

**Westwell Parish Council**  
**Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council**  
**Held on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> November at 7pm, Westwell Parish Hall**

**1. Open Forum**

No members of the public were present.

**2. Present and apologies**

Present: Cllrs Drury, (Chair), Bainbridge (Vice Chair), Lister, Farrington, and Wyatt. Clerk – Sonia Young

**Apologies:** Cllrs Richards, Butcher, Hutchinson and Bartlett, Borough Cllr: Larry Krause

No members of the public were present.

**3. Declarations of Interest**

None.

**4. Approval of the minutes of the meetings held on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

**Resolved:**

That the minutes of the meetings of Westwell Parish Council held on 11<sup>th</sup> October be approved and confirmed as true records.

**Proposed:** Cllr Wyatt. **Seconded:** Cllr Farrington. Cllr Lister abstained as not present at the 11<sup>th</sup> October meeting.

**Resolved.** It was resolved to approve the minutes as a true record of the meeting.

**Matters Arising**

**4.1** Cllr Drury confirmed that notes from the Tri-Parish meeting on 11 October regarding the Trinity Lakes housing development were pending.

**4.2** Cllr Farrington confirmed that the skirt of the yew in the front south-west corner of the churchyard had been lifted. This area could now possibly be considered as a second area for ashes in the churchyard to match that around the other yew tree.

**4.3** It was resolved that the lower branches of the copper beech in the churchyard should be cut under the WPC tree works proposals for 2024, however such works would require liaison and approval of the PCC and possibly Faculty approval before WPC could resolve to cut them. Cllr Wyatt agreed to act as ongoing liaison between WPC and the PCC on such matters and will take this proposal to them.

**5. Planning applications received for comment**

**5.1 PA/2023/1250 Land at Water Lane, TN24 4JL**

Erection of an Agricultural building and grain store.

**Westwell Parish Council resolved to object to the proposal for the following reasons:**

- The proposal lacks sound evidence that two large fully enclosed agricultural buildings are needed on an agricultural holding of only 7 hectares.
- This is open agricultural land in the AONB without power for lighting or other services that would be required for a grain store or machinery repairs.
- The current agricultural use of the land is for arable and root crops involving occasional access with farm machinery as is the norm in modern agriculture.
- The machinery to be stored in the shed could not be justified only for use on 7 hectares and therefore would, of necessity, be moved on and off site to be used on other parcels of farmland.

- The size of the grain store is excessive for storing the crops from this small parcel of land and again would need to be used to store grain etc from other parts of the farm. For both these reasons there would be an increase in traffic movements, not acknowledged in the proposal, which may necessitate a transport assessment.
- The landscape impacts of these buildings in the AONB would also be visible from the nearby AONB escarpment and Pilgrims Way trail and therefore do need to be properly justified.
- In addition to the above inconsistencies and omissions there are also other errors in the documents submitted: the location plan marks a traveller site adjacent to Bridgewood Farm.
- It is Bridgewood Farm that is the permitted single pitch traveller site in the AONB. There is not another adjacent traveller site.

**Proposed:** Cllr Drury. **Seconded:** Cllr Bainbridge. All in agreement.

**It was resolved to object to the application.**

## 5.2 Other planning matters

### 5.2.1

Cllr Drury advised that at the recent area KALC meeting ABC head of Planning Simon Cole said that the ABC planning department has introduced several measures that meant it would soon be working to stated deadlines. The Parish Council should message the officer concerned if it required an extension to the deadline for comment and get the confirmation of this in writing.

### 5.2.2

Cllr Drury said that the ABC public planning portal has been upgraded to try and make it more user-friendly; Cllr Drury has volunteered the parish council to participate in user testing.

### 5.2.3

Regarding ABC's call for sites in the Local Plan, ABC have said they want to organise face to face meetings in parishes or with groups of parishes. This was in order to be transparent with communities about what was being proposed and to invite comments in advance of formal local plan consultation processes. The parish council will help facilitate any such face to face meetings.

### 5.2.4

An appeal has been lodged against ABC's refusal to permit development listed as PA/2022/2068 Bridgewood Farm, Watery Lane, TN25 4JJ. For 3 mobile homes. When a date for the Appeal is known [now Dec 13<sup>th</sup>], WPC will write a full statement and attend the hearing in person. WPC did not submit an objection to the application as its previous objections existed and the Environment Agency's had objected on aquifer contamination risk.

## 6. Financial Report

### Approval of payments in accordance with the budget

#### WPC main account

Expenditure to approve for Nov 2023		Cheque No	£
Repair broken bulkhead	Canelec	BACS	53.09
Salary payment Nov	S Young	BACS	720.93
Tax & NI	HMRC	BACS	180.20
External AGAR audit	Mazars	BACS	252.00
Mowing	All Seasons Gardening Services	BACS	558.40
<b>Total</b>			<b>£1,764.62</b>

Income			
30 Oct – cemetery fee	Country Funerals	BACS	150.00

<b>Total</b>			<b>£150.00</b>

**Bank Reconciliation Balance at 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023 = £36,470.35 less unpresented cheques as follows**

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**Actual balance = £36,470.35 at 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023**

**WPC deposit account**

Expenditure			£
<b>Total</b>			<b>£00.00</b>

<b>Income</b>			
9 Oct	Interest	BACS	14.64
<b>Total</b>			<b>£14.64</b>

**Bank Reconciliation Balance £15,920.19 at 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023 Less un-presented cheques as follows:**

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**Actual balance = £15, 920.19 at 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023**

**WPC No 2 Account**

Expenditure		Cheque No	£
<b>Total</b>			<b>£00.00</b>

<b>Income</b>			
<b>Total</b>			<b>£00.00</b>

**Bank Reconciliation Balance £3.44 at 31<sup>st</sup> October 023**

**Actual balance = £3.44 at 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023**

WPC resolved to approve the accounts as noted and payments in accordance with the budget.

**Proposed:** Cllr Wyatt. **Seconded:** Cllr Bainbridge. **All in agreement.**

**Resolved.** WPC approved the accounts as noted and payments in accordance with the budget.

**Action:** Clerk

**6.1**

The donation of £100 to St Johns Ambulance has already been approved but was not listed as the payment details need to be confirmed. When they are confirmed, the payment will be made.

**Action:** The Clerk

**6.2**

The proposed budget for the 2024-25 was circulated in advance of the meeting and discussed. Details from NALC of the annual salary award for the 2023 year from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 were made public after the proposed budget was circulated and so a new calculation will be required for the salary line. It was noted that the Annual salary award is automatic as it is part of WPC 's the employment contract for the clerk.

**Action:** The Clerk

WPC resolved to further discuss the budget at the December meeting. The budget will need to be approved at the December meeting so that the precept claim for 2024/2025 can be submitted ahead of the early January deadline.

**6.3**

WPC resolved to move the General Reserve of £23, 429.90 – which includes community plan grant monies of £2,279 – into the deposit account to accrue more interest.

**Proposed:** Cllr Bainbridge. **Seconded:** Cllr Wyatt. **All in agreement.**

**Resolved:** WPC approved the transfer of the General Reserve into the deposit account.

**Action:** The Clerk.

## Information items

### 7. Correspondence

WPC resolved to write in response to the recent communication from ABC regarding broadband connectivity within the borough as it was felt its assertions were incorrect.

**Action:** Cllr Bainbridge to draft a response for The Clerk to send to ABC chief executive Tracey Kierly.

Cllr Drury confirmed that former ACRK employee Tessa Sullivan has joined ABC as part of the Kent Rural and Community Housing Enabler (RACE) team.

### 8. Highways update

#### 8.1 HiP project update

The HiP works are complete pending the installation of the village sign which has had to be taken away and remade as it was too wide. Councillors were somewhat disappointed that the much-anticipated village gates are not made from wood as expected but are instead made of white plastic. Further information when the scheme is complete.

### 9. Cemetery

#### 9.1 Survey Project

A project brief will be drawn up by Cllr Drury. Cllr Bainbridge has located a second firm to secure a comparison quote for works needed.

**Action:** Cllr Drury to draft the project brief and Cllr Bainbridge to forward the details of the second firm to The Clerk. The Clerk to organise for the firms to visit the cemetery to formalise the scope of works and provide quotes for approval.

#### 9.1.2 Deed of Grant of Burial

Cllr Drury advised that Cllrs Drury and Bainbridge and The Clerk had held a remote meeting with Halletts Solicitors to discuss the content and range of the proposed deed. A first draft will be sent across for comment. Halletts estimate the work will cost £750.

#### 9.1.3 Approval of Margaret Lloyd memorial application

WPC resolved to approve the application as submitted.

**Action:** The Clerk to confirm the approval to the applicants.

#### 9.1.4 Consideration of proposal to add more signage to direct the public to the cemetery

WPC considered the proposal and agreed that adding additional signage on nearby land would not be appropriate or visible enough. Cllr Farrington has informed Google of the mapping error. It was suggested that the PCC add signage at St Mary's that would post a map/ direct people who had confused the churchyard with the cemetery, to the actual cemetery.

**Action:** Cllr Wyatt to take this suggestion back to the PCC.

#### Other

It was confirmed that The Clerk will attend the KALC training on 7 December about cemetery and burial management.

Cllrs Drury and Wyatt will visit the cemetery with the current cemetery map that shows both the sold and used plots. Their aim will be to match the map, as best they can, with existing headstones to give survey companies some fixed points to map from.

The Clerk has been in touch with Tesco to follow up on the damage caused by one of its home delivery trucks to the green and kerbs outside the church. An accident claim form was completed over the phone.

### 10. Playground - grant application and insurance claim

The Clerk said that the insurance claim had been approved pending an estimate from Cahoot re the costs for the replacement panel and its installation.

A grant application for 10k has been submitted by The Clerk to ABC to help fund the replacement swings and spinner on the playground. No timeframe has been given for when WPC will be notified about whether its application has been successful.

**11. Hall Management Committee**

Cllr Bainbridge will circulate the minutes in due course as they have not yet been received. He advised that there were no headline matters to raise with WPC.

It was noted, however, that signage outside of the hall needed to be updated with the current clerk's contact details.

**Action:** Cllr Bainbridge.

**12. Additional items**

The re-siting of the noticeboard at Tutt Hill has not been done.

**Action:** The Clerk to contact Mercury Windows to ask them to move the noticeboard to the outside of their fencing.

**13. Date of next meeting**

Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> December.

**The meeting closed at 9.17pm**

Chairman's Signature.....