

WEST HILL PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 6th December 2022 AT 7.30PM

Present:	Chairman Cllr Della Cannings (DC) , Cllr Margaret Piper (MP), Cllr Stephen Owen (SO), Cllr Amanda Townsend (AT), Cllr Alison Carr (AC),
In attendance:	Anne Oliver Parish Clerk, DCC/EDDC Cllr Jess Bailey, 6 members of the public attended the meeting
Apologies received from:	Cllr Peter Bennett (PB)

AGENDA – ORDINARY MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

ltem (a)	Discussion and decisions (b)
22/348	Welcome and Chairman's announcements The meeting started at 7.30pm.
	 The Chairman's comments included: The Parish Council has sought to keep all households informed of the progress of the East Devon Local Pan through the Council's newsletters, website, noticeboards and more recently at the drop-in session. The Chairman thanked residents for attending the session and for sharing their views with ClIrs. Landowners have put forward 17 West Hill sites for consideration in the Local Plan. EDCC have carried out their initial assessment and propose sites WH04 and WH06 as their 1st preference sites, with WH01 as a second preference site. The remaining 14 sites are shown as "rejected". The Chairman considered this to be misleading as the sites may be re-considered during the further development of the Local Plan. The Chairman also noted that a planning application for 23 houses has recently been submitted for one of the "rejected" sites. (ref 22/2533/MOUT).
22/349	Apologies. To receive apologies and approve reasons for absence. Apologies from Cllr PB were noted and accepted.
22/350	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. <i>Individual contributions are limited to 3 minutes</i> . This item includes issues submitted to the Clerk prior to the meeting.
	Three members of the public wished to speak.
	1. The resident congratulated the Parish Council on the success of the Local Plan drop- in session.
	The resident then raised a number of concerns regarding the planning application 22/2533/MOUT for 23 houses on land off Oak Road. He also suggested that the



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	Council considers compulsory purchase to secure the land as an Open Space facility for residents use.
	 Colin Veale, Chairman of Village Hall Trustees, asked if the new Council elected in May 2023 will be bound by the commitment(s) of the current Council.
	The Chairman advised that this may be subject to any contracts that are in place, but would follow up and respond to the Trustees.
	3. A Resident of Windmill Lane asked for information on the proposed new Settlement Boundary for West Hill included in the draft Local Plan. The Chairman commented that Cllrs had been surprised to see a proposed new Settlement Boundary to replace the existing Built Up Area Boundary as there had been little/no discussion of this at the EDDC Strategic Planning Committee. She noted the proposed new area is enlarged and includes some of the sites put forward in the call for sites to be included in the Local Plan, including WH04, WH06 and WH01.
	The Chairman encouraged members of the public to submit their views on the proposed boundary to EDDC.
	A member of the public left the meeting.
22/351	District and County Councillors' reports for information (items raised for decision will appear on the agenda for the next meeting)
	 DCC/EDDC CIIr JB gave a short report to the meeting Planning Application 22/2533/MOUT Land off Oak Road - CIIr JB had requested an extended consultation period as the current deadline includes the Christmas period. Draft East Devon Local Plan – CIIr JB encourage the public to respond to the DRAFT Local Plan and reminded the meeting of the alternative means of submitting comments: via the consultation website or in writing to Planning Policy. However, she expressed concern that the consultation website was time consuming and difficult to find relevant sections.
	Cllr AC queried whether EDDC were consulting the public properly. She noted that the consultation has been running for a month however there are very few responses on the consultation website. Cllr DC noted the consultation website was unsatisfactory: smiley faces, the public were concerned about the detail, difficult to find items such as settlement boundary etc
	EDDC Cllr JB suggested WHPC could submit interim feedback to highlight these concerns.
	• Housing Targets: Cllr JB hoped the recent Government announcement, Housing Targets will be advisory rather than mandatory, would be good news for East Devon. She noted that East Devon had already experienced significant development in recent years. The statement also included changes to the 5 Year Land Supply requirements
	• Photo ID: Legislation now requires voters to provide photo ID at polling stations.
22/352	Declarations of Interest
	 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 (Councillors with DPIs must leave the room for the relevant items).
	Cllrs DC, MP, AT, SO and AC each declared no interests.
22/353	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
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confidential nature of the business to be transacted): to agree any items to be dealt with after the public and press have been excluded.
Proposed items, to be considered in Part A and continued in Part B, if appropriate
• 22/362-1 To consider arrangements for the appointment of an Internal Auditor for 2022-2023
22/374 Personnel Matters – National Pay Award
Cllrs noted 22/362 was a commercial matter. Both items were noted and agreed to be considered in Part B.
Minutes: To approve and sign the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 1 st November 2022 previously circulated. The minutes were unanimously approved and then signed by the Chairman
Planning Applications received
22/2432/TRE Treeferns Higher Broad Oak Road EX11 1XJ Applicant Mr Browell Various works to 8 oak trees
Cllrs did not support the application for the following reasons
 The oak trees are a significant visual feature and contribute to the sylvan character of West Hill 'the woodland village'.
• The application for tree works relates to their condition and safety, so it is unclear how this application was validated without written arboricultural advice, or other diagnostic
information from an appropriate expert.
Planning decisions received for information (*denotes WHPC differed)
22/2324/TRE Meadowgate West Hill Road West Hill EX11 1UZ Status: Split decision Various tree works
22/1977/FUL White Chimneys Bendarroch Road EX11 1UW Status: Approved Installation of two air source heat pumps to heat the main house and annexe
22/1920/FUL 4 Eastfield Orchard EX11 1FS Status: Approved Single storey rear extension.
22/1864/VAR Village Hall West Hill Beech Park EX11 1UQ Status: Approved Variation of condition no.2 (approved plans) of planning permission 21/2207/FUL (Installation of pedestrian access) to allow revisions to layout of internal path
22/1094/RES Hasta La Vista Windmill Lane EX11 1JP Status: Approved Reserved matters application for access, appearance, layout, scale and landscaping pursuant to outline planning permission 19/2834/OUT
22/2075/TRE 8 Warren Park EX11 1TN Status: Refused * Scots pine: Fell
Cllrs were pleased to note the EDDC decision notice for 22/2075/TRE emphasised the need for an arboricultural report to be provided to justify proposed works. Previous WHPC consultee responses have frequently requested a supporting arboricultural report.
All decisions noted
Other Planning Matters
 To note the confirmed TPO 22/0027/TPO Land at and Adjacent To Brake View, Rockbeare Hill, Rockbeare
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	West Hill Parish Council
	Noted
2.	To note correspondence from Morrish Homes advising they have submitted a planning application for Land off Oak Road
	 Cllr DC reported EDDC had notified the Parish Council of a planning application 22/2533/MOUT Outline application for the erection of 23no. dwellings with all matters reserved save for formation of vehicular and pedestrian access
	As the application arrived too late to be included on the agenda WHPC had requested and agreed an extended deadline for responses. This would enable the Parish Council to consider the application and agree a response at the next meeting on Wednesday 5 th January 2023.
	Given the scale of the application, and previous site history, Cllrs anticipated that many residents may wish to attend the meeting share their views on this major application.
	The Chairman proposed to hold a separate meeting to allow sufficient time for public speaking. Cllrs unanimously agreed.
	It was resolved to hold an Extraordinary Council Meeting on
	 Tuesday 3rd January 2023 7.30pm at the Village Hall

WHPC Groups + Initiatives

22/358	WHPC Strategic Planning Group:
	 Emerging East Devon Local Plan: To receive a report on the progress of the Emerging Plan and the WHPC Drop-In session on 18th November.
	Cllr DC noted that for 18+ months the Parish Council had sought to keep residents informed of the progress on the Local Plan through newsletters and WHPC website. In addition to this the Council's drop-in session on 18 th November provided information on the published Draft Plan and explained how/where to respond to the EDDC consultation.
	Cllr DC reported the event was busy throughout the session. Some 120+ people attended together with the developers for the three preferred sites in West Hill. Many attendees discussed their views and concerns with Cllrs.
	Cllr DC encouraged residents to submit their views to EDDC. The EDDC and WHPC websites explain how to submit comments to the consultation.
	Cllrs were asked to identify additional possible actions to support the community. Cllrs agreed to continue to use the Council's website and noticeboards to publicise the consultation.
	b. To consider a first draft of the WHPC response to the public consultation.
	Cllrs considered a paper circulated before the meeting (available on the Council website) and were invited to comment on a Draft WHPC response to the consultation prepared by the WHPC Working Group. No changes/additions were proposed in the meeting. Cllrs were asked to submit their comments by 23 rd December. A further version will be considered at the next WHPC meeting, 4 th January, before submission before the 15 th January 2023 deadline.



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	2. Neighbourhood Plan : To consider a proposal to create a Neighbourhood Plan for West Hill, and if appropriate, to establish a budget for the project and inform the Precept for 2023-2024
	Cllrs considered a paper circulated for the meeting (and available on the Council website) which set out the options available to the Parish Council following the notification of Ottery St Mary Town Council's (OSMTC) intention to review the current joint OSM/West Hill Neighbourhood Plan.
	 Comments included The East Devon Local Plan sets out policies which apply across the district. The Neighbourhood Plan sets out policies applicable to West Hill. The training session (for November 8th) made clear that the creation of a Neighbourhood Plan is a lengthy and time-consuming process whichever option is chosen. Benefits of focussing on West Hill only Would want to work with OSMTC on common areas such as the green wedge
	It was unanimously resolved to a. Develop a Neighbourhood Plan b. To write to OSMTC to inform them of this decision and to seek to work jointly on
	common sections of the plan. Cllr DC explained that the first step in the process was to define the Neighbourhood Development Area (the Parish boundary).
	It was unanimously resolved to apply to EDDC to designate a Neighbourhood Development Area
22/359	 Village Hall Pedestrian Link: To receive a verbal update on arrangements for the tendering process. Cllr DC reported the "Invitation to Tender" process had begun as the Council's planning application 22/1864/VAR had been approved. A Tender Pack had been approved by the joint West Hill Village Hall/Parish Council working group issued to 5 contractors seeking responses by 16th January 2023
	A member of the mublic left the meeting
22/360	A member of the public left the meeting. Community Engagement Group: 1. To receive an update on the November drop-in session.
	Cllr MP was pleased to report a member of the public joined the November drop-in session. The next event is Tuesday 13 th December, 7.30pm at the RBL.
	2. To consider activities to encourage candidates to stand for the new Council in May 2023.
	 Cllr MP reported Members of the Community Engagement working group had attended a seminar focussed on how to encourage people to stand as a Councillor a dedicated "Become a Councillor" webpage had been created on the Council's webpage. This gives information on West Hill Parish Council, eligibility criteria etc. It will continue to be developed to provide further information.
	3. To consider arrangements for the next WHPC newsletter
	It was resolved that a WHPC newsletter would be distributed from Saturday 21 st January with printing costs estimated to be £400.
	4. To consider arrangements for the Annual Parish meeting on Friday 10 th March 2024.



	West Hill Parish Council
	It was agreed that the CEO of Ottery Health Matters, Emily Lezzeri woud be invited to be the guest speaker for the event. As in previous years village groups and organisations would also be invited to give a short annual update to the meeting.
22/361	Remembrance Service 2022: To receive a report on the 2022 Remembrance Service, Sunday 13 th November 2022
	Cllrs considered a brief report prepared by Cllr AC on the road closure organised by WHPC for the 2022 Remembrance Service. The event had passed without incident. Learning points and information would be collated and made available to the new Council for their consideration.
	It was resolved the Task and Finish working group has achieved its purpose and would be suspended.
22/362	Finance Working Group: 1. To consider arrangements for the appointment of an Internal Auditor 2022-2023 To be considered in Part B
	EDDC Cllr JB and three members of the public left the meeting
	2. To consider a draft budget and precept for 2023-24.
	 Cllrs considered a Finance Working Group paper circulated for the meeting. This set out an updated draft 2023-24 budget a consideration of the draft budget, existing reserves and Precept Demands timescales for the submission of a Precept Demand to EDDC (deadline mid-January 2023)
	 Comments included staff costs represent a significant proportion of the budget the draft budget considers two scenarios for the weekly hours for the Clerk have taken into account known increases to operational costs and anticipated inflation increases the Parish Council has significant reserves can't see a justification for increasing the precept Can't predict unforeseen costs such as additional audit fees Need to ensure that the new council is fully funded but can't predict their plans and projects. A no change precept would be good news for residents
	Cllrs agreed to maintain the Precept Demand at the current level, £56,875.00 subject to a final confirmation at the next meeting on 4 th January 2023.
	3. To receive an update on S106 funding for the playpark equipment and lease.
	The Clerk confirmed that the overdue s106 monies for the Climbing Frame £14,176 had been received. Also, EDDC had advised the reimbursement of fees for the new Playpark Lease was in progress.

Other Matters

22/363	Clerks Report:
	1. To confirm decisions taken under Delegated Powers
	a. Meeting rooms booked for 2023: Noted



	2.	Action points from previous WHPC meetings a. Outstanding Actions: Noted
	3.	Matters arising
	4.	Resident Communications
		 Several residents have already provided a copy of their response to the EDDC Local Plan consultation
	5.	Any urgent matters arising
	a.	Playpark Opening hours: West Hill Village Hall Trustees had contacted WHPC to request that an operating hours notice is displayed at the Playpark. Standing Orders were suspended Colin Veale, Chairman of the West Hill Village Hall Trustees gave a report on recent incidents of damage/theft in the Village Hall which had been reported to the Police. He asked WHPC to display an operating hours notice at the Playpark to discourage evening use. Standing Orders were resumed
		It was resolved to post an Opening Hours notice (daylight hours) at the playpark.
	b.	Cllr AC will represent WHPC at the Ottery Leisure East Devon Partnership meeting on 17 th January 2023
	C.	Cllrs agreed a response to the EDDC Community Warm Spaces in East Devon initiative.
	d.	Cllrs agreed to sign up to the latest ".gov.uk" website monitoring service offered by the Cabinet Office.
	e. f.	Cllr AT + Clerk will conduct the annual WHPC inspection of the Playpark during January. Findings will be reported to Cllrs and considered at the February meeting. The Clerk gave an update from recent training courses.
22/364	Counc	illor Vacancy : To consider seeking to co-opt a Councillor (paper previously circulated)
	Counci	C reported that WHPC had received EDDC confirmation that it can now seek to co-opt a illor as a by-election had not been requested following the resignation of Cllr Cook. Cllrs hat this wasn't mandatory as the May Election is within 6 months.
		onsidered a paper prepared for the meeting setting out a proposed process for co-option. onsidered whether to proceed with co-option. Comments included a very short period, less than six months, remains for the Council as the Council has a small membership of 7 Councillors there is a risk that meetings may not be quorate.
	It was i - -	resolved to seek to co-opt a Cllr to fill the Councillor vacancy to adopt the recommended process to advertise as soon as possible to invite candidates to submit an application form before 23 rd December 2022.
22/365	West H	Hill Playpark: To receive a verbal update on playpark equipment (playboat/noticeboard)
	а.	erk reported the playpark noticeboard was due to be delivered and installed in December 2022. the removal of the wooden playboat was to be re-scheduled at the request of the contractor.



	Cllrs discussed Cllr AT's request asked for this to be delayed until the new date could be re-publicised in the primary school newsletter.
	Cllr DC call for a vote, proposing the playboat was removed as soon as possible. 4 Cllrs in favour, 1 Cllr against
22/366	To receive a verbal update on arrangements to engage with residents regarding West Hill events to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III on 6 th May 2023. Cllr MP reported that village groups/organisations had been invited to meeting on 30 th January to discuss West Hill's plan to celebrate the Coronation. Any interested members of the public were invited to attend and asked to contact the Clerk for details.
22/367	Covid Memorial Tree: To consider the purchase of a memorial plaque.
	Cllr MP reported that the Memorial Tree (a heritage apple tree) would not be available for planting until January due to the mild weather in November.
	 Cllrs considered the purchase of a memorial plaque. It was resolved to purchase a plaque and ground spike Cllr MP to finalise the wording for the plaque to include the Council logo on the plaque to approve a budget of £125.00 + vat
22/368	 External Organisations: To receive an update on recent meetings Ottery Health Matters: To receive a written report. Clirs thanked Clir MP for her report on the recent meeting. Exeter Airport Consultative Committee: To receive a verbal update. Clir MP gave a short report on the recent meeting. The meeting included a tour of the airport. Residents were reminded that low-flying aircraft could be reported to the airport and advised to note the time of the event.
22/369	 Seeking Resolution with a Resident: To confirm 1. the appointment of a Mediator 2. the date for mediation, venue and costs incurred to date (ref 22/347).
	 Cllrs noted and confirmed a mediator had been appointed, the venue and date for mediation had been set costs to date £2,354+vat and they looked to the mediation being positive and enabling the Council to move forward.
22/370	Police Matters: To receive the monthly West Hill crime stats: September 2022 if available (for information) Noted A member of the public left the meeting.
22/371	Financial matters:
	 To consider and approve the Schedule of Payments for WHPC 6th December 2022 The Clerk presented three additional invoices a. West Hill Village Hall: Room hire £62.44 b. Woodbury Park Hotel £530.00 c. PLG Services VAS transfers £91.20 All payments were approved and signed.
	2. To receive if available: WHPC Finance Tracker, Bank reconciliation Oct Nov 2022. The Finance tracker and Bank Reconciliation for Oct were noted and signed.
22/372	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> Cllr MP proposed the VAS schedule to be presented to the 4th January 2023 meeting should
22/373	cover a 6 month period. Next meeting: To confirm arrangements for the next WHPC ordinary meeting WEDNESDAY 4 th January 2023 7.30pm at the Village Hall.

Part A of the meeting ended at 21.40pm.

Part B began at 21.40pm

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.

22/362	1. To consider arrangements for the appointment of an Internal Auditor for 2022-2023 financial year.
	Cllrs considered a paper setting out shortlist of potential Internal Auditors and also NALC best practice for the appointment of an Internal Auditor. Cllrs unanimously
	 resolved to appoint Penny Clapham as the Internal Auditor for the 2022-23 financial year. considered her to be competent and independent of the Parish Council agreed to invite her to carry out an informal mid-year Internal Audit resolved to approve costs of £200.
22/374	Personnel Matters: To note the impact of the National Pay Award 2022-23
	 Cllrs noted the national pay award for Local Government workers and it's impact a. on the Clerk's salary effective from 1st April 2022. b. Annual leave entitlement increased by one day (pro-rata) An addendum to the Clerk's contract was signed by the Chairman and Clerk.

Part B ended at 21.54pm

The meeting closed at 21.55pm. Signed: *Anne Oliver*, Clerk to the Council, 9th December 2022