

**WEST HILL PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON 4th June 2024 AT 7.30PM**

Present:	Chairman Cllr Francis Pullman (FP), Cllr Trevor Ingram (TI), Cllr ShirleyMay Saunders
In attendance:	Anne Oliver Parish Clerk, DCC/EDDC Cllr Jess Bailey (JB) from 8.00pm onwards, 2 members of the public.
Absent	Cllr Andrew Gorton (AG), Cllr Ann Cooper (AC)

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council

Item (a)	Discussion and decisions (b)
24/185	<p>Welcome and Chairmans announcements: The meeting started at 7.30pm. The Chairman, Cllr FP, welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p> <p>The Chairman report included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The planning application for Potters Country Market has been withdrawn. • As a General Election has been called the Parish Council is subject to Pre-Election restrictions.
24/186	<p>Apologies. To receive apologies and approve reasons for absence. The meeting received apologies from Cllrs AG and AC. Their reasons for absence were accepted.</p>
24/187	<p>Public question time (3 minutes): Residents are invited to give their views and question the Parish Council on issues on this agenda or raise issues for further consideration at the discretion of the Chairman, before the start of the Parish Council meeting. Members of the public may not take part in the Parish Council meeting itself. This item includes issues submitted to the Clerk prior to the meeting. <i>Individual contributions are limited to 3 minutes.</i> No matters were raised.</p>
24/188	<p>To receive District and County Councillors' reports for information (items raised for decision will appear on the agenda for the next meeting).</p> <p>Under Standing Orders this item was considered later in the meeting at 8.05pm</p> <p>DCC/EDDC Cllr Jess Bailey (JB) gave a short report on the meeting of EDDC's Strategic Planning Committee held earlier on 4th June 2024. The meeting considered two issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the process for the allocation of development sites in the Emerging Local Plan. <p>It was agreed that a series of Ward Member/Planning Officer working groups would take place during June/July to review sites. Each group would focus on a town and surrounding area. Decisions to allocate sites will be made at the Committee meetings. The Committee supported Cllr JB's request for a representative of relevant Town/Parish Councils to attend the meeting for their area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Process for allocating sites within National Landscapes (formerly AONBs). - <p>Cllr JB noted that a report on EDDC's Housing Land Supply was expected to be considered at the next Committee meeting.</p>
24/189	<p>Declarations of Interest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Under the Localism Act 2011 (sections 26-37 and Schedule 4) and in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, members are required to declare any interests that are not currently entered in the Member's register of interests including the nature and extent of such interests they may have, in items to be considered at this meeting. - Members are also reminded that any change to their Declaration of Interests must be notified to the Monitoring Officer at East Devon District Council within 28 days of the change.

	<p>- Receipt of requests for dispensations for new Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, Other Registerable Interests or Non-Registerable Interests for items on the Agenda. Cllrs FP, TI, SMS declared no interests on items on the agenda.</p>
24/190	<p>Confidential/exempt items. In consideration of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted): to agree any items to be dealt with after the public and press have been excluded.</p> <p>Cllr FP proposed 24/212 should be considered in Part B as it was a commercial matter. Cllr TI seconded the proposal. Unanimously agreed.</p>
24/191	<p>Minutes: To receive the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting of 7th May 2024 (Minute 24/128 - 24/172) and the Extraordinary meeting of 21st May (Minute 24/173 -24/1184) and to approve the signing of the Minutes by the Chairman as a true record.</p> <p>The minutes of the meetings of 7th May and 21st May 2024 were unanimously accepted as a true record by those Cllrs present at the meetings and were signed by the Chairman.</p>
24/192	<p>To receive an update on Councillor vacancies.</p> <p>The meeting noted that the Notice publishing the vacancy arising from the resignation of former Cllr Alison Carr was published on 13th May. The notice period closed on 3rd June. Also, EDDC have confirmed the Parish Council can seek to fill the vacancy by co-option as a by-election was not requested.</p> <p>Cllr FP encouraged members of the community to consider becoming a Parish Cllr. He noted the meeting was only just quorate this evening due to Cllrs commitments. With so few Cllrs it can be a struggle to ensure a meeting is quorate.</p>
24/193	<p>Planning Applications received: To consider a response to:</p> <p>24/0992/FUL Banjul Toadpit Lane West EX11 1LQ Proposed extension and amendments to front porch/lobby. Cllrs supported the application.</p>
24/194	<p>Planning decisions received for information (*denotes WHPC differed)</p> <p>24/0352/FUL Lindridge Elsdon Lane EX11 1UB Status: Approved *</p> <p>Demolition of existing bungalow and garage with construction of a replacement house and integral double garage. Cllrs noted Cllr FP attended the EDDC Planning Committee's consideration to speak (object) on behalf of the Parish Council. Cllrs noted the Committee's decision to approve the application.</p> <p>24/0044/FUL Potters Country Market West Hill Road EX11 1TY Status: Withdrawn Demolition of existing buildings and redevelopment to provide 9no. dwellings and replacement commercial/retail (Class E) space, with associated access, parking and landscaping. Cllrs noted the withdrawn application.</p> <p>23/1973/FUL The Croft Bendarroch Road EX11 1UW Status: Approved Replacement dwelling, including the demolition of the existing dwelling and multiple outbuildings located within the grounds.</p>

	Cllrs noted the EDDC Planning Committee’s decision to approve the application.
24/195	<p>Planning Matters: Strategic Planning Working Group:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To consider and approve, if considered appropriate, Terms of Reference for the working group. The Terms of Reference for the Working Group were agreed. 2. To receive a verbal report, if available, on the EDDC Strategic Planning Committee held on 4th June 2024. Cllr FP gave a short report on the meeting. The committee considered two issues concerning the Emerging Local Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The process for allocating Development Sites: The Strategic Planning Committee will decide the site allocations at their meetings over the summer months. These sites will be included in the Publication draft of the East Devon Local Plan for public consultation in Dec-24-Jan-25). A series of Working Parties will meet to review the sites prior to the Committee Meetings. It was agreed that a representative of Town/Parish Councils will be invited to attend the relevant working party meeting. - Protocol for development in the National Landscape areas of East Devon (formerly known as AONBs) 3. To note a further Draft Local Plan Consultation (Closing: Thursday 27th June, 5pm). Cllrs noted the Draft Local Plan Consultation covered 8 topics. Cllr FP noted one topic, Green Wedges, was of particular interest to West Hill. The consultation invited comments on the boundary of the Green Wedge between West Hill - Ottery St Mary. Cllrs encouraged residents to respond to the consultation. Details of how to submit comments to EDDC were available on the WHPC website and Noticeboard. Residents were also encourage to attend the Parish Council Drop-In Session on 7th June. 4. To consider a WHPC response to the consultation. Cllrs agreed to submit a response to the consultation as they felt it was very important to maintain a separation between Ottery St Mary and West Hill. They noted the proposed boundary was similar to the Green Wedge identified in the Neighbourhood Plan but were concerned that the area included a “preferred” possible development site. Cllrs agreed to listen to resident’s feedback at the Drop-In session and reflect this in the WHPC response to EDDC. 5. To consider arrangements for an “Emerging Local Plan” drop-in session on Friday 7th June 4.00-6.30pm at the Village Hall. Details of the session were agreed.

WHPC Groups + Initiatives

24/196	<p>Finance Working Group:</p> <p>Annual Governance Statement 2023-24 (AGAR Part 3)</p>
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	<p>a. To receive and consider the findings of the independent review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control. To note no issues raised by the internal auditor.</p> <p>Cllrs noted</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the Internal Audit had been carried out by an independent Internal Auditor and their report, dated 24th May 2024, had been circulated to Councillors. ii. No issues or concerns were raised by the Internal Auditor. <p>Cllrs accepted the Internal Audit Report</p> <p>b. To resolve to complete and sign the Annual Governance Statement.</p> <p>Cllrs considered each of the 9 Governance Statements in turn and were satisfied of the proper effectiveness of the internal controls.</p> <p>Cllrs resolved to complete the Annual Governance Statement. The Chairman and Clerk then signed the Statement.</p>
<p>24/197</p>	<p>Annual Accounting Statements 2023-24 (AGAR Part 3)</p> <p>a. To receive and consider the Accounting Statements.</p> <p>b. To resolve to approve the Annual Accounting Statements are accurate.</p> <p>Cllr FP reported the Finance Working Group had reviewed the Statement and supporting documents at their meeting on 28th May 2024.</p> <p>Councillors considered the Accounting Statement and Cllr FP gave a brief explanation of year on year variances.</p> <p>It was resolved to approve the Accounting Statement as a true record and the Chairman signed the statement.</p> <p>Action: The Annual Return (Internal Audit Report, Governance Statement and Accounting Statement) to be submitted to the External Auditor and a copy to be published on the WHPC website.</p> <p>DCC/EDDC Cllr JB joined the meeting 8.00pm</p>
<p>24/198</p>	<p>To approve the Period for the Exercise of Public Rights 2023-24 (proposed dates 6th June 2024 to 17th July 2024, including the first 14 days of July as required by law.)</p> <p>The proposed dates, 6th June to 17th July 2024 were noted and agreed. It was resolved to book a room for the inspection of the accounts, if requested, as the Council does not have a public office. The Notices and guidelines to be posted on the Council's website and noticeboard as required.</p>
<p>24/199</p>	<p>To receive a verbal update on the challenge to the 2022-23 Annual Return.</p> <p>The Chairman, Cllr FP, reported the External Auditor had provided a six-month update on the challenge to WHPC's 2022-23 Annual Return. Due a backlog, WHPC was in a "queue" and awaiting consideration. Cllr FP noted that this will not incur additional cost, however the External Auditor will charge £355/hr + VAT when they process the challenge.</p>
<p>24/200</p>	<p>Village Hall Pedestrian Path Working Group:</p> <p>a. To receive an update on the project including updated quotations + progress on the lease.</p> <p>Cllr FP gave a brief update. Comments included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Both, The Village Hall Trustees and the Parish Council had instructed their Solicitors and a draft lease would be presented to a future meeting for approval.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Three contractors had provided revised quotes for the construction of the path and highways works. The quotes range from £21,035 + VAT to £41,485.18 + VAT. As the detail of each quote is commercially sensitive the quotes were considered in detail in Confidential session Agenda Item 24/212. <p>b. To resolve to accept quotations subject to the future agreement of a lease, if considered appropriate, from</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. JRC Engineers (s278/post construction sign off) <p>Cllrs discussed a quote provided by JRC Engineers for negotiations with Highways (s278 works) and for support during the construction phase (a total of £4,200.00 + VAT). Cllrs considered that the Council had limited/no experience of the technical matters to be agreed with Highways and in particular they sought professional oversight of the construction works.</p> <p>It was resolved to accept the JRC Engineers quote subject to future agreement of the lease.</p> <p>Action: VH Path Working Group to inform JRC Engineers of the Council's decision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ii. Richard Green Ecology (ecological services) <p>Cllrs discussed a quote provided by Richard Green Ecology for activities required to fulfil planning approval conditions with regard to the hedge and Devon Bank.</p> <p>It was resolved to accept the quote, £480+vat, for Richard Green Ecology to act as the Ecological Clerk of Works during the construction period subject to the future agreement of a lease.</p> <p>Action: VH Path Working Group inform Richard Green Ecology of the Council's decision</p>
24/201	<p>Emergency Plan Working Group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. To receive a verbal update on the Emergency Plan workshop held on 18th April. b. To note the successful grant application to the Devon Communities Resilience Forum (£75). c. To receive a verbal update on membership of the group and to resolve to appoint named members of the public to the group, if considered appropriate. <p>Cllr FP gave a brief report on the Emergency Plan workshop held on 18th April. The session, led by Devon Communities Together, was attended by representatives of WHPC, Ottery Town Council and other local Town/Parish Councils. EDDC's Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Officer also attended the session. The session discussed the role of Community Emergency Plans and community involvement.</p> <p>Cllrs noted the successful application to the Devon Resilience Forum for £75 to fund Emergency Plan Working Group Meetings.</p> <p>Cllr FP was pleased to report 5 members of the public had volunteered to join the Working Group.</p> <p>It was resolved the 5 residents would join the Emergency Plan Working Group.</p> <p>Action: Emergency Plan Working Group to organise the next meeting of the Working Group.</p>
24/202	<p>Remembrance Service Working Group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. To consider and approve, if considered appropriate, a risk assessment for the D-Day 80 Memorial event on Thursday 6th June 11.00am at the War Memorial to coincide with the national events. <p>It was resolved to approve the risk assessment for the event at 11.00am 6th June 2024.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. To confirm arrangements for the D-Day 80 service and road closure for the event.

	<p>The Chairman gave a brief update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DCC Highways had approved the Parish Council's application to close School Lane and the War Memorial slip road for the event. - Households in the vicinity were notified by letter of the road closure. - Members of West Hill RBL and St Michael's Church will lead the service at the Memorial. <p>Cllrs noted the additional events organised by West Hill's RBL branch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - During the evening of 6th June, to co-incide with the national programme of events, the War Memorial will be illuminated. - On Saturday 8th June the West Hill RBL will hold a "BBQ & Music" at the clubhouse School Lane in celebration of the achievements of D-Day 80. This event is open to the public,
<p>24/203</p>	<p>Communications Working Group.:</p> <p>a. To consider and approve, if considered appropriate, Terms of Reference for the Working Group.</p> <p>It was resolved to approve the Terms of Reference.</p> <p>b. To receive recommendations for WHPC activities at the West Hill Summer Fete Saturday 29th June 12.00-4.00pm at the School Field.</p> <p>Cllr TI led a discussion on preparations for a WHPC stall at the Summer Fete. Cllrs discussed information to be displayed at the event, activities to encourage attendees to visit the Council stall and engage with Cllrs.</p> <p>c. To confirm arrangements and budget for the WHPC activities at the fete.</p> <p>It was resolved to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Hold a Treasure Map competition with all proceeds to be donated to the PTFA. ii. WHPC to fund 3 Amazon Vouchers to present as prizes to the value £25, £10 and £5 iii. Print a large format map of the Parish to be used as the Treasure map. iv. To establish a budget of £190+vat for the event. <p>Action: Cllr TI to document the rules for the event to be displayed at the WHPC Stall.</p> <p>Action: Clerk to organise printing of the map.</p> <p>Cllrs considered the WHPC publicity banner to be out of date as the Parish Council no longer makes use of social media. Cllrs discussed options for a replacement and agreed that a pop-up self-supporting banner would be suitable for a wide range of indoor/outdoor events. Cllrs were keen for the banner to be robust and hard wearing as it would be used for several years.</p> <p>It was resolved to purchase a new banner to display the Council name and logo and to set a budget of up to £200+vat. It was noted that the new banner was unlikely to be available for the Summer Fete.</p> <p>Action: Clerk to purchase a new publicity banner.</p> <p>DCC/EDDC Cllr JB left the meeting at 8.35pm</p>
<p>24/204</p>	<p>Playpark Working Group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. To receive recommendations for replacement playpark bench(es). b. To resolve actions, expenditure and the use of CIL monies if considered appropriate.

Following the removal of the decayed playpark bench the Playpark Working Group was asked to consider options for a replacement bench.

On behalf of the Working Group Cllr TI recommended the installation of a low-maintenance bench available from Glasdon £662.89+vat including fixings and delivery. This was similar to the WHPC bench at the War Memorial.

The Working Group also recommended the re-installation of the storytelling thrones and if possible, the re-siting of the picnic bench.

Cllrs discussed the recommendations and also considered whether the Council should replace the remaining wooden bench which had several areas of decayed timber and was considered to be uneconomic to repair.

Cllrs also considered where the items should be sited. Options included siting the items in the central area which was currently an open space following the removal of the playboat. They acknowledged that it could be some time before the Council agreed a long term strategy for the playpark and equipment and siting new equipment in the central area.

It was resolved:

- to purchase 2 Glasdon Phoenix Benches
- to re-install the storytelling thrones
- to re-site the picnic table subject to discussion with the lengthsman
- for the above works to be undertaken on 1 day to minimise costs
- to establish a project budget of £1,600+vat to include purchase of the benches and Lengthsman's costs.

Action: The Playpark Working Group was asked to update the WHPC Playpark Management Plan for future consideration at a Council meeting.

Action: The Playpark Working Group was asked to consider a short/medium/long term strategy for the playpark/equipment and to present initial thoughts for future consideration at a Council meeting

A member of the public left the meeting 8.47pm

Standing Orders were suspended

A member of the public asked if it was possible to donate benches to the Parish Council. If so, he may be able to organise this.

Standing Orders were resumed.

Cllrs thanked the resident for his generous offer and asked the resident to write to the Council with details of the proposal.

It was resolved to delay the purchase of the benches for a short period whilst awaiting details from the resident.

It was resolved to use CIL monies to purchase the benches subject to the above.

Other Matters

24/205	To determine the time and place of informal monthly Cllr training workshops . The dates for the June-December workshops were agreed.
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	It was resolved to book the RBL Clubhouse for the workshops and to set a budget of £240.00 for the room bookings.
24/206	To note decisions made under delegated powers: To purchase 10 discounted copies of the Good Councillor Guide 2018, in total £20+postage. The decision was noted.
24/207	To receive a report from the Parish Clerk <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Lengthsman reported problems downloading data from one of the VAS devices. The Clerk had provided details of how to re-synchronise the phone and VAS device. If the problem is not resolved the device may need to be returned to the manufacturer for repair. Data downloads from the other device are unaffected. 2. The Lengthsman will carry out verge cutting at specific junctions in the coming weeks. 3. The annual ICO registration was completed in May-24.
24/208	To review WHPC's Action Tracker . Cllr FP thanked Cllrs and Clerk for their work to complete the outstanding actions. It was noted that WHPC was awaiting a response from Morrison's regarding the provision of a community noticeboard.
24/209	Financial matters: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To consider and approve, if appropriate, the Schedule of Payments. Cllrs considered the Schedule of Payments and invoices circulated before the meeting. No questions were raised. It was resolved to approve the payments and sign the invoices. 2. To consider and approve, if appropriate, any additional payments presented to the meeting. Cllrs approved the payment of additional invoices presented for consideration: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Pro-Lawn Garden Services - VAS Transfers 20052024, £96.00 b. Pro-Lawn Garden Services - VAS Transfers 03062024, £96.00 c. Pro-Lawn Garden Services - Grass Cutting 03062024, £72.00 d. Clerk's Mobile Phone (Monthly), £9.60 e. West Hill Village Hall - Room Hire May-24, £43.50 3. To receive, if available, monthly Bank Reconciliations and finance trackers. The Bank reconciliation and Finance trackers will be presented to the next meeting.
24/210	Councillor questions, reports and items for future agenda Each Councillor is requested to use this opportunity to report minor matters of information not included elsewhere on the agenda and to raise items for future agendas. <i>Councillors are respectfully reminded that this is not an opportunity for debate or decision making.</i> No matters were raised.
24/211	Next meeting: To confirm arrangements for upcoming WHPC meeting on Tuesday 2nd July 2024 7.30pm at the Village Hall.

The remaining member of the public left the meeting
Part A ended 9.10pm
Part B began at 9.12pm

Part B - Confidential/exempt items. In consideration of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted): to agree any items to be dealt with after the public and press have been excluded.

24/212	Village Hall Pedestrian Path Working Group: To resolve to appoint a contractor for the construction of a pedestrian path, subject to the future agreement of a lease, if considered appropriate. Cllrs considered each of the contractors' quotes with a focus on cost, timescales, and content. A number of queries were raised, in particular, with regards the completeness of the quote.
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<p>It was resolved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- to engage JRC Engineers to review the quotes and comment on whether they fulfilled the brief: Are the quotes comparable and comprehensive?- To establish a budget up to £1,250+vat <p>Action: To write to JRC Engineers to request they review the quotes.</p>
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Part B ended 9.43pm
Meeting closed 9.45pm

Signed

Date

DRAFT