

WIDECOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held in Leusdon Memorial Hall on Thursday 2 April 2026 at 7.30pm

Members present: Councillor Raynor (Chair for this meeting), J Bibby, D Edwards, M Jonas, C Partridge, S Raynor & J Welby

Also attending: District Councillor Rogers

Members of the Public: Four

Clerk: Suzanna Hughes

5232 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- Cllr Elliott
- Cllr Fitzpatrick
- District Cllr Nutley
- County Cllr Morgan

5233 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

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.

Cllr Partridge declared an interest in item 5239(b).

5234 OPEN FORUM

A representative of the newly formed Widecombe Events Group attended the meeting to request use of the village green in Widecombe for a village fete. This was agreed in principle, subject to there not being any other event already planned on that day, the group arranging its own public liability insurance and carrying out a risk assessment prior to the event, and ensuring that the green is restored.

5235 RATIFICATION OF MINUTES

Members received the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 5 March 2026 which were approved as a true and correct record.

5236 REPORTS

(a) **County Councillor**
No report

(b) **District Councillors**
Cllr Rogers reported that the meeting scheduled for 26 March to discuss assets did not go ahead. He has therefore exercised his right to call a supplementary meeting which will take place on 19 May. TDC has also allocated £800k over 4 years to match fund community projects and the criteria has now been set. Funding has also been allocated for TDC-owned playparks over the next two years; Cllr Rogers will liaise with DNPA and Cllr Partridge about how Widecombe might be able to access funding.

(c) **DNPA Representative**
No report

(d) **Police Report**
In the period 1 – 29 March 2026, there were 2 recorded offences. Both offences involved dogs attacking sheep. Police also responded to 1 non-offence incident during the same period.

(e) **Delegate Reports**
None

5237 PROJECTS & ESTATES

(Cllrs Raynor, Edwards, Fitzpatrick & Jonas)

(a) Parish Field

- (i) Members received a response from the neighbouring landowner regarding the ash trees. It was agreed that the Parish Council would respond advising that the advice it had been given was informal and that they would be welcome to look at the trees themselves from the parish field to view their proximity to the outdoor classroom.
- (ii) The sheep are now in the field. One of the terms of the licensee's insurance is that the pre-school children must not pet the sheep. It was agreed that the Parish Council would write to the pre-school to remind them of this.

(b) Tree survey

Members received and noted the tree survey carried out by Geoff Partridge. Geoff commented that the large horse chestnut on the green is probably one of the finest examples around and suggested that it would be sensible to collect some seeds from the tree and cultivate saplings so that if the large tree fails in the future, a suitable replacement can be planted. It would be a question of finding someone in the parish who has the facilities and space to do that.

5238 PLANNING/LOCAL LIAISON

(Cllrs Bibby, Partridge, Guest & Welby)

(a) New planning applications/appeals

- (i) 0074/26 – Higher Tor Farm, Poundsgate
Structural repair to historic timber fireplace lintel to stabilise existing historic crack

Members agreed not to comment on this application.

(b) Planning Decisions/Withdrawals

- (i) 26/0016 – Works to trees in Conservation Area at the kiosk, Widecombe-in-the-Moor
T1 Sycamore – 5m crown lift, T2 Sycamore – 5m crown lift, T3 – mixed stand of hedge trees which requires crown lifting

Members noted that DNPA has no objection to these works being carried out.

(c) Beating of the Bounds

Cllr Guest and Partridge updated members as to progress with this event. Designs for a commemorative medal were shared and a mock-up would be presented for approval closer to the event. Landowners' permission is being sought and, overall, good progress is being made.

5239 FINANCE & GOVERNANCE

(Cllrs Bibby, Partridge, Guest & Welby)

(a) Cash Book & Parish Field

Members noted the income and expenditure to date.

(b) Payments

Members approved the following payments:

- Clerk's salary & disbursements - £295.77
- JKE Web Design Ltd - £405.60
- G Partridge – Tree survey - £400
- Church House – hire of hall (2025-26) - £108

(c) Dartmoor Search & Rescue

Members were asked whether the Parish Council would consider contributing to the cost of funding a drone for use by Dartmoor Search & Rescue. It was agreed that it might be appropriate for the organisation to make an application to the District and/or County Councillor's locality budget.

(d) New Parish Council website

Members discussed the new Parish Council website which was ready to go live. It was agreed that content should only relate to the Parish Council and not the parish itself. The new website supports compliance with Assertion 10 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return relating to Digital and Data Compliance.

- (d) **Annual Parish Meeting – 21 May 2026 at 7.30pm**
The meeting will be held in Leusdon Memorial Hall. The theme will be a ‘Celebration of our Community’. Representatives of the various groups in the community will be invited to give a short report of their activities.

5240 HIGHWAYS

- (a) Road Warden Scheme:
Cllr Raynor advised that there has been limited activity due to other commitments but hopefully sessions will resume over the coming weeks.

Everyone is encouraged to continue to report potholes on DCC's website:

Online: <https://www.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/>
Telephone: 0345 155 1004
Email: customer@devon.gov.uk

5241 CORRESPONDENCE

- (i) Members received a letter from a resident about pursuing a speed restriction in the centre of Widecombe. It was agreed that this had been discussed many times before, and therefore it was not something the Parish Council wished to pursue at this time.
- (ii) Members received letters of thanks from groups in receipt of a small grant.

5242 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 bus service (271) from Newton Abbot to Widecombe and back, which, in the past, has operated on a Saturday (May - September), will also be operating on a Thursday, giving more opportunities for residents and visitors to get around. It was agreed that it would be useful to disseminate this information to parishioners via the parish mailing list, Rolling Along and the Parish Link

5243 NEXT MEETING

It was confirmed that the next Parish Council meeting will be held on 7 May 2026 in Leusdon Memorial Hall.

Signed Dated