This might be something which the District Councillors' community fund could support. The Chair offered to speak to the Chair of the Leusdon Memorial Hall Committee to offer the Parish Council's support.

**5168 NEXT MEETING**

It was confirmed that the next Parish Council meeting will be held on 2 October 2025 in Church House, Widecombe.

Signed ..... Dated .....