

# Gulworthy Parish Council

## Minutes of Annual Parish meeting held on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> April 2025 at Gulworthy Parish Hall Minutes no 177

*These minutes are provisional until they are agreed and signed by the chair at the next Annual Parish meeting in 2026.*

**Councillors present** - J.Hamilton, K Royston (Chair), D Edwards, G Lister, K Steer and E Wearing

The hall opened at 6.30pm with tea, coffee, cakes and biscuits available for everyone. The cakes were provided by Cllr Steer, Lister, Hamilton and Wearing and refreshments were provided by various Councillors. These were enjoyed by all. Thanks to everyone.

Meeting opened 6.55pm

1. **Chairmans welcome and report** - Cllr Royston (chair) welcomed everyone present and everyone in the room introduced themselves.

**Report** – Cllr Royston welcomed a new Cllr, Emma Wearing who will be representing Wheal Maria.

Cllr Royston summarised that the PC manage the Parish Council prudently, the precept has only been increased by 5%, they have recently planted a landmark tree (small leafed lime) in the cemetery, installed a new noticeboard on the side of the bus shelter. Last year the PC campaigned for better road safety, responded to planning applications, assisted in local flooding issues, continue to engage with 'connecting Devon and Cornwall' regarding the ongoing issues with broadband. At the last summer fete Cllr Royston asked people for local feedback and the biggest feedback was to keep the school going, parish hall and the church, together with the concerns about road safety. What is valued by many is Gulworthy's community spirit. Cllr Royston also said that the website is a good source for information and if anyone has any feedback to please contact the Clerk.

2. **Minutes of the last annual parish meeting 164 to be approved** – Cllr Hamilton proposed they are approved. Seconded by Cllr Steer. Agreed by all. Cllr Royston signed and dated the minutes.

3. **Guest Speaker Cllr. Mandy Ewings, Leader of West Devon Borough Council – talking about devolution**

On 16 December 2024 Government issued a statement on devolution.

On 5 February 2025 a formal invitation from the Minister for existing District Councils to submit their plans by 21 March 2025 for a devolved Devon without District Councils or a County Council. The new structure would be a Mayoral Combined Authority with a small number of unitary authorities of ideally around 500,000 [households or voters].

Devon is in tranche 3 of the counties to become Mayoral Combined Authorities (tranche 1 being the priority) and Devon's councils may hear back about their submitted plan by mid June with an overall deadline of 28 November 2025.

This is a top-down re-organisation which is likely to be very costly.

### **Parish Councillors**

Kate Royston (Chair), Daniel Edwards (Vice Chair);

Jim Hamilton, Katherine Steer, George Lister and Emma Wearing

Parish Clerk: Emily Young: Telephone 07942286125 Email: [clerk@gulworthyparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@gulworthyparishcouncil.gov.uk)

Website: [www.gulworthyparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.gulworthyparishcouncil.gov.uk)

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West Devon Borough Council have had to put their 4 year plan now 'kind of' on hold.

The devolution plan that has been submitted is called a 1:4:5 model. This proposes that 1:Plymouth staying within its current boundaries. 4: West Devon, South Hams, Torbay & Teignbridge 5: Torridge, North, Mid & East Devon & Exeter.

In all, it is understood that up to ten different potential options for how Devon should be organised have been proposed to Government.

The presentation slides are available here:

[https://www.gulworthyparishcouncil.gov.uk/news\\_details.php?id=140](https://www.gulworthyparishcouncil.gov.uk/news_details.php?id=140)

Currently there are 31 District Councillors which will be reduced to 10.

The devolution plan is to get rid of all district and county councils.

## 4. Open matters – the things that matter to you

### **Gulworthy clean up – litter picking**

There are currently 6 known active volunteers in Gulworthy Parish including Mill Hill. The group is always open to more volunteers. All the people involved have their own areas. It is sad to see the large amount of litter being picked up in a rural area, particularly empty alcohol bottles and cans!

***Please contact the Clerk if you wish to join the group.***

Cllr Sellis said if you do "Chapter 8 training" then you can close 'A' roads for 15 minutes.

The local group are currently looking into putting up litter signs.

Cllr Blackman offered to help with items that may need purchasing.

West Devon Borough Council said they have community money available to help fund litterpicking equipment?

### **Broadband – latest connectivity news**

Cllr Steer and Cllr Royston are in regular contact with Connecting Devon and Somerset (CDS) who is managing the rollout of broadband across Devon and Somerset. Their role is to deliver next generation broadband infrastructure to areas where the market has failed to invest.

In Gulworthy, Airband was contracted to deliver the infrastructure, but this contract has been set aside. .

Cllrs Steer and Royston confirmed that Gulworthy is classified as a 'Very Hard to Reach Households' area (VHTR) and we are working with CDS to see if it is possible to develop a pilot project in Gulworthy building upon the infrastructure that has been put in place already by Airband.

We understand the next steps are for CDS to meet with the responsible Minister to get the go ahead and related funding; and the Parish Council will also be writing to Geoffrey Cox MP for his support.

### **Gulworthy road safety and signage**

Cllr Royston asked if members of the public felt it was a good idea to have signage at the boundaries of the Parish to let people know that they are entering Gulworthy Parish. The

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feedback was that it would be a good idea.

A member of the public said font and number of words make a difference and this must be considered in the sign design.

Cllr Royston asked if there was any private land at the parish boundaries where signs could be placed.

The speed of the traffic outside the hall, church and school is of great concern but the difficulty is the current speed is 60mph. It will take a number of years to get a speed reduction put through. Cllr Royston said this will be progressed with more determination in 2025; and in the short term we must consider other measures to encourage traffic to slow down including signage welcoming people to 'Gulworthy Village' located as drivers enter the centre of the Parish It was agreed that this would be a good idea.

A member of the public asked about the Gulworthy roundabout and planting. Cllr Royston confirmed nothing was planned.

## **Parish Councils summing up**

Cllr Royston thanked everyone for coming and closed the meeting.

**Meeting closed 8.45pm.**

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