

Winkleigh Parish Council

**Minutes of the Extra Ordinary Parish Council Meeting
on
Thursday, 27th November 2025 at 8.00am
at
Community Centre, Castle Street, Winkleigh**

Present: Cllr. A Phillips (Vice Chair), Cllr. A Jacobs, Cllr. P Odulinski, Cllr A Warner, Cllr A Keys and Cllr S Leahy,

Attendees: None

EPC 15.11.25	<p>Cllr Phillips (in the absence of the Chair) opened the meeting at 8.00 am and welcomed all those in attendance.</p> <p>Apologies for absence: Cllr. G Goldsworthy, Cllr T Squance, Cllr A Wonnacott, and Cllr B Roth.</p>
EPC 16.11.25	<p>To receive declarations of interest - None</p>
EPC 17.11.25	<p>Public Participation - None.</p>
EPC 18.11.25	<p>Matters Raised by Members (Not on the Agenda) Cllr Leahy raised the matter of procedural and legal oversight within the Council and proposed that an item be included on the agenda for the January meeting to invite the Monitoring Officer at TDC, Ms S Dorey, to attend and clarify her role and responsibilities, to ensure Councillors have a clear understanding of correct procedures.</p> <p>The Chair advised that Ms Dorey works standard daytime hours and suggested that the Council could alternatively, or additionally, consider inviting Mr. T Vanstone, Elections Officer. Members noted the importance of understanding where responsibility lies for procedural and legal matters.</p> <p>Action: Clerk to consider inclusion of an appropriate item on the January meeting agenda.</p>
EPC 19.11.25	<p>Councillors' Concerns Regarding Data Practices To consider concerns relating to data management and ICT (<i>Information and Communications Technology</i> – including the Council's email systems, website, document storage, file sharing, hardware, and data security arrangements), governance, and compliance.</p> <p>The Council considered its current arrangements for data management and ICT, including email provision, document storage, website management, system access, and the devices used to access Council information. Members acknowledged that existing systems are operational and include professional service providers; however, concerns had been raised regarding governance, resilience, and alignment with recognised best practice.</p> <p>Key points noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• No specific data breaches or failures had been identified; however, it was appropriate to review whether current arrangements fully align with statutory requirements, regulatory guidance, and national best practice for Parish Councils.• Existing arrangements concentrate technical knowledge and administrative control in a manner which may present governance and continuity risks.• Best practice requires a clear separation between operational use of systems, technical administration, and independent oversight to ensure accountability and resilience.

- Independent professional assessment would assist the Council in understanding compliance, security, and liability considerations and would reduce reliance on internal judgement.
- External provision and oversight of ICT services may reduce exposure to personal liability for councillors and officers and strengthen public confidence.
- Practical considerations include document sharing functionality, email access on personal devices, and the sustainability and usability of council-issued hardware.

Members agreed that any review should be proportionate, objective, and focused on governance, compliance, risk management, and affordability, rather than unnecessary changes.

Review of Data Management and ICT Arrangements

Original Motion

That the Council obtain three quotations from suitable providers for professional advice and/or services relating to data management and ICT security, and that Torridge District Council's legal department be consulted to provide guidance on best practice, governance, and compliance requirements.

Proposed by: Chair and seconded by Cllr Warner

Amendment to Motion

That the People's Committee review the available options as part of the process.

Proposed by: Cllr Warner and seconded by Chair

Decision:

The amendment was accepted and incorporated into the motion. The final motion, as amended, was put to the vote and carried unanimously.

It was thereby resolved:

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1. That three quotations be obtained from appropriate providers in respect of data management and ICT security advice and/or services.
2. That Torridge District Council's legal department be consulted to provide advice on best practice, compliance, and governance in relation to the Council's ICT and data management arrangements.
3. That the People's Committee review the available options, undertake an options appraisal, and report back to the Council with recommendations prior to any final decision being made.

Action Points

- Cllr Odulinski to obtain three quotations from suitable ICT/data management providers. Also to seek legal guidance from Torridge District Council regarding ICT governance and data compliance.
- People's Committee to review findings and present recommendations to a future meeting of the Council.

Exempt Session

**Confidential Matters (Part II) Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 S1(2)
The public and press are requested to leave the meeting if matters are decided to be discussed under this section.**

Meeting ended at 8.42 am.

Chair.....

Date.....