

Winkleigh Parish Council

**Minutes of the Parish Council Annual General Meeting
on
Wednesday, 28th May 2025 7.30pm
at
Community Centre, Castle Street, Winkleigh**

Present: Cllr. A Phillips (Chair), Cllr. B Roth (Vice Chair), Cllr. A Jacobs, Cllr. G Goldsworthy, Cllr. A Keys, Cllr. A Warner and Cllr. A Wonnacott.

In attendance: 6 Members of the public
District Cllr Simon Newton
DC Cllr Cheryl Cottle-Hunkin
Lucie Moorse (Parish Clerk)
Josie Hole (Administration Assistant)

01.05.25	<p>Welcome: Cllr Phillips welcomed everyone to the meeting, and, together with the Parish Clerk advised of the formalities that are required to be conducted before the commencement of the Parish Council Meeting.</p>
02.05.25	<p>Election of Chair and signing of Declaration of Acceptance of Office Cllr Warner proposed, and Cllr Phillips seconded that Cllr G Goldsworthy be elected as Chair, this was agreed by all. The Chair signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.</p>
03.05.25	<p>Election of Vice-Chair and signing of Declaration of Acceptance of Office. Cllr Odulinski was nominated by Cllr Jacobs and seconded by Cllr Warner and received two votes. Cllr Phillips was nominated by Cllr Goldsworthy and seconded by Cllr Roth and received four votes. Cllr Phillips was duly elected as Vice Chair. The Vice Chair signed the declaration of Acceptance of Office.</p>
04.05.25	<p>The Chair opened the meeting at 7.36pm and received apologies of absence from Cllr Odulinski who is on holiday.</p> <p>The new Chair, Cllr Goldsworthy thanked his supporters and pledged to fulfil his role diligently. He emphasised the importance of open communication, encouraging Councillors to approach him directly with any concerns. He also expressed gratitude to all Councillors and Group Leaders for their significant, often unseen, contributions to the Parish Council's operations.</p>
05.05.25 and 06.05.25	<p>Co-option of a new Councillor and Election of new Councillor and signing of Declaration of Acceptance of Office.</p> <p>Discussion followed on the co-option of a new Councillor. A community member present, who had previously discussed this with Cllr P Odulinski, declines the offer to be co-opted at this time, but is willing to assist with Council tasks (such as cleaning street signs), which the Chair and Councillors appreciate. It was agreed that this would be tabled for future discussion.</p>
07.05.25	<p>Declarations of Interest: None</p>

08.05.25	<p>6.1 County Cllrs Report – Cllr Cheryl Cottle-Hunkin presented her report Cheryl Cottle-Hunkin, the new County Councillor was introduced to the Parish Council. She has also been appointed to the new County Council Cabinet role for Rural Affairs, aiming to amplify rural voices. Cllr Cottle-Hunkin (still early in her term), provided a brief personal introduction. She detailed the recent political shift in the council: Liberal Democrats now hold 27 of 60 seats, followed by Reform UK (18), Conservatives (7), Green Party (6), and two Independents, with Labour no longer present. Notably, 80% of councillors are new. She committed to advocating for rural issues, acknowledging the challenges in securing support and funding, and even responsibility for potholes. During discussions it was agreed that the Parish Council will meet with her to discuss local concerns and long-standing county-level support issues.</p> <p>6.2 District Cllrs Report – Cllr Simon Newton – presented his report. District Councillor Newton presented his annual report, commending the Parish Council's transformation, including a new strategic plan, improved governance, and a collaborative group for inter-parish communication. He reported that at Torridge District Council, (where leadership under Ken James is stable and independent-controlled), focus remains on major projects like the Appledore Clean Maritime Centre and a new waste operations depot. He briefly mentioned Holsworthy's government-funded developments and the uncertainty surrounding Devon's local government reorganisation, expressing concern for new County Councillors. He informed the Councillors that he has limited local grants budget, (having already allocated some to the football club), and encouraged requests for support. He concluded by stating he is actively managing seven local cases, from housing benefits to planning advice.</p> <p>6.3 Police Representative update – none</p>
09.05.25	<p>Public Participation –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion on Exeter Road Safety and Traffic Concerns Two members of the public (who moved to Winkleigh Parish approximately a year ago) shared serious concerns about the dangerous traffic on Exeter Road, mentioning reckless driving and a near-miss incident involving a pedestrian. The lack of any visible speed limit enforcement was emphasised and asked for safety measures in that area. Other members of the public expressed strong agreement on the need as it is very much used by families and school children, especially near the school bus stops and they emphasised the risk posed by fast-moving traffic. Cllr Warner responded confirming that this is a focus area and one of the main reasons for purchasing the speed gun, but a definitive solution had not yet been decided. Discussions then followed concerning the installation of a mirror to help visibility for those joining the road at a bad junction, but the practical difficulties of installing a mirror were acknowledged, including potential property issues. <p>Another member of the public expressed concern about the management of heavy vehicle traffic on Winkleigh's roads. Cllr Phillips pointed out that current restrictions' limits access for vehicles over 7.5 tonnes but removing the exemption for these vehicles could enable more effective policing, as it would become easier to fine drivers using Winkleigh as a cut-through unlawfully. The growing traffic volume due to new developments was noted as a pressing concern.</p> <p>Speed monitoring was discussed, with the observation that without sufficient data, speed enforcement vans do not attend. Suggestions were made about police support and the potential for a speed watch location on Exeter Road.</p> <p>The subject to 20 mph speed limits within the village was raised by the public in attendance and the Council advised that this was already on the Agenda to be discussed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Spirit in Winkleigh

	<p>The newer residents praised the friendliness and politeness of Winkleigh residents, contrasting this with less welcoming experiences elsewhere in the country. Other participants echoed this sentiment, underscoring the village's unique social cohesion and friendliness, which they considered a core strength and cherished aspect of local life.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clubs and Societies <p>Efforts to Support New Residents and Promote Community Engagement</p> <p>Jacqueline Sheppard (who had been invited by Cllr Odulinski to attend the Meeting) presented her project to create a printed booklet listing 38 local clubs and societies to help new and existing residents integrate into Winkleigh life. This comprehensive, tangible booklet aims to be more accessible than online resources, especially with 300 new houses expected. While a grant application has been submitted, the council confirmed that no financial commitments could be made during the public session, and further discussion on the grant and booklet distribution will occur at a later formal meeting. Volunteer support for distribution was offered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal for a Village Community Notice Board <p>Mr Richard Clarke (member of the public) presented a long-standing proposal for a central, aesthetically pleasing community notice board to unify the village's different existing boards. This idea, originally from the Winkleigh Society, has gained traction, especially after a previously locked board on South Street was successfully repurposed. Mr Clarke emphasised the need for a visually appealing, custom board that reflects village pride and serves as a focal point for local activities and announcements. The discussion included clarifying access to existing public boards and replacing the "Three Halls" notice board. Mr Clarke was advised to submit a formal grant application via the Parish Council's website to move the project forward.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village Phone Box <p>Another member of the public asks whether the village's red phone box can be painted and queried the ownership. The Council confirmed that BT owns the box and that it's likely still in place due to its listed status or location within a conservation area. The box is functional, with a working dial tone. Following debate over whether repainting requires official approval, it is suggested that, due to its classification as road furniture, specific permissions and materials (such as a regulated type of paint) may be needed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village Planters and Responsibility <p>Some members of the public raised concerns about the condition and placement of planters in the village, particularly at the top of Coopers Hill noting its neglect. There was some confusion about maintenance responsibility which the Councillors agreed to investigate and there was note of past issues, such as a planter being moved from the "Ring of Bells" site due to land ownership disputes with Torridge District Council, which also highlighted responsibility for the installations and their recurring challenges. Ultimately, the Parish Council agreed that whilst planters are welcome, their maintenance and placement must be clarified and done with approval.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">**** DC Cllr Cheryl Cottle-Hunkin left the Meeting at 8.35pm ****</p> <p>The Chair thanked the public for their enquiries and contribution and returned to the next Agenda item of the Meeting.</p>
10.05.25	<p>To receive and approve the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 23rd April 2025.</p> <p>The Minutes from the last meeting were reviewed and accepted by the Councillors and duly signed.</p>
11.05.25	<p>Matters arising from the Minutes for the previous Meetings not covered in the agenda.</p> <p>No matters raised.</p>
12.05.25	<p>Planning</p>

	<p>To receive a report from the Planning Sub-Committee. Following the report issued by Cllr P Odulinski prior to the Meeting, the Councillors discussed this report, and the following is a brief resume of the discussions and the decisions from the proposals.</p> <p>(i) To note planning applications, comments, and decisions since the last meeting.</p> <p>NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS</p> <p>Application Ref: 1/0365/2025/FUL Proposal: Erection of warehouse, access and yard Applicant: Southwest Fixings Ltd Land At Grid Reference 263321 108895, Winkleigh, Devon Submission of observations required by: 7th June 2025</p> <p>Following discussion during which the Chair and other Councillors expressed support to this application, and it was proposed by Cllr Phillips and seconded by Cllr Wonnacott and fully agreed by other Councillors, that Winkleigh Parish Council would formally support the application, while also making emphasis to justify the site's use despite it technically falling outside the designated business development area. The Clerk was instructed to advise TDC Planning Department accordingly</p> <p>DECISIONS BY TORRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLANNING DEPT.</p> <p>Decision Notice issued 14th May 2025 - application was granted permission in respect of: Application Ref: 1/0322/2024/OUT Proposal: BT Autos – Outline application for 6no. dwellings with all matters reserved except access.</p> <p>(ii) It was confirmed that there were no further Planning Notices since the Agenda preparation.</p>
13.05.25	<p>To receive updates and report from the People Services Committee. In view of Cllr Odulinski absence, and that some members not able to attend the Meeting, it was agreed that this report would be deferred to the next Meeting.</p>
14.05.25	<p>Finance The following had been previously circulated to all the Councillors and were presented at the meeting for approval.</p> <p>a). Schedule of Payments and Receipts since last Meeting held on 23rd April 2025 was approved and signed.</p> <p>b). Agreed and approved Bank Reconciliation to 30th April 2025. It was also confirmed that the copies would be uploaded to the Parish Council's website under the Finance section.</p> <p>c). Agreed and approved Accounts and Budget update to the period 30th April 2025.</p> <p>d) Update concerning the addition of Cllr Goldsworthy as signatory to the Parish Council Bank Account. The Chair informed the Councillors that although Cllr Jacobs had submitted required documentation to NatWest six weeks prior there had still not been a response. It was agreed that they would both follow up to verify whether the Chair's access had been granted and it was noted the intention to apply for a bank card and set up online banking access.</p> <p>e) The Clerk advised that the Summary of Receipts & Payments for the year ended 31st March 2025 would be presented at the next Meeting.</p>

	<p>f) The Chair, Cllr Goldsworthy presented update concerning IT costings, during which the Council discussed the proposal to purchase dedicated laptops for councillors to enhance data protection and legal compliance, moving away from personal devices. It was agreed that laptops should be issued on a case-by-case basis based on clear need. Funds are already allocated on the "Website and IT" budget for such purchases. However, it was proposed by the Chair and seconded by Cllr Phillips and unanimously approved to purchase two laptops (for Cllr Odulinski and the Administration Assistant) with accessories, at an estimated cost of £1,000.</p> <p>Further discussion focused on centralising all finance data onto a hard drive to improve access and security, minimizing email circulation of documents. Councillors committed to uploading their files, with an offer of one-on-one assistance.</p> <p>A separate folder for committee materials was approved, conditional on maintaining a log sheet. It was noted that this centralisation reduces data breach risks, and the hard drive/website are automatically backed up. Additionally, a quarterly password change policy for email accounts was announced by the Chair to bolster cybersecurity.</p> <p>g) Defibrillator Agreement. The Clerk advised the Council that Angela Findlay was proposed as the primary contact Guardian, with Cllr A Warner as backup. The Agreements, which had been duly previously circulated to the Councillors, had been duly amended to show the responsible parties and the Council was asked to formally agree to and sign off on these arrangements. A proposal to this effect was made, seconded and members were asked to show their support. The Chair duly signed and dated.</p> <p>The discussion on annual training on Defibrillators followed and it was confirmed that training is contractually provided annually, and while attendance has varied, it had occurred.</p> <p>To receive Report from Finance and Governance Committee: The Minutes of this Committee Meeting held on the 12th of May 2025, had been previously circulated. Cllr Key proceeded to discuss the development of a more detailed financial spreadsheet. Currently, only a summary exists, but the plan is to introduce multiple tabs categorising individual expenses. The Administration Assistant is working on this system, and the goal is to complete it by the next council meeting. The new structure will allow for both top-level overview and detailed inspection of budget allocations. The Chair was noted in praising the initiative, noting that it will improve transparency and decision-making regarding expenditures. With the fine-tuning the spreadsheet to ensure formulas work correctly this emphasises the importance of this work for future spending decisions, especially as the Council looks to increase outreach and promotional activities.</p> <p>To receive Report from the Parish Environment Committee The following items also to be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Bungalow maintenance update b) Cemetery – consider Cllr Warner’s proposed Funeral Directors instructions. <p>The Councillors discussed the above subjects, and the following is a resume of outcomes and further actions:</p> <p>a) Bungalow Maintenance update Cllr Warner briefly outlined that a quote was obtained through the Estate Agent’s maintenance provider for work on a bungalow, and, after discussing the matter in greater detail concerning the difficulty in obtaining the required number of quotations Cllr Jacobs proposed moving forward with the initial quote, with Cllr Phillips seconding the motion, and unanimously agreed by the other Councillors present.</p>
15.05.25	
16.05.25	

	<p>b) Cemetery – proposed Funeral Directors’ instructions</p> <p>Cllr Warner advised the Councillors that the Cemetery's soil box is full, and a new soil deposit area has been designated in the north-west corner near the stables, though an undertaker recently used the incorrect north-east corner. All soil is consecrated and must remain within the cemetery grounds.</p> <p>To address these issues and ensure compliance, Cllr Warner that he feels it advisable that the Council should distribute updated written instructions to gravediggers and undertakers. These instructions will clarify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designated Soil Placement: Soil must be placed in the newly designated north-west corner. • Maximum Mound Height: Graves must not exceed a mound height of 10 cm (4 inches) above the surrounding ground. • Inspection Notifications: Gravediggers and undertakers will undertake to notify the Council of their required 6-month and 12-month inspection dates for graves. <p>Cllr Phillips proposed, and Cllr Wonnacott seconded the motion but with the added contact details of the Clerk to be shown at the bottom of the notice.</p>
17.05.25	<p>S106 Issues –</p> <p>a) BT Autos – Planning Permission – Agreement 15th April 2025. This planning permission was duly noted by the Councillors.</p> <p>b) Update concerning bench application in play area - Westcots Drive. It was noted that Adrian Avery is away until July and therefore await his return for any update on this matter.</p>
18.05.25	<p>Parish Council Vacancies – Update and Action ref Co-option To be discussed and reviewed again at the next Parish Council Meeting.</p>
19.05.25	<p>Street Safety Group Report: Community Infrastructure Updates and Action items: To receive and consider report updates and consider the following specific subjects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) 20mph Zone for Winkleigh – update b) Review of traffic management and signage for HGVs in the village. c) Zebra Crossing Mid Devon Motors - update d) Winkleigh Speed Gun – update <p>The Councillors discussed the above subjects, and the following is a resume of outcomes and further actions:</p> <p>(a) Street Safety and 20mph Zone update This subject was raised during the “Public Participation” and following this the Council discussed in greater detail extending 20 mph speed limits within the village, acknowledging the County Council's reluctance to implement them near junctions, which complicates wider adoption due to enforcement difficulties. Despite some successful pilot areas and previous funding, budget constraints and legal costs remain significant barriers.</p> <p>It was noted that there is strong support for a Devon-wide 20 mph policy, citing successful implementations in Dolton and across Somerset. Whilst potentially expensive upfront, it was argued that this would be the most cost-effective safety improvement. Councillors were encouraged to formally lobby Devon County Council and raise the issue at Cabinet level, with several members offering to compile supporting data.</p> <p>b) Review of traffic management and signage for HGVs in the village Cllr Phillips emphasised the need to remove a specific restriction on Winkleigh’s 7.5-tonne vehicle limit. He suggested changing the signage so that only vehicles with access needs</p>

	<p>could enter, thus enabling police to enforce violations easily (under a TS60 offence). He noted that increasing traffic from nearby development will exacerbate existing problems. Speed monitoring is challenged by the lack of supporting data, which prevents placement of speed enforcement vans. The need for better enforcement and clearer signage was stressed.</p> <p>.</p> <p>c) Zebra Crossing Mid Devon Motors - update No further update at the moment on this subject but it was hoped the matter can be further discussed at the next Parish Council Meeting.</p> <p>d) Winkleigh Speed Gun – update Cllr Warner advised that with the purchase of a speed gun for data collection, the aim is to gather first-hand information about speeding in various locations. Importantly, this is not intended for enforcement but for data supporting lobbying. Discussion followed about ensuring transparency, and the Council agreed to publicise timing and location of their data collection on Facebook. It was also emphasised that safety precautions, such as wearing high-visibility clothing, will be followed.</p> <p>The Council also further agreed to a suggestion that in order to prevent repetitive discussions and improve coordination, a comprehensive dossier of all current traffic and speeding initiatives should be compiled. Furthermore, it was agreed that a brief update on speeding issues will be included in the Community newsletter. It was noted that its submission deadline is the 30th of May 2025.</p> <p>There were also discussions on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road surfaces and paths: Concerns were raised about eroded granulated road surfaces, with speculation about potential repairs (tarmac/better surfacing). Plans are in place to address the path to Winkleigh Woods next week, including gate specifications. • Castle Green & Utility Works: Rumours of disturbances at Castle Green were dismissed, with the only verified activity being traffic light installation mentioned on the County Council website. Ducting work is scheduled for 16th to 20th June, following a recent project completion by South West Water. • Utility Coordination & Access: There is uncertainty about the coordination of various utility works (water, electricity, etc.) and potential access disruptions. An update on S278 (Highways Act) acceptance and fixation was noted. • Pedestrian Crossings: A discussion ensued about different types of pedestrian crossings – especially puffin and pelican. The former was explained in detail, highlighting their sensor-based timing to adjust to pedestrian presence and efficient traffic flow.
20.05.25	<p>Paths and By-ways Report - To receive and consider report and updates. It was reported that the byways are still walkable but there were difficulties in matching walked paths to official footpath numbers, due to inconsistencies in available documentation. Cllr Roth confirmed that he had already commenced a maintainable spreadsheet showing when each path was last inspected, and he also confirmed that an email had been sent to the Footpaths Officer requesting clarity on the matter.</p>
21.05.25	<p>Parish Matters</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) TDC - Street Cleaner update b) Update regarding Children's Play parks c) To discuss large vehicle access and signage on village roads. d) Community minibus. e) ESMG update f) Update and potential actions concerning property in Eggesford Rd.

22.05.25	<p>a) Street Cleaning Service The Clerk reported they had initially received no response to a written query and had to follow up by phone: a detailed email was subsequently sent expressing the Parish Council's dissatisfaction and asking for a prompt response. At present time this is still awaited.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action: Parish Clerk</p> <p>b) Update regarding Children's Play parks This matter was not discussed.</p> <p>c) Large vehicle access and signage on village roads The Council discussed persistent concerns about Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) traffic navigating the village, such as the incident of a large lorry getting stuck. Despite existing "unsuitable for HGV" signs and a 7.5-tonne weight restriction, drivers frequently miss or ignore them, often realising their mistake too late.</p> <p>Concerns were expressed about the current signage being ineffective and suggestions were made about providing unofficial, affordable signs as a potential deterrent and strategically placed in areas, e.g. near Castle Street.</p> <p>The Councillors discussed the suggestion of reporting registration numbers to the police for violations which was considered a more direct solution, but such issues might go unaddressed by the community. Ultimately, the discussion highlighted the challenge of deterring HGVs despite existing restrictions and the need for more effective, perhaps localised, signage solutions.</p> <p>d) Community minibus No update to this report received</p> <p>e) ESMG Update Cllr Warner advised that there had been little change from his update at the last Parish Council Meeting in April. He advised the transport planning officer will be contacted soon to follow up on progress. Her previous action was to pass the project to economic development, who were tasked with contacting identified landowners to ascertain their willingness to sell land. It was noted that these initiatives often span several years.</p> <p>f) Update and potential actions concerning property in Eggesford Road. The Council discussed the long-standing issues concerning a deteriorating property on Eggesford Road, following a further enquiry from a lady resident. It was acknowledged that little progress has been made since last year's site visits, and the Council feels it has limited options unless the property becomes a direct public hazard.</p> <p>It was noted that District Cllr Newton has been involved, confirming that the District Council holds the primary authority to act. However, significant legal complexities arise as the property owner residing in the Channel Islands, and ongoing maintenance of aspects like the garden complicates enforcement. It is understood that District Cllr Newton is expected to follow up with relevant officers and the Councillors await feedback on this issue although no substantial change is anticipated in the near future.</p> <p>A.O.B.</p> <p>a) Submission Deadlines for Parish Reports The Chair raised concerns about receiving reports too close to council meetings, making it difficult for members to review and prepare. Although it was noted that a report had been submitted two weeks prior, he urged everyone to submit documents at least five days in advance to ensure productive discussions.</p> <p>b) Funding for Community Events The Clerk advised that she had received a request from Cllr Odulinski concerning the Community Events Fair on 5th July- and - Community Awards on 17th July, in that a</p>
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	request of £500 funding allocation had been received to support promotion and other event-related costs. This proposal was officially approved with Cllr Warner as proposer and the Chair as seconder. It was noted that this would be allocated to the events budget.
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It was duly noted and agreed by all present to extend the Parish Council Meeting by a maximum of 30 minutes

Meeting ended at 9.50pm.

Date of next meeting: Wednesday, 25th June 2025

Chair..... Date.....