

**WEST HILL PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON 2nd FEBRUARY 2021 AT 7.30PM**

**** The meeting was held by video-conference due to the Covid-19 situation**

Present:	Chairman Cllr Margaret Hall (MH), Cllr Alison Carr (AC), District Cllr/WHPC Cllr Jessica Bailey (JB), Cllr Della Cannings (DC), Cllr Margaret Piper (MP), Cllr Amanda Townsend (AT), Cllr Alan Cook (ABC)
In attendance: Apologies received from:	Anne Oliver Parish Clerk, two members of the public attended the meeting DCC Cllr Claire Wright (CW)

AGENDA – ORDINARY MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

Item (a)	Discussion and decisions (b)
21/025	Welcome and Chairman’s announcements The meeting started at 7.30PM. The Chair MH welcomed everyone and reminded everyone that the meeting was being sound recorded.
21/026	Apologies. To receive apologies and approve reasons for absence. Apologies were received from DCC Cllr Claire Wright.
21/027	Public question time (3 minutes) From 7.30pm 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 included issues submitted to the Clerk prior to the meeting. No matters raised.
20/028	District and County Councillors’ reports for information (items raised for decision will appear on the agenda for the next meeting) DCC Cllr Claire Wright submitted a written report to the meeting (available on WHPC website) covering <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DCC Covid Support Fund, Unpaid Carers, Covid vaccinations, Adult Social Care funding cuts. EDDC Cllr Jess Bailey gave an update: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Hill’s RBL were successful in their grant application to EDDC. The funds awarded will be used to purchase equipment for their new kitchen. • Cllr JB no longer holds a cabinet post at EDDC. • Held a meeting with Highways to discuss various West Hill issues (see item 21/044) • EDDC have recruited a further Tree Officer. • Ash Hill Road TPOs (see item 20/029) • Residents have alerted Cllr JB to a safety concern caused by an overgrown hedge which restricts visibility when entering Elsdon Lane from the footpath. <p style="text-align: center;">Cllrs agreed to write to the householder asking for the hedge to be cut back.</p>
21/029	Declarations of Interest <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Register of Interests: Councillors are reminded of the need to update their register of interests. b. To declare any personal interests in items on the agenda and their nature. To declare any disclosable pecuniary interests in items on the agenda and their nature

	<p>(Councillors with DPIs must leave the room for the relevant items).</p> <p>Cllr JB declared an interest as a District Cllr, plus a Personal Interest in item 21/032 (21/00565/FUL) as she knew the applicant but would take part in discussion. Cllrs: MH, ABC, AC, DC, AT, MP no interests declared.</p> <p>All noted and accepted</p>
21/030	<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. N/A</p>
21/031	<p>Minutes</p> <p>To approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 5th January 2021, previously circulated – including correction to item 21/005. Noted and approved</p>
21/032	<p>Planning applications received</p> <p>21/0065/FUL Woodbines Ford Lane West Hill EX11 1XE Applicant Mr & Mrs Wray Two storey rear and side extension, addition of dormer window and remodelling of front doorway</p> <p>Councillors noted and supported the following concerns previously submitted by residents: overlooking and lack of screening.</p> <p>Councillors did not support the application for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllrs were concerned that the 1st floor windows overlook neighbouring properties. Cllrs had hoped to carry out a site visit to assess the impact of the proposed development but this was not possible due to Covid restrictions. • It is clear that boundary hedge/trees have already been removed and replaced with a fence. This is contrary to the West Hill design principles set out in the Neighbourhood Plan which promotes boundary Devon banks or hedges in keeping with the character of the area. Councillors request a scheme of replanting with native species. <p>Councillors supported the Tree Officers submitted comments.</p> <p>21/2756/FUL Willow View Park Site Willow View Park Whimple EX5 2QT Applicant Mr D Light The siting of two residential park homes with garages</p> <p>WHPC was consulted as an adjacent parish.</p> <p>Cllrs noted that an earlier application had been refused due to Environmental Health concerns regarding the nearby industrial unit.</p> <p>Cllrs objected to the application for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cllrs supported the Environmental Health officers concerns regarding noise and loss of amenity. 2. The proposed location adjacent to the community centre would lead to a loss of amenity. 3. The proposed development is in open countryside. <p>21/0046/TRE Broad Oak Plantation Higher Broad Oak Road West Hill Applicant Tilhill Forestry Beech trees between the woodland and neighbours garden - Tree tag 3435 with multiple stems and an adjacent beech tree which is untagged, we are applying to remove the remaining 3 stems and an adjacent beech tree.</p>

	<p>Councillors did not support the application for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Tree Report (dated May 2020) does not provide evidence for removal of the trees. It identifies the presence of disease which requires maintenance work. It does not recommend felling. 2. Cllrs were concerned at the potential loss of habitat for bats. A bat box is mounted on the tree and it may have been present for some time.
<p>21/033</p>	<p>Planning decisions received for information (*denotes WHPC differed)</p> <p>20/2314/TRE Thrushes Anvil Windmill Lane West Hill EX11 1JP Approved Various tree works</p> <p>20/1824/TRE Parsonage House Bendarroch Road West Hill Approved* Various tree works. Noted</p>
<p>21/034</p>	<p>TPO notifications</p> <p>21/0002/TPO Land to the north of Oak Road, West Hill EX11 1SJ: Provisional Order - to be confirmed Noted (please see next item for further detail)</p>
<p>21/035</p>	<p>To receive an update on a planning matters:</p> <p>a. To consider the East Devon Local Plan Public Consultation (deadline for responses 15th March 2021), in particular arrangements for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Consultation • WHPC response <p>Cllr MH gave an update on the EDDC Local Plan Review which is now open for public consultation. The new Local Plan will outline how the district addresses issues including the climate change emergency, how many new homes should be built and where, how and where new jobs should be created.</p> <p>Cllrs noted this is a significant issue for the Council and residents. In particular residents will want to have their say on how many homes are built and where.</p> <p>The timescales for responses are short as the deadline for responses is 15th March. Cllrs discussed how to publicise the Review to residents and how to encourage their feedback to EDDC and WHPC. A public meeting cannot take place due to Covid restrictions.</p> <p>Cllrs agreed to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Publicise and promote resident attendance via Zoom at a WHPC Council meeting on 16th February. 2. Communicate to residents via the mailing list, website, Facebook, noticeboards etc 3. Consider the Council's draft response at the Council meeting on 2nd March <p>Cllr MH noted that a new Local Plan would invalidate parts of the Neighbourhood Plan (NP). Any subsequent work to update the NP would be onerous as the current documents applies to West Hill and Ottery St Mary jointly. Cllr DC suggested that the Council should do more to publicise the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>b. To receive an update on Land to the north of Oak Road</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Tree Works b. Resident Communication c. Recent approaches from developers (see item 21/039 New: Protocol on Planning Application Meetings with Landowners, Developers or their Agents)

	<p>Cllr MH reported that she and Cllr JB had recently received telephone calls from a developer asking for a meeting with the Council. Both had declined. The approach appeared to relate to land to the north of Oak Road</p> <p>Cllrs discussed this and stated their wish that any such meetings with Developers were transparent and open to the public. (See item 21/039) A draft protocol for meetings with developers)</p> <p>Cllr JB gave an update on recent tree works on the land to the north of Oak Road:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On Saturday 16th Jan the Parish Council were notified of works on trees adjoining Oak Road. Cllr JB attended the site and discuss the proposed work with the landowner and tree surgeon. A birch tree had been felled and further work was planned to fell two mature trees. Other residents were also present and expressed their concerns. • EDDC Tree officers visited the site on Monday and agree to place a provisional Tree Protection Order (TPO) on all trees on the site ref 21/0002/TPO. This order will be in place for 6 months. During this period it may be confirmed as a permanent order or it could be amended/cancelled <p>Cllrs discussed their concerns regarding the continuing loss of tree across the village. They expressed their concern that could change the character of the village. Cllr DC suggested “West Hill – a Woodland Village” could become a Treeless village. Cllrs noted that there are many older significant trees in the village however there were few younger trees growing to replace them in due course. Cllr MH suggested a series of wide-ranging actions were required and these may benefit from expert guidance.</p> <p>It was agreed to hold an informal meeting to develop a Tree Policy and programme of actions. The output of this meeting would then be considered at a Council meeting.</p>
21/036	<p>2021/21 WHPC Plan: To review progress to date and confirm its priorities.</p> <p>Cllr MH noted that work was in progress on all actions but expressed concern that the plan may need to be re-prioritised. The Local Plan Review and Tree action plan would require significant effort and other initiatives may need to be re-scheduled.</p>

Committee & Working Groups

21/037	<p>Finance Working Group: For information</p> <p>a) Yorkshire Bank Account confirmed closed</p> <p>To consider re-appointing Paul Hayward as Internal Auditor for 2020/2021</p> <p>The Finance Working Group proposed that Paul Hayward was re-appointed as Internal Auditor for 2020/2021 (fees unchanged, £100 + travel expenses). They also recommended, as per best practice, that a new auditor should be appointed for 2021/2.</p> <p>Cllrs agreed the recommendations.</p>
21/038	<p>Open Spaces Committee</p> <p>To note and confirm the minutes of the meeting of 29th December 2020 – n/a meeting cancelled.</p> <p>To receive recommendations and answer questions arising from the recent Committee meeting on 26th January 2021:</p> <p>a. 2021 OSC Terms of Reference: noted and agreed</p> <p>b. WHPC Playpark Management Plan: noted and agreed</p> <p>c. WHPC Tree Strategy (see item 21/037)</p>

	<p>Other matters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urgent matters arising <p>Cllr JB alerted the Council to a flooding problem on the Elsdon lane/Lower Broad Oak footpath. This may be due to a blocked drain.</p> <p>It was agreed that Cllr JB should contact South West Water to establish ownership of the drain.</p>
21/039	<p>People & Policy Working Group</p> <p>a. To approve new WHPC policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protocol on Planning Application Meetings with Landowners, Developers or their Agents. • Remote Meeting Policy <p>It was agreed to adopt and publish the Protocol and Policy listed above.</p> <p>b. To consider arrangements for the West Hill Community Survey</p> <p>Cllrs discussed a paper previously circulated which outlined</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the proposed methodology and timescales for the survey. The working group proposed that the primary method would be an online survey but paper copies would be available. • the purpose of the survey and topics for questions. <p>Cllrs were keen that many residents would complete the survey and discussed how they may be encouraged to take part. Cllr JB suggested that a small prize could be offered to encourage participation. The WG suggested that anonymity would also encourage residents.</p> <p>Cllrs agreed the methodology set out in the proposal paper.</p> <p>Cllrs were asked to submit their proposed survey questions to Cllr AC.</p>
21/040	<p>Traffic Study Working Group</p> <p>To receive an update from the Joint WHPC/Village Hall Working Group on a new pedestrian access to the Village Hall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Amendments to Design b. Memorandum of Understanding <p>To approve fees for PJA Traffic Consultant's further work up to an including a planning application.</p> <p>Cllrs discussed a paper previously circulated. Cllr MH reported</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discussions with the VH reps had progressed well. The design for the path was close to agreement and ready for a final Design Drawing. 2. The work required to get to a planning application was clear but the subsequent construction stage was becoming more complicated. Issues, such as funding, had to be resolved. 3. The Working Group proposed that public consultation prior to submitting an application was not required as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The original West Hill Traffic Study had identified the demand for a new access point • It is not an EDDC pre-requisite. • The timescales between a village consultation and the planning application are probably short. • Residents can submit their views to EDDC via the planning application process.

	<p>4. A Memorandum of Understanding had been drafted by the Village Hall Trees. This was a helpful document but it had raised several issues which need to be clarified with them.</p> <p>Cllrs considered the proposal for a post-application project manager was a pragmatic way forward.</p> <p>Cllrs agreed the proposed response to the Village Hall Trustees.</p> <p>Cllrs agreed the PJA Traffic Consultant fee proposal: Final design drawing £500, Design and Access statements for the Planning Application £500.</p>
21/041	<p>Emergency Plan Working Group</p> <p>To receive an update on the development of the Community Emergency Plan for West Hill.</p> <p>Cllrs considered a paper summarising progress to date (previously circulated):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDDC have confirmed that they have the Village Hall listed as a Rest Centre in their Emergency Plan. However, the Village Hall Trustees are unaware of any discussions on this. WHPC are awaiting an update from EDDC. • RBL and St Michael's have responded very positively and are willing to work with the Parish Council on the Development of an Emergency Plan for West Hill. <p>Cllr MH thanked Cllr DC for her work on this initiative.</p>

Other Matters

21/042	<p>Covid-19: To consider</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. To review any recent Government Covid-19 announcements. No significant changes to the guidelines have been published b. To receive an update on The West Hill Help Scheme The Clerk reported that the Help Scheme had been quiet during the 3rd phase of Lockdown. To date, only 15 requests for help had been received including 13 request for prescription collections. As before the process for collecting prescriptions was working smoothly. c. To approve Cllr Canning's attendance on a NALC event: How are local Councils vital to community recovery 25th March 2021 (*£30) Noted and approved d. To consider the WHPC meeting schedule as the legislation permitting councils to meet remotely will come to an end on 6 May 2021. Cllrs were reminded that the current legislation, The Coronavirus Act, which permits Council meetings to be held virtually expires on 6th May 2021. NALC and other bodies are liaising with the Government to ask for this facility to be extended. NALC are advising Councils to start preparations to return to face-to-face meetings. <p>Cllrs agreed that the Parish Council should write to Simon Jupp MP, NALC and DALC expressing the concerns of the Council: For a rural parish such as ours, with a demographic of many older people, it is a huge advantage to be able to hold remote meetings, or hybrid meetings, and this situation will continue into the future. We think it is essential that the power to hold remote meetings is put on a permanent footing.</p>
21/043	<p>To receive an update on</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. the monthly crime stats (for information) Cllr AT noted that the Parish Council had monitored the crime statistics for three years and for the first time a "Drugs" crime had been reported. Details of the crime report are not available. b. The Community Safety Partnership c. The Councillor Advocate Scheme (Police & Crime Commissioner) <p>Cllrs considered a report circulated by Cllr DC. No questions were raised. Cllrs were reminded to submit any issues for discussion at the Local Area Group to Cllr DC before 10th March.</p>

21/044	<p>Highways: To receive an update on a meeting with to discuss</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Parking at the War Memorial b. Additional VAS site on West Hill Road c. B3180 junction with West Hill Road d. Other matters <p style="color: red;">Cllrs MH, JB and Clerk met Highways Neighbourhood Officer to consider various West Hill issues:</p> <p style="color: red;">a. Parking at the War Memorial: Over recent months WHPC received communications from residents expressing their concern at the increasing number of cars parking at the War Memorial. Cllrs supported the road safety concerns and regretted the lack of respect for the War Memorial.</p> <p style="color: red;">Highways agreed to consider installing double yellow lines and have referred this to the HATOC panel for review. Cllrs were advised that this is a lengthy process and could take c18-24 months to complete.</p> <p style="color: red;">Cllrs agreed to liaise with the local Police team to establish possible short term actions.</p> <p style="color: red;">b. Additional VAS site on West Hill Road: As requested Highways have assessed West Hill Road to identify potential sites to locate a VAS device. This would be in addition to the current approved locations (near Needlewood Close, nr Eastfield). Highways have identified a possible site near the War Memorial. This is on private land and requires the householder's permission.</p> <p style="color: red;">Cllrs agreed to write to the Householder seeking permission to locate a VAS pole/VAS device on their roadside verge.</p> <p style="color: red;">c. B3180 junction with West Hill Road: The meeting discussed safety at the junction of West Hill Road with the B3180. This was a serious concern highlighted in the WHPC Traffic Study consultation. The meeting discussed the possibility of installing a "no Entry" sign to prevent drivers using the "side road" to turn right onto the B3180. The visibility of oncoming traffic is very restricted.</p> <p style="color: red;">Highways advised that any proposal to change this junction, including the installation of a sign, would require a major review/risk assessment as any change would have to comply with current Highways standards for gradient, visibility etc. This would be a lengthy and expensive process. He also noted that Highways were highly unlikely to fund this due to budget constraints. If WHPC considered funding the work it would be expensive with very little chance of getting Highways approval. He also reported that no serious accidents had been reported at this site.</p> <p style="color: red;">Cllrs were expressed their serious concern regarding the safety of the junction.</p> <p style="color: red;">d. Other matters: Highways agreed to assess parking on Bendarroch Road/St Mary's View.</p>
21/045	<p>2021 Remembrance Events: To receive an update on WHPC preparations for 2021 events.</p> <p style="color: red;">Cllr AT gave an update on preparations for 2021 Remembrance Events including the need for road closures and training. Further details will be presented to a future meeting.</p>
21/046	<p>2021 Census: To consider the EDDC request to publicise the 2021 Census.</p> <p style="color: red;">Cllrs agreed to publicise the 2021 census.</p>
21/047	<p>Devon Carbon Plan: To consider the WHPC response to the Devon County Council Carbon Plan.</p> <p style="color: red;">Cllrs discussed a recommendation prepared by Cllr ABC. WHPC's response is limited as it does not provide services or own assets. However the anticipated West Hill Tree action plan will contribute.</p>

	Cllrs agreed to join the mailing list and write to express support for the plan.
21/048	<p>Broadband: To receive an update on the Jurassic Fibre schedule for West Hill. Residents have expressed concern that the expected Jurassic Fibre (JF) roll out in West Hill (1Q2021) appears to have been put “on hold”. Residents were aware that JF and Openreach engineers were working in the village during 4Q2020.</p> <p>Cllrs were disappointed but acknowledged that these were commercial decisions.</p> <p>It was agreed that Cllr JB would liaise with Connecting Devon and Somerset, Jurassic Fibre and Openreach to establish their plans and encourage one of the parties to “go live” in West Hill.</p>
21/049	<p>WHPC Newsletter: To consider the date and content for the next Parish Council newsletter.</p> <p>Cllrs agreed a provisional date of 27th March.</p>
21/050	<p>Clerks Report: Actions and matters arising from the last meeting</p> <p>1. Actions, incl outstanding action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20/403 Informal meeting to discuss AONB Review discussion – to be re-scheduled. <p>2. Matters arising</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Resident communication: Parking, Tree felling, Anti-social noise, slippery pavements – all actioned b. Any urgent matters arising.
21/051	<p>Finance and Invoices Tracker</p> <p>Invoices received for approval:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clerk - claim for expenses (Microsoft subscription) 2. Wall Art Newsletters £125 Correction £135 3. Cllr DC – materials for Wildflower Challenge £197.94 <p>Additional Item:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. PLG Services: VAS transfers and cleaning bus shelter £165.60 <p>All noted and approved</p> <p>To receive the 2020-21 Finance Tracker + Bank reconciliation January 2021. – postponed to March meeting as Statements not available. Noted and approved</p>
21/052	<p>Councillors questions, reports and items for future agenda</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>Cllr MH will be attending the upcoming Airport Consultative Committee meeting.</p>
21/053	<p>Next meeting: To confirm the date of the next meeting (by video-conference) which is scheduled for Tuesday 2nd March 2021 or 16th February 2021 to deal with planning applications (if required).</p> <p>The next meeting will be on 16th Feb 2021</p>

Meeting closed 21.56pm

Signed: *Anne Oliver*, Clerk to the Council, 3rd February 2021