

Winkleigh Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Annual General Meeting on Wednesday, 28th January 2026 7.00pm at Community Centre, Castle Street, Winkleigh

Present: Cllr. A Phillips (Vice Chair), Cllr. A Jacobs, Cllr B Roth, Cllr. A. Wonnacott, Cllr. P Odulinski, Cllr A Keys, Cllr. T Squance, Cllr S Leahy, and Cllr J Sheppard

In attendance: 4 Members of the public
District Councillor Stephen Middleton
Lucie Moore (Parish Clerk)
Josie Hole (Administration Assistant)

01.01.26	<p>The Chair to open the Meeting and receive apologies for absence.</p> <p>In the absence of the Chair, the meeting was opened and chaired by the Vice-Chair, Cllr A Phillips, at 7.00 pm, who welcomed all those present.</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Devon County Cllr C Cottle-Hunkin.</p>
02.01.26	<p>Declarations of interest</p> <p>The Chair invited declarations of interest relating to items on the agenda. No declarations of personal or prejudicial interest were made and no dispensations were requested. (<i>Addendum: It was noted subsequently that Cllr Odulinski did mention "only the ones that she had already declared"</i>)</p>
03.01.26	<p>Election of Chair of the Council</p> <p>The Vice-Chair outlined the process for electing a Chair for the remainder of the 2025/26 civic year. Following several nominations and withdrawals, two candidates remained.</p> <p>A vote by show of hands was held. Cllr P Odulinski received five votes, and the other candidate received four votes.</p> <p>It was therefore resolved that Cllr P Odulinski be elected Chair of Winkleigh Parish Council for the remainder of the 2025/26 civic year.</p> <p>Cllr Odulinski signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and took the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.</p> <p>(Action: Clerk to update Council records and notify the relevant authorities of the change of Chair)</p>
04.01.26	<p>Election of Vice-Chair of the Council</p> <p>The Chair invited nominations for Vice-Chair for the remainder of the 2025/26 civic year. Two candidates were proposed and seconded.</p> <p>A vote by show of hands was held. Cllr A Jacobs received five votes, and the other candidate received four votes.</p> <p>It was therefore resolved that Cllr A Jacobs be elected Vice-Chair of Winkleigh Parish Council for the remainder of the 2025/26 civic year. Action: Clerk to update Council records and notify the relevant authorities of the Vice-Chair appointment.</p>

05.01.26	<p>Monitoring Officer – Attendance at Meeting with Parish Councillors</p> <p>The Clerk reported that the Monitoring Officer and Tom Vanstone were unable to attend evening meetings and had requested a daytime meeting. Councillors discussed suitable dates and times. A morning meeting on a weekday was agreed as most practical, with Thursday 12th February emerging as the preferred option, subject to availability.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Parish Council propose a meeting with the Monitoring Officer and Tom Vanstone on Thursday 12th at 9.00 am, subject to room and officer availability.</p> <p>Action: Clerk to confirm room availability, consult with the Monitoring Officer and Tom Bannister, and circulate final arrangements to councillors.</p> <p><i>(Correction / Addendum: The meeting was subsequently re-arranged to Wednesday 11th February at 4pm. All arrangements, including room availability and officer attendance, were confirmed for this revised date).</i></p>
06.01.26	<p>a) Devon County Councillor’s Report</p> <p>In the absence of Cllr Cottle-Hunkin, it was noted that her written report had been circulated and would be made available to parishioners via the Parish Council website.</p> <p>b) District Councillor’s Report – Cllr Stephen Middleton</p> <p>District Cllr Middleton reported on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress on the Hatherleigh / Holsworthy market and business park project and associated government funding. • Work of the Climate Change Committee to reduce the carbon footprint of key District Council buildings. • Section 106 agreements linked to developments in the Winkleigh ward and confirmation that affordable housing is to be allocated via Devon Home Choice with a “Winkleigh first” approach. <p>Concerns were raised about the release and use of Section 106 funds, including allocations linked to Eggesford Station and sports and recreation projects.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Parish Council arrange a meeting with relevant officers to clarify the status, allocation, and triggers for release of Section 106 monies affecting Winkleigh.</p> <p>Action: Chair to arrange a meeting with District and County officers and report back to Council with a summary of Section 106 allocations.</p>
07.01.26	<p>Public Participation (15 minutes):</p> <p>Members of the public raised concerns including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparency around Section 106 funds and ensuring residents can see how much money exists and how it is to be used. • Longstanding highways issues, including dropped kerbs and road layout affecting mobility scooter users, and the perceived lack of visible progress. <p>The Chair thanked residents for their contributions and confirmed that work on Section 106 clarity and highways matters would continue and be reported under relevant agenda items.</p> <p>Action: Chair to ensure updates on Section 106 and highways matters are clearly minuted at future meetings.</p> <p>It was noted that no formal resolutions were made under this item.</p>

08.01.26	<p>Environment Committee – Lead/Chair Appointment</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Phillips and seconded by Cllr Squance, with full approval by the Members that Cllr A Jacobs be confirmed as Lead/Chair of the Environment Committee until the ordinary elections in May 2026.</p> <p>It was resolved that Cllr A Jacobs be appointed Lead/Chair of the Environment Committee until the ordinary elections in May 2026.</p>
09.01.26	<p>Councillor Vacancy & Co-option:</p> <p>The Council noted that the statutory notice period for the current councillor vacancy would expire on 30th January 2026.</p> <p>Members considered the application from Ms Catherine Wensley, who had been interviewed and found suitable for co-option.</p> <p>Resolved: To approve, in principle, the co-option of Ms Catherine Wensley, with formal appointment and commencement of term of office on 31st January 2026, subject to no further applications being received by the close of the notice period.</p> <p>The continuing vacancy was noted and further expressions of interest were encouraged.</p>
10.01.26	<p>Approval of Minutes – 26th November, 27th November and 15th December 2025</p> <p>Members reviewed the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 26th November 2025. Clarification was provided in relation to “Matters Arising (Road Safety),” where wording could be interpreted as implying that a particular speed-limit extension had been agreed, when the Council had in fact only agreed to further work and consultation.</p> <p>An amendment to remove the misleading wording and to add a clear deadline in respect of the register of interests was agreed. Proposed by Cllr Phillips and seconded by Cllr Wonnacott with full approval by the members.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 26th November 2025 be approved, subject to the agreed amendment to the “Matters Arising (Road Safety)” section and the inclusion of a clear action date for the register of interests.</p> <p>Action: Clerk to amend the 26th November 2025 Minutes accordingly, arrange for signature by the Chair and upload the approved version.</p> <p>The Minutes of the Extraordinary Meetings held on 27th November, and 15th December 2025 were then considered. No amendments were requested. Cllr Phillips proposed and Cllr Wonnacott seconded with full approval by the members.</p> <p>It was resolved that the Minutes of the Extraordinary Meetings held on 27th November 2025 and 15th December 2025 be approved as a correct record. Resolution 2026-01</p>
11.01.26	<p>Matters Arising:</p> <p>Members considered matters arising from the above Minutes not otherwise covered on the agenda, including ongoing work on traffic and highways and planning for community consultation through the parish questionnaire.</p> <p>Action: Chair and Environment Committee Lead to ensure agreed traffic and consultation actions remain clearly tracked and reported back at subsequent meetings.</p> <p>No further resolutions were recorded under this item.</p>

12.01.26	<p>Parish Environment – Environment Committee Report and Planning</p> <p>Environment Report</p> <p>The Environment Committee Lead reported on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribution arrangements for the parish questionnaire to households and businesses. • Progress on benches and community grant opportunities. • Dog waste bin provision, including relocation of the bin near the school, which had reduced overflowing. <p>Members noted a further heavily used dog bin on a newer footpath and considered the need for additional provision.</p> <p>Resolved: That the Council allocate budget provisionally for the purchase of an additional dog waste bin, with the exact location to be agreed at a future meeting. Resolution: 2026-02</p> <p>Action: Environment Committee to bring a recommendation on bin location to Council; Clerk to obtain costs and arrange purchase once agreed.</p> <p>The Chair also updated members on discussions with Devon County Council Highways and a proposed walkabout by the Director of Highways to look at key routes and issues in Winkleigh.</p> <p>Action: Chair to confirm the date and arrangements for the Highways walkabout and report back.</p> <p>Planning</p> <p>Members noted planning decisions issued since the last meeting, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1/0886/2025/FUL – 12 Ashplants Close, Winkleigh – permission granted 09/01/2026. • 1/0901/2025/FUL – The Barn, Pittford Cottages, Wembworthy – permission granted 16/01/2026. • 1/0693/2025/FUL – Land at Hatherleigh Road, Winkleigh – permission granted 20/01/2026. <p>New applications were considered as listed on the agenda, including 1/0010/2026/FUL, 1/1016/2025/PIP and 1/0839/2025/FUL. No material objections were raised, and it was agreed that the Council’s comments would reflect the discussion.</p> <p>Resolved: That the Clerk submit planning responses to Torridge District Council in line with the views expressed at the meeting, including support where no material planning objections were identified.</p> <p>Members noted that further legal clarification was being sought in relation to Planning Application 1/0920/2025/FULM (Allison Homes) and the associated Public Right of Way.</p> <p>Action: Cllr Odulinski to continue to liaise with the Planning Authority regarding the Public Right of Way and report back when updated information is available.</p>
13.01.26	<p>People Committee – Update</p> <p>The Council received a brief update from the People Committee on its recent meeting, including consideration of website, email and data management options, Community Awards and staff matters.</p> <p>There were no separate resolutions under this item, as related decisions were taken under Agenda Items 14.01.26 and 15.01.26.</p>

14.01.26	<p>Data Devices: The Council discussed the use of personal devices for council business and associated data protection risks, particularly in relation to subject access requests.</p> <p>It was agreed that Councillors should, where possible, access Council emails via a secure application rather than downloading data to personal devices, and that a small number of council-owned devices would be purchased for those who need them.</p> <p>Resolution:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To adopt a secure, app-based approach for accessing council emails (via the chosen IT provider), avoiding local storage of council data on personal devices. 2. To approve a budget of up to £200 for the purchase of dedicated council-owned devices for councillors who require them. <p style="text-align: right;">Resolution: 2026-03</p> <p>Action: obtain suitable devices, maintain an asset list, and provide guidance on the new arrangements.</p>
15.01.26	<p>Website and IT Services: The Chair presented options for outsourcing the Parish Council website, email, and data management and for moving to a .gov.uk domain.</p> <p>Following consideration of costs, reliability and security, members agreed that Parish Online offered the best overall solution.</p> <p>Resolution:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To move to a .gov.uk email domain for councillors and staff. 2. To appoint Parish Online as the preferred provider for website and email services. 3. To authorise Cllr Phillips to manage the website transition and provide interim IT support until the new arrangements are fully implemented. <p style="text-align: right;">Resolution: 2026-04</p> <p>Action: Clerk and Cllr Phillips to progress contracts with Parish Online, implement the .gov.uk domain and report progress at the next meeting.</p>
16.01.26	<p>Finance & Governance Committee – Update The Council received an update from the Finance & Governance Committee on recent work and noted that its recommendations would be taken under Item 17.01.26 (Finance) and Item 19.01.26 (Parish Matters).</p> <p>No separate resolutions were recorded.</p>
17.01.26	<p>Finance</p> <p>a) Schedule of Payments and Receipts The schedule of payments for January, totalling £2,606.37, was considered and approved, including a forthcoming payment of £84.99 for Microsoft Office 365 due on 18th February 2026.</p> <p>It was agreed that, in the absence of a Council debit card, the Office 365 payment could be made via the Clerk’s personal card and reimbursed.</p> <p>Action: Clerk to process the approved payments and arrange reimbursement for the Office 365 payment.</p> <p>b) Cash Book and Budget to 31 December 2025 The cash book and budget position to 31 December 2025 were reviewed and approved, noting that approximately 32.4% of the budget remained unspent.</p>

	<p>Action: Clerk/RFO to continue monitoring the budget and report variances to the Finance & Governance Committee and Council.</p> <p>c) Bank Reconciliation to 31 December 2025 The bank reconciliation as of 31 December 2025 was approved.</p> <p>d) Precept 2026–2027 The precept for 2026–27 was confirmed at £40,418, representing a 5% increase in line with prior forecasts and reflecting changes in the tax base. Action: Clerk to notify Torridge District Council of the precept requirement.</p> <p>e) Scribe Update It was noted that previous issues with the Scribe accounting system had been resolved and that the system was now functioning as intended.</p>	
18.01.26	<p>S106 Issues Members noted ongoing work to consolidate information on Section 106 agreements affecting Winkleigh, including amounts, purposes and any time-limits. Action: Chair to prepare a summary of relevant Section 106 funds for consideration at a future meeting.</p>	
19.01.26	<p>Parish Matters. The Policy Review Programme was noted. It was agreed that work on a combined IT and Digital Compliance Policy should be prioritised, with other policies scheduled in line with the Policy Working List.</p> <p>Resolved: To prioritise completion of an IT and Digital Compliance Policy as part of the 2026 policy review programme.</p> <p>Action: Clerk to prepare a draft IT and Digital Compliance Policy and bring it to a future meeting; Policy Working List to be reviewed periodically.</p>	
20.01.26	<p>Any Other Business:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Clerk’s resignation was noted and accepted, with thanks for her service; an extended notice period of one month was agreed to support a managed handover, including statutory returns. • Suggestions were made to improve audibility at meetings and to explore options for live-streaming, to increase accessibility for parishioners. <p>Action: Chair (with People/HR support) to progress recruitment and handover arrangements; Chair to investigate audio and streaming options and bring proposals to a future meeting.</p> <p>At 9.00pm Cllr Phillips proposed and seconded Cllr Roth, with all in favour that the Council to move to Part II of the agenda, during which discussions will be held in private.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="311 1545 1460 1668"> <tr> <td> <p>Exempt Session Confidential Matters (Part II) Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 S1(2) The public and press are requested to leave the meeting if matters are decided to be discussed under this section.</p> </td> </tr> </table> <p>Return to Public Session.</p>	<p>Exempt Session Confidential Matters (Part II) Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 S1(2) The public and press are requested to leave the meeting if matters are decided to be discussed under this section.</p>
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Meeting ended at 9.30pm.

Date of next Parish Council Meeting: Wednesday, 25th February 2026 at 7pm

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