

WEST DEAN PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY 23RD MAY 2023 AT 7.30pm

	ACTION	
<p>In attendance: Cllrs Corbett, Court, De Groot, Graham, Goacher, Slade, County Cllr Hunt and District Cllr Potter</p>		
<p>2 members of the public</p>		
<p>Agenda Item 1: Election of Chair and Signing of Declaration of Acceptance of Office It was proposed by Cllr Goacher and seconded by Cllr Slade that Cllr Corbett be elected as Chair. Cllr Corbett thanked the Council and accepted the nomination. Cllr Corbett duly signed the acceptance of office.</p>		
<p>Agenda Item 2: Election of Vice Chair and Signing of Declaration of Office It was proposed by Cllr Court and seconded by Cllr Slade that Cllr Goacher be elected as Vice Chair. Cllr Goacher thanked the Council and accepted the nomination. Cllr Goacher duly signed the acceptance of office.</p>		
<p>Agenda Item 3: To confirm and accept all Declarations and Acceptance of Office have been made and Registers of Interests received Clerk confirmed that all acceptances of office had been signed and received. It was noted that Cllrs Goacher & Graham will forward their register of interests by email</p>	<p>Cllrs Goacher & Graham</p>	
<p>Agenda Item 4: Apologies for Absence None</p>		
<p>Agenda Item 5: Code of Conduct</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. <u>Declarations of Interests</u> Noneii. <u>Dispensation Requests</u> None		
<p>Agenda Item 6: Minutes – to agree and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 8th March 2023 On a proposal by Cllr de Groot and seconded by Cllr Goacher it was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting on 8th March 2023 be approved. They were duly signed by the Chairman as a correct record.</p>		
<p>Agenda Item 7: Review and Election of Committees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Traffic Action Committee – Cllrs Court & Sladeb) Planning – Cllr Corbettc) Highways – Cllr de Grootd) Village Maintenance and Footpaths – Cllr Goachere) Cemetery – Cllr Goacherf) Winter Management/Maintenance – Cllr Graham		
<p>Council agreed the allocation of committees as above</p>		
<p>Agenda Item 8: Review and Adoption of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Standing Ordersb) Financial Regulationsc) Staff and Cllr Data Policy		

- d) Data Protection Policy (General)
- e) Risk Register
- f) Asset Register

On a proposal by **Cllr Slade** and seconded by **Cllr Court** it was recommended that the polices as above were approved. Clerk to update the website. Council approved this decision **UNANIMOUSLY**.

Clerk

Agenda Item 9: Matters brought forward from previous meeting:

- a) Bus stop signage

Cllr Corbett thanked Cllrs Hunt and de Groot for their hard work on this project. It was noted that Cllr Hunt will continue to follow up the signage

Cllr Hunt

- b) Selsey Arms update

It was agreed that Cllr Goacher will get an update from David Kendall and take this forward ensuring that the application is updated to include recent village activities

Cllr Goacher

- c) Operation Watershed

It was reported that a grant had been awarded to the Council to move forward with the works. Cllr Graham confirmed that he has all the necessary information and will liaise with the contractor. Cllr Hunt reported that the work on the grips was overdue and he is continuing to follow this up

Cllr Graham

Cllr Hunt

Agenda Item 10: County Councillor Report and Questions – Cllr Hunt

Cllr Hunt updated the Council as follows:

Update on our Childrens Services

You may remember that back in 2019 our Children’s services received an inadequate report from Ofsted. Since then we have invested millions of pounds in an extensive improvement programme and I am pleased to say that, following [Ofsted’s latest inspection](#) (click on this link for the full report), the service was given an overall rating of ‘requires improvement’, with ‘good’ judgements for children in care and leadership and management. The judgements on children needing help and protection and children leaving care are they ‘require improvement to be good’. Ofsted Inspectors have praised West Sussex County Council for its ‘relentless approach to improving practice’ in Children’s Services. Some of the key findings from the report were:

- Most children coming into care make good progress
- The voice of children and young people is strong and well-considered in decision-making
- Early Help support is making a positive difference to children’s lives
- Staff benefit from a wide range of support, and training and development opportunities; and feel valued
- The implementation of the new Family Safeguarding practice model has been carefully considered with clear plans for the next steps
- Partnership working is improving, although there is more to do
- Leaders have been determined to shift the organisational culture and put children first
- The advice and support provided to care leavers aged 21 and over requires improvement
- Placement choice for children who are looked after requires improvement

The full report can be found at on the following link: <https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50216276>

Highways Update

As you will be aware, following the weather events we have experienced over the last year, we are now tackling a large number of issues on the network. We continue to see exceptionally high numbers of customer reports, in March this was just under 8,000 enquires , this is double what we would normally expect at this time of the year and this trend continues. In January the number of enquiries exceeded 11,000. The impact on the Highways teams has been significant. The teams are incredibly busy and the volume of work is unrelenting, including the significant incidents at the A29, Midhurst and Wiston, which have also added pressure to the workload. For example, we currently have two teams working full time on all the small side roads around Midhurst, which are being used as ‘unofficial’ diversion routes and therefore experiencing much higher volumes of traffic - and heavier vehicles - than normal. I would like to

assure you we are doing all we can to manage the workload across the county; officers are working over-time and we have successfully recruited new staff but they need support and training to become fully operational. Our contractors' gangs are also working twilight shifts and Saturdays to manage the increased number of jobs. We are also looking to increase the number of gangs further but as I am sure you will appreciate; this is common to the entire south-east and nationally, so sourcing additional gangs is very difficult. Our 3 Jet Patchers are now in operation so this will help.

In order to enable the Highway Teams to effectively deal with the volume of safety issues being reported, we will be pausing non-statutory activities for a period of 4 weeks as we did in January. We will extend our response times to customers on general enquiries from 10-20 days. We appreciate your support and understanding at this very busy time.

Just to clarify, the proposed temporary measures are:

- Extend SLA for customer responses – up to 20 days
- Pause non-essential licensing activities (e.g., residential Vehicle Crossovers, Standard Forms of Consent for activities like licensing banners or planters).
- Pause responses to general enquiries, including Community Highway Schemes
- Add pop ups to the webpages to advise members of the public of paused activities
- Amend the wording on the corporate complaints acknowledgment

Midhurst Road Closure update

As referenced above, unfortunately the closure of the A286 in the centre of Midhurst remains closed to through traffic due to the recent fire at the Angel Hotel. Obviously this closure has not only had a huge impact on traffic flows, but it has also had a huge impact on local businesses. Similar to the position around the closure of the A29 at Pulborough - which is now open with single lane working - the situation is complicated in that both these incidents involve property owners and their insurance companies. Added to these complications is that the building is Grade 1 listed and therefore the remaining facade of the building cannot simply be knocked down. It therefore has to be shored up before it is safe to re-open the road. So, although this is not directly our responsibility - and in the interests of the travelling public and the businesses in the town - the SDNP, CDC and WSCC are working together to try and get this work completed so that the road can be re-opened as soon as possible. As an update, I believe that this work has now been commissioned, but I understand that it is likely to be seven to eight weeks to complete before the road can re-open. Both CDC and SDNP are co-ordinating press updates and the latest releases can be found at: <https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/south-downs-national-park-authority-commissions-plans-to-shore-up-midhurst-buildings-damaged-by-fire/> and <https://www.chichester.gov.uk/article/37699/Midhurst-fire-update-from-South-Downs-National-Park-Authority-5-May>

Local Issues

Communities highway scheme - Binderton/West Dean Speed Limit reduction

As per my update two your March meeting, this is still scheduled for implementation during the second half of the financial year 2023/24. The latest update I received last week confirmed this. It stated: *'The speed reduction scheme on A286 Lavant Rd. is still being progressed for construction in this financial year, although we are looking at doing this later in the year to allow ourselves time to carry out our statutory requirements to advertise the Traffic Regulation Order. I expect that we will have a detailed design for the scheme completed within the next two months, at which point we will provide these to you and the Parish, prior to going to formal consultation'.*

Operation Watershed - B2141 Flood Relief scheme adjacent to Crows Hall Farm

I'm pleased to say that this application was recently approved by the County Council and I believe the funds will shortly be transferred to your account so that you can plan an implementation date with

Landbuild. Please be mindful that it may take a while for Landbuild to get the necessary permission to put in the necessary traffic control.

Farbridge - Bus Stop. I was delighted to see that, following my intervention, this bus stop was finally replaced with a lovely shiny new pole. I'm sorry that our officers weren't more responsive to your earlier requests, and that the old pole remained just 'propped' in the hedge for so long, but I was glad I was able to help and get the work expedited.

Finally, please don't forget to keep an eye on our website, especially our news and campaigns page where you can keep up to date with all our latest news. <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/about-the-council/news-and-campaigns/>

Also, a reminder that all our public meetings are webcast live and are also archived, so you can always view them later. <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/about-the-council/how-the-council-works/watch-county-council-and-committee-meetings-online/>

Questions/Comments:

Cllr Court asked whether a scheme for the reduction of speed near the school had been further considered. Cllr Hunt responded that he will follow this up however following lengthy discussions around speeding it was agreed that any formal application for a community highways scheme should be postponed until further data is collected from the SID and the Speed Watch group as this data will be useful in building a case. It was also noted that this is supported by West Dean Estate who may be able to provide some support through funding.

Cllr Hunt

Agenda Item 11: District Councillor Report and Questions – Cllr Potter

The following report was submitted by District Cllr Potter:

I have little to report due to the Purdah period prior to the Local Elections.

I was one of the fortunate Members to retain my seat as your representative for the Goodwood Ward, many failed and you now have a Council with a distinct majority of Liberal Democrat members. The adjustment to this new balance took some time, but the membership of various committees was made clear at the first Full New Council Meeting last week on the 17th

There is one thing quite clear, the new Leader 'elect' appointed someone else to attend SDNPA Meetings instead of me, so any news of activities in the Park will be less apparent in the future. He is John Cross who is the newly elected Member for Fittleworth.

john.cross@southdowns.gov.uk will be his contact address

Currently, the work on the railway line north east of Singleton Bridge is nearing completion and until more funding is found any further works will be curtailed and there is still no firm decision on how the West Dean Tunnel is to be negotiated, though there is now greater discussion about a route through a small spinney of woodland north of the Highways footpath, the original concept, which is now considered too dangerous with often fast moving traffic using the A286. The result of the bat survey in the actual tunnel is still not completed, so for now the idea of passing through the tunnel is discounted.

The District Council is publicly consulting on a review of the Public Spaces Protection Order for control of Dogs 2020 from last Wednesday (10th) until 7th June. The proposal is to extend the PSPO Order for a further 3 years but any comments or opinions received will be considered and any amendments made before the extended Order is confirmed. The link to the consultation can be found on the Councils webpage 'letstalkdogsinpublicspaces' so if you have thoughts on any variations to the Order, now is the time to provide them.

At a Planning Training session for new members on Friday last, I had the opportunity to speak to Andrew George who is on the Councils Enforcement team. He confirmed that the case on the 'Pool House' is now closed, Council Tax is being paid but he was unsure if the arrears had been recovered!! Nice work if you can get away with it?

And that concludes my brief report.

I thank all for your support over the past years and I look forward to continued working with you in the future.

Questions/Comments:

Cllr Goacher asked whether there was an update on the fencing on Centurian Way. Cllr Potter responded that they were looking at a track through the woods adjacent to the road. Cllr Corbett noted that this area had already been surveyed and would seem suitable. Cllr Graham reported that a general contractor is starting work in approximately 3 weeks.

Agenda Item 12: Traffic / Roads Update

a) Speedwatch Update

Cllr Court thanked Pat and Colin for their continued support and hard work. It was reported that a recent Speed Watch monitoring had recorded a Mercedes travelling at 58mph at 8.30am past the school. Cllr Hunt commented that this is good evidence which should be documented for a future community highways application. Discussions around sleeping policemen and other traffic calming measures were discussed and it was confirmed that according to Highways the road past the school is too narrow however in previous years West Dean Estate had offered to donate a piece of land to allow the road to be widened, this was refused by Highways. Cllr Hunt confirmed that he will follow this up and look at the new speed policies which came into force last year. The Parish Council noted that this remains high on the agenda and they will continue to work with Cllr Hunt as well as gather information from the SID and Speed Watch to put together a case for the reduction of speed outside the school and if possible more traffic calming measures through a community highways scheme.

Cllr Hunt

b) SID Update

Cllr Graham reported that the SID is being used and capturing data. It was noted that the SID can only be used for 3 weeks in one location and then is required to be moved. Data forwarded to the Parish Council suggests that when the SID is being installed and people in high vis vests are in the vicinity speeding tends to decrease, increasing again once the physical presence of volunteers is no longer seen.

20.24pm Cllr Hunt excused himself from the meeting.

Agenda Item 13: Planning Update

The Pool House, Binderton – Cllr Corbett reported that further to Cllr Potter’s report nothing further can be done as the case has been closed. It was noted that Council tax is being paid but not known whether arrears have been collected. Cllr Potter agreed to contact the revenues department to investigate this. It was also highlighted that how they have access to the property is still not clear. Cllr Corbett reminded the Council that the case has been closed and nothing further will be investigated by Planning.

Agenda Item 14: Finance

a) Annual Review for Year ending 31st March 2023

- i. To receive and note **full internal audit report 2022 - 2023** and any findings
Council considered the internal audit report. On a **proposal by Cllr de Groot** and **seconded by Cllr Slade**, Council duly noted and accepted the Internal Audit 2022-23 and instructed the Clerk to update the asset register according to the remarks on the internal audit report
- ii. **Certificate of Exemption** – To approve and sign the Certificate of Exemption
Council considered the opportunity to exempt themselves from External Audit for the year 2022-23 and on a **proposal by Cllr Goacher** and **seconded by Cllr Court** Council asked the Clerk to submit the Certificate of Exemption for 2022-23
The Chairman duly signed the Certificate of Exemption
- iii. **Annual Governance Statement** - To review the effectiveness of the system of internal control (Section 1)
Council received and noted the Annual Governance Statement for the year 2022-23 and on a **proposal by Cllr de Groot** and **seconded by Cllr Slade** the Chairman duly signed the Annual Governance Statement

<p>iv. Accounting Statements - To consider the Accounting Statements (Section 2) Approve the Accounting Statements by resolution. Sign Section 2 of the Annual Return Council received and noted the Accounting Statements for the year 2022-23 and on a proposal by Cllr Graham and seconded by Cllr Goacher the Chairman duly signed the Accounting Statements</p> <p>v. To agree and set the period of public rights On a proposal by Cllr de Groot and seconded by Cllr Slade Council agreed the period of Public Rights Clerk to update website with necessary documents</p> <p>b) To approve regular ongoing standing orders for 12 months</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Clerks salary ii. Monthly payroll payment iii. Microsoft 365 monthly payment <p>Council agreed UNANIMOUSLY to continue the payment of the ongoing standing orders as listed above</p> <p>c) To acknowledge receipt of first instalment of Precept Council acknowledged receipt of the first instalment of the Precept</p> <p>d) To approve Clerks salary and expenses – Appendix A On a proposal by Cllr Graham and seconded by Cllr de Groot Clerks salary and expenses were duly noted and approved</p> <p>e) To note and approve the monthly income and expenditure report – Appendix B On a proposal by Cllr de Groot and seconded by Cllr Court the monthly income and expenditure report was duly noted and approved</p> <p>f) To approve the regular Bank Reconciliation – Appendix C On a proposal by Cllr Graham and seconded by Cllr Slade the monthly bank reconciliation was duly noted and approved</p> <p>g) To review the agreed Budget and make any changes – Appendix D Council reviewed the Budget for 2023-24 there were no changes</p>	Clerk
<p>Agenda Item 15: Correspondence to note</p> <p>Council acknowledged receipt of the following correspondence:</p> <p>a) Request for funding of a defibrillator at the Chilgrove Business Centre Clerk reported that an email as above had been received. After discussion the Council asked the Clerk to respond to the email received stating that the defibrillators that are currently in place in West Dean and on West Dean Estate were not purchased by the Parish Council as they were provided by the British Heart Foundation and as such it is suggested that other avenues such as the British Heart Foundation are approached to see if they might provide funding for a defibrillator</p>	Clerk
<p>Agenda Item 16: Matters arising not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr de Groot asked whether the Parish Council pay for the verge cutting, it was confirmed that this is paid for by the EJ Foundation and any additional cutting should be discussed directly with them and the contractor • Cllr Court asked whether there was an update on the village gates. Cllr Graham confirmed that these will be done once the location is confirmed • Cllr Goacher asked whether signage was going to be placed near the new bin. Cllr Graham confirmed that this should have been done and he will follow this up. Discussion took place regarding whether there has been an increase in dog poo since the bin has been moved. It was 	Cllr Graham Cllr Graham

<p>also confirmed that by the river there does not seem to be much litter, although dog poo continues to be a problem.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Corbett asked the Clerk to draft a letter of thanks to Ian Odin reflecting his time on the Council as well as another letter to the Selsey Arms thanking them for their support of the village with he recent events held at the pub • It was agreed after discussion that an extract from the Parish Council meetings be published in the Valley Diary on an ongoing basis after each meeting. This would not be a copy of the minutes but an extract of the most salient points. Each councillor will take it in turn to provide this to the Valley Diary starting with Cllr Corbett. It was also noted that the 2 vacancies for the Council should also be advertised as well as information on how to use What3Words and Parish Council meeting dates. It was noted that the draft minutes would also continue to be published on the website by the Clerk after the meetings <p>Agenda Item 17: Any other matters for information only</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Graham reported that conversations with Southern Water are continuing around the tankers and the ongoing need for the works to be completed • Cllr Graham asked how a space is booked in the cemetery. Clerk to send details to him as well as updating the information sheets • Cllr Slade commented that a lovely gate has been put in place at Binderton at the bottom of the hill by the Estate. Cllr Court asked whether a similar gate could be put in at the other end as the current one is not very sightly. Cllr Court to take forward with Ian Graham and the Estate • Cllr Corbett asked for the co-option papers to be sent to him as he may have some interested parties that would consider being co-opted on to the Parish Council <p>Agenda Item 18: DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING</p> <p>The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 5th July</p> <p>Meeting finished at 21.00</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Cllr Corbett</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Cllrs Graham & Slade</p> <p>Clerk</p>
Appendices and Attachments	

Appendix A

Clerk Salary and Expenses

Clerks Salary 1 – 30th April 2023

Net Salary £502.50

PAYE £16.20

Total Net Outlay £518.70

Paid by Standing order on last working day of the month

Clerks Expenses Paid after the meeting

Date Paid	Detail	Reason	Cost ex VAT (£)	VAT (£)	Cost inc VAT (£)
24/5/23	Working from home allowance (March)	As per contract	18.00	0	18.00

24/5/23	Working from home allowance (April)	As per contract	18.00	0	18.00
24/5/23	Mileage	Mileage May meeting (£0.45 x 20 x 2)	18.00	0	18.00
Total			54.00	0	54.00

Appendix B

WEST DEAN PARISH COUNCIL					
FINANCIAL REPORT 16/5/23					
RECEIPTS					
FILE NUMBER	DATE	REF	PAYER	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
	21/04/2023		CDC	1st half of Precept	6945.75
	10/05/2023		CDC	Coronation grant	400
					7345.75
APRIL PAYMENTS					
FILE NUMBER	DATE	REF	PAYER	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
	19/04/2023	BACS	CDC	Bin Emptying 2022 - 23	487.35
	19/04/2023	BACS	Microsoft	365 subscription	11.28
	20/04/2023	BACS	WSALC	WSALC/NALC Subs	144.35
	28/04/2023	BACS	HLO'Callaghan	Clerk Salary April	502.5
	02/05/2023	BACS	HMRC	PAYE April	16.2
	02/05/2023	BACS	Chi Payroll	Payroll April	15
	02/05/2023	BACS	Helen Court	Coronation Expenses	191.45
	04/05/2023	BACS	Keith Goacher	Grass Cutting - Cemetery	840
	11/05/2023	BACS	Sterling Pub Company	Music for Coronation Event	400
	11/05/2023	BACS	Sterling Pub Company	Coronation Expenses	2000
					4608.13
PAYMENTS TO BE PAID IN MAY					
	31/05/2023	BACS	HLO'Callaghan	Clerk Salary May	502.5
	01/06/2023	BACS	HMRC	PAYE May	16.2
	01/06/2023	BACS	Chi Payroll	Payroll May	15
	01/06/2023	BACS	Microsoft	365 subscription	11.28
					544.98

WEST DEAN PARISH COUNCIL		
BANK RECONCILIATION		
16-May-23		
RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS		
Balance brought forward as at 31/03/2022		£34,628.52
Add Total Receipts		7,345.75
Less Total Payments		(4,608.13)
TOTAL		£37,366.14
BANK		
Barclays as @ 16/05/23		31,150.13
Santander as @ 31/3/23		6,216.01
TOTAL		£37,366.14

WEST DEAN PARISH COUNCIL			
	AGREED 2023-24	Expenditure at 11/5/23	Final Budget at 31/3/22
Balance b/f at 1 April	£34,628.52	£34,628.52	£34,628.52
Receipts			
Precept	£13,891.50	£6,945.75	£13,891.50
Council Tax Support Grant	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Cemetery Income	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Bank interest	£3.00	£0.00	£0.00
CDC Grant	£0.00	£400.00	£400.00
Grants	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Miscellaneous Income	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Vat recovered	£800.00	£0.00	£0.00
Total receipts for period	£14,694.50	£7,345.75	£14,291.50
Total receipts	£49,323.02	£41,974.27	£48,920.02
Payments			
<u>General Administration</u>			
Admin -Payroll	£180.00	£15.00	£180.00
Computer costs/ Website Hosting	£200.00	£9.40	£0.00
DATA Protection Fee	£35.00	£0.00	£0.00
Postage	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Stationery costs	£20.00	£0.00	£0.00
Clerk expenses	£100.00	£0.00	£0.00
Clerk Overtime/Training Hours	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Home office	£216.00	£0.00	£0.00
Employment Costs (Gross)	£6,224.40	£502.50	£6,224.40
PAYE contributions	£100.00	£16.20	£100.00
Insurance	£600.00	£0.00	£0.00
Audit fee	£150.00	£0.00	£0.00
Training (Clerk/Councillors)	£100.00	£0.00	£0.00
Valley Diary/Publicity	£100.00	£0.00	£0.00
Traffic/Speedwatch Group/SID	£2,000.00	£0.00	£0.00
Cemetery	£2,000.00	£700.00	£2,000.00
Churchyard	£550.00	£0.00	£0.00
General Village Maintenance	£1,000.00	£0.00	£0.00
Table Tombs	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Street Lights	£700.00	£0.00	£0.00
Bin Emptying	£500.00	£406.12	£406.12
Salt Bins	£100.00	£0.00	£0.00
Subscriptions	£144.35	£144.35	£144.35
Room Hire	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Notice board	£250.00	£0.00	£0.00
Neighbourhood Plan	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Events	£2,000.00	£2,191.45	£0.00
S.137 & S.142 payments	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Election	£100.00	£0.00	£0.00
Precept payments	£17,369.75	£3,985.02	£9,054.87
NHB grant	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Grants	£0.00	£400.00	£0.00
Operation Watershed	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
VAT paid	£600.00	£0.00	£0.00
Total payments	£17,969.75	£4,385.02	£9,054.87
Surplus/deficit	-£3,275.25	£2,960.73	£5,236.63
(Receipts less payments for period)			
Balance carried forward	£31,353.27	£37,589.25	£39,865.15
Earmarked Reserves			
Village Gateways/Speeding	£20,000.00	£0.00	£0.00