

**WEST HILL PARISH COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD ON 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2025 AT 7.00pm**

Present:	Chairman Cllr Francis Pullman (FP), Cllr ShirleyMay Saunders (SMS), Cllr Ann Cooper (AC)
In attendance:	Anne Oliver Parish Clerk, 4 members of the public,
Apologies	Cllr Trevor Ingram (TI), DCC/EDDC Cllr Jess Bailey

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council**

Item (a)	Discussion and decisions (b)
25/220	<p><b>Welcome and Chairman's announcements</b></p> <p>The meeting started at 7.00pm. The Chairman, Cllr FP, welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p> <p>The Chairman's announcements included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aggregate Industries have abandoned their plans to develop Straitgate Quarry and the land had been sold.</li> <li>The West Hill PTFA takes place on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> June 12.00-4pm, on the school field.</li> </ul>
25/221	<p><b>Apologies.</b> To receive apologies and approve reasons for absence, if considered appropriate. Cllr TI sent his apology. Cllrs noted his absence and accepted and his reason for non-attendance.</p>
25/222	<p>To receive an update on <b>Councillor</b> vacancies and to consider applications for co-option. No applications for co-option had been received. The Council continued to have vacancies for three Councillors.</p>
25/223	<p><b>Public question time (3 minutes):</b> To allow members of the public present to give their question/comments to 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. <i>(Contributions are limited to 3 minutes).</i></p> <p>One member of the public raised several matters:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The footpath map and noticeboard near Morrisons was in poor condition. <b>Action:</b> The Chairman asked the Clerk to include a related agenda item for the next meeting.</li> <li>Requested painted white lines at the junction of Eastfield and the Eastfield Gardens. The Chairman noted this was a DCC Highways matter. <b>Action:</b> Clerk to refer the request to DCC Highways.</li> <li>Repair work on Public Footpath 1 has not been started. Footpath 6: Fallen branches have not been cleared. <b>Action:</b> Clerk to contact DCC Public Right of Way team to request a progress report. <b>Action:</b> Clerk to contact the landowner to request maintenance works on Footpath 6.</li> <li>The Footpath Warden will contact the landowner regarding Japanese Knotweed on Footpath 6.</li> </ol>
25/224	<p><b>District and County Councillors' reports:</b> To receive reports for information (items raised for decision will appear on the agenda for the next meeting) <b>N/A</b></p>
25/225	<p>To receive <b>Declarations of interest</b> for items on the agenda and receipt of requests for new Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs) dispensations for items on the agenda. 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. Cllrs FP and AC each declared no interests in items on the agenda.</p>

	Cllr SMS declared no interests in items on the agenda. She advised that the site of planning application (25/0818/TRE, agenda item 25/136) was near but not adjacent to her property. She would take part in consideration of the item.
25/226	<b>Confidential/exempt items. In consideration of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960</b> (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. <b>N/A</b>
25/227	<b>Minutes:</b> To receive the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting of <b>6<sup>th</sup> May 2025</b> (Minute 25/167 - 25/209) and Extraordinary Meeting <b>19<sup>th</sup> May 2025</b> (Minute 25/210–25/219) to approve the signing of the Minutes by the Chairman as a true record. <b>The minutes of the meeting of 6<sup>th</sup> May 2025 and Extraordinary meeting 19<sup>th</sup> May 2025 were unanimously confirmed as a true record and were signed by the Chairman.</b>
25/228	<b>Planning Applications received:</b> To consider a response to: <b>25/0818/TRE</b> 9 Ashley Brake West Hill Ottery St Mary EX11 1TW T1, Evergreen Leylandii tree: removal due to heavily listing T2-T10 Evergreen Leylandii tree: reduction of height by 8m from the top, too tall. <b>The Chairman noted the information presented in the application form was incorrect. The trees were subject to TPO reference 86/008/TPO which applied to “trees of whatever species”.</b>  <b>Cllrs AC and SMS supported the application as they considered the trees to be very tall and overbearing. Cllr FP did not support the application as no information was available to explain or justify the proposed works.</b>  <b>By a majority decision, the meeting resolved to support the application.</b>  <b>25/1018/FUL</b> Pitfield Farm House Exeter Road Ottery St Mary EX11 1LE Conversion of existing outbuilding into annexe ancillary to the main dwelling  <b>The meeting noted the application was to create a 3 bedroom/2 bathroom dwelling which they felt could potentially become a separate dwelling rather than an annexe.</b>  <b>It was resolved to support the application subject to a planning condition such that the converted building is ancillary to the main dwelling. The Parish Council requested mitigation measures were put in place to avoid any impact on protected species including provision for bat roosting and bird nesting</b>
25/229	<b>Planning decisions received</b> for information (*denotes WHPC differed) <b>All noted</b>  <b>25/0671/FUL</b> 6 Potters Close West Hill Ottery St Mary EX11 1YE Proposed two storey infill extension between the existing house and the detached garage. Proposed first floor extension above the garage ..... <b>25/0115/CPE</b> Village Hall West Hill Beech Park West Hill EX11 1UQ Certificate of existing lawfulness for the confirmation that planning permission has been implemented with the preparation of a trench for the foundations of a section of a new pedestrian path on the Village Hall grounds

EDDC  
Decision

Refused

Decided

## WHPC Groups + Initiatives

### Finance Working Group:

25/230	<b>Internal Audit Report for 2024-25:</b>  a. To receive and consider the findings of the independent review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control.  <b>The meeting noted:</b>
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	<p>i. the Internal Audit had been carried out by an independent Internal Auditor on 2nd May 2025. The Internal Audit report had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting.</p> <p>ii. No matters for action were raised by the Internal Auditor.</p> <p>Cllrs were satisfied that the audit was a thorough review of the Council's controls and procedures.</p> <p><b>It was unanimously resolved</b> to accept the Internal Audit Report</p> <p>b. To authorise that this be submitted to the External Auditor.</p> <p><b>It was unanimously resolved</b> to submit the report to the External Auditor and to publish the report on the Council's website.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Clerk to submit the Internal Audit Report to the External Auditor.</p>
<b>25/231</b>	<p><b>Finance Working Group:</b></p> <p>a. To consider and approve the bank reconciliation for the year to 31st March 2025.</p> <p><b>It was unanimously resolved</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to approve the bank reconciliation for the year to 31st March 2025.</li> <li>- The Chairman to sign the reconciliation on behalf of the Council.</li> </ul> <p>b. To receive and approve a Financial Report, Accounts and Financial Statement for year ending 31st Mar 2025.</p> <p>The meeting considered End of Year Financial reports prepared by the RFO.</p> <p><b>It was unanimously resolved</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to accept and approve the Financial Report, Accounts and Financial Statement.</li> <li>- the Chairman to sign the Financial Statement on behalf of the Council.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action:</b> Clerk to publish the Financial Report and Financial Statement on the Council's website.</p> <p>c. To approve and sign WHPC's CIL statement for year ending 31st Mar 2025.</p> <p>The meeting noted the Parish Council held £29,836.48 Community Infrastructure Levy Monies at 31st March 2025.</p> <p><b>It was unanimously resolved:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to accept and approve the CIL statement for year ending 31st Mar 2025.</li> <li>- the Chairman to sign the Financial Statement on behalf of the Council.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action:</b> Clerk to publish the CIL Statement on the Council's website</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Clerk to submit the Annual CIL statement to EDDC.</p> <p>d. To approve the WHPC Financial Reserves Policy and allocation of reserves held at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.</p> <p>The meeting noted the Council held £134,092 Reserves at 31st March 2025.</p> <p><b>It was unanimously resolved:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To re-adopt the WHPC Financial Reserves Policy</li> <li>- To accept the recommended allocation of reserves</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Action:</b> Clerk to publish the Financial Reserves Policy and allocation of reserves on the Council's website</p> <p>e. To review and approve amendments (if appropriate) to the Council's bank mandate.</p> <p><b>It was unanimously resolved</b> to approve the Council's bank mandate for Unity Trust Bank and The Cambridge Building Society without any amendments.</p> <p>f. To resolve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. the Council's automated payments (direct debits) and to approve their continued use</li> <li>ii. payments by BACs or CHAPs if appropriate</li> <li>iii. supplier account details.</li> </ul> <p><b>It was unanimously resolved</b> to approve items i-iii listed above without amendments.</p> <p>g. To review and approve (if appropriate) a schedule of regular payments.</p> <p><b>It was unanimously resolved</b> a schedule of regular payments presented to the meeting</p>
25/232	<p><b>Annual Governance Statement 2024-25:</b></p> <p>a. To complete the Annual Governance Statement 2024-25 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return and to authorise that this be signed on behalf of the Parish Council and submitted to the External Auditor.</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><b>It was unanimously resolved:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. to complete the Annual Governance Statement and for the Chairman and Clerk to sign the Statement at the meeting.</li> <li>ii. To submit the Statement to the External Auditor and to publish it on the Council's website.</li> </ul>
25/233	<p><b>Annual Accounting Statements 2024-25 (AGAR Part 3)</b></p> <p>a. To receive and consider the Accounting Statements of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024-25 presented by the RFO.</p> <p>Councillors considered the Accounting Statement presented by the Clerk. The Chairman reported the Finance Working Group had reviewed the Statement and confirmed its accuracy.</p> <p>b. To resolve, if considered appropriate, to approve the Annual Accounting Statements are accurate.</p> <p><b>It was unanimously resolved</b> to approve the Accounting Statement as a true record.</p> <p>c. To authorise that this be signed on behalf of the Parish Council and submitted to the External Auditor.</p> <p><b>It was unanimously resolved</b> to submit the Statement to the External Auditor and to publish it on the Council's website.</p>
25/234	<p>To consider and, if appropriate, to approve supporting documents in respect of the Financial Year 2024-25 and to authorise that these be submitted to the External Auditor as required within the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.</p> <p>The Chairman reported the Finance Working Group had reviewed supporting documents prepared by the RFO.</p> <p><b>It was unanimously resolved</b> to approve the supporting documents and to submit them to the External Auditor.</p>

	<p><b>Action:</b> Clerk to publish the Annual Governance and Accountability Return documents for 2024-2025 on the Council's website.</p>
25/235	<p><b>To approve the Period for the Exercise of Public Rights for the financial year 2024-25</b> (proposed dates 5<sup>th</sup> June to 16<sup>th</sup> July, including the first 14 days of July as required by law.)</p> <p><b>It was unanimously resolved</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to accept the proposed dates, 5<sup>th</sup> June to 16<sup>th</sup> July 2024 for the Period for the Exercise of Public Rights for the financial year 2024-25.</li> <li>- Inspection of the Accounts would be by appointment only. If a request to inspect the accounts is received the Clerk is to book a room for the inspection, as the Council does not have a public office.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action:</b> Clerk to publish the Notices and guidelines to be posted on the Council's website and noticeboard as required.</p>
25/236	<p><b>Neighbourhood Plan Working Group:</b></p> <p>a. To receive a progress report including Neighbourhood Plan Survey: 7<sup>th</sup> June – 19<sup>th</sup> July.</p> <p>Cllr AC gave a progress report. The Neighbourhood Plan Survey will run for six weeks from Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> June until 19<sup>th</sup> July. The Working Group have prepared two surveys: a young person's survey (11-17 yrs) and an adult survey. The online survey can be accessed via the Council's website. Paper copies are available at the Morrisons store, West Hill.</p> <p>Publicity material will be posted ahead of the start date. A Press Release will also be issued. Members of the Working Group will attend the Summer Fete to promote the survey.</p> <p>b. To confirm the decision made under Delegated Powers to approve the wording of the WHPC Newsletter for June 2025.</p> <p><b>It was unanimously resolved</b> to confirm the wording of the WHPC newsletter (June 2025) previously agreed under Delegated Powers.</p>
25/237	<p><b>Village Hall Pedestrian Path Working Group:</b> To receive a progress report and to agree actions and costs. Report including:</p> <p>a. Application for Certificate of Lawfulness</p> <p>It was confirmed that the Parish Council had received a Certificate of Lawfulness from EDDC. This confirmed phase 1 construction works for the pedestrian path complied with the terms of the associated planning permission ref. 22/1864/VAR (which followed planning permission 21/2207/FUL).</p> <p>b. Traffic Regulations Order</p> <p>The Chairman reported that the Parish Council continued to await DCC's decision on the Parish Council's application for a Traffic Regulations Order for parking restrictions on West Hill Road.</p>
25/238	<p><b>Emergency Plan Working Group:</b> To receive a progress report and agree actions, if appropriate.</p> <p>The meeting received a report from the working group. The group are developing plans for a village hub to support the West Hill Emergency Plan.</p>
25/239	<p><b>Playpark Working Group:</b> To receive a progress update on the development of a playpark strategy</p> <p>Cllr AC reported the scheduled Playpark Working Group workshop was re-scheduled by a month due to Councillor availability. The Working Group will provide an update to the next meeting.</p>

## Other Matters

25/240	<p>To consider a <b>Grant Applications</b> from West Hill PTFA request for £450 funding towards the cost of the Summer Fayre.</p> <p>The meeting considered an application by the West Hill PTFA for a grant of £450 towards the cost of the PTFA Summer Fayre to be held on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2025. This was a community event open to all residents.</p> <p>Cllr SMS proposed the grant should be awarded, seconded by Cllr AC.</p> <p>It was resolved to award the grant in full, £450.00</p>
25/241	<p>To decide a response to East Devon District Council's <b>Rural Broadband consultation</b>.</p> <p><b>It was resolved</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to submit a response to the consultation</li> <li>- to decide a response to the survey questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. From the businesses and /or residents you represent, what are the most common complaints or challenges raised about broadband connectivity in rural areas? Poor broadband speeds and mobile coverage in many parts of the village. Many residents rely on wi-fi calling but this itself is dependent on broadband speeds.</li> <li>ii. What initiatives or solutions have you seen (or would you recommend) to improve broadband services for rural communities? What can national or local government do to help? Extend provision of fibre to the home. Protection against power failure</li> <li>iii. If broadband infrastructure were improved in rural areas, what potential economic, social or business opportunities do you foresee for those you represent? Greater personal safety. Better opportunities for small business/work from home.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
25/242	<p>To consider <b>Councillor training</b> requirements and to approve costs.</p> <p>Councillors were reminded to return their self-assessment.</p> <p>Action: To include an agenda item for Training Needs on the agenda for the next meeting.</p>
25/243	<p>To confirm arrangements for the Parish Council stall at the <b>PTFA Summer Fete</b>:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. To decide arrangements for the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group attendance. It was agreed that members of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group would attend the West Hill Summer Fayre to promote the Neighbourhood Plan Survey.</li> <li>b. To consider and if appropriate, approve a Risk Assessment for a Crazy Golf activity provided by the Parish Council. It unanimously resolved to approve a risk assessment for the event.</li> <li>c. To consider actions and confirm costs (£200.00 budget previously approved 25/201) The Clerk gave an update on materials purchased to date. The overall costs of staging the event was expected to be within budget. Cllrs discussed arrangements and decided the charges for adult/child participants at the event. No further actions or costs were approved.</li> </ol>
25/244	<p>To receive a report from the Parish Clerk.</p> <p>The Clerk will be attending the Society of Local Council Clerks Expo during June.</p>
25/245	<p>To consider correspondence received:</p> <p>The Clerk gave an update on a complaint received and reported to the WHPC meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2025. The complaint was processed according to the Council's Complaints Policy and the matter resolved informally.</p>
25/246	<p>To review WHPC's <b>Action Tracker</b> and agree actions as considered appropriate.</p> <p>The Chairman led a review of the outstanding actions. No further actions were identified.</p>
25/247	<p><b>Financial matters:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To consider and approve, if appropriate, the Schedule of Payments.</li> </ol>

	<p>The meeting considered the Schedule of Payments and invoices circulated and published before the meeting. No questions were raised. <b>It was resolved</b> to approve the payments and sign the invoices.</p> <p>2. To consider and approve, if appropriate, any additional payments presented to the meeting. Two additional payments were presented to the meeting. <b>It was resolved</b> to approve the payments and sign the two invoices:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Inv2196 West Hill Village Hall Room Hire May 2025) £26.51 Inv3392 Pro-Lawn Garden Services VAS Transfers £96.00</p> <p>3. To receive, if available, monthly Bank Reconciliations and finance trackers. <b>Carried forward to the next scheduled meeting.</b></p>
<b>25/248</b>	<p><b>Councillor questions, reports and items for future agenda</b></p> <p>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></p> <p><b>No matters were raised.</b></p>
<b>25/249</b>	<p><b>Next meeting:</b> To confirm arrangements for upcoming WHPC meeting on <b>Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2025</b> 7.00pm at the Village Hall.</p>

All members of the public left the meeting.  
Part A ended 8.04pm  
Meeting closed at 8.04pm

Signed .....

Date .....