

Gulworthy Parish Council

Minutes of ordinary meeting held on Monday 5th January 2026 at Gulworthy Parish Hall

No 187

These minutes are provisional until they are agreed and signed by the chair at the next meeting of the parish council.

Councillors present – Cllr K Royston (Chair), Cllr K Steer (Vice Chair) Cllr D Edwards, and Cllr J Hamilton

In attendance: Three members of Public

Parish Clerk, Lucie Moorse

1. Chair's Welcome: The meeting opened at 7.35pm and the Chair welcomed attendees and initiated introductions.

2. Members of the Public

Three members of the public were present at the start of the meeting. One member of the public requested a broadband update and wished to meet the new Parish Clerk. The remaining two members of the public were in attendance to observe proceedings and to gain an understanding of the process relating to a Certificate of Lawfulness for a local property.

3. Apologies for Absence

The Chair noted apologies from DCC Cllr Sellis, WDBC Cllr Saxby, and Cllrs Lister and Wearing.

4. Dispensations and Declarations of Interest

The Chair declared a personal interest in the property regarding Planning Application Ref: 3615/25/CLE – Land at SX 430 737, Wheal Josiah Cottages, Gulworthy and stated that she would excuse herself from voting on any related matters.

5. Minutes of Previous Meeting (Minute No. 186)

The Draft Minutes of the meeting held on 1st December 2025 were discussed. Minor typographical corrections were noted, and it was agreed that the amendments would be emailed to the Clerk for revision.

6. Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes

The Council noted that a point concerning the burial ground may be deleted from the previous minutes pending further agreement.

7. Planning:

7.1 Planning Applications

7.1.1 Ref: 3530/25/LBC – Chapel Cottage, Mill Hill, PL19 8NP

The Council discussed this application for flood damage reinstatement. It was noted that the work appeared to form part of an insurance claim and would have no visual impact on the property. Councillors unanimously supported the application, noting the necessity of the repairs due to severe local flooding.

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Gulworthy Parish Council

7.1.2 Ref: 3615/25/CLE – Land at SX 430 737, Wheal Josiah Cottages, Gulworthy

The resident explained that a workshop extension had been converted into ancillary accommodation for health reasons and that the application sought to regularise the situation. Councillors expressed unanimous support, noting that it provides much-needed local accommodation. The Clerk will respond to the Planning Department accordingly.

7.2 Planning Applications Received After Publication of the Agenda: No new applications were received.

7.3 Ref: 3706/24/HHO – 13 Mill Hill Cottages: The Chair confirmed that this application for extensions has received conditional approval.

Two members of the public left the meeting at 7.50 pm.

Agenda item 13 Broadband – update

The Chair brought forward this agenda item to allow the remaining member of the public to address the Council. The member of the public expressed frustration at BT placing pressure on residents to move to digital services despite the ongoing inadequacy of local broadband and telecommunications infrastructure. It was noted that a meeting is scheduled for 30 January with Sir Geoffrey Cox MP and representatives from BT to seek potential solutions, including consideration of possible alternative service provider(s).

The member of the public left the meeting at 8.05 pm.

8. Devon County Council Report – Cllr Sellis. No report was received.

9. West Devon Borough Council Reports – Cllrs Saxby and Blackman. It was noted that no reports were received from West Devon Borough Council.

10. Gulworthy Cllr reports – for information only

Concerns were raised about the deteriorating condition of traffic islands and uncertainty over responsibility for their maintenance. Members agreed that action is required but should not be undertaken in icy conditions.

The main discussion focused on parking and the use of bollards at the Village Hall. Members expressed frustration that the bollards unnecessarily restrict parking, particularly during school pick-up times and community events. An incident on Remembrance Sunday was noted, where parking tickets were issued but later resolved. Poor visibility of bus stop markings and general management of the area were also highlighted. It was agreed that a formal letter from the Parish Council should be sent to the Village Hall Committee outlining these concerns, addressed to the Committee Secretary, and that this should be attempted before any further action is considered.

An update was provided on traffic speed monitoring outside the school. The Council were informed that PC Sgt Ottley confirmed that speed monitoring equipment will be installed outside the school to gather data for a proposed speed limit reduction. Support from relevant

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Gulworthy Parish Council

local authorities was noted, and members were cautiously optimistic, despite no confirmed timescale

Road maintenance issues were discussed, including potholes and the poor condition of several road sections. While some patching has taken place, concerns remain about the lack of comprehensive repairs. These matters will be included on the agenda for the village meeting. A lack of locally available road salt was also noted.

11. Burial ground

The Council discussed a proposal from Derek Ross for mole control, involving a £60 one-off fee plus £10 per mole for a six-month period. The council noted there are sufficient funds in the Cemetery Account to cover the new mole control contract. This was formally proposed, seconded, and approved. Additionally, it is hoped that the digitising of the Council's cemetery records and photographs to create a comprehensive plan will be done by next month.

- Mole activity

Visible mole activity was noted near the graveyard gate. Photographs of the affected areas, specifically identifying issues near plot C9, to help locate the activity.

- Cemetery Plan

Discussions continued regarding the layout for reserved graves and the interment of ashes for an enquiry received. The Clerk is to consult Reverend Blowey and review historical documents to ensure the request for a headstone on an ashes plot complies with local regulations.

12. Finance

12.1 Payments Schedule duly approved

PAYEE	AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION
Mrs L A Moorse	£318.04	Parish Clerk December 2025 Salary including WAH allowance
Mrs L A Moorse	£52.00	Payment of ICO Fee (No DDM set up)
Mrs L A Moorse	£52.00	Payment of ICO Fee (No DDM set up)
Gulworthy Parish Hall	£23.75	Nov Meeting Inv 803
HMRC	£73.40	Payments due for Parish Clerk £73.40 £0 'Er NI (January PC Meeting)

The Council considered the payment schedule, including the Clerk's salary and working-from-home allowance. Payroll is administered by an external provider, with HMRC submissions made directly. Some payments may cover previous and current months, and tax deductions were confirmed as correct. The ICO registration fee was paid personally by the Clerk on 1st January 2026 to avoid non-compliance; reimbursement is included in the payment schedule. Supporting documentation was provided. The Schedules were duly initialled and authorised.

It was proposed by Cllr Edwards and seconded by Cllr Hamilton that the payment schedule be approved.

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12.2 Bank Reconciliations (RFO Report No.187)

Bank Reconciliation - Gulworthy Parish Council			
<u>Gulworthy Club, Charity & Trust account (00298624).</u>			
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Balance brought forward	25.11.2025		£6,134.33
Receipts			£0.00
Expenditure			
3.12.2025 E Young : Nov payroll		£571.76	
3.12.2025 Gulworthy Parish Hall Inv 796		£23.75	-£595.51
Balance as at 2nd January 2026			£5,538.82
<u>Gulworthy Cemetery account (00020251)</u>			
Balance brought forward	25.11.2025		£16,683.90
Receipts			
10.12.2025 Interest		£20.43	
17.12.2025 Walter C Parson : Maunder Burial		£600.00	£620.43
Expenditure			£0.00
Balance as at 2nd January 2026			£17,304.33
<u>Gulworthy Fundraising account (00035992)</u>			
Balance brought forward	25.11.2025		£5,126.07
Interest Receipt 10.12.2025			£6.28
Expenditure			£0.00
Balance: as at 2nd January 2026			£5,132.35

Combined Account Balances:	£27,975.50	<i>(No differences to Bank Statements)</i>
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Proposed by Cllr Keer to approve RFO Report 187 seconded by Cllr Edwards, agreed by all present.

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12.3 Budget and Precept for 2026-2027

The Councillors discussed the review of budget documents with noting the previous Precept for reference purposes.

The Clerk suggested to adopt a clearer budgeting approach : start each year with a full budget and update monthly with actual figures.

After full discussion the suggested Precept for 2026–27 was agreed at £7,575, a small increase of 2% from the previous year; any unexpected costs to be covered from reserves. Audit costs and other minor expenses confirmed these can be accommodated within reserves. The Council noted the need to earmark reserves for specific projects (e.g., cemetery gates, paths, training). Formal approval of Precept for 2026-2027 at £7,575, with submission deadline 30th January 2026.

12.4 AGAR 2025-26 “Assertion 10” requirements

The Clerk informed the Council that the Parish Council website must meet AA accessibility standards; accessibility statement required. The AGAR forms with true signatures to be removed/re-uploaded in compliant format and the Compliance now mandatory and will be checked by Auditors. The Clerk advised that the current website management by Barry Isaacs would test website and provide report for £45 + VAT. The Chair proposed and seconded by Cllr Edwards to approve and proceeding, with all present in support and authorised the Clerk to request this to be carried out.

13. Broadband – update (previously discussed earlier in Meeting)

14. Highways

Road Signs – update

Vice Chair (Cllr Steer) noted the need to schedule a highways meeting, inviting relevant representatives including the school. Update on speed limit petition: 85 signatures collected to date; a mix of paper and online signatures is acceptable. It is proposed to create a poster with QR code linking to the petition for display in the church, school, and notice board to encourage further participation. Collection of signatures to continue over the next couple of months; members offered to contribute completed forms.

Mill Hill – Local Wardens

An update was given and the Members noted the process remains ongoing.

Members discussed extensive roadworks in Tavistock, including drainage, resurfacing, and utility works affecting key roads. Frustration was expressed over the scale, duration, and coordination, with concern that utility planning did not account for new housing. Members noted disruption to businesses, travel routes, and daily routines, particularly during school terms and adverse weather.

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15. Gulworthy Farm Cluster –

Vice Chair Cllr Steer noted the need to progress the Gulworthy Farm Cluster and to arrange an initial engagement event. Members were asked to suggest evening dates, with winter evenings preferred. Funding support from WDBC Cllr Saxby and DCC Cllr Sellis was confirmed, and Members agreed to move the initiative forward promptly.

16. Any Other Business

Members discussed the structure and frequency of future council meetings, including the possibility of fewer full meetings and greater use of a small planning group to respond quickly to planning matters. Statutory meeting requirements were noted, and the Clerk will review the Standing Orders to confirm required meetings, whether dates can be adjusted, and whether delegation to a planning committee is permitted. Further discussion will take place at the February meeting.

The next meeting was confirmed for Monday, 2nd February 2026. Members noted the need to recruit an additional parish councillor to avoid meetings becoming inquorate and agreed to promote the vacancy through other methods to encourage representation from outskirt areas of the Parish.

Former Councillor: Mr Robin Pike, Deceased

The Council formally acknowledged the passing of former councillor Mr Robin Pike. Members expressed their sadness and reflected on his long service to the parish and wider community, including his work on West Devon Council and continued support of local events such as Poppy Day. It was agreed that a sympathy message would be sent to his family and his service to the parish would be recorded in the minutes.

The meeting was formally closed at 9.30pm. by the Chair and thanked all those who attended.

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