

LYDFORD PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the council meeting at Nicholls Hall, Lydford on
Tuesday 13th January 2026 at 7:00pm

Present: Cllrs Hulett (Chair), Lenton L, Moyse, Purnell. Cllr Southcott (WDBC), Fife-Cook (DCC), Katie West (WDBC housing) John Pettitt.

1. Public Session (15 minutes)

The Chair began by wishing all present a happy New Year. John Pettitt declared that the disabled parking bay by the Granite Way has been upgraded to a good standard and thanked the council for its efforts in that regard. John stated that he has been in discussion with representatives from Dartmoor National Park Authority who have assured him that by late spring they will be updating the public toilets in the car park to include facility for disabled users. The question of the bus turnaround by the bus shelter was considered. The Clerk outlined discussions between the council and the Integrated Public Transport Officer for Devon CC, through which Stagecoach had explained that the larger buses used on the 118 route were unable to turn at the triangle by the bus shelter because of their length, despite evidence to the contrary. The IPTO agreed to try and set up an observed trial run to prove / disprove that position. Councillor Fife-Cook reported that he had a very helpful contact a Stagecoach and agreed to forward their contact details to John Pettitt.

2. Apologies for absence Cllr Cook (Medical) Cllr Mott.

3. Declarations of Interest

Nil

4. Affordable housing survey

Katie West, Housing Enabling Officer from West Devon Borough Council came to the meeting at the invite of Councillors to advise on the next steps the council might want to take in exploring whether affordable housing should be provided in Lydford. In her submission to the council, Katie noted that the feedback from the 2023 survey and the latest one, completed in November shows a reasonable consistency in that a demand does exist. Her next step will be combine that data with information relating to Lydford from Devon Home Choice, the shared waiting list for social housing across Devon, to write a report which summarises the demand. Once written, Katie will forward the report to Councillors for their approval.

In response to questions from Councillors, Katie stated that there has been no consultation with the National Park on provision of affordable housing, although the Dartmoor Authority's plan focuses on delivering 65 affordable properties across the National Park annually for local need.

When discussing time scales, Councillors were keen to know what they could do in the meantime to help those in need locally. Katie advised that anyone in need should be guided to contact Devon Home Choice. Katie will send contact details to the council.

5. Minutes of the monthly meeting 9th December 2025

The minutes were accepted without amendment and duly signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

6. Matters arising from the meeting 9th December 2025 which are not part of the agenda items. (See also Action Points from meeting).

- Broadband network provision within the village – the council has received a letter from Geoffrey Cox MP inviting it to send representatives to a meeting in Holsworthy Community hall on Friday 30th January. The council agreed to send Councillors Hulett, L. Lenton and Purnell. Councillor Fife-Cook explained that he is to attend a meeting with the Devon County Council lead on Connectivity. He agreed that he will forward any information from that meeting if there is anything to share.
- Bus shelter – any update from Stagecoach discussions. (See public session)
- Ancient Spring – questions regarding land ownership moving forward. Land nearby is registered, however there is no title registered for the land containing the spring. Is there any point in continuing enquiries. Do we want to adopt the land? Councillor Hulett will be speaking to the local Dartmoor Ranger Kit Hancock to explore whether the National Park will undertake the upgrade under their Access for All initiative. Failing that, Councillors wondered whether grants might be available to fund the project. (**AP1** Cllr Purnell to draft a council project proposal to make the path accessible to all). (**AP2** – Clerk to add to February agenda).
- Silver Street resurfacing. Councillor Fife-Cook explained that he was unable to get Highways to agree to the resurfacing of the roadway in Silver Street.
- Electricity cables going in at the Mucky Duck tomorrow (20th January). No road closures expected. Large drain to be installed soon after.

7. Urgent matters to report (For information)

There were no matters to report.

8. Council finances 2026-27

a. Budget 2026-27

Councillors resolved to agree the 2nd version of the council budget (previously circulated). Proposed Cllr Hulett, seconded Cllr Lenton. All in favour.

b. Precept 2026-27

Councillors resolved to set the council's precept for 2026-27 at £10,412.00, representing a below inflation increase of 2.6% Proposed Cllr Hulett, seconded Cllr Lenton. All in favour.

9. Planning

a. Councillors were unable to agree a response to the consultation request on application 0001/26 Raventor, EX20 4BJ. Prior Notification for the erection of an agricultural barn. There was some uncertainty about the location of this application. Councillors asked for clarification of the address and an extension of the deadline. A proposal for a site visit was rejected by the majority of Cllrs. (**AP3** – Clerk to seek clarity and extension from Planning Officer)

b. Councillors noted the response to application 0359/25, Lydford Gorge EX20 4BH. Retrospective approval granted for the surfacing of an existing path.

10. Policy review

a. Councillors agreed to continue using the following policies without amendment -

Flag Flying policy	Health & Safety policy	Privacy notice
Retention policy	Scheme of Delegation policy	

b. Councillors agreed to continue using the following policies with minor amendments -

Grant policy	Grievance policy	Reserves policy
Publication scheme		

Further amendments were proposed to the Complaints and Safeguarding policies (**AP4** – Clerk to enact amendments). To February meeting for approval.

c. Councillors agreed to adopt the updated policy -

Equality policy

11. Finances

a. It was resolved to approve the payments:

i. J. Bright	£ 412.77	January salary
ii. HMRC	£ 98.79	PAYE & employers' NI contribution January
iii. S Hulett	£42.39	CERT expenses – padlocks
iv. S Hulett	£10.56	CERT expenses - sandbags
v. A Purnell	£7.00	Costs for Land Registry enquiry (council business)

Proposed Cllr Purnell, seconded Cllr Lenton. All in favour.

b. Grant application

Councillors resolved to agree to a request from Torridge and West Devon Citizens Advice for funding support. The proposed figure of £100 was accepted by the council.

Proposed Cll Hulett, seconded Cllr Purnell. All in favour.

c. Banking reconciliation for period 1.4.25 to 31.12.25

Duly noted by Councillors.

Opening balance 1.4.25		Bank holdings at 31.12.25	
Add receipts	£10,606.72	Deposit Account	£14,650.30
Less payments	£11,349.20	Current Account	£4.55
	<u>£7,301.07</u>		
	£14,654.85		£14,654.85

d. Payments made by the Clerk under the Scheme of Delegation

Nil

01/2026

Meeting closed: 20:00

Next meeting 10.2.26

Action points from meeting			
	Action required of	Action required	Outcome
1	Cllr Purnell	Write a proposal for the council to undertake a project to make the path to the Ancient Spring accessible to all.	Duly submitted. Included in agenda.
2	Clerk	To add the question of making the Ancient Spring accessible to all to February agenda.	Duly added.
3	Clerk	Obtain clarification from DNPA Planning as to the exact location of proposed barn, and to seek an extension to the response deadline until after February's meeting.	Ten figure grid reference confirmed location. Map circulated to Cllrs. for clarity. Deadline amendment not permissible – prior notification request. Decision by email if possible.
4	Clerk	Enact proposed amendments to Complaints and Safeguarding policies.	Complaints procedure updated to the effect that complaints hearings should be held as "Part 2" meetings if appropriate. Safeguarding policy undergoing a substantial re-write in light of comments from Councillors and others. To February meeting.