



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

Members present: Councillor Elliott (Chair), J Bibby, D Edwards, A Fitzpatrick, M Jonas, C Partridge, S Raynor, H Symonds (from item 2) and J Welby

Also attending: District Councillor Rogers and County Councillor Morgan

Members of the Public: One

Clerk: Suzanna Hughes

5256 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from:

- District Cllr Nutley

5257 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.

There were no declarations of interest or requests for dispensation.

5258 OPEN FORUM

Stuart Rogers advised that the Post Office van will be attending the village fete event on 25 July.

5259 RATIFICATION OF MINUTES

Members received the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 4 June 2026 which were approved as a true and correct record.

5260 REPORTS

(a) County Councillor

County Cllr Morgan reported that she was pleased to have been able to recently support the Community Hall with a grant.

(b) District Councillors

Cllr Rogers advised that the match-funding grant scheme is oversubscribed. He has asked whether the £800k allocated over the next four years can be brought forward. He continues to pursue funding to replace the play equipment in the play park. The Crisis Resilience fund is available – he will share links for circulation.

(c) DNPA Representative

No report

(d) Police Report

In the period 1 – 30 June 2026, there were 0 recorded offences or incidents.

(e) Delegate Reports

Cllr Partridge attended a meeting of the Widecombe Church House Committee. The National Trust is investing in a new fire detection system. As part of that process, a professional fire risk assessment must be carried out. There has been a problem with water ingress and some work will need to be

carried out on the chimney. The pre-school is still discussing forming a CIC to enable them to change their constitution.

5261 PROJECTS & ESTATES

(Cllrs Raynor, Edwards, Fitzpatrick & Welby)

(a) Parish Field

- (i) Members received and noted the most recent income and expenditure report.
- (ii) Members noted that the pre-school has paid their £1 peppercorn rent for this year.
- (iii) Members noted that a branch from an oak tree from a neighbouring field has fallen into the pre-school's outdoor classroom. The clerk has written to the landowner to ask that it is removed. The landowner has asked to meet with representatives of the Parish Council to review the boundary line between the two properties and establish correct ownership. The Council has a copy of the title plan showing the boundary and it was noted that the trunk of the tree in question is on the neighbouring side of the Parish Council's established fence. After discussion, it was agreed that Cllrs Elliott, Bibby and Edwards would meet with the landowners on site.

(b) Widecombe Fair

Members received correspondence from the Treasurer of the Widecombe Fair Committee about arrangements for letting the Parish Field to Widecombe Fair Committee. He indicated that:

The Fair makes minimal or no profit from running the Fair on the Green. In fact, when its share of other indirect costs (Park and Ride, security, etc.) is considered, it operates at a loss.

The Green is of course a community asset, and the Fair appears to be unique among users of the Green in being required to pay a hire fee.

As the Council will be aware, after prudent reserves the Fair distributes all its profits to national and local charities and good causes. The hire fee therefore reduces the funds available for distribution to local good causes such as the Playschool, Leusdon Memorial Hall and the new Community Hall.

To the best of my knowledge, the income from the Fair has not been specifically allocated to community grants or initiatives but has instead formed part of the Council's general reserves.

It was therefore his intention to raise with the Chairman that alternative arrangements are proposed as follows:

The Council reduces the fee to a "peppercorn rent" status, or best of all foregoes it entirely, and the Fair commits to distributing an equivalent sum to local good causes, reporting those distributions publicly.

The Council distributes the money in accordance with the original understanding and informs the Fair of the beneficiaries

The Council and a Fair representative jointly agree the beneficiaries.

After discussion, the Parish Council agreed to respond as follows:

It is too late to change arrangements for this year, but the Parish Council would be willing to consider a formal request from Widecombe Fair Committee about the arrangements for future years. It is, however, to be noted that Widecombe Parish Council allocates £1500 in its budget each year, to enable it to respond to requests for grants from local groups and organisations within the parish. In the last couple of years, Widecombe Parish Council has supported Widecombe Community Hall, Widecombe Pre-school, Widecombe PCC, Spitchwick Cricket Club and Leusdon Memorial Hall. Unlike Widecombe Fair, the Parish Council's grant scheme prevents distribution of funds to national charities, and therefore money generated from income stays within the community. The Parish Council would very much like to continue to financially support local groups, but without the income from Widecombe Fair, the only way it could do this would be to increase the precept. Bearing this in mind, and noting that the current arrangement, which has been in place since 2017, has worked well, it seems unnecessary to change. It was further noted that the commercial arrangement the Parish Council had with Raymond Amusements generated significantly more income for the Parish Council.

- (c) **Community Minibus**
Members receive correspondence from Anthony Arnold about an idea he had for a collaborative project for purchasing a shared community minibus for Widecombe for use by any community group in the area along with the school. After discussion, it was agreed that, whilst this was a good idea in principle, a shared vehicle would be difficult to manage. Cllr Elliott would respond on that basis and suggest that he liaises directly with other community groups who might benefit more from being able to access a shared minibus.
- (d) **Wildlife Warden Project**
Members discussed a request for funding towards the cost of installation of swift nesting boxes in St Pancras bell tower. The total cost of the project is £1500 and, to date, £1200 has been raised, leaving a shortfall of £300.

It was agreed that the Parish Council would open its small grant scheme in September with a view to considering all applications, including this one, in November's meeting.

5262 PLANNING/LOCAL LIAISON

(Cllrs Bibby, Partridge, Jonas & Symonds)

- (a) **New planning applications/appeals**
(i) 0180/26 – Higher Foxworthy, Poundsgate
Proposed single-storey lean-to conservatory side extension

Members agreed to support this application.

Cllrs Jonas and Symonds to lead on planning next month.

- (b) **Planning Decisions/Withdrawals**
None

- (c) **Beating of the Bounds**
Cllr Partridge advised that the FiPL bid will include the cost of the film-makers (£1000), medals (£50-75), mugs (£350), volunteer hours, clearance of the route and any necessary infrastructure which can't be borrowed. The Parish Council may need to make a contribution depending on the outcome of the bid. Cllr Partridge also suggested that the Parish Council may consider installing a new boundary stone. She will update members with details of progress over the coming weeks. Booking details will be published in August.

5263 FINANCE & GOVERNANCE

(Cllrs Bibby, Partridge, Jonas & Symonds)

- (a) **Cash Book**
Members noted the income and expenditure to date.
- (b) **Payments**
Members approved the following payments:
- Clerk's salary & disbursements - £579.84 (2 months)
 - G Partridge – village weedspraying - £150
- (c) **Infrastructure Plan**
Members received a draft Infrastructure Plan to support the upcoming CIL application. Observations and comments were made and would be incorporated into a final draft for approval in September.

5264 HIGHWAYS

- (a) Road Warden Scheme: Cllr Raynor advised that she will continue as Road Warden despite this being her last meeting as a Parish Councillor. They have now been supplied with some tack spray and will continue to look into purchasing their own wacker plate. A quiz at The Old Inn has been arranged this month to raise money for the road warden scheme.

As always, 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

5265 CORRESPONDENCE

None

5266 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

None

5267 NEXT MEETING

It was confirmed that the next Parish Council meeting will be held on 3 September 2026 in Church House, Widecombe.

Signed Dated