

# **INWARDLEIGH PARISH COUNCIL.**

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

## **Minutes from the meeting of Inwardleigh Parish Council held on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2025 at Folly Gate Parish Hall.**

In attendance:	Cllr. King (chair)	Cllr. Dennis	Cllr. Ions
	Cllr. Piddington	Cllr. Timms	Cllr. Hooper
	WDBC Leach	WDBC Dexter	DCC Davies
	Clerk: Mrs. Clarke		

### **Minutes.**

**01/07/25** The chair opened the meeting and noted apologies from Cllr Henderson

**02/07/25** There were no declaration of Interest on the agenda

**03/07/25** There were no members of the public present for a public participation period.

### **04/07/25 Reports from West Devon Councillors (full reports will be added online):-**

**Cllr Sue Davies (DCC)** Cllr Davies introduced herself, as this is her first attendance at an Inwardleigh. She covers 22 parishes. The Reform Party holds 28% of the vote at DCC but no cabinet seats, therefore there is no direct input on cabinet-level decisions. The following points were highlighted: **Highways:** A review has been conducted and published, detailing planned works including pothole repairs and resurfacing, broken down by area. Cllr Davies proposed a follow up later if delivery of this fails within eight months.

**Road and Snow Wardens:** The parish currently has neither. Cllr Davies outlined the potential benefits of appointing a road warden, particularly in connection with traffic-calming initiatives like "20 is Plenty". Devon County Council can provide insurance, equipment, and materials for volunteer wardens. **Childcare Survey:** Devon County Council is running a survey on childcare provision until 9th August.

**Local Government Reorganisation:** The consultation phase is underway, with an announcement due on 28th November. Potential outcomes include increased workloads for borough councillors and parish clerks. Cllr Davies expressed concern over the implications for clerk workloads and suggested more clarity will emerge in 2026, with reforms in 2027. **Communications:** The council confirmed it receives DCC weekly bulletins. **Traffic Updates & One.Network:** residents are advised to check the One.Network website for updates.

**Cllr George Dexter (WDBC)** highlighted the following key matters: **West Devon Police:** Inspector Jones is holding online and in-person meetings. The police now ask residents to report speeding problems, including specific times and locations so they can act on this with their equipment. **Planning Reform:** Strategic changes to the Joint Local Plan (JLP) are underway. The current arrangement with Plymouth and South Hams is under review. Cllr Dexter is serving on the project steering group. **Budget:** West Devon has carried forward a £400,000 underspend, but significant funding challenges are anticipated from May 2026 onward, with projected deficits of around £1.6 million. Next year is expected to be a serious financial test.

**Cllr Tony Leech (WDBC)** Cllr Leech echoed points raised by Cllr Dexter and made additional remarks:

**Local Plan Housing Requirement:** Recent government changes have raised West Devon's housing target from 160 to 460 homes per year. This adjustment has rendered the current five-year land supply invalid, now standing at 2.5 years. This makes the area more vulnerable to speculative development applications. **Consultation on Planning System Reform:** Concerns were raised that the direction of proposed changes that may strip local representatives of input, particularly regarding delegated planning powers. A concern that parishes may no longer be able to "call in" applications, undermining local democratic accountability.

**Planning Impact on Inwardleigh:** Members of the council reiterated that recent housing developments had failed to deliver local benefit or affordable housing, with homes marketed as "low cost" but still unaffordable. Officers had overruled objections and justified approvals with questionable evidence, such as reclassifying the village as "sustainable" without parish consultation.

**Infrastructure Strain:** The Parish council also noted that new development was putting pressure on limited infrastructure -- including medical services, education, and public transport -- with no commensurate investment. There was consensus that the current system is increasingly undemocratic and influenced by policy targets rather than local need or suitability. The Chair and other members strongly criticised the centralised direction of planning policy, arguing that: Local democratic input is being eroded, Parish objections are regularly overruled, "Low cost" housing is unaffordable to local residents, development benefits incomers while undermining local services, Planning officers are now making independent judgments based on flawed or politically motivated policy

**05/07/25** Minutes of the last meeting held on 21st May 2025 were approved and signed.

## **06/07/25 Matters Arising**

**6.1 Vice Chair** The Chair requested nominations for the position of Vice-Chair. Cllr Piddington was subsequently nominated and agreed to take on the role. The Chair indicated that having an experience Vice-Chair would be helpful given their relatively new position. **Resolution:** Cllr Piddington was elected as Vice-Chair unopposed. Proposed by Cllr Dennis and seconded by Cllr Timms.

**6.2 Domain/Web Hosting** The council needs to transition to comply with .gov.uk requirements, research has confirmed that a .gov domain is not mandatory - the current inwardleigh.org.uk domain is acceptable.

**Discussion:** the clerk had presented detailed cost analysis after extensive research, Western Web (current provider) was requesting additional fee for .gov transition of £300 Cost comparison presented was presented of a self-managed option: £37 (first year), then £166 annually. Further transition option were detailed: £105 to maintain current site while the new site was developed at £37. The Chair referenced the other sites created by the clerk. The website template was reviewed and accessibility compliance confirmed with appropriate features included.

Technical Considerations: were discussed i.e. Menu visibility . It was approved to transition to self-managed website. Western Web contract to be terminated to avoid renewal fees. Transition was discussed.

**6.3 Village Hall Update -Background:** The Village Hall Committee has been seeking to proceed with roof repairs but required clarification on ownership, insurance, and trustee responsibilities. Current Status: All repair work was placed on hold pending legal clarification, the conveyance documents have been requested from the Charities Commission for determining ownership and responsibilities. **Insurance Matters:** The Parish Council now covers building insurance. Insurance costs have doubled. **Charity Commission Issues:** The Records held by them have not been updated by the village hall committee since 2018, as contact details still show Michael Chesty as primary secretary/contact. **A Resolution was Approved:** Village Hall Committee authorised to obtain repair quotes immediately and it was acknowledged that quotes were needed regardless of final ownership determination. The Charity Commission records will also need to be updated by Secretary of the village hall committee.

**6.4 Policy Reviews,** the following Policies were Reviewed and Approved: Information Technology, Code of Conduct, Standing Orders.

**07/07/25 Updates on Matters from the Last Meeting - Highways and Infrastructure Updates:** Gas Works Project in Okehampton, Significant infrastructure project ongoing with major traffic implications -Phase 1: Traffic light system on hill section - commencing within weeks. Phase 2: Complete road closure planned - timing to be confirmed. Police are "extremely concerned" about emergency access during this phase. The Link road completion is delayed until the end of September, the only alternative is via Crediton creating significant detour. There are calls for proper bypass/exit planning before Phase 2 implementation

**Footpath Issues:** Eastacombe Lane: Footpath blockage reported, sign removed from blocked path. Decision was made previously not to pursue this vigorously due to dog related issues at far end. **Westacott Location:** Persistent vandalism of footpath signage. Sign repeatedly pulled out and thrown in hedge. Replacements within 24 hours results in immediate revandalism, this is an ongoing enforcement challenge.

**Speed Monitoring:** Previous Attempts have been unsuccessful at arranging a speed watch group, there has been difficulty recruiting due to lack of interest for this in the community. Other parish councils have successfully implemented resident-led speed monitoring with police training.

## **08/07/25 Planning**

**8.1 Planning Application: 1736/25/CTN Application:** Temporary Campsite Notification to operate for 60 days from 4th July to 2nd September, Prism Lane for 60 days (4th July to 2nd September). Notification received

### **8.2 Planning Updates**

1661-25-OPA Detached house and detached garage off Spinny way Development. The council discussed this application, noting it appeared to be "phase two" of development following the earlier phase one Members expressed concern about the size of the proposed development compared to the existing housing estate and the potential for this to be the beginning of opening up access for further development **Resolution:** The council voted to object to this application.

**Appeal Matter:** The council noted an appeal case, with the council maintaining its original position of support.

**09/07/25 Finance** The Bank balance at end of June 2025: £8,576.67, Payments for Authorisation: as per the agenda were approved. The council discussed the transparency of financial reporting and agreed to continue including payment details.

**Banking Update:** The council noted NatWest, who have written suggesting account closure due to lack of use. New signatories Cllr Timms and Cllr Hooper are being added to the banking arrangements to provide better coverage for payment authorisations.

**10/07/25 Matters Brought Forward by the Chairman** -No items.

**11/07/25 Matters Brought Forward by Councillors - September Meeting Change:** Due to other commitments the council agreed to move the September meeting to Wednesday 1st October 2025 at 8:00pm.

**Councillor Attendance:** Cllr Davies requested that county councillor reports be scheduled early in meetings to allow for potential early departure to other parish council meeting. The council agreed to this arrangement.

#### **12/07/25 Correspondence and Clerk's Report**

**Dog Waste Bin Request:** The council received a request from a resident of the new development at Folly Gate, for installation of a dog waste bin. The request noted that there are several residents who own dogs and currently there are no dedicated facilities for dog waste disposal. **Costs were considered.** The council discussed various concerns including: Cost implications for the precept (all parishioners would pay for a facility benefiting few), Placement difficulties (this would need to be outside someone's property), creating hygiene and odour issues and the existing alternatives as residents can use general waste bins with appropriate bagging.

**Resolution:** The council voted unanimously against installing a dog waste bin. Citing the above concerns.

#### **13/07/25 Date of Next Meeting**

Wednesday 1st October 2025 at 8:00pm, Folly Gate Parish Hall

**14/07/25 The meeting closed at 9.28pm**