

Minutes



Westbourne
Parish Council

PO Box 143
Emsworth
PO10 9DX

07775 654483
clerk@westbourne-pc.gov.uk

Minutes of Westbourne Parish Council's Full Council meeting which took place on Thursday 11 January 2024 at 7.15pm at The Meeting Place, North Street, Westbourne.

Present: Cllr Neil Attewell, Cllr Lade Barker, Cllr Kim Franks, Cllr Jane Gould, Cllr Nigel Ricketts and Cllr Laura Velton.

In attendance: Clare Kennett, Clerk to the Council

Meeting chaired by Cllr Ricketts. Three members of the public and one member of the press were present.

159. Apologies for absence: Cllr Roy Briscoe and Cllr Richard Hitchcock.

160. Declarations of interest: There were no declarations of interest.

161. Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 14 December 2023: Members **AGREED** to **APPROVE** the minutes as a true record which were signed by the Chairman.

162. Updates and issues from the minutes of 14 December 2023:

Item 147: The Clerk had written and printed resident consultation letters for proposed speed limit reductions from national speed limit (NSL) to 40mph on Foxbury Lane and the top section of Monk's Hill, and for 20mph along the whole of Whitechimney Row. Responses received would be included as evidence in the traffic regulation order application to West Sussex County Council. Cllr Ricketts volunteered to distribute letters on Monk's Hill, Cllr Franks said she would distribute on Foxbury Lane and Cllr Gould said she would distribute on Whitechimney Row.

Item 147: It was agreed to rearrange the Recreation, Leisure and Amenities Committee on Thursday 25 January at 7pm.

Item 148: The Clerk informed members that she had received a second quote of £400 for surveying the war memorial from <https://www.pgoacher.co.uk/> which members **APPROVED**. There was no decision on the repair of the two memorials that had been laid down, although it was **AGREED** to include a budget for this work along with cleaning the memorial and carrying out a sonic inspection of the yew trees in the 2024/25 budget for a decision next financial year.

163. Open forum: A member of the public said he was concerned about the speed of passing traffic on Monk's Hill and said he would like to volunteer for the Community Speedwatch Group. The Clerk said she would be buying a new speed indicator device for lamppost 2 on Monk's Hill, as previously agreed by the Council, and the Council would appreciate help with maintaining it and collecting data. It was also discussed that the speed limit outside the recreation ground was being reduced to 30mph and that an application for reduction of the speed limit at the top section from

Minutes

NSL to 40mph would be submitted to the County Council as soon as responses to the consultation had been received.

A resident introduced herself and said that she would like to be considered for co-option to the Parish Council. It was **AGREED** to include co-option as an agenda item at the next meeting and to advertise the remaining vacancy on the Council to the public.

164. County Councillor's comments and questions: Cllr Andrew Kerry-Bedell had sent his apologies for the meeting and had circulated a report before the meeting which was **NOTED**. In summary, Cllr Kerry-Bedell recommended that the Parish Council agreed which TROs to progress and collate resident research, send more pictures of HGVs in all locations to support an application for blue unsuitable HGV signs, and site seven Bourne Trail signs in the Parish. Cllr Kerry-Bedell had worked with Cllr Barker to update Nick Rule's presentation and had submitted the revised version to the County Council's Operation Watershed team for consideration. This included proposals for:

- River Street - drainage tunnel under road likely with EA involvement and suggested balancing pond
- North Street - road dip north of the river regularly floods, review mitigation with WSCC Highways.

Cllr Kerry-Bedell said he had been trying to set up a task and finish group to look at water quality but it had been blocked due to the government's response to the issue. Over Christmas, the Environment Agency had installed three new flap gates at the causeway to Thorney Island and flooding had returned to normal. He was now setting up a meeting with the military and school to discuss how flooding could be prevented in the future. Cllr Kerry-Bedell said that the Parish had seven pages on the Bourne Trail <https://bournetrail.co.uk/> and signs for the sites had been printed and were ready for siting around the Parish. They could either be screwed onto walls or placed on five-foot oak posts. 10 further sites had been identified and Nigel Peake was writing the content. Large interpretation boards would be available in the next year with details of each heritage trail. The Bourne Bus had now moved ownership from Southbourne Community Land Trust to Community Transport Sussex. Additional routes to Compton and Stoughton had been added and a new timetable would be available soon. Resident research showed that nine out of 10 thought that the Bourne Bus met their needs very well.

165. District Councillor's comments and questions: Cllr Roy Briscoe had sent his apologies for the meeting and had circulated a report before the meeting which was **NOTED**. In summary, the District Council's Planning Committee had approved the southern access route to the Whitehouse Farm Estate which would allow developers to deliver a further 800 homes for Chichester. This was in the Local Plan and was a perfect example of how planning system should work, and it would support the five-year housing land supply and help stop speculative developments. Cllr Briscoe was aware of a in issue just before Christmas in Duffield Lane, Woodmancote where land was being cleared. The District Council was working to prevent further damage but was powerless to stop the site being cleared as it was not a planning issue, even though the land was part of Natural England's Green Framework. Cllr Briscoe said he had declared an interest as he lived close to the site so the Leader of the Council

Minutes

and Cllrs Bangert and Hickson from Southbourne were working on the issue. There was no update on policing but Cllr Briscoe said that Rural Crime Team still only had one Sgt, one PC and one PCSO for the whole of West Sussex, although he was told it would change imminently. Cllr Briscoe still had not seen any police officers patrolling the streets, yet on several occasions there have been more than 15 signed police vehicles parked outside the police station in Chichester. Following wet weather River Street had flooded and the slice gate at the Mill on River St had been fully open for a month - at one stage there was five cubic meters of water flowing down stream and the River was close to bursting its banks. Cllr Briscoe gave his thanks to the Rule family for monitoring the situation and doing everything to alleviate problems. Portsmouth water takes 20 cubic meters a day during the summer months from the aquafer which is why the Ems suffers so much. Cllr Briscoe had met the CEO of Portsmouth water who explained they were looking at the Ems to reduce abstraction but that was a couple of years ahead with all the Planning they had to do. There had been little flytipping which was probably due to the bad weather. The District Council was promoting a range of energy efficiency grants through www.warmerhomes.org.uk The District Council were considering applications for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, including one from the Community Hall.

166. Budget monitoring: Members **NOTED** the budget report to 31 December 2023 which outlined that total net expenditure was at 55.1%. The Clerk said that although expenditure was lower than previous years, some of the 2023/24 budget had been identified to top-up earmarked reserves for projects which would be reflected in the figures at year end so expenditure by the end of March would be higher. Members **RECEIVED** the bank reconciliations to 31 December 2023 which stated that the closing balance of the Lloyds account was £154,064.90, signed by Cllr Barker, and the Unity Bank account was £87,605.09, signed by Cllr Franks.

167. Annual review of fees and charges: Members **REVIEWED** the report which outlined the Council's fees and charges with no amendments.

168. Budget and precept 2024/25: Members consider the draft budget for financial year 2024/25 and **AGREED** the final considerations, as follows:

- To include £1,500 for legal and professional fees as the Council would need to work with a solicitor on matters relating to the Westbourne Community Trust (WCT) project at Mill Road.
- To include £4,000 for responsibilities relating the closed churchyard.
- To increase the amount paid to the Church towards the cost of grass cutting at the closed churchyard to £300.
- To give £100 to the Final Straw Foundation as a S137 donation in recognition of their support at the Council's village litter picking events and the work they do in the community to raise awareness of the local environment.
- To include £1,500 for a tree survey and any required surgery at Monk's Hill and Mill Road recreation grounds.
- To use an earmarked reserve for the Council's contribution of £1,000 towards the Bourne Bus instead of including the amount in the Precept. The Clerk informed members that an amount of £1,380 was set aside in 2020 when the Council temporarily stopped the former community taxibus service during lockdown.

Minutes

- To include £3,000 for new heritage street lights on the junction of East Street and Whitechimney Row.
- To include £2,000 towards running a community event in the summer. The Clerk reminded members that in order to advertise the event to the local community, plans would need to be progressed as soon as possible.
- To include £15,000 towards new initiatives in 2024/25. The Clerk reminded members that £88,342.95 had been saved as an earmarked reserve and that £55k of this amount was earmarked as a contribution towards the new playground and storage building being developed by the WCT. The Council still needed to complete its Business Plan to identify how the remaining amount would be allocated.
- To include £7,500 to increase the general reserve as the auditor had advised that the Council should have six months operating costs (half of the Precept) as a minimum. The general reserve was currently at £48,674.98, a shortfall of roughly £15k but savings from this financial year along with the amount earmarked in the 2024/25 budget would mean that by March 2025 the general reserve would be at the correct level.

Members **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to set a budget and Precept for financial year 2024/25 at £133,264. This was an increase of 6.3% for a Council Tax Band D property (an increase of £8.33 per year). The Clerk would inform the District Council of the amount required and would update the information on the website.

169. Updates to the Council's constitution: Members **REVIEWED** the Council's Financial Regulations and **AGREED** the amendments below following a recommendation by the internal auditor.

4. Budgetary control and authority to spend

4.1. Expenditure on revenue items may be authorised up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the approved budget. This authority is to be determined by:

- the council for all items over £2,500;
- a duly delegated committee of the council for items up to £2,500; or the Clerk, in conjunction with Chairman of Council and Chairman of the appropriate committee/ or Vice Chair of the Council up to £2,500 in an emergency.
- The Clerk is authorised to purchase stationery and other office requirements up to £1,000 for the day to day running of the Parish Council.

Members **REVIEWED** the Standing Orders and Code of Conduct with no amendments. The Clerk reminded members of the rules of debate at meetings set out in the Standing Orders. In summary, these were:

- A councillor may speak once in the debate on a motion.
- During the debate on a motion, a councillor may interrupt only on a point of order or a personal explanation and the councillor who was interrupted shall stop speaking.
- The time designated for public participation shall not exceed eight minutes.
- A member of the public shall not speak for more than three minutes.
- A question shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. An oral or written response to be given after the meeting.
- A person shall raise his hand when requesting to speak.

Minutes

- A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct his comments to the chairman.
- Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. The chairman shall direct the order of speaking.
- No motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is on the agenda and the mover has given written notice to the proper officer at least seven clear days before the meeting.
- Agendas should be published three clear days before a meeting, not including weekends or the day of the meeting. The Clerk said for meetings held on a Thursday, she published the agenda the Friday before. The agenda could not be changed once it was published to give notice to the public and other councillors on the items to be discussed.

170. Year-end Rialtas close down: Members **APPROVED** the appointment of Paul Burdick, ACCLC, to close down the financial accounts for 2023/24 and roll over the information to the new financial year at a cost of £540 plus VAT.

171. SDNPA CIL funding: Members discussed planting spring bulbs in Aldsworth to help with bringing drivers attention to the residential location to help reduce speeds. It was finally **AGREED** to ask Greening Westbourne if they had any ideas for an application around the three priorities of nature recovery, climate action and a national park for all.

172. Payments for approval: Members **RESOLVED** to approve the list of payments totalling £7,955.99 and due immediately (to be paid before 8 February 2024 and required advance authorisation). There were payments totalling £59 made since 14 December 2023 which members **RESOLVED** to approve retrospectively. The list of payments is available in Appendix 1.

173. Correspondence: Members **NOTED** the list of correspondence.

174. Police incident report: Members **NOTED** the report available at www.police.uk which stated that in November 2023 there had been five incidence of violence and sexual offences, two of criminal damage and arson, one of anti-social behaviour and one of possession of weapons.

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

176. Date of next meeting: The next meeting was scheduled to be held on Thursday 8 February 2024 at 7.15pm.

Meeting closed at 8.20pm.

Minutes

Appendix 1

Westbourne Parish Council, 11 January 2024

Agenda item 14: Payments for approval

(DD: payment by Direct Debit, BACS: payment by Internet Banking, C: cheque payment inc. cheque number, PC: payment by petty cash, * earmarked reserve).

Payments for approval		Total	Net	VAT
DD	O2 mobile phone Jan 24	24.00	20.00	4.00
BACS	Confidential payments Jan 2023	1,658.43	1,658.43	0.00
BACS	WSCC LGPS Dec 2023	511.77	511.77	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	GM Support playground inspections	130.00	130.00	0.00
BACS	HMRC quarter 3 payments 2023/24	1,719.90	1,719.90	0.00
BACS	Kompan playground inspections quarter 3 2023/24	356.16	296.80	59.36
BACS	Longmeadows quarter 3 2023/24	3,227.10	3,227.10	0.00
BACS	Reimbursement N Ricketts for tools from Screwfix for Mill Road repairs	177.46	147.88	29.58
		7,955.99	7,837.85	118.14

Payments for retrospective approval

BACS	Information Commissioner's Office, data protection fee 2024	35.00	35.00	0.00
BACS	O2 mobile phone Dec 23	24.00	20.00	4.00
		59.00	55.00	4.00