

Lawhitton Parish Council Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held at the Village Hall on
Tuesday 20th May 2025 at 19.30pm

Members Present: Cllr Steven (Chair) Cllr King
Cllr Hunt Cllr Chudleigh
Cllr Bastard
Mrs A Clarke (Clerk) 6 Member of the public

Public Participation

Concerns were raised regarding the visibility of agendas on the parish notice board. The agenda had been posted on the website. Clerk to explore using social media for wider notice distribution.

01/05/25 Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman. The current Chair confirmed willingness to continue in the role. Proposed by: Cllr. King and Seconded by: Cllr Chudleigh. The Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance was signed. There was no nomination was confirmed for Vice-Chairman. It was noted that with six serving councillors, the role of Vice Chair may be non-essential but helpful for cover when needed.

02/05/25 Apologies for absence. Received from: Cllr Robinson , Cllr Perry, County Cllr Parsons who sent a report in lieu of attendance due to a clashing meeting in Lesant.

03/05/25 There were no declarations of interest for items on the agenda:

04/05/25 Public participation period this was around two situations:

1. Traffic and Road Safety Concerns – Bulsworthy Lane, Polson Junction and Surrounding Routes

Parishioners raised serious concerns regarding excessive traffic, particularly HGVs and agricultural vehicles using local lanes as shortcuts (Bulsworthy lane to Polson). Specific issues included: Structural concerns over a small bridge under frequent heavy use. Repeated instances of speeding, especially near Polson junction. Road and verge damage, including spillages (animal waste/fertiliser) allegedly from abattoir vehicles. Visibility hazards, corner-cutting, and near-misses—one resulting in a written-off vehicle. Reports of unacknowledged incidents, including an injury-causing accident involving a Cormac vehicle.

The Polson junction and Swarthy Lane were identified as high-risk areas, with calls for: Speed limit reductions to 30mph. 'No Right Turn' restrictions for certain vehicle movements. Greater enforcement of existing weight and speed restrictions. Improved signage, physical traffic calming, and better vegetation management (e.g., hedge cutting along A388). Residents expressed frustration at the lack of Highways enforcement and concern over future housing developments worsening the situation. The existing lane was described as single-track and unsuitable for increased traffic.

Clerk to forward photographic evidence to Highways and request a structural and usage assessment of the bridge. Formal correspondence with Cornwall Council Highways to address: Speed limit enforcement and reassessment (Swarthy Lane and Polson junction). Feasibility of new restrictions and improved road layout. Weight limit enforcement (including referral to National Highways). Request update on proposed junction improvements and any available timelines. Matter to be added to the next agenda for further discussion. Council to compile and submit resident evidence (including CCTV footage) to support the case.

2. Village Green / Community Space Project

Despite housing development delays, a resident-led group has been formed to progress the village play area project. Traffic impact from the nearby development is currently minimal. Financial support remains secured via the Wind Turbine Committee, previously approved by the Parish Council. The new group has appointed a Chair and Secretary; no Treasurer is required as the group does not directly handle funds. Equipment and Layout: The original plan includes a picnic bench, accessible swing, climbing frame, and see-saw. Due to updated health and safety guidance, fencing (approx. 1m post-and-rail) will be required along areas adjacent to the new housing. The see-saw may be removed to accommodate this. Maintenance and Safety: Ten years of annual ROSPA inspections were included in the original quote, though costs may be reduced by using alternative suppliers. Equipment will be timber-based and low-impact, designed to degrade naturally at end of life. Supplier: Caledonia Play, based in Scotland, who have visited the site and are willing to collaborate with local volunteers to reduce costs.

Next Steps: Group to re-engage with Caledonia Play for an updated quote incorporating fencing. Prepare a basic plan/sketch for Council review and approval. Ensure installation proposals remain within the defined village green boundary. Clerk to check for existing land registry records or diagrams confirming village green boundaries. Council will review the updated quote and layout once submitted.

05/05/25 Reports from Councillors: Cllr Parsons

Election and Council Induction: Following the 1st May Cornwall Council elections, the Councillor expressed gratitude for continued support and has since commenced formal induction and mandatory training, including planning and code of conduct modules. **New Council Administration:** The new administration is a coalition of Liberal Democrats and Independents. Key appointments include: Chairman: Rob Nolan Leader: Leigh Frost Deputy Leader: Adam Paynter, Cabinet Members: Cllrs Jim McKenna, Hilary Frank, Tim Dwelly, Sarah Preece, Loic Rich, Peter La Broy, Dan Rogerson, and Thalia Marrington (portfolios pending). The Reform Group, despite being the largest, abstained from nominations and votes.

Plusha Junction Update:

A meeting with Lee Quinney and the project manager confirmed ongoing collaborative efforts between Cornwall Council and National Highways to re-evaluate options for a grade-separated junction at Plusha. A business case will be developed for Department for Transport funding.

Local Highway Concerns:

Visibility issues at the Stourscombe junction have been raised again; the Highways Steward has been asked to inspect and arrange verge maintenance.

Bus Service Changes (Routes 12 and 76):

The recent restructuring of these routes into three segments—combining commercial and subsidised elements—has led to inconvenience for users, particularly affecting the previously well-used Bude to Plymouth service. Though the provider cites low full-route usage as justification, the changes have been unpopular locally due to added cost, delays, and transfers. Efforts are underway, in collaboration with Cllrs Adam Paynter and Andrew Long, to reverse or amend the decision.

06/05/25 Minutes of the last meeting of Tuesday 18th March 2025 were approved and signed.

07/05/25 Matters arising:-

- 7.1** - Register of Interests to be updated To be reviewed and updated post-election. New forms expected imminently.
- 7.2** - Community Space - as per the public participation above.
- 7.3** - Dates for the review of policies, proposal to address one document per meeting to support audit compliance. Clerk to distribute summaries and delegates may read sections individually for manageability.
- 7.4** - To confirm Insurance Policy – Confirmation of renewal at £214. It was highlighted that some matter maybe overpriced the clerk will investigate.

08/05/25 Updates on matters from the last meeting: Forms were submitted collectively for the elections.

09/05/25 Planning - Planning: No new applications requiring review. Prior approvals, including door replacements and residential construction, were confirmed.

10/05/25 Finance - Annual Return Finance and Audit: Auditor has requested minor adjustments to the cash book and PAYE entries. VAT council must determine whether to continue separating VAT for reclaim or consolidate for simplified reporting. Last VAT reclaim was minimal (£68). Annual Return and supporting documents are being finalised.

Update on the Internal Audit. Email and .gov.uk Domain Compliance: Due to audit requirements, the council must now use official .gov.uk email addresses. Proposal: Purchase a domain for approx. £32 annually (inc. mandatory security). Initially, the Clerk's email will be official; councillors to follow in due course.

Current Balances and Bank reconciliation End of March balance: £1,131.06 End of April balance: £4,304.06 (following receipt of the first half of the precept).

11/05/25 Matters brought forward by the Chairman: The bank mandate seems to be mostly in order with signatures confirmed Once the mandate clears, full online banking access is expected to follow. Cheque books are still in use until online access is finalised.

12/05/25 Matters brought forward by Councillors: Council discussed a recent road incident near Laverne Crossroads. Discussion on recent enforcement matters, including unauthorised camp

13/05/25 Correspondence received/clerks report: raised in finance

14/05/25 Date of next meeting: Tuesday 15th July 2025.

15/05/25 Meeting closed.