

**WHIMPLE PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
MONDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2025, 7pm**

Present: Cllr Denise Dearden
Cllr Todd Olive
Cllr Angela Trimblett
Cllr Lynda Patrick

Also present: Amy Tregellas (Parish Clerk)

Andrew Wood, Director of Place at East Devon District Council attended the start of the meeting for the item on the Slewton Crescent Play Area and left after that item of business was concluded.

118. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Yarwood, Venton and Johnson.

119. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Trimblett declared a Personal Interest in respect of agenda item 7 Applications for grant funding as she is one of the St Mary's Whimble Bell Ringers.

120. Public Participation

There were no members of the public present.

Cllr Dearden moved that agenda item 8vii Slewton Crescent Play Area be brought forward for consideration, and this was unanimously approved by councillors.

121. Slewton Crescent Play Area

East Devon District Council (EDDC) are currently in the process of refurbishing the Slewton Crescent Play Area. The original plan (that had been shared with the public) was to extend the play area into the land immediately surrounding the current play area. However, due to land ownership issues being identified after the EDDC project had been agreed, they confirmed that the project could not be completed as planned. The play area is being refurbished on the current footprint, meaning that four items of kit will not be installed at Slewton Crescent. The items of kit are a metal cableway (zip wire), rope climbing unit, hip hop rotating see-saw and double perch standing see-saw.

Discussions are taking place between EDDC and the Parish Council to determine if these four items of kit can be installed in the Parish Field alongside the Whimble Parish Council play area project, thus keeping the kit in Whimble and it not being installed elsewhere in the district.

The Parish Clerk and Cllr Olive had been discussing this matter with officers and members at EDDC. The factors to consider are:

- Whether the Parish Council would be charged for the kit or if EDDC would donate it
- Who would be responsible for installing the kit and whether the suppliers that the Parish Council are working with would be minded to install it or whether EDDC's contractors would be asked to install it.
- Risks to the Parish Council including guarantees, insurance and health and safety (the Parish Council will be completing a separate risk assessment for the parish field play area project)
- Where the kit would fit in the Parish Field to fit in the with Parish Council's play area project, the Pump Track and goal mouth(s)

- How this will be communicated to the public.

Mr Wood confirmed that he had taken on board the issues raised by the Parish Council and that a meeting of senior officers was due to take place on Tuesday 18 November. Once EDDC's position has been determined Mr Wood advised that an update would be given to the Parish Council.

Councillors thanked Mr Wood for attending the meeting. He left the meeting at this point. The meeting reverted back to the order of items on the agenda.

122. 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 20 October 2025.

(proposed by Cllr Dearden; seconded by Cllr Olive)

Clerk provided the following updates (for those items not covered in the agenda):

- Minute 98 (public participation) The clerk confirmed that the pads and battery for the defibrillator machine at Whimble Victory Hall have been ordered. Once delivered (hopefully by the end of the week) they will be fitted and the machine will be registered on The Circuit.
- Minute 106v (Finance Reports) The clerk confirmed that the transfer of funds from the current account to new savings account has been completed. The Council is now earning interest on general reserves.
- Minute 106vii (Earmarked Reserve (EMR) Update) the invoice for MRW Landscaping has been paid and money taken from Town Lane Project EMR
- Minute 108 (Risk Assessment – Quarter 2 review) The clerk confirmed that the updated risk assessment has been published on the Council website.
- Minute 109 (Appointment of Internal Auditor) Confirmed the appointment of the Internal Auditor with Parish and Town Auditing Services (PATAS). Starting to send finance paperwork across to the internal auditor so that it doesn't all have to be done at the financial year end.
- Minute 110 (Priorities and Projects for 2026/27) The clerk confirmed that this information has been included in the next Whimble News article and will also be published on the website, Facebook and noticeboard.
- Minute 111 (EDDC Town and Parish Council Consultation) the clerk confirmed that she had submitted the parish councils responses to the survey.
- Minutes 112 to 114 (policies relating to Data Protection, Freedom of Information and Privacy Notices) The clerk confirmed that the updated policies have been published on the website.
- Minute 117 (Chair's Business) the Remembrance wreath was provided by Fiona Clarke and Cllr Dearden expenses claim form is included in the payment run.

123. District and County Councillor reports:

East Devon District Council (EDDC) Councillor report

Cllr Olive gave a verbal update to the meeting:

- The Strategic Planning Committee meeting that was scheduled to take place on 4 November was moved to 25 November due to the reports not being ready. The agenda pack for the meeting on 25 November has been published and includes agenda items on the East Devon Local Plan – second stage of Regulation 19 consultation. This includes Air Quality Reports, Water Study Report, Statement of Community Involvement and Infrastructure Delivery Plan for 2020-2042. The Heritage Strategy for 2024-2042 is also on the agenda.

- EDDC have produced a Water Study Report that was commissioned to give EDDC an understanding of the sewerage system capacity and how that impacts on new development across the district. The report has raised a significant number of issues that EDDC will discuss with South West Water. This includes the need for significant work to existing sewerage works and/or additional sewerage works.
- The Local Government Reorganisation proposal supported by EDDC has been published online as it is due to go to Council on 26 November 2025. The preferred model is the 4:5:1 model (3 Unitary Councils) – One Unitary Council consisting of Torbay, South Hams, West Devon and Teignbridge areas; One Unitary Council consisting of Exeter, East Devon, Mid Devon, North Devon and Torridge areas; and Plymouth Unitary Council remaining as it is currently. The proposal sets out that set up costs would be recouped in three years.

Devon County Council (DCC) Councillor Report

Councillor Connor was not in attendance but had sent a report. This included the following key points:

- The Local Government Reorganisation proposal from DCC is the 9:1:1 model. This consists of Plymouth and Torbay Unitary Councils remaining as they are and the rest of Devon being merged into one Unitary authority, which they are calling 'new Devon'.
- Locality Budget 2025/26. Cllr Connor advised that she still has funding available in her Locality Budget. Applications need to be made to Cllr Connor and the funding must be spent by the 31 March 2026.
- Roads – DCC are trialling a new scheme relating to potholes. Where a pothole is reported, DCC will repair all potholes on the same stretch of road, rather than to keep visiting the same stretch of road.

124. Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in Devon

The Clerk confirmed that each of the Councils in Devon are taking their preferred proposal relating to Local Government Reorganisation through their democratic process before submitting to the Secretary of State by the 28 November 2025.

There are potentially five different proposals, which are outlined in the appendix to the minutes. Proposals are being submitted by Devon County Council, Exeter City Council, Plymouth City Council, Torbay Council and seven District Councils.

Consultation on the proposals will take place in before May 2026 and, according to the current timetable, the Secretary of State will announce the preferred option before the parliamentary summer recess in July 2026.

125. Environment & Community

i) Community Speed Watch initiative

There is no update on the Community Speed Watch Initiative.

The Clerk advised that she had contacted the Devon and Cornwall Police Road Safety Team who go out monitoring speeds, to see if they would visit Whimble. The Police have asked for the problem area(s) in the village and councillors asked the Clerk to confirm they are Church Road, Broadway and School Hill.

ii) To receive an update on the Play Area Project (Parish Field)

The Clerk updated that the Play Area project Working Group had met with all three preferred suppliers to discuss their proposals in more detail.

The Working Group is still on course to bring a report to the December 2025 Council meeting but this may change as a result of the discussions with EDDC regarding the Slewton Crescent play equipment.

iii) To receive an update on the Town Lane Project

The Clerk confirmed it was anticipated that the work on the next stage of the Town Lane project would commence after the Parish Field Play Area project has concluded.

iv) Parish Car Park

The Clerk advised that Whimble and Broadclyst Young Farmers completed the clearance works in the Car Park on Sunday 26 October 2025. The donation of £400 will be split equally between two charities – Dementia UK and Devon Air Ambulance.

Whilst the Young Farmers were clearing the car park, a representative from the Scouts cut back the tree which is on land owned by the Scouts. A member of the public complained to the Parish Council regarding these works. The Scouts did not contact the Parish Council to advise of their plan to cut back the tree. Had they done so, they would have been advised to contact EDDC to notify them, and/or apply for planning permission if applicable (given that the tree is in the conservation area).

Councillors advised that there is a faulty streetlight in the Parish Car Park which needs repairing by Devon County Council (DCC). Councillors asked the Clerk to report it to DCC Highways.

v) Village Maintenance

No matters other than those raised under other points

vi) The Parish Field

The clerk confirmed that a letter had been received from Mr & Mrs Goodman in response to the letter from the Parish Council regarding their planting proposal for the boundary of the Parish Field. The Clerk confirmed that she had drafted a response that she would circulate to councillors for comments before sending to Mr & Mrs Goodman.

vii) Slewton Crescent Play Area

Considered under minute 121.

viii) Welcome to Whimble Sign and Planter

The Clerk updated that the sign and planter had been destroyed again by an unknown driver. A message was posted on Facebook to ask the person responsible to come forward but to date there is no update.

The Clerk also advised that Billy Bloomfield is repairing the sign and planter and will submit his invoice once the works have been completed.

ix) Other Environment and Community issues

No matters other than those raised under other points

126. Allotments

The Clerk advised that an article confirming that the Allotment waiting list is open for applications will be going into the next edition of Whimble News as well as on the Council website and Facebook pages. The Clerk will also be contacting people that are already on the waiting list to offer them vacant allotment plots.

The invoices for allotments will be sent out in January 2026.

The Clerk also advised that she had received a letter from Savills (on behalf of Exeter Diocese) advising that following a rent review, the rent due for the Grove Road Allotments for 1 January to 31 December 2026 will be £390.

The Council **RESOLVED** that the Clerk sign the Grove Road Allotment rent agreement and return it to Savills.

(Moved Cllr Dearden; seconded Cllr Trimblett)

127. Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Olive updated that he is continuing the work on the Landscape Assessment which forms a key part of the evidence base for the affordable housing allocation in the Whimble Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr Olive advised that only one other parish council in the East Devon area has included an affordable housing allocation. As the allocation was not contentious, they had not needed to complete a Landscape Assessment. However, due to the sites in Whimble being potentially contentious, officers at EDDC had advised that the assessment would need to be included in the Plan.

Discussion took place around:

- Concerns being raised by members of the public relating to the length of time it is taking to complete and submit the Neighbourhood Plan to EDDC.
- Whether assistance could be given to Cllr Olive to expedite the Plan coming forward.
- Assistance would need to be individuals or organisations that have planning knowledge and experience and that is likely to cost a not insignificant amount of money.
- The Earmarked reserve for Neighbourhood Planning is to cover masterplanning of the two sites likely to be in the EDDC Local Plan.
- Cllr Olive confirmed that the work could be concluded more quickly if the number of affordable housing sites were reduced.
- The draft Neighbourhood Plan to come to the February 2026 council meeting – but with the caveat that it will have gaps relating to the affordable housing allocation information.

The Council **RESOLVED** that a report on the Affordable Housing allocations would be considered at the January 2026 Council meeting and the draft Neighbourhood Plan (excluding the affordable housing section) will be considered at the February 2026 Council meeting.

(moved Cllr Olive; seconded Cllr Dearden)

128. Planning

No planning applications had come forward from East Devon District Council

129. Finance

i) Summary receipts and payments for 2025/26 to 31 October 2025

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the summary of receipts and payments to 31 October 2025
(Proposed Cllr Dearden; seconded Cllr Olive)

ii) Unity Bank current account reconciliation as at the end October 2025

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the Unity Bank current account reconciliation to end October 2025, with the amount in the Current Account totalling to £500.00.

(Proposed Cllr Dearden; seconded Cllr Olive)

iii) Unity Bank savings account 1 reconciliation as at the end October 2025

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the Unity Bank savings account 1 (earmarked reserves) reconciliation to end October 2025, with the amount in the Savings Account totalling to £60,155.53.

(Proposed Cllr Dearden; seconded Cllr Olive)

iv) Unity Bank savings account 2 reconciliation as at the end October 2025

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the Unity Bank savings account 2 reconciliation to end October 2025, with the amount in the Savings Account totalling to £24,453.85.

(Proposed Cllr Dearden; seconded Cllr Olive)

v) To approve the schedule of payments for November 2025 totalling £1,855.47 which included payments for:

Whimble Victory Hall hire October = £27.50

Donation to Whimble and Broadclyst Young Farmers (car park works) = £400.00

Cllr Dearden Expenses (Remembrance Wreath) = £25.00

St Mary's Whimble Bell Ringers Grant = £300.00

Clerk salary November 2025 = £806.48

HMRC PAYE and Employers NIC; November 2025 = £290.49

Unity Trust Bank service charge 01/10/25 to 31/10/25 = £6.00

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the schedule of payments for November 2025.

(proposed Cllr Dearden; seconded Cllr Olive)

vi) Transfer of funds from Savings Account 2 to the Current Account

The Council **RESOLVED** to transfer £1,855.47 from savings account 2 to the current account to cover the payment schedule for November 2025.

(moved Cllr Dearden; seconded Cllr Olive)

vii) Budget Monitoring Report 2025/26 as at end October 2025

Income:

The Clerk confirmed that no income had been received in October 2025.

Expenditure:

The Clerk confirmed that the Council is pretty much on target to be pretty much on budget by the end of the financial year.

The Council **RESOLVED** to note the budget monitoring report as at end October 2025

(Proposed by Cllr Dearden; seconded by Cllr Olive)

130. Draft Budget for the 2026/2027 Financial Year

Councillors considered the expected outturn position for the end of the 2025/26 financial year, reserves and the draft budget for the 2026/27 financial year, which had been produced by the Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer (RFO).

Anticipated outturn report for the end of the 25/26 financial year

Discussion took place around:

Income:

- The assumption has been made that interest totalling £800 will be received in December 2025 and March 2026, giving a potential interest figure of £1,409.63 at 31 March 2026. The Clerk advised that this is a prudent assumption given that interest rates may reduce after the Government Budget announcement in the week commencing 24 November 2025.

- Expecting £500 income for the allotments before the end of the financial year. This is to include money from existing tenants and any new tenants taking up an allotment before the end March 2026.
- Devon County Council have been invoiced for the verge grass cutting so £337 should be paid into the bank account shortly.

Expenditure (excluding VAT):

- Likely to be on budget for salary costs (subject to the staffing matter later on the agenda), payments to the HMRC, Clerks expenses, councillor expenses and Unity Bank Service Charge.
- Expecting to be overspent on the Administration budget – mostly due to the replacement battery and pads for the defibrillator being coded to this budget heading. Other items under administration includes Data Protection Renewal fee, Finance system annual hosting and maintenance charge, hosting and support for the website, email and gov.uk domain. A one-off charge of £48 for duplicate bank statements relating to 2022/23 has also been included in admin (obtained to be able to reclaim VAT for 2022/23).
- Allotment rent will be overspent. The Council had budgeted for a £336 rent charge but Savills have confirmed it will be £390.
- No anticipated expenditure on the computer or telephone
- Assumed two more grass cutting sessions meaning that the budget will be marginally overspent – due to the allotments work
- Estimated the insurance will cost £1827.10 when the insurance is renewed in January 2026. The Clerk confirmed that she will be looking to get quotations to bring to the next Council meeting and that the insurance provision for the next 12 months will need to be flexible to add the play equipment when the new play area is installed and it becomes operational
- Expecting to be underspent by £1,790 on essential repairs. The only expenditure so far this year relates to the removal of barbed wire and posts in the Parish Field.
- Anticipating an overspend against community grants if any applications are received for the March 2026 round, given that 448.50 has already been paid against a budget of £500.
- The donation to the Young Farmers is listed against code 4255 but the £400 has come from the Village Maintenance EMR.
- Overspent on General Maintenance as no budget was set in 2025/26. Most of the spend against this code came from EMRs, which was £500 for the Lomas Seat, £550 for the clearance of the riverbed and riverbank in The Square and £1,260 for the Town Lane clearance works. In addition to this the two repairs of the Welcome to Whimple sign and planter have been allocated to this code.

In summary, the Council is expecting that as at 31 March 2026, approximately £4,000 more income than budgeted will be received, and that there will be a slight overspend (£1,000) expenditure. This means that circa £3,000 will be added to general reserves. However, the Clerk added the caveat that something may happen that requires additional expenditure than expected and this would reduce the amount going into general reserves.

In terms of VAT, the Clerk confirmed that £1,449.83 had been reclaimed for the 2024/25 financial year, and that a claim dating back to 2022/23 would likely total to £1,904.34 (which would be reclaimed before the end of the financial year). To the end October 2025, VAT paid out totals to £2,308.05. This will be reclaimed in April, after the end of the financial year.

Ear Marked Reserves

In terms of EMRs, the Clerk advised that the balance currently stands at £57,798.56. Once the £400 is paid to the Young Farmers, this total will be £57,398.56, split across:

- Village Maintenance = £4,600
- Neighbourhood Plan = £7,500
- Elections = £1,100
- Lomas Seat = Nil
- Play Area Project = £35,549.08
- Town Lane Project = £6,626.08
- Locality Budget = Nil
- Parish Field Goal Mouth = £2023.40

The Clerk advised that the balance of the EMR no longer matches the balance in the savings account, which totals to £60,155.53 (giving a difference of £2,756.97), and the Council has two options:

Transfer £2,756.97 from savings account 1 (EMR) to savings account 2 (general balances) so that both the finance system and bank account show balances of £57,398.56; or
Allocate the £2,756.97 across existing or new EMRs.

The Council **RESOLVED** to set up a new EMR called Defibrillator and to allocate £500 to it
(*moved Cllr Olive; seconded Cllr Trimblett*)

The Council **RESOLVED** to allocate the remaining balance of £2,256.97 to the Parish Field Play Area Project EMR.
(*moved Cllr Dearden; seconded Cllr Trimblett*)

2026/2027 Draft Budget

The Parish Clerk and RFO explained that the first column of figures related to the 2025/26 budget, the second is the projected outturn position for 2025/26 at 31 March 2026 and the third column is the proposed 2026/27 budget.

The Clerk also advised that she applies the assumption of prudence when setting a budget, i.e. not overstating income or understating expenditure.

Income:

Bank Interest – proposing the budget is set at £800. Given the amount of interest received in 2025/26 for just one savings account this may be considered prudent but there is uncertainty as to what will happen with interest rates following the Government budget and a large chunk of the ear marked reserves will be spent in 2026/27 when the Parish Field play area and goal mouth projects will be completed.

Allotment Income – given the number of current vacancies, a figure of £500 is considered prudent for 2026/27.

Grass cutting reimbursement – an assumption has been made that the same amount as in 2025/26 will be paid by Devon County Council.

No other income sources are expected, and the precept will be the balancing figure, when the budget is finalised and the tax base has been provided by East Devon District Council.

Expenditure:

Clerks salary – this has been calculated based on the current hourly rate with an assumption that the 2026/27 Local Government Pay Award will increase that by £1 an hour.

Payments to the HMRC – the Local Government pay award assumption has been factored into the 2026/27 budget for both PAYE Income Tax and National Insurance Contributions.

The Council **RESOLVED** to split this budget area into two separate codes – one for Income Tax (PAYE) and one for National Insurance Contributions.
(*moved Cllr Dearden; seconded Cllr Olive*)

Clerk and Councillors expenses – a budget of £100 is proposed for both budget headings.

Administration – the administration budget is not transparent at the current time and councillors and the public are unable to tell what is coded here.

The Council **RESOLVED** that the administration budget be split into the following budget headings for 2026/27:

- Finance System
- Website, email and domain name
- Data Protection Fee
- Defibrillator

(*moved Cllr Dearden; seconded Cllr Olive*)

In terms of the budgets for the finance system, website, email and domain name and Data Protection fee, a 6% inflationary increase has been added to what was paid in 2025/26.

No budget has been set for the defibrillator due to an ear marked reserve being set up to cover future costs.

Allotment rent expenditure – the actual figure of £390 has had a 6% inflationary increase added for 2026/27.

Audit fees – this budget heading covers both the internal and external audit fees.

The Council **RESOLVED** to split internal audit and external audit fees into separate budget headings for 2026/27.
(*moved Cllr Dearden; seconded Cllr Olive*)

In terms of the internal audit fee, this has been set at the level confirmed by the new internal auditor. The external audit fee has had a 6% inflationary increase applied for 2026/27.

Computer and Telephone – The Clerk confirmed that she will be bringing forward a paper on using cloud based systems for document storage and the Finance system, so no expenditure is anticipated to be incurred relating to the computer in 2026/27. In terms of the telephone no budget was set in 2025/26 and it is therefore recommended that this is removed from the budget. This will be considered at the December meeting.

Devon Association of Local Councils Subscription – Assumed a 6% increase to the 2025/26 subscription.

Dog and Litter Bin Emptying – Assumed a 6% increase to the 2025/26 charge from EDDC.

Grounds Maintenance – currently a budget of £5,000 has been added to the 2026/27 budget. However, further work is needed to look at the grounds maintenance works schedule. So, an update will be provided to the December 2025 meeting.

Hire of Victory Hall – this figure has been calculated based on 12 planning meetings and 11 Council meetings taking place in 2026/27, plus a small additional amount in case any further meetings are needed.

Insurance – The Council's insurance is due to be renewed from 1 February 2026. The Clerk confirmed that she is reviewing the current schedule of cover and obtaining quotes from suppliers. These will be brought to the December 2025 Council meeting. At the current time the budget of £2,400 has been included for 2026/27.

Remembrance Wreath – a figure of £25 has been included for 2026/27 which is the actual amount paid in 2025/26.

Training – the training budget has been maintained at £170 for 2026/27.

Water Rates – the current budget heading for water rates includes expenditure for the Recreation Ground (Parish Field) as well as the Heberton Close and Grove Road Allotments. The Clerk advised splitting out the budget headings so it is clearer for recharging the allotment tenants going forward.

The Council **RESOLVED** to split water rates into two budget headings for 2026/27 which will be water rates – Recreation Ground and water rates – allotments.
(*moved Cllr Dearden; seconded Cllr Olive*)

In terms of the water bills, a 20% increase has been included in the 2026/27 budget.

Essential Repairs – it is proposed that the budget be kept at £2,000 for 2026/27.

Community Grants – The clerk advised that she had included £800 as the budget for 2026/27 based on grant applications being considered three times a year. Following discussion, councillors felt that the budget should be £600.

The Council **RESOLVED** to set a budget of £600 for community grants for 2026/27.
(*moved Cllr Olive; seconded Cllr Patrick*)

Donation – no budget is proposed for 2026/27. If further works are carried out by the Young Farmers this would come from ear marked reserves.

Bank Service Charge – An assumption has been made that Unity Trust Bank will increase the monthly service charge from £6 a month to £7 a month, so a budget of £84 has been added for 2026/27.

General Maintenance – As already highlighted earlier, expenditure against this budget heading in 2025/26 has been covered mostly from ear marked reserves. An allocation of £500 had been added to the 2026/27 budget but councillors felt that the budget should remain at £0 as per the 2025/26 budget.

As it stands at the current time, there is a £2,378.36 difference between the income and expenditure for 2026/27. However, further work is to be completed to firm up some of the figures before the budget is considered again at the December 2025 Council meeting.

The Council **NOTED** the expected outturn position for the end of the 2025/26 financial year, reserves and the draft budget for the 2026/27 financial year, including the resolutions that have been set out in the minutes.

(moved Cllr Dearden; seconded Cllr Olive)

131. Grounds Maintenance Schedule for 2026/27

Following on from the 2026/27 budget discussions, the grounds maintenance schedule was considered, and the following items to be added for 2026/27:

- Cutting the communal areas at the allotment sites 4-5 times a year (resolved by the Council at the September meeting)
- Cutting the grass at Town Lane site 3-4 times a year
- Cutting back and tidying the Parish Car Park once a year
- Cutting back and tidying the riverbank and riverbed in The Square once a year

The Council **RESOLVED** to add the above listed items to the Grounds Maintenance schedule for 2026/27 and to bring quotation(s) to the December 2025 meeting.

(moved Cllr Dearden; seconded Cllr Patrick)

132. Health and Safety Policy update

The Clerk confirmed that she had reviewed the Health and Safety Policy and presented it to the Council for approval.

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the Health and Safety Policy

(moved Cllr Dearden; seconded Cllr Olive)

133. Forward Plan

The Council noted the Forward Plan, which had been updated until the end of the Municipal Year (end of April 2026). Key items to note are

- Budget and Precept (December 2025)
- Grounds Maintenance Quotation for 2026/27 (December 2025)
- Insurance quotations (December 2025)
- Parish Field Play Area Project Report (December 2025 / January 2026)
- Internal Control checklist – Quarter 3 review (January 2026)
- Risk Assessment – Quarter 3 review (January 2026)
- Neighbourhood Plan Affordable Housing Allocation Sites Report (January 2026)
- Draft Neighbourhood Plan (excluding Affordable Housing information) (February 2026)
- Grant Applications (March 2026)
- Asset Register (March 2026)
- Internal Control checklist – Quarter 4 review (April 2026)
- Risk Assessment – Quarter 4 review (April 2026)

134. Correspondence

The Council considered the following correspondence:

i) Correspondence from a member of the public regarding the Scouts significantly cutting back a tree on the Scouts land when the Parish Car Park clearance works were taking place. The Clerk confirmed that she had sent a response to the member of the public explaining that nobody from the Scouts had contacted the Parish Council to advise that they were looking to cut

the tree back. Had the Scouts have done so, they would have been advised to speak to East Devon District Council as the Local Planning Authority, given that the tree is located in the conservation area. The Clerk also advised that she had emailed the Scouts regarding this matter but to date had not received any response from them.

ii) Email from EDDC to confirm that a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) has been made for 25/0046/TPO Land East of Gribble Lane, Whimble.

iii) An email from South Western Railway confirming that the timetable is to be fully restored from Monday 24 November 2025.

iv) Email from Jonathan Prideaux on behalf of the History Society to confirm that the Wassail will take place on Saturday 17 January 2026.

v) Email from Devon County Council Highways confirming that Whimble Footpath 13, Whimble Straighaway Head Overbridge footpath will be closed from 15 to 17 December. There is no alternative route during the closure.

135. Chair's Business

There were no items raised under Chair's Business.

136. Confidential Item – Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Council **RESOLVED** that in accordance with the Councils Standing orders the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the discussion of agenda item 20 as there was likely to be disclosure of confidential information as matters were being discussed that could identify individual(s).
(*moved Cllr Dearden; seconded Cllr Olive*)

The Parish Clerk left the room whilst the staffing matter was discussed and returned to the room in order to minute the decision of the Council.

137. Staffing Matter

The Council **RESOLVED** that:

i) The Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) should have moved from SCP 19 to SCP 20 on 1 April 2024, and then from SCP 20 to SCP 21 on 1 April 2025.

ii) The Parish Clerk & RFO be paid at the hourly rate of £17.18 (SCP 21) from 1 December 2025.

iii) That backpay be calculated for SCP 20 from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, and SCP 21 from 1 April to 30 November 2025 (taking into account the Local Government Pay Award) and included in the Parish Clerk & RFO's December salary, with the costs to coming out of general reserves.

iv) The Parish Clerk & RFO be paid at SCP 22 from 1 April 2026, and that this be factored into the 2026/27 budget.

v) The Parish Clerk & RFO's job description to be updated and circulated by the Chair

vi) The Chair arrange an appraisal for the Parish Clerk & RFO

(*Moved Cllr Dearden; seconded by all councillors*)

The meeting closed at 9.27pm

The next Planning Meetings will be held on Monday 1 December 2025 at 7pm * A planning meeting will be cancelled if no new planning applications are received by the date that the agenda is published

(the Tuesday before the meeting). The next Parish Council meeting will take place on Monday 15 December 2025 at 7pm.

Signed by Chair:

15/12/2025