

Minutes



Westbourne

Parish Council

PO Box 143
Emsworth
PO10 9DX

07775 654483

clerk@westbourne-pc.gov.uk

Minutes of Westbourne Parish Council's meeting which took place on Thursday 8 July 2021 at 7.15pm at The Meeting Place, North Street, Westbourne.

Present: Cllr Lade Barker, Cllr Roy Briscoe, Cllr Richard Hitchcock, Cllr David Mack, Cllr Mike Magill, Cllr Kate McNicol, Cllr Ann Pearcey, Cllr Nigel Ricketts and Clare Kennett, Clerk to the Council.

Meeting chaired by Cllr Hitchcock. Four members of the public were present.

1. To receive declarations of interest and updates to the Register of Interests: None.

2. Apologies for absence: None.

3. Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 10 June 2021: The minutes were agreed to be a true record and were signed as such by the Chair.

4. Updates and issues from the minutes of 10 June 2021:

Item 11: A letter had been sent to the Chair of Southbourne Parish Council, as agreed at the June meeting, to bring to her attention Westbourne's experience during the audit process in 2020/21 regarding the JBC, and to recommend improvements to ensure a seamless audit process for this financial year. Cllr Lyn Hicks had sent a response to Cllr Hitchcock, which had been circulated to members and is included in Appendix 1 for reference. It was noted that it appeared Westbourne's audit report had not been circulated to Southbourne's JBC representatives or discussed by Southbourne's full council.

Item 15: It was noted that two people were interested in being co-opted to Westbourne's remaining vacancy and it was agreed to invite them both to the meeting in October.

5. Open forum: A member of the public asked if bus companies were aware of road closures and it was noted that WSCC Highways were responsible for informing relevant companies and organisations. The member of the public said that edges of Foxbury Lane were deteriorating which made travelling by bus uncomfortable and there was also a large pothole in Woodmancote that needed to be repaired. Cllr Magill said he would inform Highways who were already aware of issues.

6. Bourne bus project: Andrew Kerry-Bedell, Save our Harbour Villages, gave a presentation to the Council about a proposal for a local parish bus service covering Thorney Island, Westbourne, Southbourne, Nutbourne, Emsworth and Havant. The bus would be bought by the Army, based at Thorney, to help service families get around and it would be available for the public to use. It was proposed to run on a Tuesday, Thursday and Friday with the possibility of running on a Saturday if volunteers could be found. Members welcomed the bus service which would support

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local residents following WSCC's cuts to public transport and agreed in principle to contribute £2k towards setting up and running the service in the first year. It was estimated to cost £1k for following years. Members discussed that the service would replace the community taxibus that the Parish Council had provided previously for trips to Emsworth which had been stopped during the pandemic.

7. Westbourne Community Trust: Frank Campbell, Chair of the WCT, gave a report to the Council on progress of the Mill Road affordable housing project. The written report is included at Appendix 2. The Parish Council thanked Mr Campbell for his work to develop the project which plans to provide affordable housing in Westbourne.

8. County Councillor's comments and questions: County Councillor Mike Magill provided the following report. COVID: Numbers continue to increase across the country and this is being seen at a local level now too. The most recent figures show there has been 820 confirmed cases in West Sussex in the last week. This is up 326 cases from the previous week. For Chichester this figure is 110 for the last week which gives us a rate of 90.5 per 100,000. This is obviously the highest we have had for some time. Although cases are rising, we now have 81.7% of the county's over 18s vaccinated with at least one dose, and clinics continuing their good work. PCSO: I have spoken to Baylee Reed with regards to a suspected dog theft, where the dog was recovered having been found in a trap. Please be aware this was near Monks Hill Recreation ground so residents need to be careful with their dogs and not let them too far off their leads. In addition, Baylee told me that we now have a second PCSO who has been added to cover this area, so hopefully we will see more of a presence. His name is Matt Isles and I believe the plan is that he will come and introduce himself to the Parish Council. Highways: I am working on Monks Hill but it feels as though the tail is wagging the dog and officers continue to have far too much of a say. I have had one conversation with the Cabinet Member for Highways and this is due to be followed up with another shortly. If they claim nothing can be done, my plan is to go to the Observer along with a couple of other cases they are neglecting in Rural communities. Children Services: The consultation on the family centre restructuring has come to an end and there was a large response which led to a late discussion on the matter. This is now due to go to the scrutiny committee to review the proposals and will no doubt put forward recommendations which Cabinet will consider and make the final decision on 27th July. Cabinet do not have to act upon Scrutiny recommendations. I have made my views on this known as I do not think that we should be losing more assets in rural locations.

9. District Councillor's comments and questions: District Councillor Roy Briscoe provided the following report. Meetings: We've held a senior leadership and cabinet strategy day, cabinet, special full council and two planning committee meetings so far. I've held meetings at Priory Park with residents who had concerns over events planned for the park. Strategy Day: We are looking to prioritise what we deliver and hope, after efficiency savings, to maintain services. There are pressures on new posts for the green agenda, including a property decarbonisation officer and zero carbon transport design officer. The latter, for me, is a WSCC issue which I cannot support. There are other 'green' pressures which, if implemented, would mean some service cuts so there are difficult decisions ahead. At cabinet, decisions regarding Hyde were made in relation to a new agreement so that any funds they receive from the district will remain in the district to improve our housing stock. I've just initiated

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the probable upgrade for a family in fuel poverty to solar and air source heat pump. Planning: I have declared an interest at Foxbury Lane for a large single dwelling in the countryside. The planning committee will be carrying out a site visit before making a decision. Visit Chichester: The Great Sussex Way is promoting local businesses and attractions, membership this year is free, so I'd urge businesses in hospitality to join up and use their services. Tourism employs about 15% of workers in the CDC area and is a major part of our local economy. Environment: Progress is being made on the Ems and extraction from Walderton. Pressure from all quarters has led to Portsmouth water proposing a reduction in abstraction over a period so only the local area will be fed by the water abstraction. We're not sure what effect it will have as it's only proposed for a short time and the aquifer takes time to replenish. Southern Water has been prosecuted for discharges into the Harbour. CDC's leadership and Cabinet Members for Environment and Planning are both holding Southern Water to account and pushing for faster improvements at the treatment plants. It remains to be seen how much improvements can be made. Fly tipping: CDC has investigated two tips where identification was found - one from Bognor and one from Leigh Park. Farmers are doing a great job reporting issues quickly and checking for any documentation left behind. I am still working to get the Cameras back in use, although I understand they have been used for other wildlife reporting building evidence in our Local Plan informing the Wildlife Corridors. Policing: A new police and crime panel is now in place with new members after the election and independents having to stand down. I was on standby for interviews for the vacancies but in the end wasn't needed. I proposed the new Chair for the Panel Christian Mitchell for West Sussex County Council. The lady stealing batteries and metal from farmyards was given a 12-month sentence, numerous offences taken into consideration. Planning: Our NP goes to referendum at the end of July - please turn out and vote. It provides protections to our village for the first and second years even if a five-year land supply is not available.

10. Police incident report: PCSO Baylee Reed sent the following report. I have gone through the last month of reports for the area which are as follows. 9x reports of nuisance motorbikes in the village which I am treating seriously and have identified the suspects. I am planning a day of action to try and catch them in the act and deal with them robustly. Beyond this we have had scattered reports of low level drug use (namely cannabis).

11. Committee/Working Group reports: Members agreed the recommendations of the:

- Public Services Committee: Minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2021.
- Recreation, Leisure and Amenities Committee: Minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2021.
- Strategy and Finance Working Group: Notes of the meeting held on 24 June 2021.
- Joint Burial Committee Working Group: Notes of the meeting held on 30 June 2021.

12. New Homes Bonus: The Clerk had prepared an application for NHB funding in 2021 for a new safety surface around the embankment slide at Monk's Hill playground. Increased use of the playground in 2020 had caused the soil to erode which had created a trip hazard as the rubber netting, which had been exposed. The

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Clerk had got the required quotes with the best cost of safety surface was £2,245 and the indicative amount of funding available for Westbourne was £2,656. Members agreed to apply for NHB funding for this purpose and the Clerk would submit the application by the deadline of 31 July.

13. Annual Parish Assembly: The Clerk had invited village organisations and groups to have a stand at the event on 24 July at the Rectory Lawn in Westbourne and it had been publicised widely to residents. Local businesses were still to be contacted once their email addresses had been collected. Members agreed to spend £50 of the Chairman's allowance on prizes for a raffle to raise money for Westbourne Primary School. (This is the amount set aside in the budget each year for cheese and wine at the usual event). The Clerk said she would give Cllr Hitchcock the WPC banner, table cloth, NP documents and remaining newsletters to put on the Parish Council's stand.

14. Neighbourhood Plan: The Clerk reported that she had carried out the following work to raise awareness of the referendum on 29 July:

- Newsletter written, designed, printed and distribution booked for 15 July.
- Posters written, designed and printed and will be put up.
- Banner with updated poster for The Square prepared and ready to put up.
- Posts added to Facebook. Asked the village website to share. Please like/share/comment.
- Website articles published and web page updated.
- E-newsletter sent to 250 subscribers – please forward to friends.
- Press release sent to local media.

15. Churchyard wall: Members considered the arboriculturalist's survey and method statement and agreed to a payment of £240 to the Church for half of the cost of the survey.

16. Budget report for quarter 1 of financial year 2021/22: Members noted the budget report for the first quarter of the year. There were no further comments.

17. Payments for approval: Members considered and approved the list of payments totalling £5,665.58 due immediately (which must be paid between now and 9 September 2021) and require advance authorisation. There were payments totalling £433.30 made since 8 July which require retrospective authorisation. In compliance with Financial Regulation 5.2, personal payments (including salaries) were summarised on a separate confidential paper. The list of payments is included in Appendix 3.

18. Correspondence: Members noted the list of correspondence.

19. Announcements and items for the next meeting: none.

20. Date of next meeting: The next meeting is scheduled to be held on Thursday 9 September 2021 at 7.15pm

In accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 Schedule 12, the Council may decide by resolution to exclude the press and public from any part of the meeting under a Section Two item.

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Section Two

21. Joint Burial Committee: It was noted that a working group with members from both councils had been set up to review the constitution, address financial management concerns and to research how other JBCs operate. It was noted that both Caroline and Robin Davison had resigned from Southbourne Parish Council and were leaving in August. Locum clerks had been appointed by Southbourne but a representative from Westbourne had not been invited to the interviews. This had been raised as an issue of concern with Cllr Hicks.

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Appendix 1: Email from Cllr Lyn Hicks, Chair of Southbourne Parish Council

Dear Richard

I am writing this in response to your email of 17 June and firstly I must apologise for the delay in replying to your concerns concerning the WPC audit. I had thought that the issues raised could be addressed once the JBC Working Group was established and as far as future audits are concerned I am sure this will be the case. However, as far as the current year's audit process is concerned I would like to acknowledge the points raised by Westbourne Parish Council's Internal Auditor in relation to the financial information forwarded to Westbourne Parish Council by Southbourne Parish Council and the timeliness of its availability. We also recognise that there have been difficulties because the advice given to the two councils by their internal auditors has differed in some respects.

As you know Southbourne Parish Council are in the process of appointing new auditors and we have noted the recommendation from the WPC auditor that both councils should use the same internal auditor for consistency of advice.

On behalf of Southbourne Parish Council I would like to give you an assurance that matters in relation to the internal auditing process are being looked into so that a smooth audit process can be carried out in future.

Kind regards.

Lyn

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Appendix 2: Progress Update - Mill Road Affordable Housing Project. Report of the Chair of Westbourne Community Trust

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Westbourne Community Trust has continued to press forward with its proposals for the provision of affordable housing and related community projects for the land currently used as a park at Mill Road, Westbourne. The most recent report to the Parish Council on the project was a joint report from the Chair of the Trust and the Chair of the Parish Council and was considered at the November 2020 Council Meeting. It provided an update on the progress of the scheme and addressed the anticipated obligations of the Parish Council in relation to its land and property interests and outlined the financial commitments that the Parish could make to the project.

1.2 That report covered the following key issues

- A review of the background to the project and the public consultation that had taken place to shape the proposals
- An update on the current position with the planning application and the various technical reports that had been prepared to support the application which was submitted to Chichester DC in March 2020
- A description of the main elements of the scheme including the range of community benefits that would be provided alongside the affordable housing
- A review of the leasing and funding implications for the Parish Council
- A summary of the proposals directly relevant to the Parish Council in terms of the future of the park, replacement and improvement of the play equipment and the provision of a new storage unit for Parish Council purposes
- A summary of the anticipated ongoing maintenance requirements for the Parish Council in relation to the residual park area, post completion of the development

1.3 In considering and approving the recommendations the Parish Council agreed to the future leasing and maintenance arrangements envisaged in the report and to make financial contributions to the scheme in relation to the cost of the storage building (£30K) and in relation to the proposed play equipment (£25K).

1.4 The purpose of this report is to update to Parish Council on the current position with the project and the next steps that Westbourne Community Trust anticipate towards successful delivery.

2.0 Current Position with the Planning Application

2.1 During the period from March 2020, when the application was submitted through to December 2020, the Trust and its architects responded to all of the issues raised by the Council's planning team, the requirements of the statutory consultees on the planning application and also to the various representations submitted by the public. Additional information was provided, and various amendments were made to the proposals on issues such as:

- screening and landscaping of the development,
- improvements in the provision of car parking,
- improvements to the layout of the access from Mill Road into the site,
- the provision of a travel plan to encourage sustainable forms of transport and
- the inclusion of various nature conservation features to encourage biodiversity.

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- 2.2 However whilst the Trust was able to respond to these issues of detail without much difficulty, in November 2020 a completely new issue of some significance was raised by Chichester DC Planning Team. This issue relates to the need to provide some form of mitigation to offset the impact of nitrate emission caused by new residential development.
- 2.3 The need for Nitrate Mitigation now affects all types of residential development in the Solent area. Natural England will object to all new residential development where the surface and waste water drains ultimately into the Solent, unless Nitrate Mitigation can be provided. To overcome this objection, it must be demonstrated that the proposal is “nitrate neutral”. Over many years, excess nitrate emissions have been causing high levels of concentration in the Solent waters with an adverse impact on their quality and biodiversity. Existing and new residential use and agricultural use generate significant nitrate emissions which cannot be removed through sewage processing at wastewater treatment plants or through normal surface water drainage. The approach that Chichester District Council and Natural England now require is to find a way of mitigating any additional nitrate emission from all new residential development. The requirement to make residential development “nitrate neutral” generally involves finding a way of minimising the level of emission as far as possible through the design of the development and then mitigating any residual nitrate emission by setting aside agricultural land and using it for nature conservation purposes.
- 2.4 The Trust has now identified a solution to this by agreeing with a local agricultural landowner that a portion of land on the farm can be set aside for tree planting/rewilding. The area of land is sufficient to mitigate the additional nitrate generation from the proposed development at Mill Road. The proposals have been agreed by Natural England and Chichester District Council.
- 2.5 So, with this matter now resolved, the Trust has been advised by Chichester District Council that we have satisfactorily dealt with the technical information they require to make a decision on the planning application and that they are minded to approve our proposals. During the last few months, the Trust’s solicitors have been in discussion with Chichester over the terms of a legal agreement that would be attached to the grant of planning permission. This agreement will ensure amongst other things, that the site can only be developed for socially rented affordable housing and that the nitrate mitigation scheme described above is carried out to their satisfaction. We are also in discussion about the basis upon which the land at Mill Road will be transferred to the Trust.

3.0 Funding for the Project

- 3.1 Now that the position with the planning application is clear and reaching a positive outcome, the Trust is turning its attention to how the construction work can be funded. The first step in this work has been to commission a review of the costs of the scheme taking into account the current market conditions and the implications of the various additional elements in the scheme that were introduced during the planning process.

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- 3.2 The Trust had already retained a reputable firm of Quantity Surveyors to make an assessment of the overall cost of the project during the earliest stages of preparing the design of scheme. This company has now revised the costing taking into account the additional requirements that have arisen from the planning process and current market conditions. So, we now have an improved understanding of the current likely cost of the scheme and therefore how much funding we need to raise.
- 3.3 In addition to the funding that has been committed by the Parish Council, the Trust anticipates that significant contributions will also be made available in the form of grant funding from the following organisations.
- Homes England – Affordable Homes Programme 2021 – 2026
 - Chichester District Council – Community Led Affordable Housing Fund
 - Chichester District Council – S106 Developer Contributions Fund
 - South Downs National Park Authority – Community Led Affordable Housing Fund
- 3.4 The Trust has entered into discussions with each of the above funding organisations to establish that it is eligible to receive funding and is currently preparing to make applications for grant funding to each of them.
- 3.5 There are also a number of charitable funders or specialist funding organisations that will consider bids from organisations like Westbourne Community Trust. These will be approached for funding in relation to the community elements of the scheme such as the play equipment and sports elements.
- 3.6 In addition to the funding sources mentioned above the Trust will have an assured income from the rental stream of the proposed affordable housing once it is completed and occupied. The value of this rental income net of management and overhead costs will be available to service a loan from a bank or similar financial institution. The Trust will be approaching appropriate organisations to secure a loan that will be sufficient to close the gap between the total cost of the scheme and amount of funding that is likely to be raised in direct grants from the organisations mentioned above in para 3.3.
- 3.7 There remains a significant amount of work to be undertaken in preparing an effective and viable financial plan for this project but the work is well advanced. The Trust's specialist affordable housing adviser, who is experienced in preparing funding plans for projects of this kind, is assisting closely in this work. He has advised that the scheme is viable and deliverable. The Trust remains confident that the project can be delivered and in very general terms the current programme is as follows.

Anticipated Programme for Mill Road Affordable Housing Project

July – Sept 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to review costs• Determine approach to procurement• Prepare for funding bids and loan finance
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete S106 Agreement, secure planning permission and land transfer from Chichester DC • Complete all pre tendering specifications
Sept – December 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit funding bids / loan application • Commence competitive tendering process • Select contractor for design and build contract • Secure commitment from funders for all necessary funding to implement the scheme • Finalise leasing and related arrangements with Parish Council in relation to residual park area
January to March 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalise arrangements for commencement of construction
April 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anticipated start of construction
April to June 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anticipated completion of construction

4.0 Conclusion

4.1 The Trust's planning application for the proposed affordable housing and associated community projects at Mill Road, Westbourne has reached an advanced position. Chichester District Council has indicated that it is prepared to grant planning permission, subject to a S106 agreement being signed to ensure that the proposed housing is restricted to affordable social rented accommodation and that other key provisions such as the nitrate mitigation scheme are delivered. Work on the details of the legal agreement is ongoing through the Trust's solicitors.

4.2 The Trust has now turned its focus on the question of securing the necessary funding for the scheme. The cost of the scheme has been reviewed and continues to be updated, discussions have been initiated with potential funding agencies and bids for funding are currently being prepared. A provisional high-level programme has been developed and the Trust is confident that the scheme is viable and deliverable.

5.0 Recommendation

5.1 That the Parish Council note the contents of the report and the Chair of the Trust will be present at the Council Meeting to answer any questions from councillors.

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Appendix 3: Payments for approval

(DD: payment made by Direct Debit, IB: payment made by Internet Banking, C: cheque payment including number, PC: payment made by petty cash, *movement of an earmarked reserve, ** paid from No 2 account)

Payments for approval	Total	Net	VAT
EE&T Mobile Parish Council and			
DD Westbourne Help lines	41.53	34.61	6.92
IB Confidential payments	1,370.94	1,370.94	0.00
IB WSCC LGPS April 21	432.41	432.41	0.00
IB Microshade cloud storage	53.70	44.75	8.95
IB MS 365	9.48	7.90	1.58
DD SSE street light electricity	76.99	73.33	3.66
Westbourne Weekend community			
IB chest grant	433.00	433.00	0.00
Longmeadows quarter 1, Monk's			
Hill and Mill Road grounds			
IB maintenance	3,028.00	3,028.00	0.00
IB Viking printer cartridges (full set)	74.99	62.49	12.50
L Mortimer reimbursement plants			
IB for troughs The Square	29.54	24.61	4.93
IB Westcotec SID bracket set x 2	115.00		
	5,665.58	5,512.04	38.54

Payments for retrospective approval

Surrey Hills Solicitor Monk's Hill			
IB land registration	120.00	100.00	20.00
Media 3 summer newsletter			
IB delivery	313.30	297.28	16.02
	433.30	397.28	36.02

1. Treasurers account number 1

Balance per statement 30/06/21	179,740.90
Less outstanding payments	0.00
Outstanding receipts	0.00
Add petty cash	0.00
Revised bank	179,740.90

Cashbook control

Balance forward 01/04/21	148,685.96
Add total receipts to date	52,248.68
Less total payments to date	21,193.74
Cashbook at 30/06/21	179,740.90