

**WEST HILL PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON 4th May 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), 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, no members of the public attended the meeting District Cllr/WHPC Cllr Jessica Bailey (JB)

AGENDA – ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL called by the chair

Item (a)	Discussion and decisions (b)
21/167	<p>Welcome and Chairman’s announcements The meeting started at 7.30PM. Chair MH welcomed everyone and reminded everyone that the meeting was being sound recorded.</p>
21/168	<p>To elect the Chairman of the Parish Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To approve the timetable for the Declaration of Acceptance: it is proposed the newly elected chair to make the Declaration of Acceptance and to complete and sign the prescribed form before the Parish Council at the next in-person meeting scheduled for 1st June. <p>Cllr MH nominated Cllr Margaret Piper as Chairman for the coming year, seconded by Cllr AC. Cllr MP accepted the nomination and was elected unanimously.</p> <p>Cllrs agreed signing the Declaration of Acceptance would take place at the next in-person Council meeting, scheduled for 1st June 2021.</p>
21/169	<p>To elect the Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council Cllr MP nominated Cllr Alison Carr, seconded by Cllr ABC. Cllr AC accepted the nomination and was elected unanimously.</p> <p>Cllrs agreed signing the Declaration of Acceptance would take place at the next in-person Council meeting, scheduled for 1st June 2021.</p> <p>Cllr MH left the meeting at 7.34pm</p>
21/170	<p>To confirm membership of Committees and Working Groups:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Open Spaces Committee Finance Working Group People and Policy Working Group Traffic Working Group Community Survey and Engagement Community Events Planning Policy Emergency Plan Playpark/Slide West Hill Trees <p>Cllrs agreed the membership schedule subject to an update on the Open Spaces Committee (OSC). Cllrs previously agreed (ref WHPC meeting 26th April 2021, min 21/154) they will review OSC operational matter, ongoing organisational and schedule requirements at the WHPC meeting on 6th July.</p>

21/171	<p>To review and adopt (if appropriate) the Parish Council Standing Orders, plus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To note the supplementary Standing Orders to meet the statutory requirements for the holding of remote meetings expires May 7th. <p>The Parish Council Standing Orders were agreed and adopted.</p>
21/172	<p>To review and adopt (if appropriate) the Parish Council Financial Regulations</p> <p>The Parish Council Financial Regulations were agreed and adopted.</p>
21/173	<p>To review and adopt (if appropriate) the Council's Policies.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Privacy Notice including Data Protection Policy 2. Website Accessibility Statement 3. Grievance & Disciplinary Policy & Capability Procedure 4. Complaints Policy 5. Anonymous Communications 6. Members Allowance Policy 7. Grant Award Policy 8. Protocol re Developers 9. WHPC Business Continuity <p>The Parish Council Policies were agreed and adopted. During 2021-22 the People and Policy Working Group will prepare/update the following policies for approval:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Privacy Notice including Data Protection Policy b. Website and Media Policy
21/174	<p>To review and accept the Councils Code of Conduct: Each Councillor must undertake to abide by the Councils code of conduct.</p> <p>The Parish Council's Code of Conduct was agreed and adopted subject to the inclusion of the following update</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Item 1.6 Media Policy to be approved during 2021-22.
21/175	<p>To review the inventory of land and assets including buildings and office equipment – asset register</p> <p>The Parish Council asset register was agreed and approved.</p>
21/176	<p>To confirm arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks</p> <p>Cllrs confirmed adequate insurance was in place including a Cyber-Security policy. Renewal agreed at 6th/26th April 2021 Council meetings.</p>
21/177	<p>To Review and Accept (if appropriate) Members Allowances Policy</p> <p>To consider the current policy for Chairman's and Member Allowances and whether it should be continued.</p> <p>The Parish Council Members Allowance was agreed and approved. Members did not take an allowance. If appropriate, Cllrs would be reimbursed for incurred expenses such as mileage as per Financial Regulations.</p>
21/178	<p>Review Training Requirements for Councillors</p> <p>Cllrs considered a schedule of courses available at DALC. The Chair encouraged Cllrs to identify their training needs.</p> <p>The Clerk was asked to circulate the course dates and to confirm whether the Planning Responses course was a new course.</p>
21/179	<p>To consider membership of outside bodies and committees and arrangements for reporting back</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Airport Consultative Committee 2. Leisure East Devon Forum 3. Village Hall Committee 4. Ottery St Mary Hospital Working Group 5. East Devon Community Safety Group 6. OPCC Councillor Advocate Scheme 7. Special Trees of West Hill

	<p>Cllrs confirmed membership of the outside bodies and committees listed above, subject to clarifying representation on the Village Hall Committee. This post is currently vacant. Cllr ABC volunteered to represent WHPC.</p> <p>The Clerk was asked to liaise with the Village Hall Trustees regarding the basis of WHPC representation.</p>
21/180	<p>To review subscriptions/memberships to other bodies</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. DALC/NALC 2. SLCC 3. ICO 4. Devon Communities Together 5. Breakthrough Communications 6. Parish Online <p>Cllrs confirmed subscriptions/membership of the bodies listed above,</p>
21/181	<p>To determine the time and place of ordinary meetings of the full council up to and including the next Annual Meeting of full council.</p> <p>With the cessation of legislation enabling Parish Council to hold virtual Council meetings Cllrs considered the venue for a return to in-person meetings. A limited number of options were available. The Council's preference for the main hall at the Village Hall is not available (even when alternative weekdays were considered). As an alternative Cllrs chose the Beech Room at the Village Hall. This room allows the meeting to comply with Coronavirus social distancing guidelines however Cllrs were disappointed that, as a first floor room, it is inaccessible to all residents. Cllrs previously (WHPC 26th April ref21/154) agreed hybrid meetings were impractical for the foreseeable future.</p> <p>Cllrs agreed to continue to monitor the Covid guidelines and to re-assess meeting requirements/room availability at their meeting on 6th July 2021. Cllrs confirmed their preference for a ground floor room accessible to all residents.</p> <p>Cllrs agreed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full Council meetings will take place at 7.30pm on the 1st Tuesday of the month and if required, the third Tuesday of the month. • The date for the January 2022 meeting was confirmed as Wednesday 5th January (to allow the agenda to be published on 29th December 2021). • The venue for the meetings will be Beech Room, West Hill Village Hall. This will be amended if a ground floor room becomes available.

AGENDA – ORDINARY MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

Item (a)	Discussion and decisions (b)
21/182	<p>Welcome and Chairman's announcements</p> <p>The Chair MP welcomed everyone and reminded everyone that the meeting was being sound recorded.</p>
21/183	<p>Apologies. To receive apologies and approve reasons for absence.</p> <p>Apologies were received from Cllr JB, Cllr MH</p>
21/184	<p>Public question time (3 minutes per speaker)</p> <p>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.</p>

	<p>This item included issues submitted to the Clerk prior to the meeting.</p> <p>No members of the public asked to speak during the public session.</p>
21/185	<p>District and County Councillors' reports for information (items raised for decision will appear on the agenda for the next meeting)</p> <p>No reports submitted.</p>
21/186	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <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 (Councillors with DPIs must leave the room for the relevant items). <p>Cllr AT declared a personal interest on item 21/189 application 21/1191/TRE and would not take part in this item. Cllrs ABC, DC, MP, AT - no interests declared. All noted and accepted.</p>
21/187	<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>Cllrs agree to consider a personnel matter as a confidential item.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllrs approved an overtime payment for Apr 21
21/188	<p>Minutes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 6th April 2021. 2. To approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 26th April 2021. <p>Cllr MP referred to a comment by Cllr ABC 26th April (Minute 21/155) that the Minutes of the OSC meeting of 23rd Feb were incorrect. Cllr MH, Cllr ABC and Clerk have discussed this matter. In saying that the Minutes of OSC 23rd Feb were erroneous, Cllr ABC was not challenging the Minutes as a correct record of the meeting, rather that the decision making process on the playpark management plan, and new proposals, had not followed proper procedures as laid out in our Standing Orders. This had resulted in contradictory decisions being recorded.</p> <p>The minutes of 6th and 26th April were noted and approved.</p>
21/189	<p>Planning Applications received</p> <p>21/1159/TRE Oasis Toadpit Lane West Hill EX11 1TR Applicants Mr & Mrs Pyne Pinus Sylvestris T615 indicated as such on sketch plan: Grainge Architects Proposed Site Plan (Drawing no. 1060/102 Rev B) - felling due to extreme level of needle drop and the high likelihood of loss or damage to the Applicants' property due to a stress fracture</p> <p>Cllrs agreed to support the Tree Officer decision on the application. If approved, Cllrs request re-planting on site to maintain the character of the village as set out in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>21/1122/FUL Upwey West Hill Road EX11 1UZ Applicants Mr & Mrs Hill Construction of two dormers to the south east elevation. Alterations to the existing windows and doors. Change of roof material to slate.</p> <p>Cllrs supported the application.</p>

	<p>21/1191/TRE Pine Bank Warren Close EX11 1XB Applicant Mrs Cox 1843, Scots Pine: Section Fell. Reason: Tall leaning tree with reduced vitality, has the potential to fall onto road or drive. G1.1, Scots Pine: Remove all dead wood greater than 100mm in diameter. 1839, Scots Pine: Installation of through bolt unit with 12mm threaded bar. Reason: poor branch union between stems at bifurcation at approx. 16m. See attached tree survey. Re-planting: The garden is heavily wooded and there is a high number of trees planted within the last twenty years therefore replacement planting is not necessary to maintain tree coverage at this site.</p> <p>Cllrs noted the arboricultural report provided in support of the application. Cllrs supported the application. Cllrs acknowledged the supporting report statements concerning re-planting. However, if the application is approved, Cllrs request re-planting on site to maintain the character of the village as set out in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>21/1201/TRE 16 Eastfield West Hill EX11 1XN Applicant Mrs Munday Various tree works: T1 - 4 Lawson cypress - fell. The trees have out grown their position. T5, horse chestnut - cut to a six foot stump. To allow more light into the garden. T6, beech - reduce by approximately 0.5m to allow more light into the glasshouse.</p> <p>Cllrs noted the absence of an arboricultural report to support of the application. Cllrs objected to the application for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An arboricultural report has not been submitted identifying a need to remove the trees. 2. Loss of these mature trees would have a significant adverse impact on the character of the Eastfield and surrounding area (as set out in the Neighbourhood Plan). 3. To improve the light amenity is not a material consideration.
<p>21/190</p>	<p>Planning decisions received for information (*denotes WHPC differed)</p> <p>20/2589/FUL Woodview West Hill Road EX11 1TU Approved* Widening of vehicular entrance and driveway (partially retrospective). 21/0864/FUL Fern Lodge Bendarroch Road West Hill EX11 1JX Approved* Construction of two storey side extension</p> <p>Noted. Cllrs expressed their disappointment with these EDDC Planning decisions and felt they were contrary to the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>
<p>21/191</p>	<p>TPO notifications - for information n/a Noted</p>

Coronavirus

<p>21/192</p>	<p>To consider the impact of legislation permitting councils to hold remote meetings ending on 7th May 2021 and to confirm arrangements for the return to in-person meetings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. To complete the Return to In-person meetings checklist b. To approve the actions detailed in the WHPC Risk Assessment for In-person Council Meetings c. To enact the WHPC Emergency Schedule of Delegation. d. Agree a rota for venue preparation pre/post meeting (moving/cleaning furniture) <p>Cllrs considered and agreed</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. the Return to In-person Meetings Checklist and a return to in-person Council meetings. This will be reviewed following the first in-person meeting. b. the WHPC Risk Assessment for a return to in-person Council meetings subject to amending the room references and QR codes. This Risk Assessment will be reviewed following the first in-person meeting. <p>Cllrs unanimously agreed to enact the WHPC Emergency Schedule of Delegation.</p>
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	Cllrs considered arrangements for pre/post meeting cleaning and preparations. They agreed a rota was not required. It was agreed that the Clerk would purchase cleaning materials and claim for their cost as per Financial Regulations.
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Committee & Working Groups

Finance Working Group

21/193	<p>Annual Governance Statement 2020-21 (AGAR Part 3)</p> <p>a. To consider the findings of the review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control</p> <p>b. To approve the Annual Governance Statement by resolution</p> <p>Cllrs considered the findings of the review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control.</p> <p>Cllr AC proposed approval of the Annual Governance Statement, seconded by Cllr ABC. Cllrs unanimously resolved to approve the Annual Governance Statement.</p> <p>Cllrs unanimously agreed to publish an explanatory note concerning the 2019-20 External Auditor comment on “other matters”.</p>
21/194	<p>Annual Accounting Statements 2020-21 (AGAR Part 3)</p> <p>a. To consider the Accounting Statements</p> <p>b. To approve the Annual Accounting Statements by resolution</p> <p>Councillors considered the Accounting Statements.</p> <p>Cllr AC proposed approval of the Annual Accounting Statement, seconded by Cllr MP. Cllrs unanimously resolved to approve the Annual Accounting Statement.</p>
21/195	<p>To approve the bank reconciliation for the year to 31st March 2021</p> <p>Cllrs considered and approved the bank reconciliation for the year ending 31st Mar 2021.</p>
21/196	<p>To receive the explanation of year-on-year variances</p> <p>Cllrs considered and unanimously approved the explanation of year-on-year variances for the year ending 31st Mar 2021.</p>
21/197	<p>To approve the Period for the Exercise of Public Rights 2020-21</p> <p>a. To approve the dates for the Exercise of Public Rights– proposed dates 14th June 2021 to 23rd July 2021</p> <p>Cllrs considered and unanimously approved the dates for the Exercise of Public Rights– approved dates 14th June 2021 to 23rd July 2021.</p>
21/198	<p>To approve the 2020-21 Financial Reserves Policy</p> <p>Cllrs unanimously approved the 2020-21 Financial Reserves Policy and reserves allocation for funds at 31st March 2021.</p>
21/199	<p>To approve the CIL statement for year ending 31st Mar 2021</p> <p>Cllrs unanimously approved the CIL statement for year ending 31st Mar 2021</p> <p>The Clerk will circulate the latest analysis of CIL monies.</p>

21/200	<p>Open Spaces Committee</p> <p>To note and confirm the minutes of the meeting of 30th March 2021.</p> <p>Noted and approved</p> <p>To receive recommendations and answer questions arising from the recent Committee meeting on 27th April 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr DC requested clarification on the Wildflower Challenge discussed at the OSC meeting. <p>Cllrs were requested to contact Cllr DC if they required additional wildflower seeds.</p>
21/201	<p>Traffic Study Working Group: To receive an update on</p> <p>a. Memorandum of Understanding</p> <p>b. Ecology Report</p> <p>c. Public Consultation</p> <p>The Clerk update the meeting on the proposed new path to the Village Hall</p>

	<p>a. Memorandum of Understanding – an updated version is not yet available from the Village Hall Trustees</p> <p>b. Ecology Report – survey has been completed but the report is not yet available.</p> <p>c. Public Consultation</p> <p>The Public Consultation will commence on Saturday 15th May and run until Friday 4th June. An information leaflet will be distributed to all households on 15/16th May. In addition West Hill Primary School will publicise the consultation.</p> <p>There will be several ways for residents to submit comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o An online Survey Monkey poll o Comments box at McColls o Email to Parish Clerk <p>On behalf of Cllr MH, the Clerk thanked Cllr AC for developing the online survey.</p>
21/202	<p>Slide Working Group:</p> <p>a. To confirm the Terms of Reference for this stage of the project</p> <p>b. To receive an update on timetable for the group’s feasibility report.</p> <p>The Terms of Reference for the Slide Working Group were agreed. Cllr ABC expected the WG to submit a report for consideration at the next Council meeting on 1st June 2021.</p>
21/203	<p>Community Events Working Group:</p> <p>a. To consider arrangements for the 2021 Remembrance Events.</p> <p>Cllrs considered a report from Cllr AT (previously circulated). Cllr AT asked Cllrs for guidance regarding a traffic management plan, road closures and potential additional costs. Cllrs asked questions for develop a better understanding of the issues and options.</p> <p>Cllr MP asked Cllrs AT/AC to liaise with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the RBL to discuss their plans for 2021 events and the constraints of WHPC having responsibility for the event(s). • the Lengthsman to discuss responsibility for a Traffic Management Plan. <p>and to report back to the June Council meeting.</p>

Other Matters

21/204	<p>To discuss Code of Conduct issues.</p> <p>Cllr MP introduced the item with a reminder to councillors that WHPC is a Parish Council, a public body that operates within the regulations of standing orders, policy documents and a code of conduct. Every meeting is open to the public and discussions are recorded verbally and in writing. WHPC is a small council, a small team of volunteers with the best interests of our village at heart but with a finite amount of time available. She encouraged Cllrs to work together, to respect each other and draw on the skills and experience that each can offer. She noted WHPC is also a relatively new council and systems and policies are still evolving and requested Cllrs to show tolerance.</p> <p>Cllr MP referred to a comment by Cllr ABC 26th April (Minute 21/155) with regard his statement that he had felt bullied during some meetings, he does not propose to take this matter further (by involving the Monitoring Officer) but would like informal discussion and measures to improve future conduct of all councillors. His comments were not aimed at any single councillor. It is important to emphasise that all councillors should listen carefully and respectfully to other councillors’ views. Any actions or words which make another person feel intimidated or bullied are unacceptable. Councillors are requested to re-read and familiarise themselves with the Council’s Code of Conduct.</p> <p>Cllr ABC added “We need to work as a team, respect the integrity of fellow councillors. Our aim must be to achieve improvements to our village and for our community in the most efficient and cost effective way. “</p>
21/205	<p>To consider the WHPC response to the Government’s Call for Evidence regarding virtual Council meetings.</p>

	<p>On behalf of WHPC (ref WHPC 26th April 2021 Min 21/156) Cllr MP had completed the Government's Call for Evidence survey and encouraged Cllrs to submit their personal views:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-authority-remote-meetings-call-for-evidence <p>The consultation ends on 17th June.</p>
21/206	<p>Police Matters:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. To receive the monthly West Hill crime stats (for information) b. To receive an update on the OPCC review of the Community Speed Watch scheme (for information). <p>No matters to report (March Police Crime stats not available).</p>
21/207	<p>WHPC Newsletter: To consider the content for the next Parish Council newsletter (16thMay)</p> <p>Cllrs approved</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The distribution date for the next WHPC newsletter, 15th/16th May 2021 b. Printing costs of £135.
21/208	<p>Clerks Report: Actions and matters arising from the last meeting</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Actions, incl outstanding action The Clerk updated the meeting on outstanding actions. 2. Matters arising <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Resident communication b. Any urgent matters arising. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be considered at a future meeting: renewal of annual subscription to Zoom. Colyton neighbourhood Plan consultation, • The DCC Public Rights of Way formal consultation on West Hill's footpaths is now open until 30th July.
21/209	<p>Finance and Invoices Tracker</p> <p>Invoices received for approval:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clerk - claim for expenses (incl Microsoft subscription, postage) 2. Paul Hayward - Internal Audit Services 2020-21 £100 3. Richard Green Ecology Ltd - Ecology Report for planning application £250+vat <p>Additional invoices were presented (both previously approved)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Cllr A Carr – reimbursement of Survey Monkey annual subscription £384 5. PLG Services (Lengthsman) – VAS Transfers (April £91.20) <p>All noted and approved</p> <p>To receive the 2021-22 Finance Tracker + Bank reconciliation April 2021.</p> <p>The Finance Tracker was noted and approved. The Bank Reconciliation for April 2021 will be circulated once the bank statements are available.</p>
21/210	<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 DC advised Cllrs that DCC Highways had submitted a comment to planning application 21/0142/FUL seemingly supporting the proposal for a footpath along a section of the B3180.</p> <p>Cllr AT requested an item on the agenda for the 1st June meeting to agree which Cllrs will be judges for the PTFA Sunflower competition.</p>
21/211	<p>Next meeting: To confirm the date of the next meeting at the Village Hall which is scheduled for Tuesday 1st June.</p> <p>Cllr MP confirmed the details for the next meeting: 7.30pm Tuesday 1st June in the Beech Room, West Hill Village Hall.</p>

Signed: *Anne Oliver*, Clerk to the Council, 5th May 2021