

## Minutes



# Westbourne

Parish Council

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### Minutes of Westbourne Parish Council meeting which took place on Thursday 8 June 2023 at 7.15pm at The Meeting Place, North Street, Westbourne.

Present: Cllr Neil Attewell, Cllr Richard Hitchcock, Cllr Nigel Ricketts and Cllr Laura Veltom

In attendance: Cllr Andrew Kerry-Bedell, West Sussex County Council  
Clare Kennett, Clerk to the Council

The meeting was chaired by Cllr Hitchcock. Five members of the public and one member of the press were present

41. To receive declarations of interest and updates to the Register of Interests:  
There were no declarations of interest.

42. Apologies for absence: Cllr Lade Barker, Cllr Roy Briscoe, Cllr Kim Franks and Cllr Jane Gould.

43. Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 18 May 2023: It was **AGREED** to add at minute 40 that Cllr Franks and Cllr Hitchcock had declared an interest in the item as trustees of the Westbourne Community Trust and they did not take part in the vote. The minutes were then **AGREED** to be a true record which were signed by the Chairman.

44. Updates and issues from the minutes of 18 May 2023:

**Item 30:** It was discussed that the Annual Parish Meeting had been very successful with nearly 60 people in attendance and a very interesting presentation being given by Sir Andrew Ross, resident of Westbourne and member of His Majesty's Bodyguard of the Honourable Corps of Gentlemen at Arms. Members thanked the Clerk for organising the event and publicising it to the community. The Clerk thanked members for the flowers that they had recently bought her and she said that it was a lovely surprise to receive them.

**Item 31:** The Clerk informed members that the order for the new planters for The Square had been placed and once they arrived, Longmeadows would be installing them on concrete blocks and filling them with soil. Hopefully they would be ready in time for the volunteers to plant them before the Open Gardens event on 18 June.

*The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 7.30pm*

45. Open forum: The owners of a plot of land in the village said that they would like to build a property on it and set up a small business connected to the land, possibly camping, fishing or a yoga retreat. They wanted to run these ideas past the Parish Council for their consideration. Members explained that they were not able to give any comments unless a planning application was received. Members recommended

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they contacted the Council District Council who would also be able to advise on any flooding issues and implications for building on the land.

*The Chairman reconvened the meeting at 7.45pm*

46. Co-option: The Clerk said she had received no applications from residents to be co-opted to the Parish Council. It was **NOTED** that one vacancy remained on the Council following the election on 4 May 2023 and the Council agreed to continue to advertise it so it could be filled as soon as possible. The Clerk said she would inform the District Council who would be able to advise on the next steps.

47. County Councillor's comments and questions: Members thanked County Councillor Andrew Kerry-Bedell for the report circulated prior to the meeting which was **NOTED**. In summary, Cllr Kerry-Bedell had spoken to officers at WSCC Highways and although the HGV restriction TRO application for Westbourne had been refused, it had been discussed that blue rectangular 'narrow road unsuitable for HGVs' signs could be installed at the entrances to the village. Cllr Kerry-Bedell recommended that a Zoom meeting was arranged with councillors to go through the consultation responses for highways improvements to Whitechimney Row and East Street so that a proposal could be put forward to Highways to consider. It was agreed that the Clerk would arrange the meeting in the coming weeks. Cllr Kerry-Bedell thanked Cllr Barker for agreeing to join a meeting to discuss flooding in the Bourne area and a meeting would be arranged shortly. The Parish Council also needed to complete an Excel spreadsheet about proposed speed reductions in the Parish which could be submitted to WSCC for consideration. Cllr Kerry-Bedell said that there had been changes to the leadership and committees at WSCC and that he had joined the community highways and environment special committee which would be of benefit to the parishes under this responsibility. Cllr Kerry-Bedell said that the Bourne Community Bus had recently celebrated its first year of operation, during which there had been over 3000 passenger journeys and had been well used and supported in Westbourne. Six pages were now live on the Bourne Heritage Trail for Westbourne and signs would be put up soon to advertise the facility.

48. District Councillor's comments and questions: District Councillor Roy Briscoe was unable to attend the meeting and had not been able to send a report prior to the meeting. Member wished him all the very best.

49. Police incident report: It was **NOTED** that no incidents of crime had been reported to the police in the Parish in April 2023, see [www.police.uk](http://www.police.uk). It was discussed that members of the public should report all incidents to the police, rather than publishing issues on social media, so that an accurate picture of crime could be identified and police resources deployed as necessary.

50. Internal audit for financial year 2022/23: Members **RECEIVED** the report from the internal auditor, Andy Beams from Mulberry & Co, following a meeting with the Clerk that was held on 19 May 2023, also attended by Cllr Hitchcock, which concluded the internal audit for 2022/23. The report was considered alongside the interim audit report issued following the interim audit on 23 September 2022. It was **NOTED** that the internal auditor had signed the Annual Internal Audit Report on the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2022/23, and had made no significant recommendations for improvement. The report stated:

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'Our sample testing did not uncover any errors or misstatements that require reporting to the external auditor at this time, nor did we identify any significant weaknesses in the internal controls such that public money would be put at risk. It is clear the council takes governance, policies and procedures seriously and I am pleased to report that overall, the systems and procedures you have in place are fit for purpose and whilst my report may contain recommendations to change these are not indicative of any significant failings, but rather are pointers to improving upon an already well-ordered system. It is therefore our opinion that the systems and internal procedures at Westbourne Parish Council are well established and followed.'

The internal auditor had recommended that the Parish Council followed the JPAG guidance on emails for councillors and ensured that all councillors used their official email accounts for all council business. He said he would be checking this at the interim audit for 2023/24.

The Clerk informed members that at the meeting on 19 May, Andy Beams had recommended that he liaised with Paul Burdick, external accountant who had closed down the accounts and issued the figures for the Joint Burial Committee (JBC), before the end of the financial year. This would mean that the annual Precept payment to the JBC from both parishes (Westbourne and Southbourne) would be correctly accounted for in the figures. Andy Beams also recommended that if members were not able to attend JBC meetings, that another member deputised for them to ensure that there was equal representation from both councils at all meetings.

51. Receipts and payments 2022/23 and statement of reserves: Members **RECEIVED** and **AGREED** the outturn figures of receipts and payments against revised budget for the financial year 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. Members **NOTED** and **AGREED** the statement of the Council's reserves as at 31 March 2023.

52. Accounting statements 2022/23 (Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) Section 2): Members received and **AGREED** the circulated accounting statements for the year ended 31 March 2023 which was signed by the Chair.

53. General Power of Competence: Members **AGREED** that the criteria had been met for eligibility during 2023. (To note that the number of councillors elected at the last election in May 2023 was equal to two thirds of its total number of councillors and the Clerk had a CILCA qualification).

54. Budget monitoring: Members **NOTED** the bank reconciliation and bank statements dated 31 May 2023, circulated before the meeting. Cllr Attewell signed the printed copies.

55. Payments for approval: Members **RESOLVED** to approve the list of payments totalling £5,857.71 and due immediately (to be paid before 13 July 2023 and require advance authorisation). There were payments totalling £7,497.17 made since 18 May which members **RESOLVED** to approve retrospectively. The list of payments is available in Appendix 1.

56. Correspondence: Members **NOTED** the list of correspondence. For the SDNPA election, members **AGREED** to vote for Alun Aylesbury and Andrew Shaxson.

57. Announcements and items for the next meeting: There were no announcements.

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58. Date of next meeting: The next meeting was scheduled to be held on Thursday 13 July 2023 at 7.15pm.

Meeting closed at 8.15pm.

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### Appendix 1

Westbourne Parish Council, 8 June 2023

#### Agenda item 15: 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)

<b>Payments for approval</b>		<b>Total</b>	<b>Net</b>	<b>VAT</b>
BACS	EE Mobile phone	20.59	17.16	3.43
BACS	Confidential payments June 23	1,584.41	1,584.41	0.00
BACS	LGPS May 23	490.10	490.10	0.00
BACS	Microshade cloud storage and email accounts	141.69	118.07	23.62
BACS	MS 365	9.48	7.90	1.58
BACS	Woodmancote Residents' Association community chest grant	100.00	100.00	0.00
BACS	HMRC quarter 1 payments 2023/24	1,362.46	1,362.46	0.00
BACS	WSCC street light maintenance and electricity 2022-23	2,148.98	1,790.82	358.16
		<b>5,857.71</b>	<b>5,470.92</b>	<b>386.79</b>
<b>Payments for retrospective approval</b>				
BACS	Amberol 2 x planters for the Square	658.68	548.90	109.78
BACS	Enerveo 5 x heritage street lights	4,895.22	4,079.35	815.87
BACS	History Group community chest grant	100.00	100.00	0.00
BACS	Reimbursement C Kennett Annual Parish Meeting expenses	107.65		
BACS	Mileage C Kennett return trip to waste recycling centre and Aldi	4.50	4.50	0.00
BACS	Mulberry & Co internal audit fee	231.12	192.60	38.52
BACS	Bourne Community Bus donation	1,500.00	1,500.00	0.00
BACS				
		<b>7,497.17</b>	<b>6,425.35</b>	<b>964.17</b>