

# Gulworthy Parish Council

---

## MINUTES OF THE GULWORTHY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

MONDAY, 13<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2026 7.30PM HELD AT

SKITTLE ALLEY, THE COPPER PENNY INN, CHIPSHOP, TAVISTOCK

**Present:** Cllr K Royston (Chair), Cllr D Edwards, Cllr J Hamilton, Cllr G Lister and Cllr E Wearing

**In attendance:** DCC Cllr Sellis  
Rev'd Judith Blowey  
Two members of the Public  
Mrs L Moore – Parish Clerk

### 01. Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting which commenced at 7.40pm and apologised for the delay in commencing the meeting.

Apologies for absence were noted from Cllr K Steer (Vice Chair) and WDBC Cllr A Blackman.

### 02. Declaration of Interest

No declarations of interest were made, including personal interests or disclosable pecuniary interests.

### 03. Public Participation

A member of the public raised a concern regarding delays in the connection of an approved solar panel and battery installation to the grid. It was noted that planning permission had already been obtained and the installation arranged, but progress was being held up by the separate grid-connection approval process. Councillors acknowledged that this was a matter for the grid operator rather than the local planning authority, and the Chair agreed to make further enquiries.

Rev'd J Blowey announced upcoming community events, including a 170th Anniversary Service for St Paul's Church on 5<sup>th</sup> of July which will feature a "Songs of Praise" celebration. The Annual Fête & Dog Show is scheduled for 9<sup>th</sup> of August at Stubberlands Farm.

### 04. Approval of previous Minutes

It was proposed by Cllr Edwards, seconded by Cllr Wearing and all in favour that the Minutes of the No.190 ordinary meeting held on 9th March 2026 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.

### 05. Matters arising from the Minutes of the last Meeting:

#### 05.01 Broadband Provision.

The Council received an update on broadband provision across the parish. It was noted that fibre rollout remains a long-term project, with some areas potentially not receiving full commercial deployment until around 2028 to 2030, and that timing is therefore critical. The government voucher

scheme was discussed, including the possibility that properties previously served by fixed wireless may still qualify, and that some remote properties may need interim alternatives such as Starlink.

#### **05.02 Parish Clerk Laptop.**

The Council discussed the Parish Clerk's laptop replacement. Members agreed that the Clerk should proceed with a purchase within the previously approved budget of up to £500, rather than delay the matter further.

#### **05.03 Parish Council Reserves.**

The Councillors considered the level of reserves and the possible need to ring-fence cemetery-related funds. It was noted that the Council's year-end balance was approximately £27,000, which may trigger additional reporting considerations. It was resolved that further investigation should be undertaken to confirm any restrictions attached to Cemetery monies and to ensure compliance with financial requirements.

#### **05.04 Gulworthy Farm Cluster Initiative**

An update was received on the Gulworthy Farm Cluster Initiative. Members discussed plans for an informal launch meeting at 'The Copper Penny Inn' and noted progress with possible speakers and external partners. It was agreed that initial coordination should continue, with further arrangements to be brought back to the Council.

### **06. Follow up to Annual Parish Meeting**

The Council reviewed matters raised at the Annual Parish Meeting. Broadband and the Farm Cluster initiative were noted as key ongoing themes, and local policing and speeding concerns were also discussed. Support was expressed for requesting a vehicle speed awareness sign for local roads.

### **07. Reports from County and District Councillors**

DCC Cllr Sellis reported on recent developments, including the ongoing consultation regarding library services. Members noted that the future of library provision remains under review and that local representation had been made at a meeting in Tavistock to support the retention of services. The Councillors also discussed highways matters - particularly the continuing problem of potholes, and noted that road repairs remain a source of frustration for residents.

It was further reported that the County Councillor's Locality Budget had increased from £8,000 to £10,000, although the funding would not be available until after the May elections. Members were advised that applications would need to be made in the usual way once the Locality Budget is released.

### **08. Parish Councillor Reports**

Councillors raised a number of local issues affecting the Parish. There was further discussion about the ongoing condition of the roads, with particular concern expressed about potholes and the frequency with which temporary repairs were failing or requiring repeated attention. Members noted that this remained a source of frustration for residents and Councillors alike, and that the matter continued to be reported to the relevant authority.

Attention also turned to drainage concerns at Mill Hill, where it was reported that water was still running over the bank despite previous work having been carried out. Councillors noted that the underlying cause of the problem remained unclear and that further investigation may be required.

The condition of the Cemetery was also discussed. Members noted that while grass cutting had recently improved the overall appearance of the site, there were continuing concerns about the stability of some headstones, several of which were reported to be leaning or sinking. The Cemetery notice board was also identified as being in poor condition and in need of repair or possible replacement. It was agreed that the matter should be revisited at a future meeting.

Councillors also referred to the Parish notice board and discussed whether it was sufficiently accessible and visible to residents. It was confirmed that the keys were available and no change to its position was proposed at this stage.

A brief discussion also took place regarding general maintenance, including road sweeping and the need to keep key areas of the Parish tidy and presentable.

## **09. Planning**

**09.01 Planning applications received after the publication of this agenda.** No additional planning applications were considered at the meeting.

**09.02 Planning decisions made since the last meeting.** No planning decisions were reported.

**09.03 Other Planning matters.** The Council considered a planning application for Hartshole Farm, involving the erection of two agricultural buildings on existing hardstanding for calf housing. Members noted that the proposal appeared to remain within the existing farm footprint and would be screened by hedging. It was resolved that a final decision would be deferred to the next meeting to allow further review.

*A member of the public left the meeting at 8.45pm*

## **10. Finance**

**10.01 Payments Schedule:** The Council considered the payments schedule, and it was resolved that the payments listed be approved and were signed by Cllr Edwards, Cllr J Hamilton, Cllr G Lister, and Cllr E Wearing:

**10.02** The Council noted the receipts received since the last meeting.

**10.03** The Bank reconciliation and Account balances to 31st March 2026 were reviewed and approved. The Council was satisfied that the accounts remained in order.

**10.04 Budget Report.** This was duly noted as well as that spending had remained under budget and that the year-end position showed an approximate surplus of £561.

**10.05 AGAR 2025 - 2026 = Audit.** The Clerk reported on the progress of the AGAR process. The Internal Auditor is expected to begin work in June, meaning that a further short meeting will be required in July to approve the documents before submission to the external auditor. It was resolved that a July meeting would be arranged for this purpose.

## **11. Cemetery Update -**

**11.01 Mole activity** - It was reported that there was no current mole activity in the cemetery and that the site had improved following grass cutting.

**11.02 Enquiries** - The Clerk reported a recent burial enquiry and confirmed that arrangements were in hand. It was also noted that a burial involving a family from Plymouth would take place privately on 23rd April 2026. The Council further noted that non-resident fees would apply in accordance with Cemetery regulations.

**11.03 Cemetery Plan** - The Clerk updated Members on progress with a digital cemetery register and mapping project. Work is underway to create a clearer Excel-based layout linking grave plots, names, and certificate numbers. Members welcomed the improvement to record-keeping and administration.

*\*\*DCC Cllr Sellis and remaining members of the public left the meeting at 8.57pm\*\**

## **12. Governance, Website and Communications**

**12.01** The Council discussed the need for a regular working arrangement for the Parish Clerk, including a routine day for duties and timely circulation of correspondence. It was also agreed that the Parish Council website should be kept up to date, including publication of meeting dates and a resumption of regular news updates.

### **12.02 Recruitment of Parish Councillor**

The Council considered the current vacancy and discussed the possibility of recruiting a new Parish Councillor. Members agreed that efforts should be made to encourage expressions of interest from residents and to promote the opportunity more widely within the Parish.

## **13. Highways**

Further to the highways matters raised under Parish Councillor Reports (Agenda Item 08), Members re-emphasised their ongoing concerns regarding potholes, drainage at Mill Hill, road sweeping and general maintenance. It was agreed that these issues should continue to be monitored and reported to Devon County Council as required.

## **14. Items for Next Meeting**

The following items were noted for consideration at the next meeting:

- Broadband provision.
- Parish reserves.
- Gulworthy Farm Cluster Initiative.
- Cemetery maintenance and notice board.
- Hartshole Farm planning application.
- AGAR approval meeting.
- 

Councillors were asked to advise the Clerk of any apologies or availability issues in advance of the next meeting.

Cllr Royston advised that she would not be able to attend the next Meeting and gave her apologies in advance.

## **15. Date of next Meeting**

Monday, 11<sup>th</sup> May 2026 Annual Parish Council Meeting

## **16. Part II – 9.29pm**

**It was RESOLVED that the meeting move into Part II under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to consider Cemetery Reserves.**

The Meeting closed at 9.40pm

**Signed:**

**Date:**