

**Minutes of the Fremington Parish Council Meeting
Held on Monday 11th May 2026 at 7pm at the Beechfield Centre,
Beechfield Road, Fremington**

Present: Cllrs S Kingdom (Chairman), S Adams, F Biederman, J Cann, D Harris, C McCormack-Hole, B Sherborne, E Smlatic, N Tamlin and H Walker

Cllr Mackie, North Devon Council

Mrs V Woodhouse, Executive Officer
3 Representatives from Wales and West Utilities
1 Member of the Public

2605/01 **Election of Chairman**

It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to elect Cllr Kingdom as Chairman for 2026/2027.

2605/02 **Declaration of Office – Chairman**

The Chairman read and signed the prescribed 'Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

2605/03 **Election of Vice-Chairman**

It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to elect Cllr Cann as Vice-Chairman for 2026/2027.

2605/04 **Apologies**

Cllrs J Bridgeman, D Dixon and Mrs S Haywood.

2605/05 **Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Biederman declared a Personal Interest in Item 2605/07 as a member of Devon County Council.

2605/06 **Chairman's Announcements**

Members were reminded of the details of Mr Christopher Haywood's funeral which would take place on Friday 15th May 2026.

The Chairman proposed and it was unanimously agreed to bring Item 18 forward on the Agenda.

2605/07 **Wales and West Utilities**

Wales and West confirmed that they had carried out several public drop-in consultation sessions which had been well attended.

The Chairman asked why the gas mains cannot be placed within the public footpath to prevent the disruption to the area. Wales and West explained that they are a gas payer funded organisation and this would not be practical, the pavements are already full of utility cables, it would lengthen the works and disruption and they would still have to access the main that is in the road.

It was noted that any time there are works along the B3233 it causes traffic

chaos and brings Barnstaple to a halt.

Wales and West understand the disruption that the works are going to cause, however, it is a Health and Safety Executive driven programme, and they are 24-year into a 30-year replacement programme, a once in a lifetime project. Wales and West reported that the volume of leakage on the Bickington road is huge and results in unplanned works and road closures, this is planned and will prevent these unplanned situations. They have been proactive in trying to collaborate with other providers to utilise any traffic management where possible and Devon County Council will be utilising to undertake drainage work during the second phase.

Wales and West have requested, on several occasions, that the bus gate is opened to try and ease congestion, however, DCC has refused and there has not been any movement on this position. The Chairman proposed and it was unanimously agreed for the Parish Council to write to DCC to urge the authority to open the bus gate, if it cannot be open for the entire length of the works it should be opened for the second phase which are due to commence on 24th August 2026. Cllr Biederman declared a Personal Interest as a member of Devon County Council.

Cllr Biederman confirmed that he had submitted a list of questions in relation to the road closure to DCC and would share the response once received. Cllr Biederman thanked Wales and West Utilities for the consultation and public engagement it had undertaken (it was noted that the company was under no obligation to carry out the consultations) and noted that over 20,000 letters had been sent to residents.

Concerns were raised about the provision for carers and time sensitive visits, Wales and West asked if they could contact them direct they would try their best to aid visits and access, however, there will be some instances where the road is completely impassable due to holes and sometimes the holes will be so deep they cannot be covered or made safe to allow access. It was noted that residents would have access to their properties at all times and if their gas supply was going to be interrupted, they would be told, it was noted that this would be for hours and would not run into days, there is the vulnerable register and provisions will be made for those who require. It was further noted that Wales and West are in contact with the Manager for care in the area.

Members asked about access for emergency services. It was noted that they are only given the same information as the public and it would be helpful to be kept up to date with access arrangements, Wales and West confirmed that they would be happy to keep them up to date. Members felt local signage and social media information would be helpful to the community. Wales and West explained that they would appreciate the Parish Council's help in publicising the works and information locally.

A question was asked about resources for the project, and it was explained that Wales and West had allocated 12 people at 45 hours a week and their working hours would be 7am – 7pm and include weekends where

necessary, however, for welfare reasons they would still need time off.

Cllr Mackie asked if a small lane could be put aside for pedestrians and cyclists. Wales and West explained that this would not be possible as it would mean closing the whole road to vehicles, however, pedestrian access will be maintained, and cyclists will be able to get through.

Members felt it would be important to support the community through the disruption a bit like the COVID-19 volunteer scheme and asked if information on the road closures could be placed on all Parish Council noticeboards.

Wales and West reiterated that if anyone has any concerns to please contact them direct and confirmed that there is number for a gas emergency and a separate Customer Service line.

The representatives from Wales and West Utilities and the member of the public left the meeting.

2605/08 **Public Participation Period**
None.

2605/09 **Minutes**
It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 2nd March 2026 as a correct record.

2605/10 **Committees**
To receive, and adopt the minutes, and note the decisions therein, of the following Committee meetings:

- Planning Committee meeting held on 26th February 2026
It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to adopt the minutes and note the decisions therein of the minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 26th February 2026.
- Environment and Community held on 26th February 2026
It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to adopt the minutes and note the decisions therein of the minutes of the Environment and Community Committee Meeting held on 26th February 2026.
- Finance and Personnel Committee held on 24th March 2026
It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to adopt the minutes and note the decisions therein of the minutes of the Finance and Personnel Committee Meeting held on 24th March 2026.
- Planning Committee held on 26th March 2026
It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to adopt the minutes and note the decisions therein of the minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 26th March 2026.
- Assets and Facilities Committee held on 26th March 2026
It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to adopt the minutes and note

the decisions therein of the minutes of the Assets and Facilities Committee Meeting held on 26th March 2026.

- Finance and Personnel Committee held on 28th April 2026
It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to adopt the minutes and note the decisions therein of the minutes of the Finance and Personnel Committee Meeting held on 28th April 2026.
- Planning Committee held on 30th April 2026
It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to adopt the minutes and note the decisions therein of the minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 30th April 2026.
- Environment and Community held on 30th April 2026
It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to adopt the minutes and note the decisions therein of the minutes of the Environment and Community Committee Meeting held on 30th April 2026.

2605/11

Annual Report

The following reports from outgoing Committee Chairmen were circulated ahead of the meeting:

- a) Chairman's Report
- b) Finance and Personnel
- c) Environment & Community
- d) Assets & Facilities
- e) Planning

Cllr Walker apologised for the delay in sending in the reports.

It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to note the above reports.

2605/12

Terms of Reference and Scheme of Delegation

Members reviewed the Scheme of Delegation, and it was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, not to make any amendments.

2605/13

Membership of Committees

- a) To appoint seven Councillors to serve on the Environment and Community Committee.

It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to appoint Cllrs Haywood, Kingdom, Cann, Walker, Dixon, Tamlin and Smlatic to the Environment and Community Committee.

- b) To appoint seven Councillors to serve on the Assets and Facilities Committee.

It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to appoint Cllrs Kingdom, Cann, Walker, Bridgeman, Dixon, Tamlin and Sherborne to the Assets and Facilities Committee.

- 2605/14 **Review of Standing Orders**
Standing Orders were reviewed, and it was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, no to make any amendments.
- 2605/15 **Review of Financial Regulations**
Financial Regulations were reviewed, and it was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, not to make any amendments.
- 2605/16 **Parish Council Representatives**
It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to appoint the representatives as follows:
- a) Fremington Parish Hall Management Committee Cllr Adams
 - b) Tomlin Hall Management Committee Cllr Walker
 - c) Devon Association of Local Councils Cllr Walker
 - d) Fremington Quay Environment Group Cllr Walker
 - e) Muddlebridge & Babbages Allotment Association (must be a member of Assets and Facilities) Cllr Bridgeman
 - f) Taw & Torridge Estuary Forum Cllr Dixon
 - g) Fremington Local Nature Reserve Management Committee Cllr Cann
 - h) Police and Crime Commissioner Cllr Bridgeman
 - i) Earth Action North Devon Cllr Kelly (with his consent)
 - j) Tree Warden for Fremington/Yelland Cllr Tamlin
 - k) Tree Warden for Bickington/Roundswell Cllr Tamlin
 - l) Snow Warden Co-ordinator Cllr Biederman
 - m) Healthwatch Assist Network Cllr McCormack-Hole
- 2605/17 **Members' Code of Conduct**
The Members' Code of Conduct was reviewed and no amendments proposed.
- 2605/18 **Assets and Lease Arrangements**
The Council's Assets and Lease Arrangements was circulated prior to the meeting, and it was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to note the asset and lease arrangements.
- A member of the public re-entered the meeting.
- The Chairman proposed and it was resolved, with no votes to the contrary, to allow Public Participation to take place at this point in the meeting.
- 2605/19 **Public Participation Period**
A member of the public raised concerns that people from Barnstaple will not be able to get to Fremington Quay, specifically the Café for work and raised concerns about the impact of the works on their business and home due to increased traffic using unofficial diversions. They also raised concerns about the impact on the local economy and questioned the support that would be available for local businesses. Cllr Walker noted that there is a compensation scheme available for applications.

2605/20

County and District Councillors' Reports

Cllr Mackie – Fremington Ward

Cllr Mackie thanked Cllr Biederman for the vegetation clearance that was being undertaken by DCC on the pavements. Cllr Mackie explained that

there will be a trail for recycling soft plastics in part of Fremington and if your household is within the trial you will be notified directly, if you are not notified you will not be within the trial. District Cllrs have received some bite sized training on enforcement and there are currently only two enforcement officers, therefore, expectations of what can be achieved quickly need to be managed. If there is an enforcement issue people should ring customer services who will complete a form which will then be prioritized, and it was noted that priorities can change.

Cllr Biederman – Fremington Ward

Cllr Biederman congratulated Cllr Mackie on her re-election as District Cllr.

Cllr Walker/Cann - Bickington Ward

Cllr Walker reported that there has been an initiative on dog fouling and to confirm the paint used to spray fouling will wash away but has been used to highlight the anti-social behaviour.

Cllr Cann explained that the land at Cedar Grove was still not yet within the ownership of the NDC and the legal process is ongoing, however, they have been looking at ways to prevent unauthorised access.

2605/21

Cemetery Rules and Regulations

Members reviewed the Cemetery Rules and Regulations, and it was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to include the Parish Council's Memorial regulations within the Cemetery Rules and Regulations for clarity and as follows:

- 1.1 Only BRAMM accredited or equivalent Memorial Masons will be permitted to work in Fremington Cemetery. Memorials in the Cemetery other than those fixed by a BRAMM accredited, or equivalent, memorial mason are not allowed.
- 1.2 The Burial Authority will only permit one headstone, not exceeding 914.4mm (3') in height or a tablet on burial plots and one tablet on ashes plots.
- 1.3 Memorials must be constructed of materials suitable to the environment and period of grave lease. The Council reserves the right to reject an application for any memorial that it deems unsuitable.

2605/22

Biodiversity within the Parish

A report to note from the Maintenance & Amenities Operative was circulated prior to the meeting in relation to opportunities to enhance the biodiversity within the parish. It was noted that this report had been presented to the recent Environment & Community Committee which had supported the proposals in principle. Members thanked the Maintenance and Amenities Operative for the excellent report and initiative(s) and agreed support for the proposals, Cllrs would like to see members of staff and Cllrs engaging with the proposals and out on site helping to implement.

2605/23

Fraud Awareness

Members provided feedback from the recent pop-up fraud awareness event. Cllr Cann felt it was disappointing that people did not wish to engage, however, Cllr Biederman felt it was still a useful exercise to engage with the

public on other items even if the main conversations did not focus on fraud. Members discussed future events and it was felt that approaching groups within the community directly could be a better approach for the Parish Council in relation to fraud awareness, however, members did feel pop-up stands should be held during the year by Parish Cllrs to engage with the public and it was agreed to organise a stand at Fremington Quay over the summer.

2605/24

Councillors Questions

Cllr Adams asked if the bus shelter in Yelland opposite Midway Motors would be replaced, Cllr Biederman confirmed it would be in due course.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.04pm.

Signed

Dated

