

## Minutes



# Westbourne

Parish Council

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### Minutes of Westbourne Parish Council's Annual Meeting which took place on Thursday 9 May 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 Richard Hitchcock, Cllr Joanna Lockett, Cllr Nigel Ricketts and Cllr Laura Veltom.

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 Hitchcock. Two members of the public and one member of the press were present.

20. Election of the Chairman of the Council: Nominations were received for Cllr Hitchcock, who was proposed by Cllr Veltom and seconded by Cllr Briscoe with all in favour. Cllr Hitchcock was **ELECTED** as **CHAIRMAN** and signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office form.

21. Apologies for absence: None.

22. Election of the Vice-Chairman of the Council: Nominations were received for Cllr Ricketts, who was proposed by Cllr Hitchcock and seconded by Cllr Gould with all in favour. Cllr Ricketts was **ELECTED** as **VICE-CHAIRMAN** and signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office form.

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

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

25. Updates and issues from the minutes of 11 April 2024:

**Item 4, 207:** Members **NOTED** that the public consultation for the speed limit traffic regulation order on Monk's Hill had concluded, with a successful formal consultation period. WSCC had passed a works instruction to its contractor to relocate the speed limit terminal from its current location (at the village gateway) northwards for approx. 270m, meaning the recreation ground would fall within the 30mph section of road. It was expected that the works would take place in the next six weeks.

**Item 9:** Members **NOTED** that the Annual Parish Assembly had been successful with 27 members of the public in attendance. The Council thanked Dr Will Denby for giving such an interesting presentation on the broader view of General Practice in England. Cllr Hitchcock asked members to start thinking of a guest speaker for next year's Assembly. The Clerk said the minutes were available at

[http://www.westbourne-pc.gov.uk/Annual\\_Parish\\_Assembly\\_25177.aspx](http://www.westbourne-pc.gov.uk/Annual_Parish_Assembly_25177.aspx)

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26. Open forum: A resident informed the Council about dangerous driving on Commonsides, where vehicles frequently exceed the speed limit, parked on the corner outside The Cricketers pub blocking visibility and the ability for larger vehicles to pass. The Council agreed to write to the landlord about the issue and would consider an application to WSCC for double yellow lines at its next Public Services and Natural Environment Committee in June.

27. County Councillor's comments and questions: Members thanked County Councillor Andrew Kerry-Bedell for the annual report circulated before the meeting. In summary Cllr Kerry-Bedell said that a county councillor's role was one of priorities, and he would like to take care of every matter, but that would take an almost infinite budget. WSCC looked after 88,000 residents, 380,000 households and managed 4,000km of footpaths plus rights of way each year. There was an £80m budget for highways, which was only 4% of the budget of £2bn. That was because three quarters of the budget went on schools, children's and adult services, the cost of which, since Covid and Brexit, had escalated beyond inflation. WSCC had raised Council Tax by 4.99% to plug gaps in adult and children's care costs. This year, it had been challenging to deliver other services, especially regarding highways and flooding. The challenge every council faced was the budget from central Government, as there had been a 40% cut in relative terms in the budgets of councils at every level in the last decade. To plug the gap, England's councils needed another £4bn a year, yet the government only came up with £600m, 15% of what was required. Due to the lack of funding, in a recent survey 14 councils said they were likely to declare effective bankruptcy in the next 12 months, with over half saying they would go bust in the next five years without extra funding. The good news was that not only was WSCC not cutting services, it had kept all key services and still had good reserves. It had also even added new services like the Flex It bus that covered almost all of West Sussex for free travel on demand. But WSCC had to be more responsible and smarter with the money it had. Climate change meant that 2023 had the highest rainfall since Met Office records began in 1836. However, Cllr Kerry-Bedell said he had made sure Bourne parishes had planned ahead with flood mitigation through the Bourne Flood Prevention Group which had identified areas prone to flooding. Some flood issues would take time and involve multiple agencies, but identifying areas meant that a plan could be put in place to focus WSCC resources on long term solutions. For those concerned with potholes, WSCC had added another £4m in 2024/25 to fix them. Hot summers and wet winters meant that pothole reporting had doubled over the last five years. WSCC had bought two new jet patcher trucks to deal with the biggest potholes and many roads had been re-tarmacked. Another aspect of concern was speeding and Cllr Kerry-Bedell had supported a change in WSCC speed limit policy in 2023 so residents could take more control of limits on local roads. Through traffic regulation orders and community highways schemes, Bourne parishes had proposed road speed reductions on many key roads. WSCC had introduced new road crossings, traffic calming, better parking and contributed to the ChEmRoute cycle scheme. Cllr Kerry-Bedell said none of the changes would happen overnight, and WSCC Highways said 40 planned road safety improvements on Bourne roads was ten times what most councillors try and achieve, but that was not going to stop him helping. The plethora of roadworks was a concern, and Cllr Kerry-Bedell had the details of the traffic light management companies and could call them when traffic jams got too long.

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Westbourne Parish projects delivered in 2023/24 were work with WSCC to ban unplanned HGVs through all roads into Westbourne - project nearing conclusion; pothole repairs from reports submitted throughout the parish and tarmac relay on Foxbury Lane; work with councillors and WSCC on project to reduce flooding on River Street and other at risk areas; 30mph sign moved 250 yards up Monk's Hill to include the car park, recreation ground and playground; Aldsworth bridge speed reduction and road safety plan via WSCC due to be implement Oct 2024; Work with WSCC Highways to improve road safety on The Square, East Street and Whitechimney Row; working with parish on planning for speed reduction TROs and research in the Parish; advice on speed reductions, ASB, active travel, policing, sewage, highways improvements and grit bins; and extension of Bourne Bus route on Wednesday to include Compton, Stoughton, Walderton and Mardens. Strategic improvements were representing parishes on the Road Safety Task and Finish Group that created the new WSCC speed policy; creating Bourne Speed Group to review local roads and plan for speed reductions to improve road safety; creating the Bourne Flood Prevention Group to tackle higher rainfall and river and coastal flood mitigation; developing school safety QR scan posters and road safety messages with the WSCC Road Safety Group; ChEmRoute planning and speed limit reductions to create a safer cycleway from Chichester to Emsworth; four-year fight against government inaction on sewage capacity and work to reduce storm sewage overflows; lobbying Southern Water for DWMP plans now at £28m planned spend for Thornham from 2025 – 2030; helping Parishes defend via planning and appeal support against 1,000+ unplanned new houses in Bourne; driving with Cityfibre/Virgin to introduce Gigabit Broadband into Bourne Parishes and minimise roadworks; Bourne Bus first anniversary and now running four days a week and making 2,500 passenger journeys; Westbourne section of the Bourne Trail complete to improve heritage awareness and exercise; meeting with Southern Gas Networks to improve utility liaison and ensure better resident communication; working on building options to allow local residents to be able to build their own homes as part of a CLT; and reporting on reducing Bourne area crime and decreasing anti-social behaviour and improving teenage engagement activities

28. District Councillor's comments and questions: Members thanked District Councillor Roy Briscoe for the report. In summary, Cllr Briscoe said Medmerry Caravan Park and Bracklesham Caravan and Boat Club were both flooded by an exceptionally high tide and the District's resilience officers did an amazing task of being on site quickly and setting up a shelter for large numbers of people. A consultation on the Climate Emergency Action Plan was to run from July to September which would determine the next steps CDC would need to take up to 2030. There would be a large-scale exercise taking place at the Cathedral on 20 May involving road closures. Cllr Briscoe said to not be alarmed if there was lots of smoke between 7pm and 11pm - the biggest training exercise WSCC Fire and Rescue have held for several years would be underway. Funding for several projects across the District was delivered from the UK Shared Prosperity and Rural Prosperity Funds, although none was given to Westbourne. Awards ranged from £700 to £40k. It had been agreed new funding for grants and concessions would remain at £175k, so any worthy causes could apply and criteria had been published. Cllr Briscoe said he was sitting on a review group to look at the planning service and contact with applicants to improve service delivery. Increased deterrents had been installed at many vulnerable locations to stop unauthorised vehicle access which so

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far appeared to be successful. The Local Plan had been submitted which had been complex as a number of statutory consultees had changed their mind on advice already submitted or failed to give a timely response. It had taken seven years to prepare and had gone in as formulated May last year with some minor amendments from the Reg 19 consultation. Cllr Briscoe said he hoped the Examiner agreed there was sufficient information for it to go to examination - it was not without risk and the alternative was a scary thought which would leave Chichester in a difficult position with developers. Cllr Briscoe advised that now would be a good time to review Westbourne's Neighbourhood Plan. Capacity at the wastewater treatment works could be found at <https://www.chichester.gov.uk/thelocalplanclimatechange> The application for a Travelling Showman pitch on Woodmancote Lane was delayed in going to the Planning Committee whilst WSCC flooding engineers assessed the area. Whilst the applicant had dug a ditch to try and take the water away, there was still evidence of flow from the lower part of the field and if the development affected that run off, it was likely to be refused. You could comment at [dcplanning@chichester.gov.uk](mailto:dcplanning@chichester.gov.uk) - request to remain anonymous if you wish, please copy Cllr Briscoe in though. Cllr Briscoe said he was meeting a flooding engineer to look at the issues along Woodmancote Lane to assess the springs to the north which created a ford in places. Cllr Briscoe reminded residents to be vigilant on any land suspected of being sold and to consider the consequences. A new application for a site for nine Traveller Pitches had been received for Marlpit Lane. Katy Bourne had been re-elected as Police Crime Commissioner in May. The Police operated two models of Policing – functional, which was 'threat, risk and harm', and geographical, which covered specific areas. Cllr Briscoe had asked for a breakdown of how much Precept was allocated to the police from Westbourne, Southbourne, and neighbouring parishes - 85% he had been told. Hampshire used the geographical model which was what many in West Sussex would like to implemented so that a dedicated police officer developed intelligence around legal or unauthorised activity and dealt with anti-social behaviour. Cllr Briscoe had received several reports of discarded nitrous oxide cannisters, including at River Street. The PCC was in the process of arranging a meeting for Cllr Briscoe with the new Divisional Commander, Supt Grantham. Cllr Briscoe was also looking forward to meeting the new Commander Chief Inspector Keating. The River Ems was still running nicely and Cllr Briscoe did a river fly session with Sandy Galloway, Shara Hughes and Alisson to see if it was in a healthy state. Cllr Briscoe was pleased with the results and they even found a baby bull head fish - amazing considering the river was usually bled dry at this point through the summer months by Portsmouth Water (PW). Cllr Briscoe said it was important to keep pressure on them to reduce abstraction and allow the river to recover. There was an item going to cabinet to allocate £180k to the Arun and Rother Rivers Trust to develop a Plan to regenerate chalk streams. Cllr Briscoe said he would support this but this work had been done for the River Ems and would be useless unless water was flowing all year round. The Environment Agency (EA) had not responded to the request sent to them but the Environment Minister replied with regurgitated rubbish that had already been put out by PW and the EA, so that will be followed up with yet another urgent review of the licence and request as to how the abstraction could be considered sustainable. Cllr Briscoe said a new exhibition Dinosaurs; Hungry Hatchlings was running at the Novium Museum from 11 May to 9 November and more events were published at [www.chichester.gov.uk/whatson](http://www.chichester.gov.uk/whatson)

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29. Highways issues in Aldsworth: Members **NOTED** the notes of the meeting held on 12 April and welcomed the presentation from WSCC Highways regarding proposed improvements on Sheepwash Lane, Aldsworth which addressed many of the Council's concerns. It was discussed that budgetary constraints dictated much of what could be done, and in summary, WSCC planned by October 2024 to:

- Reduce the speed limit from 40mph to 30mph.
- Replace the Aldsworth nameplates to create a gateway effect at the beginning of the speed limit.
- Install horse rider warning signs at each end of Aldsworth, with new bend ahead warning signs and associated SLOW markings.
- Extend the double white line road markings to include the bend to the east of the first western bends. To include verge marker posts and resurfacing of bend
- Replace the warning signs on the approach to Aldsworth Common Road junction with new direction signs and associated SLOW markings.
- Adjust the 'road narrow signs' (Aldsworth bridge) warning signs to avoid them being lost.
- Resurface bend at junction with Aldsworth Common Rd (extent and area to be reviewed prior to construction).
- Increase number of verge marker posts at the bridge.

30. Policing in Westbourne: Members discussed the circulated paper written by Cllr Hitchcock regarding level of policing in the Parish. Members **AGREED** to the recommendation that a Q&A session was held with Katy Bourne, Police Crime Commissioner, in partnership with other local parishes to express concerns about the level of policing in the Bourne area. Members discussed preparing and circulating questions in advance and inviting the chairmen of Bosham, Childham and Hambrook, Compton, Fishbourne, Funtington and Southbourne parish councils to the meeting.

It was discussed that there were around 1,500 households in Westbourne Parish and the police 'slice' of the precept was £253 on a Band D property, which meant that in total Westbourne contributed £379k just for its area. Southbourne had 2,700 homes, which equated to £683k. In total, that was over £1m and the police did not allocate a police officer to patrol the area. It was discussed that there were many other expenses, such as supervisors, training, equipment, support officers, custody, but a core duty of the police was prevention and detection of crime, protection of life and property and prosecution of offenders. Members discussed if the Parish got what it paid for and questioned why the neighbourhood policing team operating out of Littlehampton. It was discussed that the police in West Sussex operated on a functional model, rather than a geographical model. It was also discussed that residents commented on social media about incidents of crime but many did not reported it to the police, which could be to do with a lack of trust or frustration in the current system.

Members **NOTED** the crime report available at [www.police.uk](http://www.police.uk) which stated that in March there had been four incidents of criminal damage and arson, two of anti-social behaviour and one of shoplifting. It was discussed that the crime report was six weeks old and the Parish was not receiving up-to-date data. A bi-monthly meeting was due to be organised by Inspector Dave Lyons with clerks across the district.

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31. Tree survey: Members **RECEIVED** the recommendations of the tree survey at Monk's Hill recreation ground and the allotment site which took place on 24 April 2024. It was **AGREED** to proceed with the recommendations and the Clerk said she would contact Michael Reed for a quote.

32. Committee and representative appointments: Members considered the committee terms of reference and **APROVED** the list of member appointments to the committees and representatives. Cllr Veltom asked to be included on the Recreation, Leisure and Amenities Committee.

33. Review of the Council's constitution: Members **REVIEWED** the Council's Standing Orders and Code of Conduct with no amendments. The Clerk had received the latest update of the Financial Regulations from NALC and would ask the Council to consider the updated version at its next meeting in June.

34. Budget monitoring: Members **NOTED** the budget report to 30 April 2024 which outlined that total net expenditure was at 6.8% after the first month of the new financial year. Members **RECEIVED** the bank reconciliations to 30 April 2024 which stated that Lloyds closed with a balance of £187,642.16 and Unity Bank with a balance of £88,205.72. The bank statements were signed by Cllr Gould. The Clerk said she had been researching new bank accounts and Santander could be a possibility which she would look into further for the next meeting.

35. Payments for approval: Members **RESOLVED** to approve the list of payments totalling £3,046.84 and due immediately (to be paid before 13 June 2024 and required advance authorisation). There were payments totalling £1,223.00 made since 11 April 2024 which members **RESOLVED** to approve retrospectively. The list of payments is available in Appendix 1.

36. Correspondence: Members **NOTED** the list of correspondence. It was **AGREED** to write to Woodmancote Contractors about the speed of agricultural vehicles passing through Westbourne.

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

38. 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.

39. Mill Road recreation ground: Members considered the circulated letter to Longmeadows and amended grounds maintenance contract and **AGREED** to defer the item until the next meeting in June when it was hoped Westbourne Community Trust would have received confirmation about its registered housing provider status.

40. Date of next meeting: The next meeting was scheduled to be held on Thursday 13 June 2024 at 7.15pm.

Meeting closed at 9pm.

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### Appendix 1

Westbourne Parish Council, 9 May 2024

Agenda item 16: 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).

<b>Payments for approval</b>		<b>Total</b>	<b>Net</b>	<b>VAT</b>
DD	O2 mobile phone May 2024	22.85	19.04	3.81
BACS	Confidential payments May 2024	1,723.81	1,723.81	0.00
BACS	WSCC LGPS April 2024	491.30	491.30	0.00
BACS	Clerk's milage April 2024	4.03	4.03	0.00
BACS	Microshade cloud storage and email accounts	141.69	118.07	23.62
BACS	MS 365	10.32	8.60	1.72
BACS	GM Support playground inspections	220.00	220.00	0.00
BACS	Kompan playground inspection April 2024	356.16	296.80	59.36
BACS	Viking Direct ink cartridges	76.68	63.90	12.78
		<b>3,046.84</b>	<b>2,945.55</b>	<b>101.29</b>

#### **Payments for retrospective approval**

BACS	Metta Media Ltd, Rialtas year end accounts	648.00	540.00	108.00
BACS	Gale Tree Consultancy, Monk's Hill & allotment tree survey	550.00	458.33	91.67
BACS	The Meeting Place, internal audit meeting room hire	25.00	25.00	0.00
		<b>1,223.00</b>	<b>1,023.33</b>	<b>199.67</b>