

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 uplift to enable more 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.
Agreed - that the precept is increased to £13,000 - an uplift less than £4 per household.
Action - The clerk/RFO will notify TVBC of the new precept.
- 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.
Action - 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.
Action - The clerk will notify the PTA.
- e. The clerk/RFO gave Cllrs an update on current banking arrangements and noted that there is a need for additional signatories and Cllr Young volunteered.
Resolved - That Cllr Young be added as a signatory to the PC bank mandate with Lloyds.
Proposer: Cllr Blazdell, Seconder: Cllr Newell, all agreed.
Action - Clerk to submit mandate change to Lloyds bank

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

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

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| <p>i. Old Railway Cottages, Fullerton
24/02572/FULLN</p> | <p>Erect garage to be used ancillary to main dwelling, convert outbuilding from workshop/storage to tourist accommodation.</p> |
| <p>ii. Freelands
25/01728/FULLN</p> | <p>Refurbishment to the existing 3 terraced Brick cottages including conversion of the 3 cottages into 2 with a rear extension to both cottages</p> |
| <p>iii. New House, Fullerton Road
25/02377/TREEN</p> | <p>T1 - Cypress - Remove to ground level</p> |
| <p>iv. St Peter And Holy Cross Church
25/02664/TREEN</p> | <p>Fell 3 x Ash Trees</p> |
| <p>v. Kingfishers, Fullerton Road
25/02678/TREEN</p> | <p>Black Locust – fell</p> |
| <p>vi. The Old Malt House
25/02610/LBWN</p> | <p>Remove plaster, install a horizontal damp proof course single membrane and re-plastering work</p> |

b. Applications received since the last WPC meeting.

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| <p>i. The Old Malt House
26/00005/TREEN</p> | <p>T1 - Catalpa speciosa (Northern catalpa) – fell</p> |
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Action - Cllr Bryant will 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 ChatGPT is used to draft the next report for the parish magazine from the minutes of this meeting as a test for Cllrs to review for future reports. Cllr Newell also proposed that AI could be used to help in monitoring & reporting on local planning applications. The PC however raised some concerns about using AI to generate the actual PC meeting notes, and deferred any further discussion or decision until after review of any potential issues around GDPR and FOI for recording of public meetings.

Actions

- i. **Cllr Newell will use AI to draft the next report for the parish magazine and will investigate the use of AI for planning applications admin.**
- ii. **Clerk will investigate GDPR/FOI issues recording of public meetings and report back.**

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. (It was noted that Wherwell PC submitted a response to the consultation supporting the TVBC option of a rural Mid Hampshire authority including New Forest, Test Valley, Winchester and East Hampshire.)
- v. HCC do not support any delay in local elections suggested in response to Local Gov. reorganisation.

b. TVBC report:

A Local Government Association review praised TVBC 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

Cllr Hutton requested that Cllr Drew pursue with HCC Highways what action can be taken to restrict access though the village for HGVs due to continued damage to the bridge at Winchester corner and with the added access limitations 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.
Action - The clerk will invite Alison Hellyer to the next PC meeting and request a map of the Public and Permissive Rights of Way in the parish.

- b. Cllrs discussed communications both within the PC and with the public.

Actions

- i. **Cllr Newell to lead on updating the public on the village WhatsApp**
 - ii. **Clerk Newell to lead on updating the public on the village WhatsApp**
- c. Cllrs discussed Wherwell History Group helping repurpose the bus shelter as an information & local history display hub.

Action - Cllr Blazdell to approach Andrew Flanagan to discuss WHG assistance

- d. Cllrs discussed how to ensure timely responses to official consultations eg Southern Water, Local Government Reorganisation etc. and agreed that where timeliness is important between meetings, discussions be held on WhatsApp unless it is felt that a public meeting needs to be called before any response is made.
- e. Ways to deter HGVs from crossing the bridge at the tight turn at Winchester Corner were discussed. It was suggested that use of a security camera to capture images of any vehicle hitting the bridge could be used as evidence for HCC to sue for damages.

Action - Cllr Newell will purchase a solar powered security camera

- 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.

Action - Clerk to notify TVBC and publish notice.

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: **Role:** **Date:**

Attachments - None