MINUTES OF A LYMPSTONE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL AT 7.00PM ON MONDAY 1ST DECEMBER 2025.

PRESENT:	
Councillors	R Coleman (RC), S Culhane (SC), S Francis (SF), R Gale-Hasleham (RGH), K Hill (KH), J Payne (JP), A Roberts (AR) and L Staddon (LS) (LPC Chair)
Clerk	Miss L Tyrrell
County Councillors	J Trail (JT)
District Councillors	B Ingham (BI) and G Jung (GJ)
Public	9 members

The Chair welcomed all present and explained that Cllr Atkins had asked for all members to remember Mr Bill Edworthy who had recently passed away and had previously worked for the PC for many years.

Public session

A resident highlighted the state of overgrown hedges around the village and the danger posed for all pedestrians and road users. Hedges were forcing pedestrians out onto the highway and blocking road users' visibility. He had tried to report it on DCC 'report a problem' page online but his device was not compatible with the system. LS explained that it was up to the private homeowner to be responsible for cutting back their roadside hedges. LS suggested that a reminder was added to the PCs Facebook page and to let the Clerk know of exact hedge locations for the PC to investigate.

Another resident complemented the wild meadow area in Front meadow and how much better it looked now it had been cut. She asked if it could be cut every time the contractor mowed the lawn area to keep on top of the docks. She felt regular mowing would weaken the docks to reduce their spread and encourage other plants to grow. She felt hand weeding could not remove docks. The resident added that the hedge in Front meadow also needed topping to thicken it up. LS explained that there was a working group being formed and management plan created to look after the area. The resident also asked who gave LFC permission to play on Cliff field after the heavy rain as the field had now been churned up. LS explained that the muddy areas had been taped off and there would be no further play while the field recovered. The resident also asked why LFC had still not replaced their old storage container. LS added that the new container was in storage and the club were trying to locate a vehicle to be able to transport it safely over the railway bridge and into the field.

Another resident highlighted the fact that the 'no cycling' sign in Cliff Field was still missing, people were using their bikes in the field which was ruining the field surface. LS added that the PC would follow this up with the National Trust again.

25/110 Apologies

Cllr Atkins due to other commitments.

RESOLVED that the apologies were accepted.

LS proposed. KH seconded. Unan.

25/111 Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the PC meeting held on the 3rd November be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
LS proposed. RGH seconded. Unan.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Finance and Advisory Committee meeting held on the 6th November 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
KH proposed. LS seconded. Unan.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the PC Part B meeting held on the 6th November 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
LS proposed. SF seconded. RC, RGH, KH, JP and AR supported. SC abstained.

25/112 To receive any Declarations of Interest

SF declared a personal interest with item 25/113.4
KH declared a personal interest with item 25/113.4

This was recorded in the book.

25/113 Clerk's Report:

25/113.1 LPC precept 2026/27

The Clerk explained that the proposed Parish precept for 2026/27 was £60,000. As of current rates 1st December 2025, this would be just under a 7.5% increase from the last financial year. The Clerk explained that for a typical Band D property, this would approx. be an annual increase £4.52, weekly increase of approx. £0.09.

RESOLVED that LPC would apply to EDDC for a Parish precept of £60,000 for 2026/27.
LS proposed. RGH seconded. Unan.

25/113.2 LPC budget

The Clerk had previously presented the PC budget for 2026/27 at the Finance and Advisory committee meeting held on the 6th Nov. There had been no further amendments.

RESOLVED that the PC budget for 2026/27 was agreed and approved by Cllrs.
LS proposed. KH seconded. Unan.

25/113.3 LPC internal auditor

RESOLVED that Devon Auditing Partnership was approved to be used for the PCs internal audit for 2025/26.
LS proposed. KH seconded. Unan.

25/113.4 Grant received

RESOLVED that a grant of £200 was awarded to the LVHCIO.
LS proposed. JP seconded. Unan.

LS also suggested that LVHCIO could consider applying for additional funding in the new financial year when there was more funding in the budget available.

25/113.5 Correspondence received

25/113.5.1 Responsible use of fireworks

LS highlighted the prolonged use of fireworks this year on and around Nov 5th. She suggested advising members of the public the responsible use of fireworks with the upcoming Christmas and New year celebrations. SC felt residents could be signposted to a voluntary firework code on the website.

RESOLVED that a recommended firework code was added to Lympstone website.
KH proposed. LS seconded. Unan.

25/113.5.2 The River Otter and EDDC water cycle report

SC hoped that the water cycle report would be added to the Regulation 19 consultation. AR felt that planning was not concerned with water quality. GJ explained that the water cycle report would be used in the consultation and was going to committee to discuss issues raised. The public consultation was running for 8 weeks, from 28th November 2025 – 26th January 2026. A resident explained that it was important to note that the consultation was only for comment on the changes since the last public consultation.

25/113.6 Casual vacancies

The Clerk explained that there were two vacancies on the PC and no election had been called. It was up to the PC to co-opt a new member.

25/113.7 Finance – Payments / Financial summary / Budget report

Postponed to Jan 2026 due to time constraints.
The Clerk explained that the PC had successfully opened an instant access saver account and had transferred £50,100 into it.

25/113.8 Clerk's Action List including master correspondence list.

RESOLVED that the Council received and noted the Clerk's action list.

25/114 Reports from the Chairman, East Devon District Councillors and Devon County Councillors.

JT explained that DCC cabinet members had sent a letter to the Government regarding Unitary Council changes and why Plymouth and Torbay would be excluded. He added that the reasoning for Unitary Councils was to improve and strengthen services and finances, it should simplify access to one service. Each Unitary council would cost millions to set up. Debts for each area would also be a shared responsibility. The outcome of the debate would be due March 2026. The elections due in May 2027 would be requiring names for the Unitary authority. JT updated all present that 3West would start work on the Meeting Lane development from February 2026. He highlighted the issue of Wales and West utilities starting work along Meeting Lane a week late and an enforcement officer had been out and visited this afternoon. LS highlighted the fact that the utility company was storing all their equipment on a PC parcel of land without permission. JT asked the Clerk to send him all the details, and he would pass on all information to the enforcement officer. The proposed work due on Strawberry Hill still required a highway inspection for weight restrictions, vegetation cut back and possibly include a one-way system. JT went on to explain that there were five planning applications coming in on land opposite Kings Garden Centre. DCC had only received the recent outline planning development application last Thursday. He felt frustrated with DCC and EDDC planners for a lack of joined up thinking and focus on viewing just one application at a time rather than the area as a whole. He felt there was a lack of infrastructure and roads to cope with future development. He added that Sowton needed dealing with first before coming this way. JT explained that regarding overgrown hedgerows, the PC had the power to send out letters and potholes must be submitted to the DCC online page individually. JT finished by wishing everyone a very happy Christmas.

GJ read his report (See Appendix 1).

A resident asked if Regulation 19 had a five-year land supply? The resident felt that EDDC only had a 2.9 year land supply at this moment. GJ felt it should have a five-year land supply, but EDDC could not demonstrate it at this time. SC asked if windfall sites would be included to which GJ felt they should be. JT highlighted that windfall sites did not come under policy and therefore did not count.

BI felt that part of the problem with the local plan was the fact that towns and cities were trying to adapt to current infrastructure and this floored the system. There had been an opportunity for one new town development which would have covered a housing need for the next 20-30years and then the position could have been reviewed thereafter. The change to Unitary councils was reasoned to save money and support but was worried it would grow and equal more spending and more debt.

The Chair read her report (See Appendix 2).

KH asked to speak and read his statement regarding the part closure of EDDC car park in Underhill (see Appendix 3).

Chris Wilmoth (CW) from the EA was present and explained that alternative parking was being sought for residents. LS reminded all present that the EA were holding a public meeting to discuss this issue on the 9th December at 6pm in the village hall. GJ explained that this was the first he had heard of this

closure and would be taking it up with the parking officers tomorrow. BI thanked CW for coming and asked him to feedback to the EA that communications had been very poor with Cllrs. The Clerk asked CW what format the public meeting on the 9th Dec would take, CW explained there would be a presentation, Q&A session then time for individuals to informally speak with EA staff.

25/115 Planning applications

25/115.1

25/2137/FUL - Replacement rear extension with first floor accommodation, replacement side extension, changes to fenestration with addition of cladding and construction of detached carport at The Retreat, Church Road.

RESOLVED that the Clerk send the recommendation of support based on full compliance with the flood risk assessment and ecology appraisal recommendations from LPC to EDDC.
SC proposed. RC seconded. Unan.

25/115.2

25/2246/VAR - Removal of condition 2 (Removal of Permitted Development rights), of planning permission 98/P0587 (Permission for Retention of Use of Land as Garden), to reinstate permitted development rights available to residential gardens at Garden Of 6 Bakers Cottages.

It was unanimously agreed that no comment would be made by LPC.

25/115.3

25/2323/FUL - Hip to gable roof alterations including rear first floor extension, removal and replacement of front dormer, removal and replacement of garage, installation of front decking and the addition of cladding at Byfield, Longmeadow Road.

RESOLVED that the Clerk send the recommendation of support from LPC to EDDC.
LS proposed. SC seconded. Unan.

25/116 Planning decisions

RESOLVED that the EDDC decisions were noted.

25/117 Reports of Committees

25/117.1 Environment Committee

CW explained that the EA Bio net gain project in Candys Field had changed due to issues with the S106, time restraints for construction and funding. Therefore, the EA were taking their bio net credits elsewhere but remained keen to gift twenty trees with a five-year funding support for creation and maintenance. CW added that once LPC had received tenders and chosen a contractor, the EA would provide funding upfront to the PC to ring fence for the trees over five years. SC gave an update of the project from the very start to

date and added that trees were necessary in Candys field for succession planting, areas which were underutilised, improve boggy areas and the all-round benefits of trees. CW added that if the trees were not accepted then construction would be delayed. SF read her statement (See Appendix 4).
CW highlighted the point that this was a five-year plan with no further commitment to the EA thereafter. JP liked the idea of planting trees but was concerned with the planting of more trees along the tennis courts. KH highlighted that Candys field was an open space, but he felt a few trees in the N-W boggy corner of the field was of benefit. CW explained that having fewer trees would be acceptable but having no trees would change the plans for the work. AR asked if LPC could phase plant a fewer number of trees. RC felt LPC accepted the trees and planted as and when LPC decided.

RESOLVED that the trees would be accepted with an initial five planted in the N-W corner of Candys Field and the remaining trees to be phased planted as, when and only where LPC decides.
LS proposed. JP seconded. Unan.

Mr John Brewer (JB) from Lympstone Flood Resilience Group (LFRG) was present and spoken about the SWW AMP8 meeting held on 24th Nov. He explained that in essence, SWW wished to reduce water pumped from Lympstone to Exmouth. SWW agreed to stay in regular contact with key stakeholders and report back in March 2026 after modelling had been completed. JB explained that it was noted that the tank in the car park was leaking and running at near full capacity, this was being investigated by SWW.

25/117.2 Planning and Transport committee –
Cllr Culhane reported on the NALC's Online Event; Planning For The Future: Navigating The New Planning Framework held on the 29th October (see Appendix 5).

25/117.3 Assets and Amenities Committee
The Clerk reported that she had been in touch with DCC street lighting for recommended contractors. She had received a contractor name and contacts details and would report back to the PC with an idea of costs for repairing the lights in Candys Field.

25/118 Items for the next Agenda
Neighbourhood Plan

Meeting closed: **9.00pm**

Chairman: Date:

Appendix 1:

Woodbury and Lympstone Dec 2025
There are 4 major local concerns that I've been working on.
Council Unitary. Basically, it not unified at all.
Plymouth, Exeter, and Torbay want to annex substantial existing parishes from their neighbours to expand their urban sprawl. Splitting existing District boundaries was not to be done, Government guidelines said, but they ignored government advice.
The districts want to amalgamate with a 4 district, and a 5 district Unitary with Plymouth left as it is in the 451proposal. Then the County Council want it to be simply a "One Devon" Then we have the added complication of a mayor or not, for controlling a whole Devon, and even a Devon and Cornwall mayor.
I can see the sense in a 1 Devon for running services, but it's the lack of Councillor representation with the maximum number of Councillors being only 100, is my stumbling block. This gives poor representation to the rural parishes with one councillor per 4 to 5 parishes, and the Towns and Cities being represented by 3 to 5 councillors each.
So, the Plymouth, Exeter, Torbay gives the large, urbanised areas annexing numerous rural parishes is simply a land grab, and what happens to the rural parishes, without the towns and city, it simply cannot work.
Then the other alternative known as 451 gives the best balance of Councillor numbers but splits the Devon unified services, of Highways and Children and other services.
Whatever happens, Lympstone, Woodbury and Exmouth will be in the same Council as Exeter, as all 3 scenarios does that.

Harbour Review Order. (This includes the canal and basin plus the whole Estuary to a mile offshore.) Exeter City Council want to update the historic out of date bylaws and governance. Most sensible as the Harbour master now can transport people to Australia for some minor stone throwing! Unfortunately, I am concerned regarding the possible fees and fines, that could be charged. Without a business plan it impossible to gauge the Estuary uses impact. EDDC, and many users' groups have submitted their concerns.

The Local Plan Consultation, Is now out for an 8-week consultation. This includes all the changes following the previous public feedback and includes the Water Cycle Report the Air quality report effecting the Pebblebeds and the new town proposal.
I would suggest the issues regarding sewage treatment and Air Quality are key issues to this Parish and need to be carefully scrutinised.

Unwarranted developments. From many people's perspective no housing development is the preferred option, but that's not possible.
It's claimed by some that all the UKs housing could go on Brown Field sites. Unfortunately, East Devon do not have much redundant industrial land (Approx 130 dwellings worth). Therefore, we are required to build on greenfield sites. None of you like it and nor do I, but we are compelled to provide 950 locations for dwellings a year, in our Housing Plan. No ifs no buts! If we don't, developers have carte blanche, and the Council will not have a say where they go! We have received 2 unwanted proposals, one for 150 at the top end of Hulham Road which is 2 sites eliminated from the local plan, as it is in Lympstone Exmouth Gap. Then we have a new community of 1750 new dwellings straddling the land between Clyst St George and Clyst St Mary which is to be submitted very early next year.
Both are rejected sites for the new local plan, but from the dubious evidence provided by the developers they both claim substantial local and planning support.

I will be resisting these 2 very undesirable proposals, and I hope I have your support.

District Cllr Jung
Appendix 2:

1st December 2025

A couple of updates.
The phone box door is now back on the Gibraltar Rd telephone box, it looks awesome and is ready to be a library once again.

On a query by residents of a smelly bin outside properties, the PC has managed to have this changed and we now have a bin in front meadow which is super useful for this well used area.

It is coming up to a cold snap, there is still the possibility for any volunteers to become Snow Wardens in our village - help with gritting places that may need it etc, please email Lucy our Clerk.

The Christmas tree festival is fully lit up and welcomes you to view it at the Church, thank you to Wendy Reynolds for organising again - thank you also to Cllr Francis for getting LPC's tree together in all its glory.

And finally, my sincere thanks to all of LPC Councillors for their hard work and dedication to the Council and village and to Lucy our Clerk for her support at all times.

May I take this time to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a happy new year.

Cllr Lisa Staddon
Chair to Lympstone Parish Council

Appendix 3:

<u>Carpark Closure</u>
Underhill carpark has 84 + 2 disabled resident parking spaces. EA's plan shows that 64 of these spaces will be unavailable for 6 months.

EA state 60% of carpark closed, their plan shows a greater than 75% loss of spaces. Where are EDDC proposing to provide alternative overnight parking for residents currently having to use the carpark?

Will EDDC reimburse permit holders 50% of their fee as they have sold spaces that they are no longer providing.

Will EDDC make more disabled spaces available, currently many with permits, such as myself, park in other spaces as our vehicles are often parked for long periods. Hence, we leave the designated spaces available for those who may have to use their vehicles regularly, for hospital visits, work, etc.

Cllr K Hill
Appendix 4:

Please excuse me reading my concerns, I find it very hard not to become emotional with this issue after a previous meeting.

I expressed my concern in The Assets meeting about this project being another open-ended long-term commitment for the PC. I am even more concerned, now this 2nd change has been made, and even more convinced my concern is justified.
Personally, I regret supporting the proposition when I freshly rejoined the PC last December having missed the background to this project. Years back it had been discussed that a few new trees in the corner of Candy's would be good, and I believed this proposal was to be for a 'few trees' but it seems to me to have grown into so much more and is now in my view completely different and we must take a new vote on the proposal.

I believe the original project in conjunction with the EA was mitigation for flood defence works was based around BNG units remaining in the Parish. Candy's was the only acceptable site to the EA and the number of trees was required to meet their criteria. If those units are now going out of the Parish, I question the wisdom and why we should continue to be willing to transform Candy's from a recreational area with so much new planting to parkland that is less open.
When examining the first agreement with EA our solicitor advised Council to consider carefully if this project was really right for us and the space. Advice I think we should listen to and act upon now with this proposal which would mean new contracts and ongoing costs for the council.
Although the positions and numbers of trees are consistent with the original plan. There has been a substantial change to the reasons and terms. It is right for us to reconsider it and consider any implications the new offer may have. Significant annual costs after the first five years which in a time when we are looking for ways to close gaps in our budget and ensure our finances are on a sound footing - this just does not make sense to me.
I question whether we really need the number of trees proposed at this time. Candy's is an open area and having succession planting along the other side of the pathway between Candy's and the Village Hall/Tennis Courts when the tennis Club doesn't like the trees that are already there because of the leaves and roots damaging their surfaces. It doesn't make sense at this time when we must be mindful the Hub reconstruction may begin in the next two to three years. Isn't having young there going to make things more complicated and expensive during the build? It just doesn't make sense to me, is succession planting really needed now?

If this number of trees are planted, they will need care and regular watering. Being a tree guardian is a big responsibility; it takes a lot of commitment and daily time and effort. Where will the water come from and who will pay for it? Enthusiastic numbers of volunteers at the beginning of a project may fall away and the logistics of the watering that will be required over an extended time I do not think have been adequately addressed.
I can support a goodwill gift of a small number of trees (5) planted in the wet corner of Candy's this would be very welcome, but I cannot support the numbers and places of the trees originally agreed with these changed circumstances.
I truly believe Council should not take on anymore large open-ended commitments that have a cost and may well have unintended outcomes as we have discovered with other projects
In my view as this is now a significantly changed proposal, we must reconsider all the implications and if the change from recreational space to parkland is really right for the village.

Cllr S Francis

Appendix 5:

29 October 2025 - NALC's Online Event - Planning For The Future: Navigating The New Planning Framework

Webinar aimed at helping local councils understand the impact of the amended National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Hugh Ellis, Director of Policy, TCPA - People are a solution to the problems they face in their communities, but the government largely assumes that people are in the way of development. This has set up negative tension, and there is a huge pressure on councils to mediate, deal with and work through that tension whilst navigating an extremely complex planning framework. The government is planning to move towards more strategic planning, deregulation and simplification, and to removing community oversight. The irony is that the power of parish and town councils to shape their own future, to work out the solutions that will actually deal with the climate crisis, with flooding, with community-led energy and housing, can help the government deal with some of the more difficult local issues.

It is vital to have an up to date Neighbourhood Plan in order to have a voice in the planning process, help communities understand the complexities and continue to define a vision.

"*Get stuck in, and accept you might lose occasionally*".

Roger Mortlock, Chief Executive, CPRE - CPRE want to shape the planning system in the following ways:

1. Prioritise genuinely affordable homes especially in rural areas
2. Brownfield first (currently untapped) - there is enough brownfield land in the UK for 1.2M homes
3. Protect and enhance the Green Belt (to grow food and connect with nature)
4. Protect our landscapes as we transition to renewables (there's enough roof space in the UK to meet 60% of our solar targets, preserving our countryside for farming and nature)
5. Support nature recovery and strategic land use (the UK is one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world)

CPRE is a Steering Group member of the Better Planning Coalition.

Paul Miner, Head of Policy and Planning, CPRE - Updated guide to commenting on planning applications available on CPRE and NALC websites (Note re Step 1: there is no statutory requirement for LPAs to invite local councils to pre-application discussions, even on S106s).

Key issues in rural areas:

Andrew Towlerton, National Planning Advisor to SLCC - The 'housing need' 0.8% growth is a purely arbitrary percentage - there is no evidence to support this. In the UK we consent on average 300k houses per year, but build only 220k.
Current situation is negative, but there are a few positives from government:

- Local councils can now play a bigger role in the appeal process
- Continued commitment to Neighbourhood Plans
- Easier to compulsorily purchase land

BUT the government risks undermining public trust in the planning system with strategic decision-making in Whitehall and Westminster, rather than proper planning in the local area.
Advice for local Councils

- Flood risk can challenge the tilted balance
- Arguments about design quality and sustainable development should still be considered and made (increased car dependency is <u>not</u> sustainable).
- Plenty of examples in planning case law for protecting SSSIs, RAMSAR sites etc
- Necessary to have a Housing Needs Assessment to demonstrate a need for affordable housing
- Lots of examples in Suffolk for improved transport infrastructure through major planning
- Neighbourhood Plan is vital
- Work as much as possible with District Councillors and planning officers, and get involved in the local plan-making process

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Most common question:
Should we just keep objecting to major development?
Planning is supposed to be positive - recommend "Yes, we'll take this housing, provided there is a level of affordability, and the homes are flood resilient and genuinely zero carbon."

Cllr S Culhane