

Gulworthy Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE GULWORTHY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

MONDAY, 6TH JULY 2026 7.30PM HELD AT

SKITTLE ALLEY, THE COPPER PENNY INN, CHIPSHOP, TAVISTOCK

Present: Cllr K Royston (Chair), Cllr K Steer (Vice Chair), Cllr D Edwards,

In attendance: Two members of the Public
Mrs. L Moorse – Parish Clerk

01. Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed those present and opened the meeting at 7.35pm.

Apologies for absence were noted from WDBC Cllr A Blackman, DCC Cllr Sellis, Cllr J Hamilton, Cllr G Lister and Cllr E Wearing

02. Declarations of Interest - No declarations of interest were made.

03. Public Participation

Two members of the public attended, including a resident, wishing to receive an update on broadband provision.

The resident asked whether any further information or action was required from residents in relation to the broadband project, and it was confirmed that the matter would be discussed under Agenda Item **05.01**.

04. Approval of Previous Minutes

The minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held on 21st May 2026 were considered.

The Chair explained that they had not been present at that meeting and therefore could not personally confirm the minutes as a true record. Cllr Steer (Vice Chair) confirmed that the minutes were a true record, and this was seconded by Cllr Edwards and duly signed.

05. Matters Arising

05.01 Broadband Provision

The Council received an update on the proposed parish broadband project from the Chair.

Bush Broadband was working with BDUK and Connecting Devon and Somerset on a bid covering as many properties in the parish as possible. Openreach's longer-term plans had complicated the position because some properties had been identified for future Openreach work.

The Chair would confirm the current position with Bush Broadband and circulate details of which properties were included. Properties included in the approved business case were expected to be connected by August 2028.

Residents would be kept informed.

05.02 Parish Council Reserves

The Council reviewed its reserves and confirmed that £3,950 represented cemetery legacy money. This sum had been separated from other cemetery funds and would remain as an earmarked reserve.

The Council agreed that there should be a general budget and a cemetery budget, retained as separate worksheets within one workbook rather than as numerous separate files.

After further discussion the Members agreed that the separate receipts and payments records should be consolidated into one cash book, whilst still allowing general and cemetery transactions to be identified separately. The Clerk agreed to maintain the consolidated cash book.

The question of ownership of the land on which the parish bus shelter stands was also discussed. The shelter is owned by the Council, but ownership of the land was unclear. It was agreed that relevant documentation should be located and the position clarified.

The Council noted that it is responsible for checking the defibrillator at the parish hall each month. The next check was due during the month.

05.03 Cemetery Legacy Fund

The Clerk reported that historic information concerning the cemetery legacy fund had not been carried forward clearly during changes in clerical arrangements. A report by one of the former Clerks had been located and would be reviewed so that the relevant information could be brought back to the Council.

The Council agreed that the historic records should be properly checked and retained with the relevant cemetery documentation.

05.04 Farm Cluster Initiative

Cllr Steer gave an update on a recent farm walk at Hill Farm, which was attended by approximately ten people.

Those attending had toured the farm and discussed its management, grant-funded projects, the pond and sand martin habitat, the slurry store and other aspects of the farming business. The event was considered successful and enjoyable and highlighted the clear value in bringing farmers and other landowners together to exchange knowledge, particularly given the isolated nature of farming.

A further farm walk was suggested for around September, potentially at a farm near Stoke Climsland or at another location where a battery storage facility might be available to view.

05.05 Banking Services

The Council received an update on access to banking services and the possibility of establishing a banking hub in Tavistock.

Sir Geoffrey Cox MP had been contacted following the closure of banking facilities in Launceston and confirmed that he was aware of the issue and was exploring the possibility of a banking hub for Tavistock.

It was noted that LINK's criteria include population, business demand and the availability of existing banking services. As Tavistock retains TSB, with Barclays (within the Pannier Market) and Post Office facilities, it was considered unlikely to currently meet the criteria. However, Sir Geoffrey Cox will continue to raise the matter and support proposals to broaden LINK's criteria, particularly in recognition that Post Office services do not meet all the banking needs of rural communities. The Council noted the position.

06. County and District Councillor Reports

The Council noted that funding remained available through the County Councillor's Locality Budget. The possibility of funding for the Gulworthy Academy School had been raised, and the information would be circulated more widely.

07. Parish Councillor Reports

Cllr Steer reported receiving an invitation to an art exhibition at Gulworthy Village Hall on 31st of July. The Mayor of Tavistock had also been invited.

Forthcoming community events were noted, including:

- The school summer fair.
- The dog show scheduled for 9th of August at Stubberlands Farm.

The Council noted forthcoming community events, including the school summer fair and the dog show on the 9th of August.

The condition of the village roundabout was discussed. It was agreed that weeds and debris should be removed, with the work preferably carried out early in the morning for safety reasons. Possible road re-surfacing was discussed, and an informal enquiry would be made.

The Council discussed the condition of the road and the possibility of resurfacing works. It was noted that works were currently taking place in the surrounding area, and it was agreed that informal enquiries would be made to establish whether any resurfacing was planned locally.

The Council discussed matters relating to the parish hall and its current use by the community and access for the school. It was agreed that the matter should be monitored and referred to WDBC.

The Council received an update on the Tamar Trail Centre. Following the tender process, two viable options had been identified, with a preference for a food-and-drink proposal, subject to further discussions and lease restrictions. The Council noted that the identities of the tender respondents were not yet known and agreed to continue monitoring the matter.

08. Planning

08.01 Planning applications received after publication of the agenda:

No new planning applications were received or considered.

08.02 Planning decisions made since the last meeting:

The following planning decisions were noted:

- **1121/26/FUL – Higher Artiscombe Farm, Gulworthy PL19 8JB:** Erection of a general-purpose agricultural building – conditional approval.
- **0703/26/FUL – Hartshole Farm, PL19 8JW:** Erection of two agricultural livestock buildings – conditional approval.

08.03 Other planning matters:

No other planning matters were considered.

09. Finance

09.01 Payments Schedule- The payments schedule was approved and signed by the Councillors.

09.02 Parish Council receipts since the previous meeting were noted, including cemetery receipts, interest, a Wayleave payment and memorial payments.

09.03 Account Balances and Bank Reconciliation to 30th June 2026 were reviewed and approved.

09.04 Budget update: The corrected version of the budget was agreed. It was also noted that the £3,950 cemetery legacy balance would be retained as an earmarked reserve. It was agreed that the budget would be re-organised into separate general and cemetery sections, with earmarked reserves clearly identified.

10. Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2025/26 – Form 3

10.01 Annual Internal Audit Report 2025/26

The Council noted the Annual Internal Audit Report.

The internal auditor had raised a few matters for attention, including:

- Ensuring invoices are correctly addressed to the Parish Council where appropriate.
- Locating or verifying missing bank statements.
- Checking the wording of the Clerk's offer letter and employment contract.
- Obtaining a quotation for increased Fidelity Guarantee insurance.
- Updating policies and governance documents.
- Recording the location of securely stored records on the asset register.
- Certifying or initialling downloaded bank statements.
- Adding valuation basis and document-location details to the asset register.
- Locating ownership and other documentation relating to the bus shelter.

The Council noted that its records were stored securely in a safe and that a further safe was not required.

The Clerk would investigate and address the matters raised.

10.02 Annual Governance Statement 2025/26.

The Annual Governance Statement was considered, approved and duly signed.

10.03 Accounting Statements 2025/26.

The Accounting Statements were considered, approved and signed.

The Council noted the effect of the £21,784.14 receipt and payment connected with HMRC on the annual figures. Total receipts were approximately £25,672, of which £21,000 related to the HMRC transaction. Total payments were approximately £25,600, and the bank balance on 31st March 2026 was approximately £25,792.

10.04 Explanation of Variances.

The explanation of variances was considered and approved.

The Council noted that the apparent increase in receipts and cemetery income was substantially affected by the unusual £21,784.14 HMRC transaction, which had been received and subsequently repaid.

10.05 Bank Reconciliation Proforma

The Bank Reconciliation Proforma for 2025/26 was noted and approved.

10.06 Exercise of Public Rights Statement.

The Council noted that the Notice of Public Rights and Publication would be displayed on the parish council notice board and published on the Council website.

10.07 Certificate of Exemption Form : The Certificate of Exemption was approved for signature.

11. Cemetery Update –

11.01 Mole activity - . No new mole activity was reported.

11.02 Enquiries.

The Council considered an enquiry from the family of the late Susan Gibbs Butler, concerning the donation of a memorial bench.

An existing bench commemorates Susan Kelleher and Betty Jenkins, and the Councillors discussed the proposed location; the style and durability of the bench, and the possible inclusion of a memorial plaque.

The family had offered to pay for the bench and take responsibility for its ongoing maintenance. Members considered that a position away from the immediate roadside, with a pleasant outlook and without interference with burial plots, would be preferable.

It was proposed by Cllr Edwards and seconded by Cllr Steer that permission be given in principle for the memorial bench, subject to agreeing the final position with the family and ensuring that the bench did not interfere with cemetery plots. The proposal was agreed.

The Clerk would contact the family to discuss the preferred location.

11.03 Cemetery Plan

The Clerk advised that the cemetery plan had not progressed.

The internal auditor had advised that it would be preferable to bring the cemetery books and associated records up to date before completing the plan. The plan had therefore been placed on hold temporarily.

The Council discussed allocating approximately two or three additional hours per week to update the cemetery records. It was confirmed that this additional time could be charged to the cemetery account.

The proposal was made by Cllr Steer, seconded by Cllr Edwards and agreed unanimously by those present.

11.04 Cemetery and village signage.

The Council discussed the possibility of installing signs welcoming people to the village, potentially near the route into the cemetery from Morwellham.

The signs could help drivers recognise that they were entering the village and might encourage them to reduce their speed. The possibility of involving the school in designing the signs was discussed, including designs incorporating planters.

It was agreed that a brief should be prepared for the school, with matters to be considered further in September.

12. Highways

Members discussed local road conditions, drainage and possible road works. Members noted the discussion under **Agenda Item 7 – Parish Councillor Reports**, which included concerns regarding possible road resurfacing and an informal enquiry as to whether any works were planned locally.

Members also discussed drainage issues, including drains crossing the road and possible blockages, particularly near the iron railings. It was reported that the area could overflow and that icy conditions had previously caused vehicles to slide, with two cars reportedly leaving the road.

The Council agreed to continue to monitor the position and make enquiries where appropriate.

13. Any Other Business

Members referred to the matters concerning the parish hall and its use by the community and access for the school, as recorded under Agenda Item 7 – Parish Councillor Reports.

Members discussed the potential impact of reduced funding for physical education at the school and the resulting possibility that the school may have difficulty meeting the cost of transporting pupils to Lamerton. Members considered whether the existing route through the church could provide a safe walking route for pupils, potentially reducing the need for coach transport, subject to agreement with the relevant parties and confirmation that the route was suitable and safe.

Members also briefly discussed matters relating to the administration of the village hall. It was agreed that WDBC Cllr Blackman should be invited to attend the September meeting to provide an update.

14. Items for Next Meeting

The following matters were noted:

- Broadband provision.
- Parish Council reserves.
- Cemetery legacy fund and historic records.
- Cemetery records and plan.
- Village signage.
- Farm walk initiative.
- Parish hall ownership and management.
- Recruitment or co-option of councillors.
- Councillor availability.
- Outstanding highways matters.

15. Date of Next Meeting

Monday, 7th September 2026.

The Meeting closed at 9.00pm

Signed:

Date: