

Lawhitton Parish Council Meeting

Draft -Minutes of the meeting held at the Village Hall on **Tuesday 15th July 2025 at 7:30pm.**

Members Present: Cllr Steven (Chair) Cllr King
Cllr Bastard Cllr Parsons
Mrs A Clarke (Clerk) 0 Member of the public

01/07/25 Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Chudleigh, Cllr Hunt, Cllr Robinson, Cllr Perry

02/07/25 There were no declarations of interest for items on the agenda:

03/07/25 There was no public participation due to no attendance.

04/07/25 Reports from Councillors: Cllr Parsons

Bus Services: Cllr Parsons reported on concerns regarding local bus services, particularly the route running from Launceston to Bude via Stoke, Saltash, Plymouth, and Callington. This is described as the busiest route in the area. There are concerns that if this well-used route cannot operate without subsidy, there is little hope for other less frequent services. The Launceston to Bude section struggles with low passenger numbers, the withdrawal of bus services would isolate residents, particularly affecting one or two people in each village who rely heavily on public transport.

Planning Matters: Cllr Parsons noted an increase in planning applications, particularly Permission in Principle (PIP) applications, which are less expensive than pre-application advice. There is concern about the volume of applications for developments of less than ten houses. Discussion took place regarding the government's approach to planning and the pressure on Cornwall Council. Planning officers are under significant pressure, and parish councils have limited ability to challenge supportive planning officer recommendations.

Solar Farms: Cllr Parsons acknowledged there may be appropriate locations for them, particularly on less productive or wet land.

Neighbourhood Development Plans: Monetary thresholds for development have increased to approximately £4,500. This has effectively made neighbourhood development plans less effective as a planning tool. Cllr Parsons cited Launceston's neighbourhood development plan as an example, where a tight plan with designated green areas was undermined by a successful appeal, making the time and effort invested appear wasteful.

Highways and Road Safety: Ongoing concerns were raised about road conditions and safety, particularly regarding hedge cutting and maintenance. The A388 was highlighted as being increasingly busy and dangerous, with suggestions that the speed limit should be reduced from 60mph to 50mph. Concerns were raised that this might lead to inappropriate overtaking manoeuvres. There is frustration that this end of Cornwall receives less investment compared to areas around Newquay, despite the A388 being a crucial north-south link.

05/07/25 Minutes of the last meeting of Tuesday 20th May 2025 were approved and signed.

06/07/25 Matters arising:-

6.1 Village Green The council will monitor the situation and defer any substantive decisions to a future meeting in September. Other issues were discussed, including the status of several vehicles parked on the green. Enforcement have checked land registry and confirmed at least one vehicle is not abandoned and that the underlying ownership supports the current arrangements. It was noted that enforcement action is complicated by the green's status and overlapping rights.

6.2 - Policy updates: The Code of Conduct and Information Technology was discussed, noting it was last updated in 2012. The policy updates were reviewed and considered acceptable. Website improvements were discussed, including the addition of PDFs to the website over the August period.

6.3 - Audit 2025 – 2025

6.3.1 The Certificate of Exemption was presented and signed by the Chairman and Clerk.

6.3.2 The Summary of Receipts and Payments for year ended 31st March 2025 was signed by the Chairman and Clerk

6.3.3 The Fixed Asset Register for the year ended 31st March 2025 will be provided to the councillors.

6.3.4 The Annual Return Explanation of Variance was noted.

07/07/25 Updates on matters from the last meeting: See Cllr. Parsons report earlier.

08/07/25 Planning - No new planning applications.

09/07/25 Finance

9.1 - The Current Balances, bank reconciliation and budget update was provided and approved.

9.2 - Payments for authorisation, included HMRC, the clerks salary and the auditor invoice.

10/07/25 Matters brought forward by the Chairman: The Chairman reviewed an email from a parishioner to the MP regarding traffic concerns. The Chairman noted the dangerous condition of the A388 and ongoing speeding issues.

11/07/25 Matters brought forward by Councillors: Street light Issue: Cllr Bastard had been asked to report, that a Street light on the green opposite a property has failed. The Clerk will report this to the appropriate authority.

Street light Operating Hours: A discussion took place regarding Street light operating hours, as street lights are turned off between midnight and 5:00am as part of energy-saving measures. The clerk will ascertain if this is currently the situation in Lawhitton.

Road Conditions: Ongoing concerns were raised about potholes and drainage issues, particularly at the top of the lane. These continue to be problematic despite previous reports.

12/07/25 Correspondence received/ report: Banking Matters: The Chairman reported ongoing issues with setting up online banking, which requires two signatures. A new application will be submitted

13/07/25 Date of next meeting: Tuesday 16th September 2025.

14/07/25 The Meeting closed at 8.42pm

Signed.....

Dated.....