

# INWARDLEIGH PARISH COUNCIL.

Clerk to the council: [Inwardleighpc@gmail.com](mailto:Inwardleighpc@gmail.com)

Minutes from the meeting of Inwardleigh Parish Council on:-Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2025 at Folly Gate Parish Hall.

In attendance:	Cllr. Dennis (Chair)	Cllr. Timms	Cllr. Hooper
	Cllr. Henderson	Cllr. Ions	Clerk: Mrs. Clarke
	WDBC Leach	WDBC Dexter	

## Minutes.

01/03/25 Apologies for absence were received from Cllr King and Cllr Piddington, Devon County Cllr. Mcinnes

02/03/25 There were no declarations of interest for items on the agenda:

03/03/25 Due to no Public attendance there was no need for a public participation period

04/03/25 Reports from Councillors:

**Cllr Dexter** English Devolution White Paper Devon County Council to become a unitary authority and cancel the 2025 county council elections. Devon's local government leaders have been engaged in reorganisation discussions, with district councils proposing three unitary authorities: **Plymouth** (expanded boundaries, 300,000 population) **Southern Devon & Torbay** (West Devon, South Hams, Teignbridge, Torbay, 430,000 population) **Exeter & Northern Devon** (remaining five districts, 542,000 population) This aligns with government requirements for unitary councils to have populations of at least 500,000. Other stakeholders, including Plymouth, Exeter, and Devon County Council, are putting forward their own reorganisation plans. The Government will ultimately decide the outcome.

**Financial Overview: 2024/25 Accounts:** West Devon Borough Council (WDBC) expects a £589,000 underspend, with £400,000 allocated to the Recovery Plan and the remaining £189,000 added to reserves. Total reserves are forecasted at £1.9m (earmarked) and £9.6m (earmarked). **2025/26 Budget:** A balanced budget has been set, but a £1.6m shortfall is projected for 2026/27 due to uncertainty over government grants.

**Council Tax & Property Discounts/Premiums - Rate increase:** 2.99% from April 2025. **Discounts:** 100% for unoccupied/unfurnished properties (1 month), 50% for properties needing major repairs (12 months). No discount for second homes or unoccupied/unfurnished properties after one month. **Premiums:** 100% extra tax for homes unoccupied 1–5 years, increasing to 300% for homes empty over 10 years. 100% extra tax for second homes.

**Village Hall Cluster Meeting:** A recent meeting covered topics including the Tamar Energy Consortium, community hall grants, and village halls as health hubs, with relevance to Folly Gate. Future meetings will be held quarterly.

**Cllr Leech.** Recent discussions at West Devon (WD) have covered: The Council Delivery Plan, A review of the Housing Strategy, Public Space Protection Orders (Alcohol) for Okehampton and Tavistock, A 10-month review of the revenue budget monitoring report. A well-attended virtual meeting on planning changes and Neighbourhood Plans had over 60 participants, including parish, town, and borough council members. Devolution was mentioned however Cllr Dexters report covers this aspect. Cllr Dennis asked about Cornwall and Cllr Leech explained that they are currently unitary and have area councillors.

**Village Halls:** A recent Devon Communities Together meeting focused on village hall management, including constitutions, insurance, and marketing strategies. A West Devon Village Hall Cluster meeting is scheduled for 11th March, with speakers from West Devon Borough Council and Tamar Energy Community. Communities are encouraged to participate.

Cllr Leech asked about speed watch, Cllr Timms indicated they have 5 people for this but Speed Watch has stalled. Cllr Leech indicated we should have discussions with Okehampton, so the clerk will contact the Okehampton Clerk about this.

Environmental Health & Licensing plays a critical role in food safety, health and safety, noise control, private sector housing, and emergency planning. The team leads an energy efficiency project (HUG2) to support over 100 homes with government funding. WD continues to emphasize a team-based approach to supporting residents and businesses. Diverse number of the Councils' functions in relation to Environmental Health (EH) and Licensing. This includes food safety, health and safety, environmental protection – dealing with noise, dust and odour for example, private sector housing – anything from damp and mould to energy efficiency grants, an excellent Disabled Facilities Grant team and a very busy and effective Licensing team.

The EH and Licensing team have been working hard on an energy efficiency project called HUG2 that uses Government grant funding to support over 100 properties in the Councils' area to improve their energy efficiency. These improvements and the financial savings they offer make a real difference to residents' lives. We are the only council in Devon to be leading this work on our own, and we have an effective and experienced project team in place to help deliver our corporate priorities in the future.

A further update on matters since this report was that there have been changes in planning in the NPPF which were added in immediately, in an attempt to streamline the process. There are proposals to allow the planning officers to make the decisions on applications. The view on this is its undemocratic. s106 monies was also mentioned a letter will be going to the Village Hall committee. Cllr Leech indicated the village hall committee should go to the meetings previously mentioned.

05/03/25 Minutes of the last meeting of Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2025 were approved and signed.

06/03/25 Matters arising:-

6.1 - Sewerage removal - Folly Gate, concerns were raised on this as a large amount of pumping sewerage between vehicles has been happening on a lay-by and at night. Cllr Dennis indicated this has been going on for years, as it has previously been looked into under a FOI request (Freedom of information). However the mud and mess that is being made is unacceptable and is a potential hazard as it is very slippery when wet. Cllr Leech has asked SWW about this and its being monitored and has subsequently followed this up. NB There is no health hazard as the waste is treated.

6.2 - Policy Reviews, standing orders, FOI and Equality. Standing orders, the basics were explained, Cllr Leech explained how these stand and therefore it was decided that the councillors should work through the standing orders before approval. As the councillors need to read these and comment, it was agreed to split the pages/sections between all of the councillors for ease and convenience, to be completed before the next meeting.

6.3 - Footpaths - Cllr Timms had an enquiry about one footpath being overgrown Eastacombe. Potentially the use of it suggests it is outside the time limit for being kept as a footpath. Due to this, there will be no maintenance carried out on it. On another footpath the sign keeps being removed (Westacott - Durdon Cross) on the Northlew road despite being re-instated a number of times and on the Norley bridle-path, you cant open the gate with a horse. The clerk will raise this with PROW (public rights of way) DCC. Cllr Leech has subsequently followed this up. Clerk to find any Footpath map in the archives.

6.4 - Potholes/ roads - a number of matters were raised:- Folly Gate to Northlew Road, pot holes and damage to the road to Toads Island. There is also a tree that has fallen over above part of that road. Cllr Dennis indicated this was dealt with at the last meeting, "the road authorities wouldn't do anything until the pole was put back the right side of the road and put back in the proper manner". Open reach needs to be contacted, as its been 3 months.

Goldburn Cross to Crossways there are numerous pot holes and the diversions mean they have increased in size. Stocken River bridge is still a problem as there has been a repair to one side of it but not to the other, therefore it is a ongoing safety problem for cars at night. The clerk to contact both highways and Cllr McInnes on these matters.

07/03/25 Updates on matters from the last meeting: Allotments, a discussion was held about the possible use of this land, aside from allotments, council wants to see a contract from them to us. The clerk will follow this up with WDBC.

Village hall. The clerk queried the costs, in effect the planning fees, the village hall committee are paying for everything, however the conditions and applications mean one planning application may have a number of conditions attached which will mean an extra £300 plus for any application to discharge any condition. This is a problem as we haven't accounted for this in the precept. Either side can apply for the planning. Cllr Dennis, said its not fit for purpose so something has to be done. Cllr Leech indicated the s106 is for the drainage. The village hall needs grants etc. The surveyor has to do the costing. The new roof will be subject to funding. Cllr Leech indicated if we own the property then we have to approve all the expenditure. This is not imminent matter and is deferred until the next meeting.

08/03/25 Planning - Appeal **2143/24/ARM** The council have no further comments. Updates on planning matters were reviewed online.

Planning updates, were reviewed on the website.

Licence application - New Premises Licence for Sampford Courtenay Village Hall, there are no objection to this licence.

09/03/25 Finance - Payments were approved for HMRC and the clerks Salary. The Current Balances and bank

reconciliation were provided for February and March. An administrative update was provided, mention of Dalc smaller councils meeting on the 8<sup>th</sup> April with regards to the devolution, as Dalc will be the go between the parish councils and Devon CC. The vat reclaim will be sent in this month.

10/03/25 Matters brought forward by the Chairman: A road sweeper is needed to go throughout the area, the clerk will arrange this.

11/03/25 Matters brought forward by Councillors: A request for a few items for a significant milestone being achieved by one of our residents in the village flowers and a card will be sent the parish council were all in favour. Cllr. Ions requested details of the public liability insurance cover as a contractor has requested details.

12/03/25 Correspondence received/clerks report: Planning changes slides are available. Markel insurance for village halls was raised the clerk will forward to the village hall committee.

13/03/25 Date of next meeting: 21st May 2025 at 7.30pm for the APM (Annual Parish Meeting) followed on by the AGM (Annual General Meeting) 14/03/25 The meeting closed at 1.47.26 later.

Email sent, Allotments, clerk has requested a transfer subject to contract to see if we can use the land for parking etc. Councils view is see what is in the contract.

Clerk needs maps and footpath maps to work out which are live. Emailed jmcinnes to see who to contact.

Card and flower on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April for the 100 year old use waitrose, keep in contact with carol over this.

Emailed emma 12.04.25 Cllr Leech mentioned going in with Okehampton and the clerk will liase with the Town clerk over this.

Markel insurance for village halls was raised. paid for by the trustees not the parish council as in they have to fill the details in. Sent a link on to the village hall committee /trustees.

Goldburn Cross to Crossways there are numerous pot holes and the diversions mean they have increased in size. Stocken River bridge EX20 3AU is still a problem as there has been a repair to one side of it but not to the other, therefore it is a ongoing safety problem for cars at night. The clerk to contact both highways and Cllr McInnes on these matters. Emailed 12.04.25