

Minutes



Westbourne

Parish Council

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Minutes of Westbourne Parish Council's meeting which took place on Thursday 8 February 2024 at 7.15pm at The Meeting Place, North Street, Westbourne.

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

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

Meeting chaired by Cllr Ricketts. No members of the public and one member of the press were present.

177. Apologies for absence: Cllr Richard Hitchcock.

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

179. Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 11 January 2024: Members **AGREED** to **APPROVE** the minutes as a true record which were signed by the Chairman.

180. Updates and issues from the minutes of 11 January 2024:

Item 147: The Clerk informed members that she had received a number of responses to the TRO consultations for speed changes on Foxbury Lane, Monk's Hill and Whitechimney Row and would bring a draft application for the Council to consider submitting to WSCC at its meeting in March. The Clerk reminded members to also respond to the consultations.

Item 148: The structural survey of the war memorial had taken place which confirmed that it was structurally safe. An inspection would need to be carried out again in five years' time in 2029.

181. Co-option: Joanna Lockett expressed an interest in joining the Parish Council and gave her reasons for wanting to join, including outlining her skills and experiences. Members carried out a vote and it was **AGREED** unanimously to co-opt Joanna Lockett to the Parish Council. Cllr Lockett was **ELECTED** and joined the meeting. The Council had now filled all of its vacancies following the election in May 2023 and the Clerk would inform CDC.

Cllr Lockett joined the meeting at 7.27pm.

182. Open forum: There were no comments due to no members of the public being present at the meeting.

Minutes

183. Woodland between South Lane and Duffield Lane in Woodmancote: Members **NOTED** the response below from Chichester District Council's Enforcement Team regarding the felling of trees at the site:

'I am emailing to provide an update. Based on the information currently available I can advise that no breach of planning control has occurred, however I appreciate the concerns in the local community about the loss of trees on the land and the potential for future development. I can confirm that we have used all powers available to us that we consider are currently justified on planning grounds, namely the service of an Article 4 Direction under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (GPDO), as amended, to bring into the control of the planning authority development that would otherwise benefit from an automatic grant of planning permission under the GPDO. This ensures that a planning application would be required for the specific works referred to in the direction, meaning the local planning authority can assess whether the development proposed is acceptable. We are keeping matters under review, we have taken legal advice and we are ready to consider further action if it becomes justified. We are also liaising with our colleagues in the Council's Environmental Strategy Unit regarding the potential impacts upon wildlife. In addition to the above, we are liaising with the Forestry Commission to enable a shared understanding of the situation. It is for the Forestry Commission to consider whether any breaches have occurred in respect of legislation that controls the felling of woodland trees because this is outside of the control of the Council as the local planning authority. However, the Council has served a Tree Preservation Order on 2 trees at the entrance of the site due to their amenity value. The Order has been served under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and any works to these trees without the necessary consent would now be an offence for which the local planning authority has powers.'

184. County Councillor's comments and questions: Cllr Andrew Kerry-Bedell had circulated a report before the meeting which was **NOTED**. In summary, Cllr Kerry-Bedell said he had met with Cllr Hitchcock and Cllr Veltom to discuss proposed highway improvements in Aldsworth and that discussions were underway with officers at WSCC. This included speed reduction to 30mph, village gateway signs and improved speed signage/markings and possible traffic lights at the bridge. Cllr Kerry-Bedell said he welcomed thoughts on how best to progress flooding issues on River Street. Any resolution would involve working with WSCC's Operation Watershed Team and the Environment Agency. Cllr Kerry-Bedell attended the Bourne Forum where Friends of the Ems had given a presentation on water extraction of the River Ems from the 1960 onwards. A review of the water extraction licence was highlighted as abstraction affected wildlife during the summer. Cllr Kerry-Bedell said that water was becoming a key resource for both existing residents and new housing and using less water as a whole as well as creating new water resources would be important factors in the future. WSCC had set up a Water Summit on 8 February to discuss issues such as sewage, flood mitigation, water supply and climate change effects. Cllr Kerry-Bedell said recent Southern Water data has shown that hours of overflows did not match those recorded on Beachbuoy on the same high flow days and he would be analysing the information. It was likely that heavy rain this winter meant that there was even less sewage capacity for new housing development. Cllr Kerry-Bedell had contacted Royal Mail about the PO10 postcode which affected about 4000 properties in the Bourne area with the loss of access to resident services, including risk to life with emergency services. Royal Mail

Minutes

had stated that there were no proposals to remove county information from postcode address files at this time. Cllr Kerry-Bedell encouraged the Parish Council to continue with its TRO applications for speed changes to Foxbury Lane, Monk's Hill and Whitechimney Row. The Clerk explained that the resident consultation would be presented to the Council at its next meeting for members agreement to submit the applications to WSCC. Cllr Kerry-Bedell said he had contacted the Speedwatch Officer at Sussex Safer Roads Partnership who would send promotional material to encourage volunteers to support the scheme. Cllr Kerry-Bedell said he had attended a meeting with Network Rail to discuss the rail crossing at Southbourne to try and reduce the 20 minutes per hour the barriers were down on Stein Road. This was of importance given the new housing proposed for the area and the impact on local roads. Cllr Kerry-Bedell said the new 96 Book-a-Bus service was operating and he was lobbying for it to be expanded to Bourne residents. Cllr Kerry-Bedell said the Bourne Bus had applied for National Lottery Funding to maintain the service over the next five years, and they had also received a grant from WSCC. The Bus was now picking up passengers from Compton and Stoughton with additional stops at Stansted Park and Rowlands Castle. The Bus was also offering discounted theatre trips to Chichester Festival Theatre with free travel both ways. Cllr Kerry-Bedell gave members the Bourne Heritage Trail signs so that councillors could arrange for them to be put up in the correct locations.

185. District Councillor's comments and questions: Cllr Roy Briscoe apologised for not sending a report before the meeting and explained that issues in Woodmancote had been keeping him busy. Cllr Briscoe explained CDC's response (as above) to the felling of trees on a site in Woodmancote, which had been untouched for around 100 years and was designated as part of Natural England's Green Framework. Cllr Briscoe hoped the CDC's actions offered residents some assurance, and although he'd not been directly involved due registering an interest as he lived nearby, he had still been able to advise residents. Cllr Briscoe said CDC's planning committee had discussed some contentious applications recently, including one about a pub in the city centre which was refused a late licence and ability to play louder music due to its location near Prebendal Boarding School. The committee also deferred decisions on Gypsy and Traveller applications at West Ashling until a site visit had taken place, where there are already 75 pitches and 10 unauthorised pitches. Cllr Briscoe explained some enforcement issues that were being investigated in the Parish. Cllr Briscoe said that more officers had been recruited to the Rural Crime Team who were trying to be more proactive in West Sussex. Cllr Briscoe had written to the Chief Constable to request more visible policing in the Parish. The hate crime against Cllr Briscoe was still being investigated and the suspect would be attending the police station later in the month. Cllr Briscoe attended a workshop for Portsmouth Water Stakeholders and he was able to ask questions about abstraction of the River Ems and other chalk streams. CDC had increased Council Tax by £5.42 on an average Band D property. Cllr Briscoe said CDC spent £17.47m on delivering services and it was his role to scrutinise spending to make sure there was value for money. A second home premium for second home owners would pay double council tax on second properties would bring in an extra £500k.

186. Recreation, Leisure and Amenities Committee: Members **RECEIVED** the recommendations of the committee held on Thursday 25 January 2024 where it was decided not to progress repairs to the play equipment at Mill Road as Westbourne Community Trust's works would be starting in March and the recreation ground

Minutes

would be closed to the public for health and safety purposes. Members considered it to be a waste of public resources if work was carried out given that it would be taken out of use in a matter of weeks and would be removed and replaced with the WCT's project. Members discussed that Kompan's inspection report was overly cautious and did not agree with some of their findings.

Members discussed holding an event at Monk's Hill recreation ground to commemorate the 80th anniversary of D-Day in early June. Members were in agreement that they did not have the capacity to hold such an event given the short timescales, and that it might be possible to hold an event in the autumn instead when councillors had more time to give to leading on organising it.

187. Annual spring clean day: Members **AGREED** to hold the event on Sunday 7 April from 2-4pm which the Clerk would promote to residents. It was **NOTED** that Cllr Hitchcock had informed the Final Straw Foundation of the date and has asked to borrow the equipment, and that councillors would need to attend to help with the event on the day.

188. Annual Parish Assembly: Members **AGREED** to hold the event on Thursday 18 April at 7pm at The Meeting Place with drinks and refreshments. The Clerk would promote it to residents and would invite local community groups and organisations. Members discussed options for a guest speaker and Cllr Briscoe recommended a someone who could talk about environmental matters and said he would send the contact details to the Clerk.

189. Tree survey: Members **APPROVED** the circulated quote provided by Andrew Gale Consultancy of £458.33 (ex VAT) to survey the trees, which was cheaper than the other quote received of £600 ex VAT. It was discussed that the survey would only be needed for trees at Monk's Hill and the allotment site at Mill Road as the WCT was now responsible for the recreation ground at Mill Road. The Clerk would inform Andrew Gale about not surveying Mill Road recreation ground and would ask for a revised quote.

Members **APPROVED** the circulated quote from Andrew Gale Consultancy of £737.50 for a detailed decay survey of the yew trees at the closed churchyard which was scheduled to be carried out on 12 April.

190. Speed indicator device: Members **AGREED** to purchase a new device for lamppost 2 on Monk's Hill at a cost of £3,607 using the total funds of £3,637.14 of Community Infrastructure Levy funding from CDC and the SDNPA. The Clerk would liaise with Kevan Pegley and buy the equipment before year end.

191. Community Chest: Members considered the grant application from Greening Westbourne for funding of £126.23 towards the cost of equipment for Westbourne Community Orchard. Members **AGREED** unanimously to award the remaining amount left in the community chest budget for 2023/24, which was £84. The Clerk would inform Greening Westbourne of the decision.

192. Budget monitoring: Members **NOTED** the budget report to 31 January 2024 which outlined that total net expenditure was at 61.9%. Members **RECEIVED** the bank reconciliations to 31 January 2024 which stated that the closing balance of the Lloyds account was £145,418.74, signed by Cllr Franks, and the Unity Bank account

Minutes

(at 31/12/23 which was the last available bank statement) was £87,605.09, signed by Cllr Franks.

193. Payments for approval: Members **RESOLVED** to approve the list of payments totalling £2,469.61 and due immediately (to be paid before 14 March 2024 and required advance authorisation). There were payments totalling £641.17 made since 11 January 2024 which members **RESOLVED** to approve retrospectively. The list of payments is available in Appendix 1.

194. Correspondence: Members **NOTED** the list of correspondence and Cllr Ricketts said he would remove the silhouette on East Street as requested by a resident who lived nearby.

195. Police incident report: Members **NOTED** the report available at www.police.uk which stated that in December 2023 there had been four incidents of violent and sexual offences, one of drugs and one of other theft.

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

197. Confidential business: Members **RESOLVED** to exclude the public and press, in the view that publicity would prejudice the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business or arising out of the business about to be transacted – Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

198. Westbourne Community Trust: Members **RECEIVED** an update from Frank Campbell, Chair of the WCT, about securing funding from St Mary's Almshouses Trust in Chichester which meant the project was now viable and works would start from March 2024. It was discussed that the WCT would need to close the recreation ground for health and safety purposes and facilities would not be available to members of the public for up to 18 months. The Clerk advised members they would need to consider the contract with Longmeadows as soon as possible as grounds maintenance would not be required from March, as well as GM Support's regular inspections. Cllr Barker agreed to look at the existing contract with Longmeadows to advise on any legalities.

199. Date of next meeting: The next meeting was scheduled to be held on Thursday 14 March 2024 at 7.15pm.

Meeting closed at 9.20pm.

Minutes

Appendix 1

Westbourne Parish Council, 8 February 2024

Agenda item 17: 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 Feb 24	18.24	15.20	3.04
BACS	Confidential payments Feb 2023	1,658.43	1,658.43	0.00
BACS	WSCC LGPS Jan 2024	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
		2,469.61	2,441.37	28.24

Payments for retrospective approval

BACS	Reimbursement Lynda Mortimer spring bulbs for the troughs	17.98	14.98	3.00
BACS	Philip Goacher Associates war memorial structural survey	480.00	400.00	80.00
BACS	Reimbursement C Kennett postage, mobile phone plug and extension lead	17.19	15.86	1.33
BACS	Mulberry & Co payroll services quarter 3 2023/24	126.00	108.00	21.00
		641.17	538.84	105.33