

# Lifton Parish Council

## Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held in the Tamar Room (The Arundell), Lifton on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2025

*These minutes are provisional until they are agreed and signed by the Chairman at the next meeting of the parish council*

### **Part 1**

**Present:** Cllr Edmonds (Chairman), Cllr Alexander, Cllr K Dunn, Cllr S Dunn, Cllr Glen, Cllr Gynn and Cllr Lees and Cllr Measey

- 1. Apologies:** Cllr Sutton-Woodhouse (apologies for the reasons given were approved)
- 2. Minutes:** The minutes of the Meeting of Lifton Parish Council held on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2025 were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman.
- 3. Dispensations and Declarations of Interest:** None
- 4. Visiting/Guest Speakers:** None

### **5. Public Participation/Borough Cllr. Update:**

**Public Participation:** Two members of the public were in attendance. A couple of questions were asked regarding the installation of the mobile phone mast at St Mary's Church; who would be the mobile phone provider and when is the installation going to happen. A question was also raised regarding the potholes on Duntz Hill.

All questions were addressed under the agenda items below.

### **Borough Cllr. Update:**

In response to the questions regarding the mobile phone mast raised under Public Participation; Cllr Edmonds has been liaising with Network Solutions regarding the mast installation on top of the tower at St Mary's Church. The cable has been installed but the antennae has not. The local MP was approached about the delay and they have also been in contact with Vodaphone, the network provider. The reasons given for the delay have been provided by Vodaphone3.com. Vodaphone's merger with the '3' network is reason for part of the delay but the primary reason is budget. 'Local optimisers' are looking into boosting the mobile phone signal in the village and due to the merger, there may be capacity to expedite the service. Cllr Edmonds was awaiting further update regarding timings.

West Devon Borough Council, in relation to local government reorganisation, has submitted a proposal to become a unitary council joining with South Hams, Teignbridge and Torbay Councils. Plymouth intends to remain separate. The remaining 5 district councils around Devon propose to form another unitary council. These are not final decisions as districts are continuing to work on the proposals before the governments November deadline for submissions. Devon County Council has also submitted their proposal for local government reorganisation in Devon.

WDBC are consulting with residents on the local government reorganisation and devolution deal; there is lots of information on their website: <https://www.westdevon.gov.uk/your-council/local-government-reorganisation-and-devolution> and they will also be holding local roadshows. There is one in Lifton on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2025.

## 6. General items:

### 6.1 Highways Update

In response to the question regarding potholes on Duntz Hill raised under Public Participation, DCC Highways will only make a repair if the potholes meet their strict safety defects criteria. The potholes on Duntz Hill and at the top of Darkey Lane will form part of DCCs highways annual works schedule; the PC has not been given any indication of then this work will be undertaken.

The Clerk provided a report to Councillors prior to the meeting which detailed highways matters that have been reported to or from Devon County Council Highways (or other departments) since the last meeting.

In relation to the overhanging branches on trees located at the green on Fore Street, the PC's local contractor has provided a quote of £250.00 to undertake work to cut back the branches. DCC Highways have given their approval for the PC's contractor to undertake this work, at the PC's expense.

**Lifton Community Speed Watch Group:** Councillors received the latest speed data report from Cllr S Dunn prior to the meeting. Two speedwatch sessions were undertaken yesterday at 8.00am and 3.00pm; now that the schools have broken up for the summer, the volunteers logged hardly any speeding vehicles during those sessions, 3 and 5 respectively. In comparison, 15 speeding vehicles were logged during a similar session last week.

Councillors asked the Clerk to share this information with the local primary school to highlight the issue of there being an increase in speeding vehicles in the village during school term time. All agreed.

### Vehicle Activated Speed Signs (VAS)

The VAS located in Liftondown has not been repaired yet; the one at the top of Darkey Lane is in working order. The VAS in Tinhay is working really well and has been effective in reducing speeding vehicles. The Tinhay VAS is the same as the VAS in Lewdown although their one works off solar power unlike Lifton's which is battery-operated.

The Parish Chairman is currently speaking to Ambrosia in Lifton as they have a grant scheme which the PC may be able to utilise to purchase a second new VAS.

Other possible funding could be sought from the WD Borough Councillor's Locality Fund, DCCs Locality Fund and via a grant from the D&C Police & Crime Commissioner.

Cllr Gynn will continue to explore possible funding via the OPCC, in the meantime, the Clerk will ascertain quotes from VAS providers.

### 6.2 Scheme of Delegation

Councillors received the draft 'Scheme of Delegation' prior to the meeting; it was also published on the PC's website. The scheme allows the Clerk/RFO to undertake certain functions not already covered in the Standing Orders or Financial Regulations during a specified time period as the PC may not hold a meeting during August.

**Motion: Councillors resolved to adopt the Scheme of Delegation that delegates authority to the Clerk/RFO, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, between 25th July and 31st August 2025 (inclusive). Proposed (DM); Seconded (SD); All in favour. A vote was taken by a show of hands.**

### **6.3 Ambrosia Litter Pick**

As part of Premier Foods' Environment Week (14th July - 18th July), Ambrosia staff in Lifton were to undertake a litter pick around the village. The Parish Chairman will confirm whether this took place as planned.

Councillors agreed that a letter of thanks should be sent to Ambrosia in recognition of their help in keeping Lifton tidy. All agreed.

**Action: The Clerk to write a thank you letter to Ambrosia in Lifton once confirmation has been received that the litter pick did take place.**

## **7. Reports:**

### **7.1 QEII AGM Minutes – To note the minutes from the AGM held on 14th July 2025**

Councillors noted the QEII AGM minutes which were circulated prior to the meeting.

The recent fly tipping at the QEII was being dealt with.

A 'thank you' letter was read out thanking the PC for the play area facilities and the cleanliness of the recreation ground.

### **7.2 OPCC Councillor Advocate Scheme**

Cllr Gynn provided an update on the retirement of D&C Chief Constable, Will Kerr, and an update from the Councillor Advocate Seminar that was held in Lifton on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2025 which was on 'Tackling Serious Violence (Serious Violence Prevention).

## **8. Finance**

### **8.1 For payment:**

Clerk's salary for July	£ 730.73
HMRC: National Insurance Contribution (June & July £47.02 x 2)	£ 94.12
Community First Insurance – extension of cover	£ 133.40
Lloyds Bank charges (to be taken by DD on or after 19 <sup>th</sup> July 2025)	£ 4.25

**Proposed (DM) and Seconded (SD); all in favour that the above payments be made online.**

[Total above payments: £ 962.50]

**Action: Clerk to set up all payments online for further Councillor authorisation.**

The above invoices for payment and the bank statements dated 1<sup>st</sup> July 2025 were seen and signed by two Councillors.

### **8.2 Receipts:**

Interest        £ 4.17

The transfer of £2,500 between the PC bank accounts took place on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2025; as agreed at the PC meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2025

### **8.3 Outstanding invoices: None**

## **General matters relating to Finance:**

### **8.4 Bank reconciliation: April to June 2025**

The Clerk shared the bank reconciliation with Councillors prior to the meeting; it was also published on the PC's website. No issues were found; the bank statements, bank reconciliations and cashbook all tally with each other.

Councillors formally noted the bank reconciliation and it was signed by two Councillors.

### **8.5 PC Insurance Update**

In consultation with the Parish Chairman and the PC's insurance broker (Community First), the Clerk undertook a review of the PC's insurance policy cover; this has recently been renewed as part of a 3-year long-term agreement.

Councillors noted that there has been an increase in insurance costs (see above item 8.1) due to an extension of cover relating to the two parish bus shelters and the addition of the church lychgate to the policy.

The Clerk asked Councillors to consider whether they felt it was necessary to add the parish burial ground wall to the PC's insurance policy. Whilst the PC's insurance included adequate public liability cover, it did not include Part C – All risks cover specifically for the burial ground wall should it fall down. Councillors discussed this matter and decided not to add the burial ground wall to the PC insurance but to review this again in the next annual insurance review. All agreed.

### **8.6 Asset Register 2025-26**

Councillors voted to formally approve the revised Asset Register 2025-26 following the amendments agreed at last month's PC meeting. The cricket roller and the Clerks old laptop have been removed and placed on the 'Disposals' list. In addition to this, x2 road signs and a hearing loop have been added to the register.

**Proposed (AL) and Seconded (VG); All in favour. A vote was taken by a show of hands.**

## **9. Planning**

### **9.1 Applications:**

1856/25/FUL - Proposal: Change use from holiday let to residential with minor changes to elevations (part retrospective). Site Address: Barn At Sx 371 866, Higher Carley Barns, Lifton

Councillors were reminded that they had voted in support of a previous planning application in relation to the same site/proposal (5 votes in support and 1 abstention). WDBC turned down the previous application on the grounds that the site is located within the open countryside which is considered to be an unsustainable location. Insufficient information has been provided to the Local Planning Authority in order to demonstrate that there is no proven demand for the holiday let and that the removal of the holiday letting restriction would be justified in this context.

In line with WDBC's planning policies, the applicant has now provided evidence for the non-viability of this holiday accommodation.

Councillors agreed that, although the evidence provided by the applicant was beyond the PC's remit and expertise, they voted to support this application for the following reasons; historically the barn was residential; the holiday accommodation has been empty since the current owners took it on;

there is a housing shortage in rural areas; and that the barn is not 'isolated' as it sits within a cluster of other properties.

**Proposed and seconded. PC decision: support (8); not support (0); abstain (0). All in favour.**

**A vote was taken by a show of hands.**

### **9.2 Approvals:**

1526/25/FUL - Description: Rear extension to provide two accessible toilets, reuse the existing toilet as storage & provide an access corridor. New notice board & solar panel array.

Site Address: Methodist Church, Liftondown, PL16 0DA. **Decision:** Conditional Approval

### **9.3 Refusals:**

0750/25/VAR - Description: Application for variation of condition 1 (Approved Plans), condition 10 (BNG), condition 12 (LEMP), condition 13 (PEA), condition 14 (lighting) and condition 17 (landscaping) of planning consent 3342/24/ARM to include external lighting changes. Site Address: Land At Sx 376 850 Lifton. **Decision:** Refusal

### General matters relating to Planning:

9. None

### **10. Correspondence:**

Flood and Coastal Risk management newsletter - Summer 2025

Thank you re: QEII Recreation Ground

Food Security & Resilience Emergency (email correspondence received on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2025)

**11. Councillors' items for future agenda:** VAS Funding, Village Christmas Decorations

Part 1 meeting closed at 19:58.

## **Part 2 – commenced at 19:59**

### **1. Resolution to exclude the public and press from the meeting**

Councillors passed the following resolution: To resolve that in accordance with Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960 section 1(2) and as extended by Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from Part 2 of this meeting in respect of confidential or sensitive information which is prejudicial to the public interest

**Proposed (DM), seconded (SD); all in favour.**

### **2. Ratification of Clerk's pay & conditions**

The Employment Committee met on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2025 to discuss the Clerk's annual appraisal, pay and conditions including working hours. They also considered the Internal Auditors recent recommendations in relation to the HMRCs working from home allowance and the payment of a pension.

The Clerks' appraisal has been completed and objectives agreed for the next year. The working hours will remain as 11 hours per week.

The Employment Committee recommends that the PC agree to increase the Clerk's salary to SCP17. The hourly rate may change once the National Joint Council for local government services - Local Government Services' Pay Agreement 2025-26 has been published.

The Employment Committee also recommends that the PC agree to pay the Clerk the HMRCs working from home allowance and contribute to a work-based pension.

**Councillors resolved to agree the above recommendations in relation to the Clerks pay and conditions. Proposed (DM), seconded (CE); all in favour. A vote was taken by a show of hands.**

Part 2 Meeting closed at 20:19.

SIGNED..... Date.....

**Next Meeting:** 7.00pm - Thursday, 25th Sept 2025 (Methodist Chapel, Liftondown)