

WEST HILL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL EXTRAORDINARY MEETING

HELD ON 24th June 2026 at 2.00pm

Present: Chairman Cllr Francis Pullman (FP), Cllr ShirleyMay Saunders (SMS), Cllr Ann Cooper (AC), Cllr Ben Jewell (BJ),

In attendance: Anne Oliver Parish Clerk, 5 members of the public

Apologies: Cllr Michael Owen (MO)

Minute reference 26/

MINUTES PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED AS 26/168-26/176 CORRECTED TO 26/169-26/177 - REF MIN 26/186 7-Jul-26

169 Welcome and Chairman's announcements (for information only)

The meeting started at 2.00pm. The Chairman, Cllr FP, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Announcements included:

- The Council had received a request to Inspect the 2025-26 Accounts. Arrangements were being for the inspection.
- The Council was notified of an accident at the children's playpark. The Council had requested reports from EDDC and the equipment supplier for consideration at a future meeting.

170 Apologies. To receive apologies and approve reasons for absence, if considered appropriate.

Cllr Owen sent apologies for his non-attendance. His apologies and reasons for absence were accepted by the Council.

171 Public question time (3 minutes): To allow members of the public present to give their question/comments to the Parish Council on issues on this agenda or raise issues for further consideration at the discretion of the Chairman, before the start of the Parish Council meeting. Members of the public may not take part in the Parish Council meeting itself. (Contributions are limited to 3 minutes).

Two members of the public chose to speak:

- a. Della Cannings raised questions regarding agenda item 26/175. The Chairman stated that he would not respond as the Council would consider the item later in the agenda. Also, he did not wish to make any comments that may identify individual(s).
- b. Footpath Warden, Eileen Perkins, gave an update. Japanese knotweed present on Footpath 7 (off Bendarroch Rd) will be treated later in the year. Footpath 40, landowner will cut back overgrown vegetation, Footpath 1 (surface water run-off) matters unresolved.

172 Declarations of Interest: To receive Declarations of interest for items on the agenda and receipt of requests for new Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs) dispensations for items on the agenda. Members are also reminded that any change to their Declaration of Interests must be notified to the Monitoring Officer at East Devon District Council within 28 days of the change.

Cllrs FP, SMS, AC and BJ each declared no interests for items on the agenda.

173 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.

It was resolved to consider agenda Item 26/175 in confidential session.

174 To receive a report from the Chairman (Urgent matters only) **None**

175 To receive a report from the Clerk (Urgent matters only) **None**

Part A ended 2.06pm

All members of the public left the meeting.

Part B started 2.06pm

176 To consider a letter from a firm of solicitors (requesting voluntary pre-action disclosure) and to decide actions and costs as considered appropriate.

The meeting considered:

- Two letters received from Berensens Solicitors.
- Advice provided by the Council's retained solicitors, Tozers LLP.

It was resolved:

- a. To write to Berensens to decline to comply with their request for voluntary pre-action disclosure.
- b. To approve a budget for possible legal costs up to £5,000.00 A future meeting to consider a recommendation for additional funding if further legal support is required.
- c. To establish delegated authority to the HR & Policy working group regarding this matter, within the financial and escalation limits agreed at the meeting, as this would facilitate prompt action if considered appropriate.

177 Next meeting: To confirm arrangements for the upcoming WHPC meeting on **Tuesday 7th July 2026** 7.00pm at the Village Hall

Part B ended 2.27pm

Meeting ended 2.28pm

Signed

Date

Signed: *Anne Oliver*, Clerk to the Council, 25th June 2026