

# WEST DEAN PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING

Wednesday 8 January 2025 at 7.30pm

West Dean College

**Present:** Cllr Steve Corbett, Cllr Helen Court, Cllr Ian Graham, Cllr Will De Groot, Cllr John Fleming, Cllr Keith Goacher, Cllr Amy Green and Cllr Kate Hellyer.

**In attendance:** Cllr Jeremy Hunt, West Sussex County Council, and Clare Kennett, Clerk to the Parish Council.

The meeting was chaired by Cllr Corbett. One member of the public and no members of the press were present.

**82. Apologies for absence:** Cllr Cathy Slade.

**83. Code of Conduct:** Cllr Goacher declared an interest in the agenda item relating to the Cemetery as he had submitted a quote for tree and hedge works for the Council's consideration. Cllr Goacher left the room and did not take part in the discussion. There were no requests for a dispensation.

**84. To receive an update from PCSO Booker regarding rural crime the Parish:** PCSO Booker said that he worked in a specialised and unique area of policing which focused on rural areas only, dealing with agricultural, environmental, heritage and wildlife crime, as well as tackling issues such as fly tipping with other lead authorities. PCSO Booker said that the rural crime team was five years old and still learning from experience about what worked best, and what did not. PCSO Booker acknowledged that the Parish of West Dean had been hit particularly hard by rural crime over the last few years, mainly with hare coursing and poaching. This was seasonal and tended to happen between August and February each year but was often combined with aggressive and abusive behaviour. Hare coursing and deer stalking were to do with the betting industry and filmed for an online audience. Members discussed that many residents did not know the scale of what was going on in the area, particularly for farmers who had equipment to steal. Many crimes and confrontations happened at night in the dark which were scary as there was no right to protect property. Landowners had to be careful as any threat could result in them losing their firearm licence. PCSO Booker advised that if a crime was in progress, to call 999. If a crime had taken place, to call 101 or report it at [www.sussex.police.uk](http://www.sussex.police.uk). PCSO Booker said that he worked closely with the rural crime team at Hampshire Police, and it was the same people involved there. Sussex Police were training new police officers in all departments, who came out and worked with the rural crime team, and this had helped to develop knowledge of the issues and support their work. PCSO Booker said that raising awareness of the issue and encouraging people to report issues, no matter how small, would also help the police. This would build up a picture of crime in the

area and reporting incidents gave residents a reference number which could be used as evidence if issues continued. It was **AGREED** that Cllr Corbett would write an article for the Valley Diary to raise awareness of rural crime and to encourage people to report incidents. It was discussed that it was important for farmers to report the issue first to the police, then post the reference number on the WhatsApp group that had been set up with the rural crime team as a means of sharing information. It was discussed that there were many uninsured and untaxed vehicles, or those with a police marker, using rural roads without cameras to avoid detection. West Dean provided ideal roads as they did not need to double back on themselves. These people were often involved in other crimes. PCSO Booker said five people had been arrested in East Dean and, although they received a small fine, they now had a criminal record and would get bigger sentences for any repeat offences. It was discussed that rural crime had a far-reaching impact as claiming on insurance meant higher premiums and, in the case of storage businesses, people would be less likely to use them again. The solution was not just claiming on insurance, which was often the response from the police, but preventing incidents in the first place so that businesses were protected. PCSO Booker said he was able to provide details of the most recent rural crime incidents for members to note at future Council meetings so that they were aware of issues. PCSO Booker said he could be contacted on 07912 895813 or at [colin.booker@sussex.police.uk](mailto:colin.booker@sussex.police.uk)

**85. Minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2024:** Members **AGREED** to **APPROVE** the minutes as a true record and they were signed as such by the Chairman.

**86. Update on matters carried forward from previous meeting:** Members **NOTED** the following updates:

- **Minute 72:** Cllr Slade was working with Cllr Goacher on the registration of the Selsey Arms as an asset of community value.
- **Minute 75:** The Clerk had received a phone call from Mr Baxter who said he had repaired the memorial and that the conifer would have a small root ball which he did not think would disturb the Lytchgate or surrounding graves.
- **Minute 75:** It was discussed that the remembrance silhouettes would be installed at the Cemetery once the tree and hedge maintenance had been carried out and before the VE Day 80 commemorations.
- **Minute 76:** It was discussed that the banking signatories would need to register for internet banking access before the two-stage approval process could be set up for online banking. The clerk would circulate the information again.
- **Minute 77:** The Clerk confirmed the domain name westdeanparishcouncil.gov.uk had been purchased from Parish Council Websites at a cost of £30 per year and they had applied for a government grant of £100 so there would be no cost for three years from December 2024.
- **Minute 79:** The Clerk had paid the Landbuild invoice for works at Crows Hall Farm.

**87. Open Forum:** There were no comments or questions. The member of the public left the meeting as he had attended to hear the item on rural crime.

Cllr  
Slade/Cllr  
Goacher

Clerk

**88. County Councillor report and questions:** County Councillor Jeremy Hunt said that he needed to speak to landowners with riparian responsibility about drainage works. It was discussed that WSCC had completed some maintenance work on The Grinch and would return in April for resurfacing. Cllr Hunt explained that WSCC was progressing an application to become a unitary authority and would be voting on Friday as to whether there should be an elected mayor, who would also have responsibility for the police and fire and rescue service. The government had proposed that areas of population greater than 500,00 people would become unitary. Discussions were taking place with West Sussex County Council, East Sussex County Council and Brighton and Hove City Council. It was likely that the County Council elections would be deferred in May 2025, as well as the District Council elections in 2027. The government aims were to create more powers for areas in strategic planning, the economy and skills training for 16+. Cllr Hunt said he would circulate the devolution paper to members.

**89. District Councillor report and questions:** District Councillor Henry Potter sent his apologies to the meeting. Members thanked him for the report he had sent which was **NOTED**. In summary, Cllr Potter said there was deep concern regarding the government's proposal to implement unitary authorities throughout England by amalgamating county, district and borough councils into single devolved authorities with the potential to have an elected mayor. It was early days but there appeared to be a sense of urgency and rushed decisions were seldom good for democracy. Cllr Potter said the District Council's Development Plan and Infrastructure Panel considered requests from authorities for allocations of community infrastructure levy funds, which were considerable. Sussex Police had requested, for consideration, £117,000 for the phased introduction of ANPR cameras at 13 locations, two of which are on the A285 in Halnaker and in Chilgrove on the B2141. It was unclear if Sussex Police was aware that funding for this proposal was available, but if it was agreed to approve the recommendation, there would be little reason for the scheme to proceed forthwith without a 'phased' approach. All members agreed sooner the better for residents' benefit, not just to cut speeding but to track criminals as well. Officers would engage with Sussex Police to progress the scheme as soon as possible.

**90. The Trundlers:** The Clerk had contacted Celia Dickinson who said that funds stood at approx. £1570, and they had 220 Lloyds TSB shares. Members were supportive of the funds being used for a community project, such as digitalising old performances. It was **AGREED** to defer the item until more information was available.

**91. Traffic/roads update:**

- **Speedwatch:** There was no further update.
- **SID report:** Cllr Graham said the speed indicator device was still active and he needed to provide the police with the average speed data.

**92. Planning:** Members **AGREED** to have **NO OBJECTION** to planning application 24/04841/HOUS, single storey garden studio. North Stonerock Cottage, 71 Chilgrove Park Road, West Dean.  
Members discussed the use of The Pool House, Binderton House, Binderton Lane, Binderton as a luxury rental property. The Enforcement Team had stated that an

<p>existing lawful development certificate was granted for the continuous use of the Pool House as a dwelling for more than four years (planning reference SDNP/23/00652/LDE). This meant that planning conditions relating to the original permission no longer applied and did not result in a breach of planning control. It was discussed that the Council could receive advice from a planning consultant if it wanted to pursue the complaint. It was <b>AGREED</b> that Cllr Corbett would write to Planning Enforcement once more to clarify the Council's position.</p> <p><i>Cllr Goacher left the meeting at 8.54pm.</i></p>	
<p><b>93. Cemetery:</b> Members considered three quotes which were circulated before the meeting. It was <b>AGREED</b> unanimously on a proposal by Cllr Corbett and seconded by Cllr Fleming, to accept the quote from Keith Goacher at a cost of £3550 + VAT to carry out the hedge and tree work at the Cemetery. Members discussed that Keith Goacher already had good working knowledge of the Cemetery, and the work required, which was important for continuity purposes. The Clerk would inform the other two companies who had sent a quote.</p>	Clerk
<p><i>Cllr Goacher returned to the meeting at 9pm.</i></p> <p><b>94. Website development and email accounts:</b> Members considered four quotes which were circulated before the meeting for a new website. It was discussed that the existing website did not meet the required WCAG2.2AA accessibility standards needed for the .gov.uk domain name. Members <b>AGREED</b> unanimously on a proposal by Cllr Fleming and seconded by Cllr Graham, to contract Parish Council Websites <a href="http://www.parishcouncilwebsites.co.uk">www.parishcouncilwebsites.co.uk</a> at an estimated cost of £569 + VAT with a monthly hosing and support cost of £21.85. The Clerk would contact Jeffs Computers about the existing website to thank him for his work and support. The Clerk would provide members with a timetable for developing the website once she had confirmed the order with Parish Council Websites.</p>	Clerk
<p>Members considered three four quotes for the email accounts. It was <b>AGREED</b> unanimously on a proposal by Cllr Graham and seconded by Cllr Fleming to accept the quote from Microshade VSM <a href="http://www.microshadevsm.co.uk">www.microshadevsm.co.uk</a> at a cost of £6.38 per councillor and £7.84 for the Clerk per month (total £65.26 per month). This would provide Microsoft Exchange with SPAM and virus filter, with the option of £15 per mailbox to transfer emails. It was discussed that transferring emails may not be needed. The Clerk said she would contact Jeffs Computers to thank him for providing the existing email accounts and to ask him if a redirect could be put on the accounts. The Clerk would provide members with a timetable for opening the new accounts once she had confirmed the order with Microshade.</p>	Clerk
<p><b>95. Finance:</b> Members <b>NOTED</b> the budget report, list of earmarked reserves and bank reconciliations to 31 December 2024 with no further comments. The Barclays account closed with a balance of £30,174.17 and the Santander account closed with a balance of £6,323.07.</p>	



BACS	Chichester Payroll Services Dec 24	15.00	15.00	0.00
BACS	MS 365 Dec 24	12.36	10.30	2.06
DD	O2 mobile phone Dec 24	22.85	19.04	3.81
BACS	Landbuild Operation Watershed phase 2	24,043.58	20,036.32	4,007.26
		<b>24,733.02</b>	<b>20,719.89</b>	<b>4,013.13</b>

### 3. Receipts since the last meeting, 13 November 2024

BACS	Aerial Direct mobile phone discount 19/12/24 for Nov and Dec 24	4.00		
BACS	Santander bank interest 01/11/24	5.59		
BACS	Santander bank interest 01/12/24	5.41		
		<b>15.00</b>		

### 4. Bank reconciliation

#### Barclays

<b>Balance per statement 31/12/24</b>	<b>£30,174.17</b>
Less outstanding payments	£0.00
Add outstanding receipts	£0.00
Add petty cash	£0.00
<b>Revised bank</b>	<b>£30,174.17</b>

#### Cashbook control

<b>Balance forward 01/04/24</b>	<b>£40,057.93</b>
Add total receipts to date	£27,795.63
Less total payments to date	£37,679.39
<b>Cashbook at 31/12/24</b>	<b>£30,174.17</b>

#### Santander

<b>Balance per statement 01/12/24</b>	<b>£6,323.07</b>
Less outstanding payments	£0.00
Add outstanding receipts	£0.00
Add petty cash	£0.00
<b>Revised bank</b>	<b>£6,323.07</b>

#### Cashbook control

<b>Balance forward 01/04/24</b>	<b>£6,279.19</b>
Add total receipts to date	£43.88
Less total payments to date	£0.00
<b>Cashbook at 01/12/24</b>	<b>£6,323.07</b>

<b><u>Total in both accounts</u></b>	<b><u>36,497.24</u></b>
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