

## Minutes

### Westbourne Parish Council

Clare Kennett, Clerk to the Parish Council

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#### **Minutes of the Westbourne Annual Parish Assembly held at 7pm on Thursday 20 April 2017 at The Meeting Place, North Street, Westbourne.**

Present from the Parish Council (PC): Cllr Roy Briscoe, Cllr Richard Hitchcock, Cllr Piers Mason, Cllr Val Owen, Cllr Nigel Ricketts and Clare Kennett, Clerk to the PC.

Guest speaker: Nigel Peake

Also present: Cllr Sandra James, West Sussex County Council (WSSC), Cllr Mark Dunn, Chichester District Council (CDC), and 16 members of the public.

Meeting chaired by Cllr Hitchcock, Chairman of the PC.

#### **Guest speaker: Mr Nigel Peake**

Mr Nigel Peake, father of astronaut Major Tim Peake and resident of Westbourne, gave an interesting and inspiring presentation about his son's achievements and mission to the International Space Station in 2016. Mr Peake explained his son's ambitions started with his successful career as a helicopter pilot in the army. Tim applied to become an astronaut in response to an advert he had seen on the internet – 8,000 people applied for just 6 places. Mr Peake explained how they travelled to Russia to celebrate Tim's departure to the Space Station, and all of the wonderful and fascinating traditions that astronauts have to follow before they leave. Tim is now passing on his experience and helping those who are about to travel to the International Space Station. Tim hopes to go up again between 2019 and 2024. Mr Peake said that Tim is delighted that the Parish Council will be planting a tree to celebrate his achievements.

#### **The meeting resumed at 8.15pm following an interval for cheese and wine.**

1. Apologies received: None

2. Minutes of the meeting on 21 April 2016: The minutes were deemed to be correct and signed by Cllr Hitchcock as a true record.

3. Matters arising from the minutes: It was discussed if Emsflow Project was still in operation. Cllr Ricketts reported that communities further up the River Ems have been more involved recently as they experience more issues than those such as Westbourne who are further downstream.

4. The Annual Report of the Parish Council: Cllr Hitchcock gave the following report:

Where to begin? This has been a very busy year for the Parish Council, which probably explains why the time seems to have passed so quickly. What has kept us busy on behalf of the parish?

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- **Attending** monthly Parish Council meetings and various committee meetings. All of these are open to members of the public and we are delighted that attendance has increased somewhat in recent months.
- **Discussing** 69 planning applications. The Parish Council examines applications in great detail and makes recommendations to CDC, the Local Planning Authority. Parishioners making applications – or opposing them – are very welcome to attend planning meetings.
- **Attending** CDC Planning Committee meetings when the PC has objected to an application. We are permitted to speak at these meetings and to reiterate the PC's position.
- **Attending** appeals when a refusal by CDC is challenged by an applicant. Again, we are permitted to speak at these meetings and to reiterate the PC's position.
- **Representing** WPC at various other meetings and fora, including the Bournes Forum, the All Parishes Meeting, Chichester District Association of Local Councils and West Sussex County Council South Chichester County Local Committee and the SDNPA.
- **Meeting** twice with Diane Shepherd, CEO of CDC, and Andrew Frost, Head of Planning, to discuss planning issues in Westbourne.
- **Meeting** with Shona Archer, Enforcement Manager at CDC, to discuss what we consider to have been inadequate enforcement in the parish.
- **Meeting** with Steve Hansford (Head of Communities, CDC) and Inspector Kris Ottery (Neighbourhood Policing) to discuss crime and anti-social behaviour issues in the parish.
- **Responding** to enquiries from members of the public.
- **Setting up** a number of important WPC governance documents.
- **Administering** the cemetery, jointly with Southbourne Parish Council.
- **Maintaining** our two recreation grounds and playgrounds. We have recently employed a playground inspector to ensure that the equipment is in good condition and that any problems are immediately drawn to our attention.
- **Installing** a new path leading from the car park in Monk's Hill to the recreation ground.
- **Securing** NHB funding for replacement benches/picnic tables.
- **Securing** funding, for Postcode Publication, for a defibrillator
- **Campaigning** for the relocation of the 30mph sign beyond the playground on Monk's Hill and a 40mph limit on Emsworth Common Road. This is ongoing.
- **Campaigning** for the reopening – in some capacity – of the Household Waste 'Recycling' Site in Marlpit Lane. Again ongoing
- **Running** Westbourne Spring Clean Day, at which volunteers collected 17 bags of litter.
- **Setting up** a Community Chest Grant to make funds available to village organisations.
- **Maintaining** regular contact with PCSO Colin Booker, despite his no longer being our dedicated PCSO, and with our District Councillor Mark Dunn and County Councillor Sandra James. We would like to thank Mark and Sandra for all

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their work on behalf of the parish in the last year and wish Sandra well in the forthcoming election – if we are permitted to do so, that is!

- **Publishing, and distributing**, to every household in the parish, the first three copies of the new PC newsletter. Feedback would be much appreciated.
- **Progressing/Putting the finishing touches** to the Neighbourhood Plan. After innumerable hours of work over a period of four years - by a dedicated team of volunteers (the Westbourne Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, made up of both councillors and non-councillors) - the NP was submitted to CDC just two weeks ago. The documentation, which is available on the village website, includes a basic conditions statement, an evidence base, and a consultation statement, as well as a revised Village Design Statement. After a further consultation period, the Plan will be passed to an independent examiner and eventually will be put to the parish in a referendum. If passed, it will become part of planning law, giving us at least some control over any future development in the parish. Don't you just love all this voting!

I'm sure I haven't covered everything! At present, we are currently...

- **Installing** village gateways to further slow down traffic travelling through the village.
- **Setting up** a new, dedicated Parish Council website which should be going live any day now.
- **Working** on a 5-year business plan.
- **Investigating** the possibility of providing the parish with a much-needed car park.
- **Consulting** on new play equipment for the two playgrounds.
- **Applying** for NHB funding to prepare cemetery extension

During the year, one councillor, Colin Hayter, stood down but existing councillors, Val Owen, Nigel Ricketts, Roy Briscoe, Piers Mason and myself have been joined by Sarah Miles and Mark Woods. I would like to thank all the councillors for their hard work on behalf of the Parish in the last year. We are still two councillors short so if you would like to join us and help spread the load, please contact the Parish Clerk. Talking of the Parish Clerk, our special thanks go to Clare Kennett for having learned the ropes so quickly and contributing so positively to the work of the Parish Council. We wish Clare all the best as she departs for a period of maternity leave and look forward to welcoming Louis Steele as our Locum Clerk at the beginning of May.

Lastly, the Parish Council will be awarding a plaque to the former webmaster of the village website, Jim Barlow, on having achieved 1000,000 hits. As you will know, Jim is currently very unwell and, at this time, our thoughts are with him and his family.

5. Report from West Sussex County Councillor: Cllr Sandra James gave the following report:

We are now in a period of Purdah ahead of the election and Cllr James wanted to be careful in her report so as not to be seen to campaign. Cllr James expressed her gratitude to the Parish Council and to Jim Barlow – without their voluntary work and time, things would not get done. Cllr James explained she is the link between the Parish Council and WSCC including their departments such as Highways, Adult

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Social Care, Education, Children in Care etc. There are a number of priorities that Cllr James has recently been working on including:

- Markwells Wood and the extraction of oil. Cllr James is concerned about acidisation, which she considers needs to be classified alongside fracking, and the detrimental impact on the environment and risks to local aquifers. Her job has been to bring this to the attention of the local community.
- Closure of the Household Waste Recycling Sites, which she considers to be a mistake and has resulted in much flytipping across the County. Cllr James considers the sites could be reopened again.
- Local policing. Cllr James sits on the Police and Crime Panel. Findings show that local policing has been audited as inadequate across Sussex and this needs to be addressed.
- Closure of fire and ambulance services – there is still a threat to Emsworth Fire Station which has been given a stay of execution. Losing it would be a problem for this area. Closure will come back on the agenda in two or three years.
- Monk's Hill – it is a travesty that there is a national speed limit near a playground. The process is complicated but is one that needs to be overcome.

Cllr James explained the increasing importance of parish councils in the local government sector, and their ability to collect a precept and make representations on behalf of their communities. Cllr James also said it's important to have an assertive County Council working for the community.

6. Report from Chichester District Councillor: Cllr Mark Dunn gave the following report:

Cllr Dunn explained how parish councils have changed fundamentally, and how Westbourne was a model for hot debate and the reality of local issues. He said this one is an exception – it is well attended and keeps councillors on their toes. Cllr Dunn gave his congratulations for exceptional work on the Neighbourhood Plan which once it is in place will give the community a far greater level of control than it had before. Cllr Dunn said the community owe a debt of gratitude to all the people who have made it happen. Cllr Dunn said the Parish Council needs members and urged residents to come forward for co-option to the Council. He pointed out that the Council has the power to raise a precept which is not capped, unlike WSCC and CDC. He said that we can't have taxation without representation. Cllr Dunn said that there is a looming financial crisis and that austerity was here to stay. He said there is likely to be continued cuts to policing and fire service. He thought future generations will be faced with many challenges in the future – one being the grey pound who can't go on forever – and we need to be careful that we don't expect more than we can pay for. He said it's important to have enthusiastic councillors, such as having a County Councillor like Sandra who is interested in the minutia of finance and ensuring that there is no waste. Cllr Dunn was asked if he thought parish council precepts will be capped in future – Cllr Dunn responded that he did not think they would. He said that greater responsibilities are being placed on parishes. At the moment WPC is a small council that's manageable. However, most parishes are much bigger and have larger precepts but this comes with more responsibilities and a clerk who is loaded with work. It's not uncommon now to find smaller parishes doing the same level of work as larger ones. Greater powers mean the need for greater taxation. Cllr Dunn said that CDC is being asked to find more room for

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houses. The SDNPA is the lungs and open space for the community with other local areas becoming more concentrated with development. Cllr Dunn predicted that it won't be long before the SDNPA raises a precept. It is currently funded by DEFRA and the EU but this may not continue. When they start to feel the pinch they may decide that they are privileged to live in that area and will be happy to pay to protect it.

### 7. Brief financial report of the Parish Council: Cllr Nigel Ricketts, Chair of the Finance and General Purpose Committee, gave the following report:

The Parish Council has two accounts: The number one account has been signed off with a receipts and payments balance of £106,846.46. The number two account, which contains the remainder of the S106 developer contribution for Mill Road recreation ground, remains at £4,844.42. The Precept for financial year 2016-17 was used for the Council's professional subscriptions, donations to the closed churchyard, Citizen's Advice and Sussex Playing Fields Association. It paid for the running and maintenance of the Council's two recreation areas, street lighting, litter and dog bin collections and repairs/vandalism, as well as general administrative costs such as room hire, accounting and auditing, staff costs and office equipment/stationery. The Council has built up just over £60,000 in earmarked reserves for projects, such as replacing play equipment at the recreation grounds, the car park at Monk's Hill, fingerposts, and the church yard wall. The Business Plan that the Council will be writing will identify how and when some these projects will be delivered. The Council has around £30,000 in general reserves. The Sussex and Surrey Association of Local Councils recommends that this amount, roughly half of the precept, is held in general reserve to safeguard any financial risk. Councillors are urged to be cautious of expenditure that has not been precepted for. There is an annual budget that has to be worked to and failure to do so could see the reserve drop too low and put the council at risk of not being able to function in an emergency. The Council is now being audited for its activities during 2016-17. This includes looking at the financial documents, and also to scrutinize that its corporate governance procedures and risk assessments are in place. The Precept for 2017-18 is £77,804.00 and will be paying for the same services as last year. This is roughly £77 per year for a council tax band D property. The Precept is higher than previous years to take into account new money that has been set aside for the Council's business plan which aims to improve services and facilities in the Parish, such as a new car park. The Parish Council is working on a new website and all of the Council's accounts will be available for the public to view.

Cllr Val Owen gave the following report about the Henry Smith's Charity. Henry Smith was born in 1549 and died at the age of 79. Since his death his Charity has helped those who are disadvantaged since 1628. It is the largest grant making charity in England and the success of the Charity is down to the value of the land that he owned. In 1640 the Charity bought land in Kensington for £2,000. Through Henry Smith's wishes, he continues to help others such as the sick, elderly and helps to alleviate poverty. £886 is given to Westbourne each year and is given to people who have lived in the village for some time. There is a need to find more people to distribute to people. £30 is given to a single person, and £60 to a couple. People are pleased to receive it. Please let Cllr Owen know if anyone would be suitable. The Charity has not supported anyone in Wodmancote for a while. The

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Parish Council thanked Cllr Owen and Margaret Lashley for their continued work as Trustees.

### 8. Reports from local community groups:

#### **1st Westbourne Scouts, Roy Briscoe**

Only a few years ago we were a struggling group with dwindling numbers, today we are one of the biggest groups in the Chichester District and growing year on year, we have reached the stage our Beaver section has had to start a waiting list. That's not to say don't contact us we will do our very best to accommodate the children whenever we can and of course we constantly have movement through the sections leaving vacancies. So, what's made the difference in simple terms you have, you have shown generosity in donations especially Portsmouth Surgical, through their Ch Exec Guy Schofield one of our residents here in Westbourne and another big contributor Westbourne Open Gardens. Through your generosity, it has enabled the Leaders to acquire equipment and skills to let them take the Children on some fantastic camps, where they experience exciting activities they wouldn't normally even consider. Then the 2<sup>nd</sup> thing to make a difference is that we have a group of Leaders that are so enthusiastic and competent, the children love to come along they know they are safe and will engage in some fabulous fun every time they come along. The leaders give their time freely and we owe a great debt of gratitude for their commitment. Not only do they give an evening each week but they often give their weekends or longer so our Children can go on the activities they do. I must give my thanks and I'm sure that of the people of Westbourne to the leaders of the sections Derek, Glynis, Bruce and Rachel, but also the people that help each week in the various sections. I also have a strong Executive through which we support the leaders and their tasks which makes my life easy. What have our Scout Group been up to: One camp was to PGL in Hindhead, they did everything from climbing and Raft building through to Cooking and Team games, they thoroughly enjoyed themselves and wore the leaders out. But and there is a but----when their friends found out what they had been up to we had a big demand for places. Which is why funding is so important. The Scouts did a wild camp where they built their own bivvies' to sleep in probably didn't wash a lot whilst there but had the time of their lives. The Cubs are doing a sleep over at the Novium Museum, they know the exhibitions don't come to life, but it might be fun as Tim Peakes exhibition is there. Two of the older Scouts went on a trip to Africa to help in the equipping of schools and had a fantastic experience, seeing another side to life. Our group supported their trip with fund raising. Later this year we will be going to the West Sussex Camp, a jamboree type event where they will have chance to do loads more activities and meet Scouts from around the County. Again, some of the older Scouts are going as helpers making sure the whole camp runs smoothly. Our Scout leader went on a course to teach shooting which all the children are enjoying we have access to 3 air rifles, he charges a £1 a session to cover the pellets, targets and raising money for a 4<sup>th</sup> Air Rifle. By doing this the children feel empowered and realise there is a value to these things, hopefully then respecting the equipment they gain the use of. We were going to start an Explorer Group above the Scouts but the Scout association won't allow them to be involved with the scouts there has to be a 6 month break before

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they can assist at scouts. Many of us disagree with this rule but it's there and we have to follow the rules. Our HQ on Akela Way off Mill Road is small and has been improved in recent years it's been lined so the concrete posts that protruded into the hall have gone as a safety measure, walls insulated and a new heating system installed. The store room at the back has been re-furbished and is now a useable space, Wicks in Havant donated some of the materials so I pass our thanks to them. Now we are one of the Oldest Groups in Chichester believed to have started in 1909. That's 108 years. 2 of our number have been involved with our group for over 37years that's more than 1/3 of the whole time the group has been in existence--- they are Derek and Glynis Chaffer---- I hope to be able to get them some recognition for their fantastic achievement and long may it continue. I did try a couple of years ago to get them awarded a silver wolf, which is bestowed by the Chief Scout but ran into a lot of bureaucracy, I think those hurdles have been cleared and I can try for the award again--- I think it's probably easier to nominate them for an MBE or OBE. Anyway, I believe 1<sup>st</sup> Westbourne have continued where others have folded due to their tenacity and drive, the Scout movement and Children of Westbourne owe a debt of gratitude to them, many local adults remember them from their time in the group. Thank-you Derek and Glynis. Our group is always in need of adult help if anyone wants to get involved please contact Derek or myself, it is a rewarding experience and also way to meet new people, no experience needed, but if you remember being in Scouts just remember what it did for you, would you be willing to help out and give some of your experience to the Children? Memories they can call on in future years, it's a great organisation please just let Derek or Myself Know.

### **Westbourne Magazine, Owen Pike**

There are 12 or so contributors to the magazine which is put together by four volunteers – two people work on it one month, the other two the next month. They use Publisher to create the document. They also have their own printing equipment which can take 15-16 hours to complete and they are looking for people to help with this. The Church helps fund the magazine and the rest comes from sales and advertising. The magazine is looking for more people to report from the Parish Council meeting, and also a new person to take on the advertisements.

### **Westbourne Allotments, David Lees**

The Association is run on a voluntary basis, and the landlord is the Parish Council. In 2018 there will be a rent review which has not gone up since 2013 when it increased in line with the cost of living. The Association runs an annual BBQ which will be held on 8 June. There is also a flower trip on 20 August and a trip to Kew Gardens on 24 September. The Association gets a lot of support from the community at its annual flower show and local businesses support it. They are hoping for a good future for the show and would like to sell more produce. They are not allowed to run the allotments for commercial purposes and can only share it among themselves. Last year there was a surplus which went to a local charity. A few spare plots are available if anyone is interested, which cost £20 per year.

### **St John the Baptist Church, Marjorie Kipling**

The Church is a listed building and there are a group of Christians worshipping there who love and help their neighbours and live by Gods word. The Church had an AGM

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yesterday. The magazine receives much help from the Church and 30 people deliver it across the Parish. The Church receives a lot of support from local residents from flower arranging to keeping the church open and helping visitors find out about local history. A new rector will be starting on 2 May.

### **WI:**

We began 2016 with a late Christmas meal at The Fox and Hounds, Funtington which we visited again in January 2017. During the year in addition to our regular monthly meetings a number of members also took part in visits to Goodwood Races - Ladies Day, a Chichester canal walk and talk, London show - Mrs Henderson Presents, midsummer cruise in Chichester Harbour, theatre trips, New Park Cinema to see Suffragettes, a visit to Osborne House, Isle of Wight, a trip to the WI Denman College for a Taster Day. In August we were delighted to serve the teas at Westbourne Horticultural Show with Members providing huge quantities of scones and cakes. Our stand at the show resulted in press coverage in the WI West Sussex News and Chichester Observer for our hanging baskets. Our walking groups are very popular with both weekday longer walks and shorter walks and visits monthly at weekends. The book club meets at The Meeting Place and is also much enjoyed. Our craft group also meets regularly at The Meeting Place and is working on the decoration of a tablecloth for use at our meetings and any shows we may be visiting. At some of our monthly meetings at The Parish Hall we have been enthralled by speakers and topics ranging from a Portsmouth based Masai Warrior, Nigel Peake, an ex-Playboy Bunny Girl, a local chef, quilting and freshwater pearls. At other meetings we had activities including an excellent quiz followed by Fish and Chips ordered locally from Whistlers and in June we held our Garden Party. July saw us Line Dancing on a very hot evening. In December our Christmas party involved lots of lovely things to eat, all provided by Members, and a musical interlude from the Emsworth Ukelelee Group. We also invited, and were joined by, visitors from other local WIs. We were invited to provide a Reader for the service of nine lessons and carols at St John's and one of our Members was very pleased to undertake this role. Membership is thriving and Westbourne WI feels very much part of village life with a very busy programme underway for 2017.

### **Greening Westbourne, Richard Hitchcock**

The Public Open Space at Hampshire Farm Meadows is a breath of fresh air for the future. 33 trees have now been planted at the Community Orchard, and aim to plan 50-60 in total. Greening Westbourne also carried out their Christmas Tree recycling and plan to do so again. They are working on a cycling campaign with rides for people to go on and maintenance sessions. The group has been going for about eight years and tries to make the environment more pleasant.

9. Any local issue that has not already been raised: None.

Meeting closed at 9.45pm