

**WHIMPLE PARISH COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON**  
**MONDAY 19 FEBRUARY 2024, 7pm**

**Present:** Cllr A McArthur (Chair)  
Cllr D Dearden  
Cllr J Yarwood

**Also present:** Cllr T Olive (East Devon District Council – EDDC), Cllr I Chubb (Devon County Council – DCC, for part of the meeting) and Amy Tregellas (Parish Clerk)

There was one member of the public present.

**120. Apologies for absence**

There were no apologies.

**121. Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made.

**122. Public Participation**

Mr Lascelles asked two questions relating to the minutes of the 22 January 2024 meeting. The first question related to minute 109 which referred to the meeting about the Cranbrook boundary. Mr Lascelles asked if this would impact on the Parish Boundary and Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr Olive confirmed that this related to the 2027 electoral boundary only. He also stated that any change to a Parish boundary would go out to public consultation. Mr Lascelle's second question related to minute 111 Neighbourhood Plan. He commented that he was surprised to see reference to work being needed on an assessment of sites. Councillors responded that this relates to an assessment of what the local need is, and then carrying out a complete evaluation of sites based on this. The Chair, on behalf of the Council, thanked Mr Lascelles and the POWR Group for their work on the Neighbourhood Plan.

**123. Notice of Casual Vacancy**

The Clerk notified the Council that Cllr Sarah Johnson had resigned from the Council on 6 February 2024. Following receipt of Cllr Johnson's resignation, the Clerk notified East Devon District Council (EDDC) and the notice of casual vacancy was published on 7 February 2024. The Clerk should receive notification from EDDC this week as to whether a by-election has been called or if the council can co-opt.

**124. Co-option of Councillor(s)**

The Council **RESOLVED** to co-opt Todd Olive as a Whimble Parish Councillor.  
*(proposed Cllr McArthur; seconded Cllr Dearden)*

**125. Election of Vice Chair**

The Council **RESOLVED** to elect Cllr Denise Dearden as Vice Chair for the remainder of the Municipal Year.  
*(proposed Cllr Yarwood; seconded Cllr McArthur)*

Signed by Chair:

Date: 18/03/2024

## 126. Minutes of the previous meeting of Whimble Parish Council

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Whimble Parish Council meeting held on Monday 22 January 2024.

*(proposed by Cllr Dearden; seconded by Cllr Yarwood)*

## 127. District and County Councillor Reports:

### i) East Devon District Councillor

Cllr Olive provided the following update:

- Cabinet has approved a plan to double Council Tax on second homes from April 2025, in line with new powers under the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 – formal assent is expected to be given by Full Council on 21 February
- A delivery mechanism for both gypsy and traveller pitch sites in Cranbrook expansion areas has now been agreed, which should see a total of 15 pitches provided by developers according to an existing Council specification
- Cabinet has adopted a new Safeguarding Policy as part of its work reviewing its processes in light of last year's 'Veritas Report', which will include basic Disclosure Barring Service checks for sitting District Cllrs
- Work is taking place in relation to designated green wedge areas as part of the Local Plan review. The Strategic Planning Committee have asked officers to revisit the proposals set out by the Committee, including reviewing the methodology, proposed policy wording, and proposed boundaries in light of the issues raised by Committee, with particular regard to accounting for non-visual, intrinsic settlement separation and with input from Ward Members, and bring a revised proposal with relevant evidence to a workshop with all Committee Members invited, with conclusions and recommendations brought back to Committee as soon as possible for consideration prior to Regulation 18 consultation. That a new Countryside & Green Infrastructure Strategy and Supplementary Planning Document is brought back to Strategic Planning Committee at the appropriate time, and that a report be brought to Committee as soon as possible setting out the options for exploring a Green Belt designation in the West End of the district.

### ii) Devon County Councillor

Cllr Chubb provided the following update:

- Following the numerous storms in January 2024, DCC Highways have been inundated with reports relating to potholes [for more information see his report].
- Devolution – levelling up: Devolution for Devon and Torbay has taken a big step forward with the publication of Government proposals for a ground breaking deal that could re-draw the future relationship between local government in Devon and Torbay, and Whitehall. It's hoped that additional powers with the cash that follows will happen in future years.

Cllr Chubb left the meeting at 7.20pm after giving his update.

At the conclusion of this item, the Chair decided to bring forward agenda item 10 on the Neighbourhood Plan.

## 128. Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Dearden provided the following update:

Helen from the POWR Group had emailed an updated version of the Neighbourhood Plan and that the Council now needs to complete some key things to take the Plan forward.

Discussions with officers at EDDC have been taking place, and that the officers had confirmed that the Plan needed editing to reduce it to a reasonable size.

Work continues on the Plan to take this forward to conclusion as swiftly as possible.

At this point the Chair allowed Mr Lascelles to speak, as he had been heavily involved in drafting the Neighbourhood Plan.

Mr Lascelles gave the following update:

The Plan had been produced based on old principles.

As much feedback as possible from the village has been included in the Plan.

Sections 1 – 14 in the draft Plan are virtually complete.

Sections 15, 16 and 17 need to be updated by the Parish Council.

A lot of information has gone into the Appendix including feedback from EDDC on Local Plan consultation.

Section 4 includes feedback from local residents on the Community Infrastructure Levy.

Two sections (agriculture and natural environment) were sent to an ecologist so that their feedback could be included in the Plan.

Mr Lascelles suggested that he and Cllr Dearden meet with officers at EDDC to discuss the draft Plan and to understand what needs to be amended to be able to finalise the draft.

The Chair confirmed that the work on the Plan now needs to be expedited and to do this, the Council will review the new draft and then discuss with officers at EDDC.

The Chair thanked Mr Lascelles for attending the meeting, and Mr Lascelles then left the meeting.

The Council **RESOLVED** to send a letter to the POWR Group to thank them, and Mr Lascelles, for their work on the Neighbourhood Plan and to set out the next steps that the Parish Council will take to finalise the Plan before it goes through the democratic process.

Cllr Olive confirmed that he had received an email from the Neighbourhood Planning Officer relating to the Housing Needs Survey, which would be sent to all Whimple parishioners. The cost will be met by EDDC and Devon Communities Together. It is anticipated that the survey will go out to parishioners in March 2024. The Council was asked if they would support the proposed wording for the envelopes which was “supported by your Parish Council”.

The Council **RESOLVED** that it would support the proposed wording for the Housing Needs Survey envelopes to read “supported by your Parish Council”.

## 129. Environment & Community

### i) To receive an update re the proposed footbridge

As Cllr Johnson had previously be leading on this project, it was agreed that Cllr Dearden would forward the Clerk the contact details for the Environment Agency so that she can liaise with them to obtain an update.

**ii) To receive an update re the Community Speed Watch initiative**

Communications are to be prepared for the next edition of Whimble News (April/May edition) to ask for volunteers to come forward. It was agreed that information can already go onto the website, Facebook and noticeboard, asking for volunteers. When a group and volunteers has been established, the Council will then look into funding opportunities.

The Council asked the Clerk to chase up a meeting with the new Neighbourhood Highways Officer, to discuss issues including whether traffic lights could be installed in Church Road.

**iii) To receive an update on S106 Town Lane play equipment**

Cllr Dearden confirmed that she has nearly completed the unpicking of the exact amount of funding that is available for the Town Lane Play Equipment, and whether the Community Infrastructure Levy and/or Section 106 contributions are held by EDDC.

**iv) To consider any other arising environment and community issues**

- The fallen tree that was reported some weeks ago, has not yet been dealt with. The Council asked EDDC Cllr Olive to chase this up with the appropriate officers at DDC.
- Flooding of the Square. The Clerk confirmed that, following the last meeting, she had written to the local resident that had previously raised issues to offer a site visit, but this had been declined. Whilst the Parish Council is not responsible for this area, the Council has liaised with Devon County Council (DCC) Highways regarding who is responsible for this area, and they have confirmed that it is not them. They suggested that the responsibility sits with the residents in the houses either side of the river. The Council asked the Clerk to write to the Environment Agency to find out what responsibility they have in respect of the river. Once a response has been received from the Environment Agency, the Parish Council will share this information and will then consider the matter to be closed.

**130. Allotments**

**i) To receive an update regarding allotments**

The Clerk confirmed that she is still working on sorting out the allotments paperwork. The Council asked the Clerk to liaise with former Cllr Johnson to ensure that all allotment information is handed over.

**131. Planning**

**To consider Planning Applications**

i) Planning application 23/2248/LBC – 1 Rose Cottages, Church Road, Whimble, EX5 2SY; Replace lintel on south east ground floor window plus additional lintels if identified during course of the work; replace all ceilings at first floor; remove and re-render east and west elevations; south elevation left exposed masonry; remove southern bolt on chimney; replaster internal walls at ground floor and repairs to purlins on projecting from southern gable wall plus addition roof work identified during course of work.

Discussion took place around:

- Most of the works being essential works

- The chimney being taken down and replaced with a steel flue
- The cottage being listed and in the conservation area
- The Council looks forward to seeing the Conservation Officer's comments in relation to the steel flue

The Council **RESOLVED** that whilst it has no objection to the majority of these works being carried out, it does object to the chimney being removed and replaced with a steel flue, as it is totally out of keeping with the listed building and Conservation Area.  
(Proposed Cllr Dearden; seconded Cllr Yarwood)

### 132. Finance

i) To approve the summary receipts and payments for 2023/24 to 31 January 2024  
The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the summary of receipts and payments to 31 January 2024  
(Proposed Cllr McArthur; seconded Cllr Dearden)

ii) To approve the Unity bank reconciliation as at the end January 2024  
The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the Unity Bank reconciliation to 31 January 2024  
(Proposed Cllr McArthur; seconded Cllr Dearden)

iii) To approve the Santander bank reconciliations as at the end January 2024  
The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the Santander Bank reconciliation to 31 January 2024  
(Proposed Cllr McArthur; seconded Cllr Dearden)

iv) To approve the scheduled of payments for February 2024 totalling £3,699.19, which included payments for:

Whimble Victory Hall hire; January 2024 = £20

Pro Lawn ground maintenance = £318

EDDC Dog bin emptying for 23/24 = £2,376

Water rates for recreation ground = £21.08

Clerk salary; February 2024 = £751.32

HMRC PAYE and Employers National Insurance contributions = £212.79

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the schedule of payments for February 2024.  
(proposed Cllr McArthur; seconded Cllr Dearden)

v) To review the Budget Monitoring Report as at end January 2024  
The Council **RESOLVED** to note the budget monitoring report as at end January 2024.  
(Proposed by Cllr McArthur; seconded by Cllr Dearden)

### 133. Grounds Maintenance Contract

The Council considered the amended schedule of works for the Grounds Maintenance contract for 2024/2025. The Clerk confirmed that cutting back the weeds and brambles around the perimeter of the parish field had been added to the schedule, to be completed twice a year.

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the grounds maintenance schedule of works for the 2024/2025 financial year.

### 134. Lomas Seat

The Clerk confirmed that she had gone through and searched emails and electronic and paper documentation and had been unable to find quotes for the works to the Lomas Seat. The minutes of the parish council meetings in January to March 2023 had stated that the Heritage Centre were reviewing repair options and costing and that it would be completed when the weather improved. There was no evidence that quotes had been presented to the council after that date. The Council asked the Clerk to write to the Heritage Centre to ask them to forward all quotes so that the Council can consider them at their March 2024 meeting.

### 135. Correspondence

To considered correspondence that had been received by the Council

i) Emails relating to road closure notices.

To be publicised on the website and Facebook page

ii) Email regarding Devon Community Resilience Forum Conference  
Councillors were not able to attend this conference

iii) Email from local resident

The Council asked the Clerk to liaise with Bovis regarding this matter.

iv) Email from Devon County Council regarding grass cutting visibility splays for 2024/25

The Council agreed to continue this in 2024/25 and asked the Clerk to complete the forms and return them to DCC.

v) Email from EDDC Licensing relating to renewal of a street trading licence.

The Council confirmed that it was happy to support the renewal of the licence.

vi) Email from WACY regarding goalpost in the parish field.

Councillors confirmed that nothing had changed since they considered this matter and that the Council would be liable for any accidents or injuries if the posts were placed in the parish field. The Council asked the Clerk to write back to WACY setting out the position and explaining that it is looking at options for play equipment in Town Lane.

### 136. Chair's Business

A number of items of business were raised:

i) Taking on the roles previously carried out by former Cllr Johnson. Cllr McArthur confirmed that he would be happy to pick up allotments.

Cllr McArthur stated that he would send former Cllr Johnson a letter of thanks on behalf of the Council for all her hard work over the years that she served as a parish councillor.

ii) The Council asked the Clerk to liaise with Glenn Starkey regarding Whimble Fest 2024, to see if any assistance is needed for items such as the Temporary Event Notice so that alcohol can be served at the event.

iii) The Clerk asked if the Council needed to have a Playground Policy because the play area in Slewton Crescent is an EDDC asset and is managed and inspected by them.

The Council **RESOLVED** that a Parish Council Playground Policy was not required.

Signed by Chair:

Date: 18/03/2024

*(proposed Cllr McArthur; seconded Cllr Dearden)*

iv) The Clerk asked if the Council needed to have a Tree Policy. Councillors confirmed that the policy was needed as the council is responsible for trees in the parish field. The policy will be reviewed and updated, and brought back to the March meeting.

Cllr Yarwood confirmed that she would be happy to become the Council's tree warden.

v) Pothole warden – councillors asked the Clerk to liaise with DCC to find out what training they need to do to become pothole wardens.

The meeting closed at 9.05pm

The next Planning Meeting will be held on Monday 4 March 2024 \* *A planning meeting will be cancelled if no new planning applications are received by the Tuesday prior to the planning meeting date.* The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Monday 18 March 2024.

Signed by Chair:

Date: 18/03/2024