

Minutes



Westbourne

Parish Council

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Minutes of Westbourne Parish Council's Full Council meeting which took place on Thursday 9 January 2025 at 7.15pm at The Meeting Place, North Street, Westbourne.

Present: Cllr Lade Barker, Cllr Roy Briscoe, Cllr Jane Gould and Cllr Nigel Ricketts

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

164. Apologies for absence: Cllr Laura Veltom

165. Declarations of interest: Cllr Barker declared an interest in planning application 24/02807/DOM as a friend of the applicant and did not take part in the discussion. Cllr Briscoe declared an interest in all planning applications as a member of Chichester District Council's (CDC) planning committee. However, as there would not be a quorum for planning application 24/02807/DOM due to Cllr Barker's interest, Cllr Briscoe said he would comment on the application so that the Council could make a decision and he would declare an interest if it was discussed at CDC's planning committee.

166. Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 12 December 2024: Members **AGREED to APPROVE** the minutes as a true record which were signed by the Chair.

167. Updates and issues from the minutes of 12 December 2024:

Minute 117: The Clerk informed members that she had advertised the Council's vacancies on Facebook and put posters in the noticeboards. She was also working with Monster Creative to update the posters and social media graphics, as agreed at the last meeting, and these would be available to publish soon.

Minute 153: The Clerk was still to buy the road signs, as agreed at the last meeting.

Minute 159: The Clerk informed members that a retractable ladder had been purchased to help maintain the speed indicator devices at a cost of £149.99 ex VAT. The Clerk was still to contact Longmeadows for a quote to repaint the gateways.

168. Open forum: There were no comments.

169. County Councillor's comments and questions: Members thanked County Cllr Andrew Kerry-Bedell for the report circulated before the meeting. In summary, Cllr Kerry-Bedell said that WSCC had met with East Sussex County Council and Brighton and Hove City Council about the government's plans for local government

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devolution. Proposals included combing all authorities in Sussex to create three top tier mayoral authorities – East Sussex, West Sussex and Brighton and Hove - covering populations of over 500,000 people each. Under these plans, the seven district and borough authorities would no longer exist. Cllr Kerry-Bedell said that while reorganisation had worked well for big cities such as Manchester, it was less likely to suit rural areas where there were diverse local needs. Authorities such as Chichester who were financially secure would bail out others. Local elections would be delayed, possibly until 2027/28. It would also place additional burden on the 158 town and parish councils in West Sussex. Cllr Kerry-Bedell said that only county councils had been involved in decisions, with district and boroughs being left out from discussions. Cllr Kerry-Bedell said that WSCC was reviewing where the remaining two HGV signs for Foxbury Lane and Monk's Hill would be sited and to see if directional arrows could be added to the signs. Cllr Kerry-Bedell said that WSCC had received £23m from the government for repairing potholes and he had recommended that some of the funding was used for other highways work, such as signage.

170. District Councillor's comments and questions: Cllr Briscoe said he submitted a motion to CDC to call on the government to ditch the family farm tax which was supported unanimously. Cllr Briscoe said that local government reorganisation was a result of the government wanting to cut the grants it gives to councils which would be at the cost of local democracy. He said that the unitary authorities would not work for rural communities as, for example, councillors in Horsham or Crawley would be deciding what happened in Westbourne. There had been no consultation with borough or district councils about whether they wanted a mayoral system. Cllr Briscoe said that CDC had built up good reserves over the last 20 years which would be swallowed up in the restructure. Cllr Briscoe said that CDC had approved the infrastructure business plan which allocated CIL funding, and he had managed to include several new ANPR cameras for the police. These helped to track vehicles by identifying uninsured cars and those without MOTs or with police markers. Cllr Briscoe was concerned that there were none proposed for the A259 or Common Road and he hoped the SDNPA would allocate funding towards them to help tackle hare coursing and other rural crime. Cllr Briscoe said there were only four rough sleepers in Chichester, and the rest were bussed in or came under their own steam, and he recommended that people did not give them money directly. Cllr Briscoe said the new NPPF removed all sorts of safeguards and made it much easier for developers to gain approval without the need for applications going to a planning committee. The government's new housing targets were impossible to achieve which meant the district would never be able to show a five-year housing supply which was of benefit to developers.

171. Highways issues: Members **NOTED** that WSCC had not passed the traffic regulation order applications submitted by the Council to reduce the speed limits on Whitechimney Row (extend 20mph limit to junction with Old Farm Lane) and Monk's Hill (from NSL to 40mph). This was to do with a lack of traffic data which members discussed would be impossible to evidence as accidents were not recorded by the police and there were no cameras or other monitoring of these roads. Cllr Kerry-Bedell said that this showed there had been a change of strategy at WSCC and recommended that the Council applied for the following three community highways schemes by the end of July 2025:

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CHS W1: Parking improvements in The Square – pavement triangle and planter outside the Window Box, to avoid parking blocking The Square near Coop Includes new pavement bollards end Whitechimney Row, widen pavement and bollards near Spice Cottage, add pavement section near bin outside surgery.

CHS W2: Woodmancote speed reductions – South Lane 30mph from 40mph, end Woodmancote Lane 30mph and Woodmancote village 20 mph zone plus signage Includes current TRO W3 20 mph in Woodmancote village, 40 to 30mph Woodmancote Lane after Dell cottages.

CHS W3: Old Farm Lane reduction NSL to 40mph, Whitechimney end 20mph plus TRO S11 Stein Road from South Lane NSL to 30 mph plus signage Includes current 3089548 and 3099396 (failed), TRO W4 (20mph Old Farm Lane into Whitechimney Row) Old Farm Lane NSL to to 40 and TRO W6 (Square parking).

CHS W4: 40mph down from NSL at specific locations on Common Road.

It was **AGREED** to hold a Teams/Zoom meeting in January to discuss this further.

*With permission of the Chair, and all in favour, it was **AGREED** to move agenda item 11. Community Chest Grant so it would be discussed next.*

172. Community Chest Grant: Members considered the circulated application from Greening Westbourne for funding of £275 to pay for delivery of their leaflet to encourage residents to apply for support and equipment to attract wildlife into their gardens. Martin Yallop explained that the leaflet had been designed and printed with support from CDC. Members **AGREED** unanimously to support the application.

173. Planning applications: Members **RESOLVED** to make the following decisions:

24/02783/DOM: Two storey side extension, new porch and enlargement and roof alterations to existing garage to create workshop. 2 Willow Gardens, Westbourne. It was **AGREED** to **OBJECT** to the application as there was insufficient information about the proposed use of the workshop, for example what would it be used for and when as this may have an impact on the neighbourhood, and members considered that the mass and scale of the building was excessive and affected the character of the street. Members were also concerned about the flood risk identified in the application.

Cllr Barker left the meeting at 8.16pm.

24/02807/DOM: Replacement single storey rear extension. Merrygarth, North Street, Westbourne. It was **AGREED** to have **NO OBJECTION**.

Cllr Barker re-joined the meeting at 8.18pm.

24/02570/FUL: Change use of land for the stationing of 2 no. caravans for residential purposes, erection of associated 2 no. utility buildings and associated landscaping. It was **AGREED** to have **NO OBJECTION** and for a condition to be placed on the site to restrict any further caravans because of to the countryside setting.

24/02779/ELD: Use of land for stationing of a caravan for residential purposes. Land east of Southwood Park Estate, Common Road, Hambrook. Members **AGREED** that they did not have any recollection of the caravan being there or any evidence to show this. It was discussed that this was for the District Council to decide by

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considering the evidence submitted. The Enforcement Team had visited the site previously on many occasions and would be able to provide additional information.

174. Code of Conduct: The Clerk explained that the Council was using an outdated version of the Code of Conduct. It was **AGREED** to update the policy to the circulated Local Government Association version. This newer version was used by the monitoring officer at CDC and when considering issues under the Code.

175. Year-end Rialtas close down: Members **APPROVED** the appointment of Paul Burdick, ACCLC, to close down the financial accounts for 2024/25 and roll over the information to the new financial year at a cost of £600 plus VAT. This would enable the JBC's figures to be incorporated into the Council's accounts at year end to facilitate the audit.

176. Annual review of fees and charges: Members **NOTED** the report which outlined the Council's fees and charges with no changes, and **AGREED** that the Clerk should set up Standing Orders where possible for regular payments to reduce the need to approve them monthly. It was discussed that the allotment lease would be reviewed when the project at Mill Road was completed to agree maintenance of the new storage building.

177. Budget monitoring: Members **NOTED** the budget report and earmarked reserves to 31 December 2024. The earmarked reserve of £30k for repairs to the multi-use games court at Mill Road was discussed as a communication had been received from Westbourne Community Trust (WCT) regarding its replacement at a cost of £37k. This was their preferred approach instead of repairing it, at an estimated cost of £30-34k, as it would look good and be a better solution than repairing something that was already failing. The WCT would also find another quote for the Council's consideration. It was discussed that the Council did not want to contribute any further funds to the £30k that had already been agreed. It had already contributed £72,666k towards the project and the WCT could look at other funding options. It was discussed that the upright posts could be replaced and the existing fencing repaired. It was **AGREED** that Cllr Ricketts would discuss this further with the WCT. Members also discussed the trespassing on the recreation ground at Mill Road which had been closed to the public since mid-December for site safety reasons. It was discussed that the bow-top fencing that had been removed from the park could be installed along the boundary with planting to prevent residents from accessing the recreation ground from their properties. This could be a long-term solution to prevent multiple entrance points and unauthorised use of the park if it was agreed to have any bylaws at the site.

Members received the bank reconciliations to 31 December 2024. The Lloyds Treasurers account closed with a balance of £94,031.70, the Lloyds Instant Access Savings account closed with a balance of £40,129.47, and the Unity Bank account closed with a balance of £90,024.97. The Redwood Bank account closed with a balance of £0 as the Clerk had not yet transferred money to the fixed term savings account due to funds being released for the WCT project. The Clerk recommended that the Council considered how much it would like to transfer at the end of the financial year.

178. Budget and precept 2025/26: Members considered the draft budget for financial year 2025/26 as recommended by the Strategy and Finance Committee on 17 October 2024. It was **NOTED** that the Joint Burial Committee had agreed to keep

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their contribution at the same level as 2024/25. It was **AGREED** to include £1k for the community chest grant to support local groups and initiatives, £8k as a grant to Westbourne Community Hall to support the renovation of the kitchen, £4k as a grant to The Meeting Place to support renovation of the rear room, and £1k to increase the earmarked reserve for the churchyard wall.

Members **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to set a budget and Precept for financial year 2025/26 at £14,473. This amount was raised from local people to pay for the services the Council provided. Compared to £133,247 in the previous year, it was an increase of 1.6% for a typical house in Council Tax Band D which was below the level of inflation. The Clerk would inform the District Council of the amount required and would publish the budget on the website.

179. Financial risk assessment and asset register: Members **NOTED** the Financial Risk Assessment with no further comments. It was **NOTED** that the Clerk had updated the asset register to remove the items no longer at Mill Road recreation ground, and this change would need to be explained to the external auditor as part of the end of year audit.

180. Payments for approval: Members **RESOLVED** to approve the list of payments totalling £5,877.81 and due immediately (to be paid before 13 February 2025 and require advance authorisation). There were payments totalling £115.00 made since 12 December 2024 which members **RESOLVED** to approve retrospectively. The list of payments is available in Appendix 1.

181. Correspondence: Members **NOTED** the list of correspondence. It was **AGREED** that the Clerk could contact CDC Estates about resident access to the recreation ground at Mill Road.

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

183. Date of next meeting: The next meeting was scheduled to be held on Thursday 13 February 2025 at 7.15pm.

Meeting closed at 9.15pm

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Appendix 1

Westbourne Parish Council, 9 January
2025

Agenda item 17: Payments for approval

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

Payments for approval July		Total	Net	VAT
DD	O2 mobile phone Jan 2024	11.68	9.73	2.45
BACS	Confidential payments Jan 2024	1,776.07	1,776.07	0.00
BACS	WSCC LGPS Dec 2024	514.80	514.80	0.00
BACS	HMRC quarter 3 2024/25	1,632.93	1,632.93	0.00
BACS	Microshade cloud storage and email accounts Jan 2024	125.32	104.43	20.89
BACS	MS 365 Jan 2024	10.32	8.60	1.72
BACS	Longmeadows Monk's Hill grounds maintenance quarter 3 24/25	1,626.70	1,626.70	0.00
BACS	Reimbursement K Pegley ladder from Screwfix to maintain speed indicator devices	179.99	149.99	30.00
BACS	Mulberry Payroll Services quarter 3 2024/25			
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		5,877.81	5,823.25	55.06
Payments for retrospective approval				
BACS	GM Support, playground inspections Dec 24	115.00	115.00	0.00
		<hr/> <hr/>		
		115.00	115.00	0.00