

Wherwell Parish Council



A meeting of the Parish Council took place on
Tuesday 13th January 2026 at 6.30pm, at the Colonel Jenkins Memorial Hall

Minutes

1. **Present:** Cllrs Sean Hutton (chair), Sue Blazdell (vice chair), Peter Bryant, Diane Newell, Ali Young and Cheryl Barnes plus Philip Warner (clerk).
2. **Apologies for Absence:** Cllr Barnes attended for part of the meeting and gave apologies for having to leave early.
3. **Public Participation:** one member of the public attended and raised concerns about rubbish dropped in the layby on Winchester Road / switchback. Cllr Hutton offered to clear it, and Cllrs agreed to organize a village litter pick in February.
4. **Cllr Barnes to sign Acceptance of Office & Register of Interests:** these were signed at the start of the meeting.
5. **Declaration of Interests:** there were none
6. **Cllr Hutton opened the meeting proper to recall the sad passing of Cllr Lizzie Broadbent on Boxing day. She was remembered as a delightful lady who had given many years of service to the local community, both as a wonderful teacher with a fine sense of humor and as a dedicated local parish councilor. She will be missed by the WPC and the whole community. A memorial will be held for her on 13th March from 1-3pm at the Village Hall. Close friends and family will be scattering her ashes at the Clump where she loved to walk her dog.**
7. **Approval of Meeting Minutes:**
 - a. The minutes of the meeting held on 11th November 2025 were agreed and signed as a true & accurate record by the chair
 - b. **Matters Arising:**
 - i. S106 Grant – repairs to the playing fields have commenced.
 - ii. WPF boiler has been repaired.
 - iii. War memorial update (see 11.b below)
8. **Finance:**
 - a. The Clerk/RFO presented the accounts spreadsheet for the year to December.
 - b. Cllrs discussed the precept for 2026/27. They considered the need for increased spend in the village, especially installation and ongoing costs of Speed Indicator Devices once HCC give

approval, and the need for a small contingency budget. They concluded that they would increase the precept to £13,000 which will be an uplift less than £4 per household. The Clerk/RFO will notify TVBC.

- c. Cllrs discussed in detail the draft budget requirements for 2026/27 within a spend limit of £13,000 as per the agreed precept. The levels of Section 137 grants were discussed at length, and it was agreed to hold the grant budget at the same levels as last 25/26 for now. A paper will be bought to the next PC meeting by the Clerk/RFO with details of the national regulations on S137 grants so Cllrs can reconsider grant levels moving forwards.
- d. Cllrs considered the grant application received from Wherwell primary school PTA requesting £750 in 2026/27 to purchase refurbished laptops for pupils use. The grant was approved unanimously.
- e. The Clerk/RFO gave Cllrs an update on currant banking arrangements. There is a need for additional signatories and Cllr Young volunteered. Cllr Blazdell proposed, Cllr Newell seconded, and the PC resolved unanimously for Clr Young to be added as a signatory to the PC bank mandate with Lloyds.

9. Planning Matters: Update on planning applications since last meeting including -

a. Permissions granted by TVBC that WPC has already supported/raised no objection

- i. Old Railway Cottages, Fullerton
24/02572/FULLN

Erect garage to be used ancillary to main dwelling, convert outbuilding from workshop/storage to tourist accommodation with alterations to windows and doors and separate access south of main dwelling
- ii. Freeland
25/01728/FULLN

Alterations and refurbishment to the existing 3 terraced Brick cottages which includes the conversion of the 3 cottages into 2 with a rear extension to both cottages
- iii. New House, Fullerton Road
25/02377/TREEN
iv. St Peter And Holy Cross Church
25/02664/TREEN
v. Kingfishers, Fullerton Road
25/02678/TREEN
vi. The Old Malt House
25/02610/LBWN

T1 - Cypress - Remove to ground level

Fell 3 x Ash Trees

Black Locust – fell

Remove plaster, install a horizontal damp proof course and a single membrane system and re-plastering work

b. Applications received since the last WPC meeting.

- i. The Old Malt House
26/00005/TREEN

T1 - Catalpa speciosa (Northern catalpa) – fell

It was agreed that Cllr Bryant should attend to view the tree before the PC responded.

10. Scaffolding and traffic lights round the White Lion:

It was reported to the contractors that the signs blow over in high winds because there are no sandbags, and they have now rectified this.

11. Special Projects: To receive updates on progress with special projects.

- a. **War Memorial:** Cllr Bryant reported that there has been no progress on this project and requested to District Cllr Drew that he speak with TVBC planning to stop the repeated questioning of the application that is stalling progress.
- b. **Use of AI to improve/ease PC administration:** Cllr Newell proposed that AI could be used to support administration and ease the workload of the Clerk and improve efficiency. It was agreed that she would trial the use of ChatGPT to draft the next report for the parish magazine from the minutes of this meeting. Cllr Newell also offered the help of one of her university students to liaise with the Clerk on use of AI in monitoring & reporting on local planning applications. The PC however raised some concerns about using AI to generate the actual meeting notes, and deferred any decision until after the Clerk has investigated and reported back on any potential issues around GDPR and recording of public meetings.

12. Updates on Councilors' portfolios: There were no updates not already covered by agenda items.

13. To receive report from County & District Councilor Drew:

- a. **HCC report:**
 - i. Highways have completed the major engineering works to install a new underpass at J10 of the M27.
 - ii. Advice was provided on keeping warm during winter cold spells, and everyone was encouraged to look out for vulnerable neighbours.
 - iii. HCC has launched a new blueprint for nature recovery.
<https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/nature-recovery-hampshire/hampshire-strategy>
 - iv. The Consultation on Proposals for Local Government Reorganisation in Hampshire has now closed.
 - v. HCC do not support any delay in local elections suggested in response to Local Gov. reorganisations.
- b. **TVBC report:**
 - i. A Local Government Association (LGA) review has praised TVBC for strong leadership and commended the council's work on transformation. Wherwell Cllrs agreed that there were some good teams working within TVBC, though concerns remained about aspects of the planning department.
- c. **Other matters**
 - i. Cllr Hutton requested that Cllr Drew if he can pursue with HCC Highways what action can be taken to restrict access through the village for HGVs due to continued damage

to the bridge at Winchester corner and with the added limitations of access while the White Lion is scaffolded.

14. Parish Administration & Correspondence:

- a. Cllrs agreed to the request from Alison Hellyer (Community Engagement Ranger for HCC Access Team) to meet the PC to discuss Public Rights of Way which run through Wherwell. The Clerk will invite her to the next PC meeting.
- b. Cllrs discussed communications both within the PC and with the public. It was agreed that
 - i. Cllr Newel lead on updating the public on the village WhatsApp
 - ii. Assistance be sought on updating the design of the PC website.
 - iii. The clerk to arrange improvements to the safety of access to the notice board.
- c. Cllr Blazdell will approach the Wherwell History Group on helping repurpose the bus shelter as an information & local history display hub.
- d. Cllrs discussed how to ensure timely responses to official consultations eg Southern Water, Local Government Reorganisation etc. It was agreed that discussions could be held on WhatsApp unless it was felt that a public meeting needed to be called before any response was made.
- e. Ways to deter HGVs from crossing the bridge at the tight turn at Winchester Corner were discussed. Until HCC agree to formally restrict access and put up notices that HGVs are not permitted on this road, it was agreed that the PC would purchase a solar powered security camera to try and capture images of any vehicle hitting the bridge so that HCC could use this as evidence to sue the culprit for damages. Permission from landowners at Winchester Corner would be sought for siting the camera on a temporary basis.
- f. It was agreed that the publication of a formal notice of a vacancy arising on the Parish Council will be delayed until the end of January.

15. Date of next scheduled Meeting: Tuesday 10th March 2025.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8:40pm.

These minutes are signed as a true representation of the meeting.

Signed:

Date: