

BERE FERRERS PARISH COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Council held in the Bere Ferrers Church Hall on Tuesday 29th July 2025

Present

Cllr. R. Maycock	Vice-Chair of the Council
Cllr. P. Crozier	Cllr. V. Grose
Cllr. B. Lamb	Cllr. M. Patterson
Cllr. R. Perry	Cllr. C. Shaw
Cllr. G. Sutton	

194. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr. P. Archer, Cllr. R. Leithall, Cllr. J. Maciejowska and Cllr. E. Wager. Accepted by the Council.

195. Declaration of Interests

None.

196. Notifications of items of interest as the discretion of the chair. No action can be taken on these items

None

197. Chair's Report

There was no Chair Report. The Council will be on hiatus for August and the next Full Council meeting will be held on Tuesday 30th September 2025.

198. To receive a report from the County Councillor

Cllr. Michael Fife-Cook explained to the Council and members of the public about the Locality Budget allocated to him, which can be applied for and is allocated to support local causes and small projects within the region. He highlighted a recent contribution made towards an online safeguarding initiative, which provides training for teachers on internet safety.

He expressed his belief in the importance of the chain of command, stating that matters should ideally be addressed through the Parish, then Borough, and finally County Council levels. As such, he emphasised his commitment to keeping Borough Councillors informed, reinforcing the view that "we are all a team trying to get things done."

Cllr. Fife-Cook also noted that any information he comes across which may be of relevance or benefit to the Parish will be passed on to the Parish Clerk. With his own background as a former Parish Councillor, he acknowledged the vital role Parish Councils play and the significant knowledge and effort they put in.

199. To receive reports from the Borough Councillors

Cllr. Isabel Saxby had sent her apology and her report for July/August:

1. National Spending Review: Council Tax & Funding Updates

The Government's Spending Review confirms no change to council tax referendum limits for 2026/27. For shire districts like West Devon (which do not run social care), the maximum increase remains the higher of 2.99% or £5 per year on a Band D property. In practice, this means West Devon Borough Council can consider up to a ~3% rise without triggering a local referendum.

Core Spending Power

Nationally, local government "Core Spending Power" is projected to rise by around 2.6% in real terms over the next few years. However, the specific figures for West Devon for 2026/27 will only be known later in 2025 once the detailed finance settlement is announced. A modest real-terms increase is expected, but caution remains around spending until figures are confirmed.

2. Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)

A386 Priority Route

Devon County Council's countywide LCWIP identifies the Tavistock-Plymouth corridor (A386) as a priority for improved walking and cycling routes. Currently carrying around 16,000–18,000 vehicles daily, the A386 lacks safe footways or cycle

lanes. The LCWIP proposes a new multi-use trail linking Clearbrook to Roborough, providing a safe off-road alternative for cyclists and pedestrians.

Local LCWIP Projects

West Devon has submitted a prioritised list of local LCWIP projects, including routes within the Bere Ferrers ward (covering Bere Alston and surrounding villages). Devon County Council will now review these proposals and determine which schemes may receive support or funding. Once feedback is received, I will update the Parish on progress and which projects may move forward.

3. Highways & Maintenance Updates

Cornwall Street Resurfacing

Cornwall Street carpark resurfacing completed.

4. Local Government Reorganisation

Background & Emerging Proposals

The Government continues to explore options for local government reorganisation in Devon, potentially replacing the current two-tier system (county and district councils) with new structures that could include combined or unitary authorities.

Earlier proposals included a possible “1-4-5” model:

- Plymouth to remain a standalone unitary authority;
- A single unitary for East, Mid, and North Devon, plus Exeter;
- Another for West Devon, South Hams, Teignbridge, and Torbay.

District councils, including West Devon, continue to reject a single unitary for the whole of Devon, instead advocating for genuine devolution and strong local representation.

Consultation

A public consultation is open until **11 August 2025**. Residents are encouraged to share their views via the online survey at: www.westdevon.gov.uk/local-government-reorganisation

Paper copies are available upon request.

5. Planning & Development

Local Plan Update

West Devon Borough Council has begun work on its next Local Plan, which will shape development policies and land allocations across the Borough. Parishes will be consulted later this year to help define local priorities.

Dartmoor National Park Authority Consultations

Two consultations are currently live until **25 August 2025**:

- [Statement of Community Involvement \(SCI\)](#) – This sets out how DNPA engages the community in planning policy development and planning applications. The updated draft SCI reflects recent legislative changes, for instance, replacing neighbour notification letters with site notices.
- [Local Validation Checklist](#) – This consultation focuses on the document requirements needed for planning submissions, covering everything from carbon reduction and energy efficiency to adaptable dwelling standards. It offers transparency and clarity for applicants.

Residents and parish councils are encouraged to take part and help shape future planning policy.

6. Environment & Climate

Regenerative Farming & Local Food Task-and-Finish Group

West Devon is now home to a Regenerative Farming & Food Task and Finish Group, aimed at boosting sustainable agriculture and local food security. It offers tailored support to farms in South Hams and West Devon exploring regenerative practices to enhance both environmental resilience and farm productivity.

7. Housing Initiatives

West Devon Borough Council has committed £80,400 from second-home council tax income to support the purchase of two new homes under the Government’s Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF). This brings the total number of homes delivered in the borough via the scheme to 13, with one designated for young care leavers.

The council has also remodelled a former office building at 20 Plymouth Road, Tavistock, now offering three flats as temporary accommodation. This project is part of a wider strategy to reduce reliance on costly external temporary housing.

Alongside these developments, West Devon continues to promote and support Community Land Trusts, empowering local communities to deliver affordable housing.

For further detail, visit the council’s housing page: www.westdevon.gov.uk/housing.

8. Licensing & Community Safety

Statement of Licensing Policies – Consultation Open

West Devon Borough Council is currently consulting on its next Statement of Licensing Policies, covering key areas such as alcohol sales, taxis, gambling, and entertainment licensing. Feedback is collected via the Commonplace consultation platform, under the “Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution / Your Council” category, all directly accessible online.

How to Take Part:

- Visit Let’s Talk West Devon at the [Commonplace community forum](#), search for the licensing policy consultation under the relevant category.

200. To approve and adopt the minutes from the Full Council meeting held on 24th June 2025 as a true meeting and taken as read, to deal with matters arising.

Cllr. Lamb proposed approval of the minutes, seconded by Cllr. Crozier.

Matters Arising

Minute 126

Members of the Tavy & Tamar Apple Group, together with members of the Parish Council, have begun the clearance at the Orchard. The next phase will focus on securing funding to support the continued development and maintenance of the site.

Minute 129 (63)

Cllr. Lamb provided an update to the members of the public present and confirmed the work to repair the Bere Ferrers recreational field car park, will commence on 18th August.

Minute 129 (63)

The Bere Ferrers Villagers Group is currently awaiting a quote for the replacement fencing at the playpark. Until the cost of the new fencing is confirmed, no further planning for additional improvements in the playground can proceed, due to limited available funds.

Minute 63 (758)

A meeting, which had been arranged for 15 July between Cllrs. Lamb and Crozier, the Head of Development Management, the Director of Strategy & Governance, and the Senior Green Spaces and Recreation Officer from West Devon, has now be rescheduled to mid-August.

Cllr. Maycock proposed adoption of the minutes, seconded by Cllr. Patterson.

SO, RESOLVED

201. To approve and adopt the minutes from the Plans & Highways Committee meeting held on 1st July 2025 as a true meeting and taken as read, to deal with matters arising.

Cllr. Maycock proposed approval of the minutes, seconded by Cllr. Patterson.

Matters Arising

Minute 142 (85)

Cllr. Maycock informed those present that the Parish Council has updated the Neighbourhood Plan as much as is currently can and completion of the updated version, is not feasible until West Devon Borough Council publishes its own updated planning plans.

Minute 144

Cllr. Lamb confirmed that West Devon Borough Council has signed off all agreements with Burrington Estates regarding the development of 31 new dwellings in Bere Alston.

Minute 146

Cllr. Maycock explained to those present why the Parish Council wishes to arrange a meeting with other local Town and Parish Councils to discuss shared concerns regarding the West Devon Planning Department. The Parish Clerk is currently awaiting a response from Tavistock Town Council on whether they would be willing to host the meeting.

Cllr. Fife Cook reported that, as a member of the Dartmoor National Park Planning Committee, they had suggested that the Planners meet with Parish Councils. He asked whether West Devon Borough Council would consider doing the same?

Cllr. Lamb outlined the ongoing difficulties the Council is experiencing with the Planning Department in securing the reallocation of the Section 106 funds—due from the Burrington Estates development—for the redesign of the Pavilion. It is hoped that the meeting, now rescheduled for mid-August, will help to resolve this issue.

Cllr. Maycock proposed adoption of the minutes, seconded by Cllr. Lamb.

SO, RESOLVED

202. To approve and adopt the minutes from the Footpaths & Environment Committee meeting held on 1st July 2025 as a true meeting and taken as read, to deal with matters arising.

Cllr. Grose proposed approval of the minutes, seconded by Cllr. Perry.

Matters Arising

Minute 154 (680)

The Tavistock Library said they would not stock the Footpath guides.

Minute 154 (681)

Cllr. Grose is still struggling to find someone to engrave the footpath discs required and will next try a place in Exeter.

Minute 155

When Cllr. Grose visited the bridleway running through Leigh Farm, the electric fence was not on, it has though been reported to Devon Public Right of Ways.

Minute 155

Cllr. Crozier confirmed that walkers had left three gate open. The Public Rights of Way Warden was to follow up with the landowner and the Clerk will enquiry on the outcome.

Minute 156

A public meeting will be held in the Parish Hall, Bere Alston, on 13th September (time to be confirmed). The event will be hosted by Tamar Energy Community, who will be available to offer advice and support on energy efficiency. Attendees will also have the opportunity to use a thermal imaging camera to help identify heat loss in their homes. Dartmoor Energy will also be present to provide guidance on how and where to apply for energy grants.

Minute 157

A public meeting will take place on 5th September at 7 pm in the Bere Ferrers Church Hall on Nuclear Energy. In addition an independent Energy Advisor will be there to answer any questions. Cllr. Grose extended an invitation to Cllr. Fife Cook to attend. He will look at his diary and let her know if he could attend.

Minute 158

Cllr. Perry has not yet reported the issue he highlighted at the meeting, but will do so.

Minute 159 (1)

The Clerk read out an extract from Cllr. Saxby's report concerning the Local Cycle and Walking Infrastructure project:

Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) / A386 Priority Route

Devon County Council's countywide LCWIP identifies the Tavistock-Plymouth corridor (A386) as a priority for improved walking and cycling routes. Currently carrying around 16,000–18,000 vehicles daily, the A386 lacks safe footways or cycle lanes. The LCWIP proposes a new multi-use trail linking Clearbrook to Roborough, providing a safe off-road alternative for cyclists and pedestrians.

Local LCWIP Projects

West Devon has submitted a prioritised list of local LCWIP projects, including routes within the Bere Ferrers ward (covering Bere Alston and surrounding villages). Devon County Council will now review these proposals and determine which schemes may receive support or funding. Once feedback is received, I will update the Parish on progress and which projects may move forward.

Minute 159 (2)

The deadline to submit comments on the second draft of the Tamar Valley National Landscape may have passed. However, if anyone still wishes to provide feedback, it could be worth revisiting the consultation website, as the deadline was previously extended.

Cllr. Grose proposed adoption of the minutes, seconded by Cllr. Perry.

SO, RESOLVED

203. To approve and adopt the minutes from the Open Spaces meeting held on 8th July 2025 as a true meeting and taken as read, to deal with matters arising.

Cllr. Shaw proposed approval of the minutes, seconded by Cllr. Patterson.

Matters Arising

Minute 167

Repairs to the leaks in the Pavilion roof are in progress.

Minute 168

The Clerk provided an update on actions taken following recent inspections:

The overhanging branches in Sarah Park and at the Stone Hut in Bere Ferrers have been removed.

The encroaching hedge has been cut back.

A trip hazard identified, will be removed by the Workman.

Cllr. Shaw observed a member of the Football Club carrying out repairs to the wire fence surrounding the football pitch.

It was also confirmed that it is the Parish Council's responsibility to cut back the hedge to ensure the Stop sign at the end of Down Road remains visible. Parish Council to action.

Minute 170

Painting of yellow lines down the path from Pilgrim Drive to Fore Street, will be done in due course.

Minute 171

Cllr. Patterson confirmed that the School is happy for the litter bin to be relocated further down the road, away from the area where parents typically wait. This agreement is on condition that if dog mess or litter continues to be left in the original location after the bin is moved, the bin may be returned to its current position. The Clerk will contact West Devon Borough Council to request the bin be relocated.

Minute 174 (1)

In reference to a resident's request to Devon County Council to cut back the overgrown vegetation on Cornwall Street, which was replied with a response stating that no issue was identified, the Clerk will forward all related correspondence to Cllr. Fife Cook for his review and further action.

Cllr. Shaw proposed adoption of the minutes, seconded by Cllr. Patterson.

SO, RESOLVED

204. To approve and adopt the minutes from the F & G.P meeting held on 22nd July 2025 as a true meeting and taken as read, to deal with matters arising.

Cllr. Crozier proposed approval of the minutes, seconded by Cllr. Lamb.

Matters Arising

Minute 178

Cllr. Sutton reported that, at the last British Legion meeting, it was agreed to defer any decisions regarding the commemoration of the 80th anniversary of VJ Day until the schools return. The intention is to plan an event to take place on or near the date the surrender documents were signed. There are currently no plans to hold a two-minute silence on the actual day, but this will be discussed further at their meeting next week.

Minute 178

The Council is still waiting on confirmation on when the electric charging points will be installed in the Pilgrim Drive car park. The Neighbourhood Services Manager had replied to both the Clerk and Cllr. Fife Cook:

“ I can only apologise for the delay however, the leases have taken longer than intended to finalise. We have finally reached a point of completion with legal contacting me today to discuss signing. Once the signing of the leases have been completed we can then look to the installation stage. We are in a partnership with a number of other Councils therefore install will not take place immediately but they should be completed in this financial year. The charger will be installed in the Pilgrims Drive car park following the village hall not wishing to have them installed within their car park. Leases should be signed and returned by the end of this week.”

Minute 179

Due to safety concerns regarding its location and the absence of a viable project proposal, the Council agreed not to adopt the red phone box.

Minute 180 (114)

Letters that have been placed on oversized vehicles parked in the Parish Hall are being ignored. The Parish Council will therefore explore enforcement options.

Minute 181

Ideal Lift Services advised that while an annual LG1 supplementary test for the Council Office lift is recommended, it is not mandatory. It was agreed that this matter will be discussed and decided at the next F & G. P Committee meeting.

Minute 185

The Council's solicitor is awaiting further information from the seller's solicitor regarding the sale of the Bedford Villas land to the Council.

Minute 186

The Clerk has contacted the solicitors acting on the Council's behalf for the Bedford Villas land to enquire whether they would also act for the Council in the transfer of land at Pilgrim Drive.

Cllr. Crozier proposed adoption of the minutes, seconded by Cllr. Lamb.

SO, RESOLVED

205. To receive a report from the Sports Development Committee

Cllr. Lamb read out an update from the Committee:

On 16 May 2023 a 'Task & Finish' - Sports Development Group was formed

1. At the Annual Meeting of this Council and made answerable to Council for repairs or provision of new Pavilion and other Sports Development. We have a strong team representing sport and the local community with top level expertise.
2. Over the two years we held two public consultations with 76.9% in favour of replacement of old building, a later consultation liked the design with 94.5% and subsequently the Council engaged an architect to provide a design and to take the project through to planning permission
3. Last week the F & GP recommended the final design and that £4,000 from General reserves should be used to pay for consultant's fees on Landscape Design, B. N. G. reports on habitats and effect on ecology etc. plus the cost of planning fees.
4. We have been involved in a pre-app application with West Devon planners and on 19 June they responded positively to our plans, they stated: "The principle of development is supported and subject to design/landscape/amenity considerations could be supported. The National Football Foundation, Devon F. A. and Sport England have assisted us with the plans which they have now approved.
5. Unfortunately the red line surrounding the development has now been made from the Pavilion along the northern track through the car park to Down road and we are charged planning fees on this area which I believe will add an extra £1400 to our costs at this very late stage.
6. We are now considering how we might raise this amount through grants from supporting organisations.
7. If all goes well, we expect a planning decision in October, 2025. We will then start applying to some of the National Grant Bodies.

Cllr. Lamb therefore propose that the Council go ahead and apply for planning permission in respect of this project. Seconded by Cllr. Maycock. All in favour.

206. Correspondence

None

207. Questions from any members of the public present, at the discretion of the Chair.

A member of the public wished to update the Council regarding an incident she reported several months ago. The residents have since written a letter to the Enforcement Team at West Devon Borough Council's Planning Department. A copy of the letter has also been forwarded to the Parish Council.

A member of the public raised concerns about inconsiderate parking and blocked driveways on The Down, and inquired whether the new car park on Pilgrim Drive could be used by visitors?

It was noted that this is unlikely, as there is no pedestrian path from Pilgrim Drive to the recreational field.

The Parish Council acknowledged the ongoing parking issues but noted that there is no parking enforcement restrictions in place. The Clerk will contact the Football Club Managers again to remind them to advise visitors to park considerately on The Down and avoid blocking driveways.

There being no further business, the Vice-Chair thanked members for attending and thanked members of the WI for providing refreshments at the meeting and declared the meeting closed at 8.46 pm.

Signed by the Chair of the Council

Signed this date 30th September 2025