

**WEST HILL PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON 2nd OCTOBER 2018 AT 7.30PM
AT WEST HILL VILLAGE HALL**

Present:	Chairman Cllr Margaret Hall (MH) Cllr Jill Ingle (JI) Cllr Alan Cook (AC) Cllr Quentin Tailford (QT) Cllr Jessica Bailey (JB) Cllr Christopher Hall (CH)
In attendance:	Alison Carr Parish Clerk, Cllr Claire Wright, Cllr Geoff Pratt, Cllr Paul Carter, Eileen Perkins Tree Warden, 2 members of the public
Absent:	Cllr Jo Talbot

Item (a)	Discussion and decisions (b)	Action (c)
18/328	Welcome and Chairman's announcements The Chairman welcomed everyone, reminded everyone that the meeting was being recorded and started the meeting at 7.30pm	
18/329	Public question time (3 minutes) The two members of the public will be commenting when their respective planning applications come up later in the agenda. There were no other members of the public who wished to say anything.	
18/330	To receive the monthly crime stats for information Noted	
18/331	District and County Councillors' reports for information (items raised for decision will appear on the agenda for the next meeting) District Cllr Paul Carter welcomed newly-elected independent EDDC Cllr Geoff Pratt. He said that East Devon District Council had distributed a leaflet called "Metal Matters" designed to encourage residents to recycle more metal containers, especially items like aerosols that some people do not realise are recyclable. The Clerk told everyone that she had put the information on the Parish Council website. There will be a further promotional mail-out to households in November. Regarding the relocation of EDDC to its new building in Honiton, Cllr Carter said it would probably be the end of January 2019 before all staff had relocated and the first EDDC Council meeting in the new building would probably be in February. There was no new information on the Potters/McColls redevelopment planning application. Planners are still waiting for information from the developer. District Cllr Geoff Pratt briefly introduced himself and said he intends to attend as many West Hill Parish Council meetings as possible. County Cllr Claire Wright said she would keep her remarks brief as the agenda is very full. Her complete report is available as Appendix 1 to these minutes. She reported that the road closure in Ottery due to the recent fire in the flat above The Pine Shop is causing chaos. Engineers thought they would be able to install steel struts to support the building and enable them to remove the scaffolding but that has not proved possible. EDDC is aiming to reopen the road in 8-10 weeks but everyone is working hard to ensure the road opens as soon as possible.	

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	<p>MH asked whether the annual Tar Barrels event would be affected, but Cllr Wright said it would be going ahead as usual but the scaffolding will be boarded up to deter people from climbing on it and Silver Street will be closed off to pedestrians. There are enough alternative evacuation routes.</p> <p>Cllr Wright mentioned the recent visit to Ottery Community Hospital by Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP, Secretary of State for Health. She is hoping this is a good sign and he will support the case for keeping the hospital building. She has tabled a motion before the Health and Adult Care Scrutiny Committee on Thursday asking for full support for retaining the hospital building. She also mentioned another motion she has tabled regarding strengthening the powers of the environmental watchdog to be set up by government post-Brexit.</p> <p>More information is available in Cllr Wright's written report in Appendix 1.</p>	
18/332	<p>Apologies. To receive apologies and approve reasons for absence.</p> <p>Apologies from Cllr Jo Talbot were received and approved</p>	
18/333	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Register of Interests: Councillors are reminded of the need to update their register of interests. 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>There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
18/334	<p>Minutes deferred to after planning</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 4th September 2018 were approved and signed as a true and accurate record. The minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 18th September 2018 were approved and signed as a true and accurate record. 	
18/335	<p>Updates on actions and matters arising from the last meeting (action tracker)</p> <p>Woodland Trust Broadoak plantation. Nothing further has happened since the Woodland Trust handed it to their contractor. Cllr CH is waiting for the contractor to meet him on site to discuss in more detail. He is hopeful that they will do it as part of their maintenance.</p> <p>Play park slide – the Clerk is still waiting for a quote from Alastair Guy for a suitable piece of equipment. ACTION: Clerk to remind him again.</p> <p>McColls redevelopment - see earlier comments from Cllr Carter.</p> <p>Overgrown hedges – the Clerk has sent a letter to 1 householder and has received no response so far. ACTION: Clerk and MH to identify other properties for hedge letters.</p> <p>Public open space playing field – the Working Group met and identified other possible sites which will be investigated.</p> <p>Devon Air Ambulance landing site – school governors confirmed that Toby Russell from DAAT has visited the school playing field and was optimistic that it would be suitable for a landing site. However, the school governors have some concerns, amongst which is that it would disturb residents or attract vandals. Councillors thought that based on other sites such as Ottery, a landing would not occur very often and that it would be good to have a site in the village centre, especially near the school, in case an emergency arose.</p> <p>ACTION: Clerk to ask Toby for information on how frequently the air ambulance is likely to land based on other sites such as Ottery.</p> <p>ACTION: Cllr CH to write to DAAT on behalf of the community indicating the Parish Council's support and asking what WHPC can do to help progress the project.</p> <p>Odd job person – discussed further down the agenda.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk/MH</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>CH</p>

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	<p>Protecting trees – bylaw discussed further down the agenda. Councillors asked Eileen Perkins how best to deal with the overgrown laurel hedge along the public footpath at Hayes End. Eileen said the problem area was near the top at the Exmouth Road end where there are no houses. It seems this area may still be the responsibility of Strongvox rather than householders.</p> <p>ACTION: Clerk to write to Strongvox to ask whether windows can be created in the hedge to allow more light through to the path for pedestrians.</p> <p>Play park maintenance – the Clerk reported that Steve Radcliffe has nearly finished the tasks Councillors asked him to do ie wood-preserving the play house and grounds maintenance.</p> <p>Updating the Land Registry entry for the play park to reflect the transfer from Ottery – the Clerk confirmed that the form was sent off to Land Registry.</p> <p>Letter to EDDC Planning Officers about recent planning decisions – the Clerk sent the letter off and Mike Howe attended the last Parish Council meeting to address Councillors. Ed Freeman replied on 19th September saying he would look into it and would respond in due course.</p> <p>Future housing growth needs in East Devon – Cllr MH contacted Cllrs Susie Bond and Ben Ingham. Both were supportive of coordinating responses to large planning applications but on balance thought that it would be better to wait until the GESP team has released the consultation paper currently being drafted.</p> <p>WHPC Facebook page – Cllr QT looked into it and confirmed that the Parish Council could set up a read-only page for posting information. The page would link to the WHPC website and also to the What's On In West Hill user group being run by a resident. It would require someone to be the Administrator, which Cllr QT volunteered to do.</p> <p>RESOLVED: Cllr QT to set up a Facebook page for WHPC</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>QT</p>
18/336	<p>Planning applications received</p> <p>18/2026/VAR Site of The Star and Shenne, West Hill Road Proposal: Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) of reserved matters approval 17/3050/RES (demolition of two bungalows and construction of three dwellings) to reposition all three dwellings, enlarge unit 3 and change its internal layout and remove two additional trees on plot 2</p> <p>The developer informed Councillors that the house sizes had not changed but removing the additional trees on plot 2 would allow the house to be built further forward, away from the mature oaks at the rear of the plot. He has indicated that he will plant new trees of whatever species the Tree Officer requests.</p> <p>MH point of clarification – the developer wants to remove birch tree T909? The developer said he does. Councillors discussed how many trees the developer would replant, to which he said 4 or 5 in front of plot 2. There was discussion about the species to be replanted.</p> <p>Councillors noted that the effect of not removing the birch tree T909 would be that the house on plot 2 would have to be built towards the back of the plot, closer to mature oaks on the western boundary. However they felt they should support the Tree Officers' views about retaining the birch tree T909, provided that this would not compromise the mature oaks of high amenity. Councillors therefore voted to object to the application.</p> <p>18/2119/TRE 14 Warren Park, West Hill EX11 1TN T1 Beech - fell because of excessive shading and low amenity value and limited life.</p>	

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	<p>Councillors had noted comments submitted by neighbours and by the applicant. The applicant said he did not want to add anything to his written comments. Councillors said they thought the T1 beech forms part of a group that adds significantly to the amenity of Higher Broad Oak Road. They disagreed with the applicant's view that the tree is excessively shading, has low amenity value and limited life. They thought that the applicant should have submitted evidence to support his belief that the tree is dangerous. Councillors voted to object to the application as they said the tree appears healthy, has high amenity value and the applicant has not submitted any evidence to the contrary.</p> <p>18/2122/TRE 14 Perrys Gardens, West Hill EX11 1XA T1 - leaning oak tree: reduce height by 30% (of crown) - Max: diameter cuts of 12cm Shorten all laterals by up to 20% to leave a balanced form - max diameter cuts of 8-10cm Target pruning cuts made leaving parent branch over 3 times diameter of cut size. Reasons: This semi mature oak has grown from Devon bank at 45 degrees angle (reaching for light past previously felled tree). It is significantly weighted over adjacent property, and would be deemed hazardous if left to reach maturity. Dry conditions this year make it difficult to make accurate prediction as to the stability in the Devon bank. The reduction will relieve weight throughout the crown and lessen risk of failure.</p> <p>Councillors agreed that unless they were convinced that the tree has to be cut back for safety reasons, they would not support the application. For this reason they voted to not support it.</p> <p>18/1960/FUL Little Stockleigh Proposal: Conversion of existing attached garage into additional habitable accommodation together with construction of single storey extension with new pitched roof above</p> <p>(Deferred from the Parish Council meeting on 18/9/18 as the plans were not available to view on the planning portal) Councillors commended the applicant for obtaining a full arboricultural report, which assisted them with their decision. Insofar as the extension does not harm existing trees, Councillors voted to support the application.</p>	
18/337	<p>Planning decisions received for information (*denotes WHPC differed) 18/0202/FUL Pentafield, West Hill Road – Approved with conditions* 18/1600/RES Land at The Gap, Lower Broad Oak Road – Approved with conditions Both noted.</p>	
18/338	<p>TPO notifications for information None received.</p>	
18/339	<p>To consider the procedure for recruitment of a replacement Clerk</p> <p>Councillors discussed arrangements for recruiting a replacement Clerk. There was a brief discussion about how the post could be advertised and who would be involved in drawing up a job description, person spec. and interviewing.</p> <p>RESOLVED: Responsibility was delegated to the Personnel Working Group consisting of Cllrs MH and JI. The Working Group will be joined by one or more other Councillors for the interview stage. The job description will be finalised by the Working Group and a suitable advert placed in the local paper as well as various social media and websites.</p> <p>ACTION: Personnel Working Group to meet as soon as possible to begin the process.</p>	Personnel Working Group
18/340	<p>To consider actions to investigate feasibility of creating a bylaw to require residents to notify Parish Council in advance of tree works or felling.</p> <p>The Parish Council has the power to create a bylaw. However any such bylaw would need to be approved by the Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. Consideration needs to be given to what the bylaw would be aiming to achieve</p>	

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	<p>and whether the same result could be attained by another means under existing legislation. Enforcement also needs to be considered. MH suggested consulting Charlie Plowden, EDDC Service Lead for Countryside and Leisure.</p> <p>ACTION: Clerk to arrange a meeting between Cllrs and Charlie Plowden to discuss measures available to help protect trees and hedgerows</p> <p>ACTION: Cllr AC to find out if DALC has any information about creating bylaws</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>AC</p>
18/341	<p>To consider developing a strategy for dealing with the various invasive non-native plants in the parish West Hill and surrounding areas are being invaded by Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam. ACTION: Cllr MH will email Eileen Perkins with details to ask whether DCC would be responsible for organising removal of the Japanese Knotweed that is invading a footpath next to a field near Mount Houlditch Farm.</p> <p>Councillors agreed that a parish-wide strategy is needed to tackle it. The first stage is to map where these plants are. John Sheaves and Richard Green had indicated willingness to help.</p> <p>Once the problem has been mapped, Stage 2 will be deciding how to deal with it.</p> <p>ACTION: Cllr JB to organise a meeting consisting of herself, Cllr AC, Cllr JI and John Sheaves and Richard Green.</p>	<p>MH</p> <p>JB</p>
18/342	<p>To agree the next steps in seeking a person to carry out odd jobs</p> <p>Councillors agreed that there are various odd jobs that arise throughout the year, such as inspecting and cutting verges, and inspecting and clearing ditches. Ideally someone could be called out as and when the need arose. 3 tenders will be required and a more detailed specification for the types of work expected</p> <p>ACTION: Cllr MH and the Clerk will liaise to contact possible contractors</p> <p><i>Cllr JB left the meeting at this point</i></p>	<p>MH/Clerk</p>
18/343	<p>To consider a response to Woodland Trust Tree Charter, whether WHPC should join the Tree Charter Network and register as a Charter Branch Joining the network is free and as a woodland village, Councillors agreed that West Hill should join. RESOLVED: Cllr AC to register West Hill Parish Council as a Charter Branch</p>	<p>AC</p>
18/344	<p>Traffic Study - to approve funding for three automatic speed survey strips for week commencing 8th October</p> <p>The traffic consultant will install speed survey strips to collect data on traffic and Councillors have volunteered to carry out a visual survey, guided by the consultant who will provide survey record sheets and instructions. The surveys will be followed up by a workshop led by the consultant. The provisional date for this is Friday 2nd November 6.30pm to 9pm in the Church Narthex Hall. It is envisaged that about 20 people will be invited to contribute to the workshop discussion, names TBA but likely including people who have contacted the Parish Council in the last few months with concerns about road safety.</p> <p>Councillors discussed the B3180 Exmouth Road and the B3174 Exeter Road (between Ottery and Daisymount) because the Parish Council has received complaints from residents about road safety on these roads. These will not be included in the surveys but road accident statistics for both roads will be requested from PJA. The residents' comments will be fed into the process. Also, there is existing data collected by the Community Speedwatch group for the B3180</p>	

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	<p>Cllr Claire Wright told Councillors that she wrote to Mike Brown about the B3174, saying that she thought there should be a 40mph speed limit (it is currently unregulated) and Mike said he would table it at the East Devon Highways and Traffic Orders Committee.</p> <p>Councillors thought that these two main roads should be a second phase of the Traffic Study, if appropriate, and that the main focus should be on the village centre for now as that is what was recommended by the Public Realm Study.</p> <p>PJA quoted £756 for two speed survey strips for a week, though Councillors thought they had originally discussed having three strips.</p> <p>ACTION: Clerk to clarify the number of strips and cost</p> <p>RESOLVED: To approve expenditure on the speed survey strips.</p>	Clerk
18/345	<p>To review the Parish Council's banking arrangements and approve the addition of more Councillor signatories</p> <p>The Clerk was concerned that not enough Councillors had set up logins for internet banking. Currently only 3 Councillors have registered for online banking, although 5 are signatories for the bank account. Two are needed to authorise each online transaction so there is currently little margin for error if someone is off on holiday or ill. Co-opted Members are allowed to be signatories.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To add Cllr QT to the list of online banking signatories</p> <p>ACTION: Clerk to fill in the online forms for the bank to update the signatories</p>	Clerk
18/346	<p>To receive an update from the meeting on 1/10/18 with school Governors re the school playing field</p> <p>Cllr MH reported that she and other Parish Councillors had a second meeting with Governors of the primary school and the Head Teacher to discuss out-of-hours access to the school playing field for the community. This has been an arrangement that worked well for 30 years until the field was closed off to the public by large gates and a Keep Out sign. There has been a mutual agreement with the village hall going back to when the land was purchased and the buildings built. Councillors wanted to understand what the main concerns were, to try to reach an agreement on access. Although the school does allow access for organised events, such as the PTFA Summer Fair, the Head and Governors have not agreed to allow open access by the general public.</p> <p>The meeting established that there is no issue about public liability insurance because the school's insurance would cover this. However, the Head Teacher was concerned about vandalism because she said there had been quite a number of incidents in the forest school area, although these had not been reported to the police. The Head was concerned that more public access to the land could lead to more vandalism.</p> <p>The field is owned by the SMILE Learning Trust. Funding for the school is provided by Devon County Council which has a share in the Trust.</p> <p>The meeting also briefly discussed the Parish Council's request that the school field could be used as a landing site for the Air Ambulance. The school is liaising directly with Devon Air Ambulance Trust and the coordinator has visited the field and conducted a brief survey of the terrain. Indications from DAAT are that the field looks promising. However, the project will be shelved unless the school permits access.</p> <p>Councillors have written formally to the Head Teacher requesting copies of the SMILE Learning Trust Constitution / Articles of Association and Minutes of the AGM and other Meetings of the Trust.</p> <p>ACTION: Cllr JB to liaise with Jackie Taylor at DCC to try to ascertain what happens with other Devon schools and public access to their playing fields, also to see if Minutes exist of the arrangements agreed when the school was built.</p>	

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	<p>Councillors agreed that the field is an important community asset and they would persevere with trying to obtain agreement for public access, as it is one of the few flat open spaces in West Hill.</p> <p>RESOLVED: A Working Group will be formed consisting of Cllrs JB, CH and MH to work out how to assist the school in overcoming obstacles to public use of the field.</p>	
18/347	<p>To receive an update on Communities Together</p> <p>The next meeting will be on Monday 15th October at Ottery St Mary Town Council. The scope of the Fund has been extended to include voluntary and community organisations. MH wrote to the Village Hall Committee and the RBL West Hill Club telling them about it. The Parish Council is permitted to support bids from more than one group. The joint committee is also looking at other potential projects being run by the Ottery Help Scheme.</p> <p>Unfortunately, an Air Ambulance landing site would not qualify for CT funding as it would not benefit enough other parishes.</p>	
18/348	<p>To receive an update from the meeting of the Airport Consultative Committee (Cllr C Hall)</p> <p>Cllr CH attended a meeting of the Airport Consultative Committee on 19/09/18. He reported that Ryanair will begin seasonal operations and these will fit in with the airport's existing schedule so there will be no additional late-night flights.</p> <p>He said that the airport takes noise complaints seriously and monitors the noise. There had been complaints about military aircraft during the summer, but the airport does not have control over these.</p>	
18/349	<p>To receive an update from the meeting of the Website Working Group and approve the proposed changes (paper circulated)</p> <p>The Parish Council website has been running for 6 months and some minor changes are required to improve its functionality. The Website Working Group met and agreed a suggested list of amendments, for which the web designers Cosmic quoted £480 for 6 hours' work to make the changes. Councillors agreed to the proposed amendments and the quote from Cosmic.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To approve the quote from Cosmic</p> <p>ACTION: Clerk to contact Cosmic and request the updates.</p>	Clerk
18/350	<p>To note attendance and approve funding of Cllr Tailford at DALC Planning training on 1/11/18</p> <p>Noted and approved</p>	
18/351	<p>To receive the 6-month Budget monitor</p> <p>Cllr CH reported that monitoring the budget is a work in progress. It is difficult to compare quarter by quarter because some expenses only occur once in the year. Some provisions have not been used but there are 6 months still to go. Councillors were satisfied with the budget monitoring.</p>	
18/352	<p>Finance and invoice tracker</p> <p>To receive the invoice tracker – noted.</p> <p>Invoices received – for approval:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clerk's claim for reimbursed expenses – September – approved 2. Invoice for use of Church Narthex for Traffic Study Workshop (£30) – approved (the Clerk noted that this was not in fact the invoice but was the booking confirmation. The invoice will not be paid until after the event) <p>To receive the bank reconciliation for September – for information – noted and signed.</p>	

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	<p>Councillors discussed the interest rate on the deposit account and thought that more money should be put on deposit to take advantage of any interest. The Clerk could transfer money back into the current account if necessary as no notice is required.</p> <p>RESOLVED: Clerk to move £25,000 from the current account into the interest-bearing deposit account</p>	Clerk
18/353	<p>Councillors questions, reports and items for future agenda</p> <p>Cllr MH went to a meeting of Working Together at EDDC – for parish & town councils and voluntary organisations. There were some inspiring examples of what could be achieved by community action, also information on funding options. The Big Lottery has been renamed National Lottery Community Fund and there are different sizes of grants available. She reported that Cllr Elli Pang is trying to set up a Community Interest Company to run Ottery St Mary Community Hospital. MH is involved in discussions with Elli Pang and Leigh Edwards and Geoff Pratt but not as an official representative of the Parish Council at this stage.</p> <p>Cllr MH reported that following complaints from a resident in Eastfield, whose house gets mistaken for addresses in Eastfield Gardens and Eastfield Orchard, the Clerk has liaised with EDDC and secured agreement for new road signs to be put at the entrance to Eastfield saying “Leading To...” with the other road names on it. The resident emailed to say he was pleased that the Parish Council was able to help.</p> <p>Cllr QT asked whether WHPC has thought of actively increasing tree plantations, not just opposing requests for felling? The Parish Council could have a policy that for every tree that is cut down 10 more are planted.</p> <p>Cllr CH wondered whether there was an efficient way of monitoring whether trees that are promised to be replanted under planning conditions actually are replanted.</p>	
18/354	<p>Next meeting</p> <p>The next Parish Council meeting will be on Tuesday 16th October 2018 or Tuesday 6th November 2018 if there are no urgent planning matters to consider.</p> <p>There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone and closed the meeting at 10pm</p>	

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