

WEST DOWN PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES  
West Down Parish Hall  
Wednesday 3 November 2021 at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Cllrs S Ayre (Chair), M Reeves (Vice-Chair), R Drew, R Kenshole, K Oades, S Squire, T Verney and D Cllr M Wilkinson.

Also present: Mr J Stainer, 1 member of the public and Val Ford (Clerk)

Apologies/Approvals. C Cllr A Davis

4496. Declaration of Interests

A Declaration of Interest was received from Cllr S Squire in respect of planning application 74093

4497. Requests for Dispensation

Requests for Dispensation in respect of the Parish Grants were received from:-

- a) Cllr Ayre as her husband, David Ayre, is the Treasurer of the West Down Parish Hall and he had completed the grant application on behalf of the hall. The position of funding for the hall has no personal effect on Cllr Ayre or her husband.
- b) Cllr Oades as he is a member of the Parish Hall and Green Field.
- c) Cllr Reeves in respect of the PTFA as his daughter remained a PTFA committee member for this year. Also his two grandchildren attend the village school.
- d) Cllr Squire for the PTFA as her granddaughter attends the school.

**Resolved – that the Requests for Dispensation in respect of the Parish Grants be accepted by the Parish Clerk.**

4498. Public Participation

Mr John Stainer spoke about the extremely positive news that Acorn Developments had finally paid the community recreational contribution to North Devon Council, with this money to be transferred to the Parish Council tomorrow. Mr Stainer was very anxious that these funds are made available to both organisations as soon as possible as set out in the original agreement back in 2017. Delays have cost both organisations dearly due to increased labour and material costs.

4499. Approve & Sign Minutes of the October meeting

The Minutes had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. **Cllr Oades proposed they be accepted as a true record which was seconded by Cllr Drew.** There was unanimous approval to this proposal.

**Resolved – that the Minutes of the October meeting be approved and they were duly signed.**

4500. Matters Arising

4474. Matters Arising. Letters on the sign at Dean Cross been put back in place. The request for white lines in the square had been chased up. A Slow Down sign had been put up at the railway sleepers at the entrance of Plant Machinery, together with reflectors.

4475. D Cllrs report. (b) The Clerk had been in touch with Alan Kyle, Enforcement Officer at NDC regarding the Powerpoint presentation. Mr Kyle will be holding a virtual meeting with Councillors on the 1<sup>st</sup> December prior to the commencement of the Parish Council Meeting. (c) Virtual Parish Forum held on 14<sup>th</sup> October. Cllr Ayre had logged

in to part of this with the meeting including information on restructuring of North Devon Council. (i) A letter of thanks had been sent to Mr Pearce for his help with the stone sign and seat.

4484. Asset register. The Clerk had purchased the new filing cabinet as agreed at the October meeting. Cllr Ayre had taken photos of some of the assets which will be put on the new Asset Register. This will be sent to Councillors when ready.

4485 Health & Safety Policy. The Clerk had contacted Cllr Oades requesting the PAT Testing of the Parish Council's electrical equipment be carried out at the same time as the Village Halls.

4486. Parish Online Training. Cllr Oades offered his support with this training.

4495. Any Other Business. All of the old planning applications had now been bagged up ready for collection prior to shredding.

4501. Police Report.

a) **Monthly Crime Figures.** The Newsletters had been received for November 2021. October crimes for Morteohoe/Woolacombe & West Down (includes Mullacott & Bittadon): -

Violence with Injury – 6. Violence without injury – 3. Stalking and Harassment – 1. Sexual Offences – 1. All Other Theft Offences – 1. Criminal Damage – 3. Trafficking of Drugs – 2. Other Offences – 1. Non-Notifiable Offences - 1

**b) Speed detection in the Village.**

Police presence in the village in respect of speeding traffic commenced after the last Parish Council meeting with the Police being a visible presence morning and afternoon. The vegetation around the 30 mph sign on Ilfracombe Hill had been reported and was dealt with by Highways within days of the last meeting.

4502. Report from County Councillor.

Cllr A Davis sent her apologies and had nothing to add to her report for the last Parish Council Meeting.

4503. Report from District Councillor.

D Cllr. M Wilkinson reported that:-

a) Maria Bailey is no longer leaving North Devon Council.

b) The S106 monies have now come through to the District Council to forward on. The monies include an interest payment of 4% over the base rate (£800) so this is positive for the village.

c) Ilfracombe had put in a bid for the Levelling Up Fund. Their application for regeneration of towns that are deprived was unsuccessful. Half a million pounds had been secured elsewhere to go towards building ten self-build properties. This will be affordable housing so is encouraging for Ilfracombe.

d) He had attended an Online meeting with Chris Whitty about his annual report. There are substantial problems in coastal areas as the wealthier inland towns get their figures lumped in with poorer communities. There needs to be a national incentive to bring big jobs into coastal areas. Devon and Somerset are in the highest level for coronary heart disease.

e) He has another meeting in December so sent his apologies for the Parish Council Meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> December. At this meeting he will try and find out how other authorities are coping with wild camping. The West Country has seen a huge increase in this, with the biggest problem being enforcement and only a £30 fine. There will be a representative from Central Government at the meeting so it is hoped discussion can be had about making enforcement stronger.

- f) He had written to the local MP regarding the Environmental Bill. He was waiting for a reply back. He was concerned about water overflowing into open sewers and rivers. There are already a number of local beaches with poor bathing quality which could impact on tourism and the environment.

Cllr Reeves queried if there would be a District Councillor Grant available as there was previously. D Cllr Wilkinson confirmed a grant of between four and five hundred pounds would be available. This needs to be looked at now as it cannot be retrospective.

#### 4504. Parish Grants

Applications for the Parish Grants were received from West Down Parish Hall Management Committee, West Down Community Field, West Down School PTFA and West Down PCC (St Calixtus Church).

Information about how much the grant funding could amount to had been sought as there is a limit (currently £8.41 per elector (557)) for spending under S137. However, the Parish Council can spend money on Statutory Powers, which would apply to the Community Field as this comes under recreational facilities. This means the grant funding will not breach any auditory regulations.

**Community Field** – The application was for £1,500 to replace the picnic benches that had been vandalised. Discussion took place about the cost of these and whether the D Cllrs Grant could be utilized for one of the benches. Concern was also expressed about how to stop future vandalism. Following a lengthy discussion **Cllr Oades proposed £1,250 be paid, which was seconded by Cllr Reeves.** There were 4 approvals and two abstentions for this application.

**Resolved – that £1,250 be approved for the grant funding application for new picnic benches in the Community Field.**

**West Down School PTFA** – The application was for £600 to purchase filming equipment to move forward in this digital age. **Approval for this application was proposed by Cllr Verney which was seconded by Cllr Oades.** There was unanimous approval for this application.

**Resolved – that the application for £600 to purchase filming equipment be approved.**

**Parish Hall** – the application was for £1,190. (£500 for Grass Cutting and £690 for the removal of two ash trees that have ash die back). Concern was expressed about setting a precedent for the felling of the trees. Following discussion on the amount to approve, **Cllr Reeves proposed £1,000 be paid which was seconded by Cllr Verney.** There were five approvals for this proposal, with two abstentions.

**Resolved – that the application for grass cutting and tree felling for ash die back be set at £1,000.**

**West Down PCC (St Calixtus Church).** The application was for £1,300 for Churchyard grass cutting. **Cllr Ayre proposed approval of this application, which was seconded by Cllr Oades.** There was unanimous approval for this application.

**Resolved – that the application for £1,300 for churchyard grass cutting be approved.**

4505. Co-option

No applications had been made for the co-option of a new Parish Councillor.

**Resolved – that the advertisement for Co-option of a new Parish Councillor be put back on the Notice Boards and Village Website, with a closing date of 30<sup>th</sup> November 2021.**

4506. CLT (Community Land Trust)

Cllr Ayre reported that thirty seven people were in the room for the CLT meeting. Eight people expressed an interest to be involved in the Steering Group with two more emails coming in after the meeting expressing an interest. Cllr Ayre had emailed Alison Ward about the next step, with nothing confirmed as yet due to a query as to whether this should be a zoom meeting or face to face and whether the Parish Council wanted to be involved or kept informed. Cllr Verney was happy to be involved and be the Parish Council representative. Cllr Ayre was to write to Alison Ward and provide her with Cllr Verney's mobile number and email address.

**Resolved – that Cllr Verney will be the Parish Council representative for the Community Land Trust.**

4507. Acorn Developments.

Information had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting about the community funding from Acorn Developments for the Parish Hall and Community Field. The money had finally been received by Devon County Council, with interest added on due to the length of time it had taken to sort out. An amount of £68,607.63 is to be paid by BACS on Thursday and will hopefully be in the Parish Council account by Monday before being paid out.

Cllr Ayre had also received an email from Mark Andrews of Devon County Council to say they had received the monies from Acorn Developments for £38,662 which had been moved to Devon District Council in respect of West Down School. Cllr Ayre had emailed Sue Carey, Headteacher at West Down School, to advise her of this good news and Cllr Ayre had received an email back from her thanking the Parish Council. The money is to be used for classroom enlargement which will result in the school having four appropriately sized classrooms.

Discussion took place about the increased audit fees the Parish Council will have to pay due to the money being paid into the Parish Council account before being passed on. It was agreed that an Extraordinary Meeting should be held to discuss this matter as well as the allocation of the monies.

**Resolved – that an Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting be held to discuss the additional audit fees the Parish Council will incur due to the S106 monies being paid into their bank account as well as allocation of the monies from Acorn Developments.**

4508. P3/Footpaths.

a) **Letters to landowners.** Cllr Ayre had emailed a draft letter to the Councillors about landowners' responsibilities in respect of footpaths on their land.

**Resolved – that Cllr Ayre will provide Councillors with a further draft letter reminding Landowners of their responsibilities regarding footpaths on their land.**

b) **To discuss P3 Footpath Survey**

The P3 Footpath Survey was due in January. An application for money towards the footpaths needs to be applied for in January or February. Footpaths still need to be shared out among the Councillors.

**Resolved – that the P3/Footpath Survey will be put on the Agenda for the December Parish Council Meeting**

4509. Health & Safety Policy

Cllr Kenshole was thanked for his hard work on the Health & Safety Policy. A copy of this had been circulated to the Councillors prior to the meeting. Cllr Kenshole informed the Councillors that this policy covers all of the statutory requirements. He still needs to obtain information on the Fire Safety Risk Assessment for the Parish Hall. Cllr Kenshole had also drafted an Accident Reporting form, with some more work to be done in this respect. The Health & Safety Policy needs to be reviewed annually and updated as necessary. **Cllr Ayre proposed the Health & Policy Report be adopted, which was seconded by Cllr Squire.** There was unanimous approval for this proposal.

**Resolved – that the new Health & Safety Policy be adopted by the Parish Council.**

4510. IT Policy

Cllr Kenshole was thanked for his hard work regarding the IT Policy. The necessary backups and anti-virus programmes are in place. **Cllr Verney proposed this policy be adopted, which was seconded by Cllr Reeves.** There was unanimous approval for this proposal.

**Resolved – that the new IT Policy be adopted by the Parish Council**

4511. New Parish Council Website & Emails

Cllr Kenshole referred to his discussions with Western Web since the last Parish Council Meeting. All of the recommended changes had been carried out. New email addresses still need to be finalised. Once test emails have been carried out by the Clerk, Cllr Kenshole will advise Western Web. Cllr Kenshole and the Clerk will be having training regarding maintenance of the new website shortly. It is hoped that the new website will go live during the first week in December. The invoice will need to be paid at the next Parish Council meeting. Once the receipt is received the form can be sent for the District Councillor's grant for this website. Cllr Kenshole was thanked for all of his work on the new website.

4512. Queens Platinum Jubilee Celebration Tree Planting

Cllr Verney had taken this matter to the Green Field meeting the day after the last Parish Council meeting. It was agreed that the Green Field would take on the planting of a tree. Cllr Andrea Davis had agreed to contribute towards this. There will also be a plaque. The Green Field have plans to put a bench under the tree, with the tree being of a good size. Trees are out of stock at the moment. The Green Field people will agree on which tree to plant, which will need to be a native species.

4513. Community Award Scheme

Information about this scheme had been recirculated to Councillors prior to the meeting. Cllr Verney had made a poster which needs to go out. There are three categories:- an Individual, a Child under 16 years of age and a Group. Cllr Reeves reported that S137 funding can be used for a group but not for an individual. It is possible to have a Chairman's Allowance which could be used for this. This allowance

will need to go in the budget for next year. Discussion took place about voting on this. It was agreed that this would be a leaflet drop with a form on the bottom which will need to be circulated. Cllr Kenshole was going to check with Western Web to see if Online voting can be done on the new website. With regards to the prizes, last year there was a Plate for the individual. Cllr Ayre funded chocolates for the under 16's and it was felt a framed certificate would be appropriate for the group prize.

**Resolved – that the advertisement for the Community Award Scheme would be advertised in December, with voting to run from January to April 2022. The winners would then be invited to the Annual General Meeting in May 2022.**

4514. Finances

**a) To receive and agree the invoices for payment.**

The Clerk had emailed a list of payments to the Councillors prior to the meeting.

Balance in the Business Account as at 27.10.21	£4,808.31		
Balance in the Treasurers Account as at 27.10.21	£4,516.96		
North Devon Council	Clerks Salary	£216.00)	
	Admin Charge	£ 7.72)	£223.72
North Devon Council	Dog Bin Emptying		£195.00
St Johns Ambulance	Infant/Child Pedi Padz		£136.74
Cllr S Ayre	Paper & Envelopes	£ 9.70)	
Cllr S Ayre	Bags for shredding	£ 1.50)	£ 11.20
V Hunt	Paediatric Pedi Padz		£ 83.25
V Ford	Printer Cartridges	£ 53.30)	
V Ford	Filing Cabinet	£ 58.95)	
V Ford	Postage Stamps	£ 7.92)	£120.17
			<b>£770.08</b>

**Resolved – that the invoices for payment totalling £770.08 should be paid.**

**b) To discuss the Out-turn/Mid-term accounts ending 30 September 2021**

Information had been circulated prior to the meeting (see Appendix A).

**Resolved – that the Out-turn/Mid-Term Accounts should be accepted as a true record.**

**c) To discuss preparing the Budget for the next Financial Year.**

The Clerk had circulated information to the Councillors prior to the meeting. Discussion took place about the new Clerk's Salary, which is due to be reviewed in January 2022. It was felt that the setting of the Budget and Precept should be discussed in more detail at the next Parish Council Meeting. Cllr Reeves referred to the need to keep the bank reserves fairly close to the annual running costs.

**Resolved – that the Budget for 2022/23 would be discussed at the December meeting including setting the Precept.**

4515. GDPR Training

Cllr Ayre is to provide information to Cllr Kenshole regarding GDPR Training, with this needing amendment to show the new Clerk's details.

4516. Village Website

Cllr Ayre provided figures she had obtained in respect of the cost of setting up and maintaining the Village Website. Discussion took place about whether the Parish

Council should still contribute to the Village Website once they have their own.

**Resolved – that the Clerk will obtain information about usage of the Village Website, including which pages are of most interest, as well as the advertising situation.**

4517. Grass Cutting & Bus Shelter Cleaning Tender

Discussion took place about whether the bench near the footbridge should be included in the Grass Cutting Contract. This will be considered after discussion with the new landowner. A Notice advertising this Tender will be put on the noticeboards, with a closing date of the end of November.

**Resolved – that the Tender for Grass Cutting and Bus Shelter Cleaning would be put on the noticeboards, with a closing date of the 30<sup>th</sup> November 2021.**

4518. Planning - Decisions from NDC:

None.

4519. Planning Applications:

a) To comment on the following Planning Applications:-

**74093 – Erection of one agricultural livestock building at Lower Twitchen Farm, Mullacott Cross, Ilfracombe, Devon, EX34 8NP.**

Cllr Squire had declared an interest in this planning application so she left the room whilst this application was discussed.

There were no concerns about this application. **Cllr Verney proposed approval of this application which was seconded by Cllr Kenshole.** There were six approvals for this application.

**Resolved – that Planning Application 74093 should be approved.**

Councillor Squire rejoined the meeting.

**74132 – Prior Approval for change of use of agricultural building to dwelling house Class Q (a)(b) at Barn at Wood Lane Farm, West Down, Ilfracombe, Devon, EX34 8NF.**

Discussion took place about the application being for only half of the building, with the potential for an application to be made on the other half resulting in sporadic development. The report from the Sustainability Officer was referred to, as he felt the application should not have been registered as there was no Wildlife Trigger. Discussion also took place about access to the site. **Councillor Ayre proposed the Parish Council raise concerns about normal vehicle access as the site may only be accessed by a 4 x 4 vehicle. This was seconded by Cllr Reeves.** There was unanimous approval for this proposal.

**Resolved – that the Parish Council have concerns about Planning Application 74132 as access may be limited to 4 x 4 vehicles rather than normal vehicle access.**

b) Applications received after publishing of this agenda.

**74185 – Use of authorized mobile home for 12 months holiday occupancy (replacing Land at West Hill Farm/Easter to end of October only) at Mobile Home Lant at West Hill Farm, West Down, Ilfracombe, Devon, EX34 8NF.**

No concerns were raised about this application. **Cllr Squire recommended approval which was seconded by Cllr Reeves.** There was unanimous approval for this proposal.

**Resolved – that the Parish Council have no concerns regarding Planning Application 74185.**

4520. Correspondence.

Correspondence raised at the meeting:-

- a) Letters of thanks had been received from the PCC, the Parish Hall and West Down Village Green Field Association in respect of the second Parish Council Grant payments..
- b) Maria Bailey of North Devon Council was no longer leaving her post. She was requesting attendance at either the January or February Parish Council meetings.
- c) The previous Clerk had provided a letter about the payment for the second set of Children's Padi Padz for the defibrillator. This had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting.

**Cllr Reeves proposed approval of the payment for the second set of childrens Padi Padz which was seconded by Cllr Verney.** There were six approvals to this proposal and one abstention.

4521. Unresolved Questions.

None.

4522. Items to be added to next meeting Agenda.

- a) Cllr Reeves referred to the possible NDC Climate & Environmental Grant for the West Down Village Green Community Field. The application made for energy saving from solar panels was rejected. Discussion took place about a wild planting area and orchard in the community field. Cllr Verney felt this was something the WDVGFA would look at. The deadline for applications is 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022.
- b) Setting of the Budget & Precept for 2022/23.
- c) Co-option of a new Councillor.
- d) Village Website. Update of usage and advertising.
- e) To receive any Grass Cutting and Bus Shelter Cleaning quotations and decide who should be awarded the contract for 2022.
- f) P3/Footpath Survey
- g) District Councillors Grant.

4523. Any other business.

- a) Councillor Kenshole had provided the Clerk with a Display Screen Assessment checklist to fill out and return to him.
- b) The Planning Enforcement Officer was to provide a presentation to Councillors immediately before the next Parish Council Meeting on changes to planning regulations.

The Meeting closed at 10.36 p.m.