

Westwell Parish Council
Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council
Held on Wednesday 7 February 2024 at 7pm, Westwell Parish Hall

1. Open Forum

No members of the public were present.

2. Present and apologies

Present: Cllrs Drury, (Chair), Bartlett, Farrington, Butcher, Hutchinson, Lister, Richards, and Wyatt.
Clerk – Sonia Young

Apologies: Cllr Bainbridge. Borough Cllr: Larry Krause

3. Declarations of Interest

None.

4. Approval of the minutes of the meetings held on 10th January 2024

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of Westwell Parish Council held on 10th January 2024 be approved and confirmed as a true record.

Proposed: Cllr Lister **Seconded:** Cllr Richards **All in agreement.** Cllr Bartlett abstained as not present at the 10th January meeting.

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

Matters Arising

4.1 The annual tree survey was discussed at the December meeting and as a follow up a report of the required works was circulated via email to all Cllrs prior to the February meeting for consideration. Resolved, via email, that the works identified were required.

Proposed: Cllr Farrington. **Seconded:** Cllr Richards. **All in agreement.**

Resolved. It was resolved that the works were required, and that Herbie Godden should be asked to quote for the works needed.

5. Planning applications received for comment.

5.1.2 Other planning matters

PA/2023/2211 Sandbar Business Park, Maidstone Road, Hothfield, TN26 1AR - update

Cllr Drury updated the council and advised that after the application had been discussed at the last WPC meeting it had been discovered that HS1 always had a right of access across the site to the HS1 Bridge across the M20. Also, that archaeology along the Maidstone Road would have to be considered and that no plan for drainage had been submitted with the application.

5.2.1 Appeal AP-90641-update

The application to build three new properties at Holly House was refused by ABC. The developer has appealed the decision. The start date for the appeal has not been announced. It was considered as appropriate that WPC articulate in writing both sides of the argument about policy.

Action: Cllr Drury to draft a potential statement taking in all the prior arguments about the site within the context of existing policy and to circulate that to all Cllrs for consideration at a WPC meeting when it would be discussed further. It was agreed as appropriate that the WPC's statement should also be sent to Borough Cllr Larry Krause and ABC Planning director Simon Cole.

6. Playground

6.1 Consideration of the quotes submitted for the replacement swings and wobbler.

A recommendation was circulated in advance of the meeting to all Cllrs by Cllr Farrington. The recommendation was discussed and it was agreed that Caloo's quote was preferred, subject to the change of one proposed toddler seat to a normal bar seat and a check by The Clerk that the top bar across both sides of the swing across the basket seat and the two adjacent swing seats was of an even height. It was agreed that WPC would investigate the costs of removing the old play equipment and that The Clerk should check the cost of the required independent post-installation health and safety inspection.

6.1.1 Proposal to accept one of the quotes.

Resolution to accept the quotation from Caloo at a cost of £11,944 including VAT subject to the items noted above.

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

Action: The Clerk

It was resolved to accept the quotation from Caloo.

7. Cemetery

An update note was circulated in advance of the meeting to all Cllrs.

7.1.1 Survey Project for the cemetery – update and consideration of survey quotes

Cllr Wyatt has transferred the Burial Ledger (old and new cemeteries) into an electronic format. This has then been cross-referenced with the cemetery map by Cllr Drury. One robust paper-based map now exists. All plots have been identified and named as far as it is possible. The one resulting map was shown at the meeting to all Cllrs and it indicated how many vacant plots remain.

As part of the work by Cllrs Wyatt and Drury, the burial plot of the polish pilot's wife Doris Dygryn has been identified and the War Graves Commission will be contacted in due course for a suitable memorial to be placed on it.

7.1.2 Proposal to approve one of the quotes.

Both quotations submitted were considered.

Resolution to accept the quotation and scope of works submitted by R L Surveys at a cost of £525 plus VAT subject to satisfactory answers to few minor follow-up questions by The Clerk.

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

It was resolved to ask RL Surveys to undertake the survey of the cemetery at the price quoted.

Action: The Clerk to ask RL Surveys to undertake the work subject to the scanning also including the memorial garden for ashes. The Clerk also to follow up on the agreed charging of the water supply to the cemetery standpipe and to ensure that this has been invoiced and paid for by WPC as agreed.

The Clerk will also update the T&Cs relating to management by families of the plots and circulate this for consideration in advance of the next meeting.

7.1.3 Deed of Grant of Burial

Halletts have completed the legal work. It will be implemented as soon as the allied T&Cs have been agreed by full council and will be used as the primary document to also cover the sale of plots for the internment of ashes.

7.1.4 Churchyard

As a result of the discussion above, it was agreed that liability for the wall around the churchyard needed to be investigated by the PCC and WPC via their respective insurers. It was agreed that a faculty would be required to establish a new area for ashes under the fir tree to the left of the entrance to St Mary's.

Action: The Clerk, and Cllr Wyatt who will liaise with the PCC on the above matters.

8. Financial Report

8.1 WPC main account

Expenditure to approve for Feb 2024		Cheque No	£
Salary payment Feb	Clerk	BACS	766.06
Tax & NI	HMRC	BACS	191.40
Deed Of Grant of Burial – legal work	Halletts	BACS	600.00
Mowing inv 4548	All Seasons Gardening	BACS	558.40
Replacement panel in shelter	Caloo	BACS	1737.60
Total			£3853.46

Income			
Rural Grant	ABC	BACS	10,000
Total			£10,000

Bank Reconciliation Balance at 31st January 2024 = £26,179.11 less unpresented cheques:

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Actual balance = £26,179.11 as at 31st January 2024

WPC deposit account

Expenditure			£
Total			£00.00

Income			
9 Jan	Interest	BACS	40.70
Total			£40.70

Bank Reconciliation Balance £39, 448.06 at 31st January 2024 Less un-presented cheques:

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Actual balance = £39,448.06 at 31st January 2024

General reserve	£21,231.29
Grant	£2, 279
Deposit	£15,937.77

WPC No 2 Account

Expenditure		Cheque No	£
Total			£00.00

Income			
Total			£00.00

Bank Reconciliation Balance £3.44 at 31st January 2024

Actual balance = £3.44 at 31st January 2024

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

Proposed: Cllr Butcher. **Seconded:** Cllr Bartlett. All in agreement.

Resolved. WPC approved the accounts as noted and payments to be made in accordance with the budget.

Action: Clerk

Resolution: to set aside £1,500 in the parish budget should small repairs to the perimeter wall be required.

Proposed: Cllr Hutchinson. **Seconded:** Cllr Lister. **All in agreement.**

Resolved: £1,500 will be set aside in Parish budgets to cover the cost of any necessary emergency repairs to the churchyard wall.

Information items**9. Correspondence**

Cllr Drury advised that additional details re the new waste and recycling contracts would be delivered via a booklet to residents in the next month or so and that details would be included in the Westwell Eye.

Cllr Bartlett offered to work to create a Westwell Resilience Plan.

It was agreed that a project group would need to be set up to organise the village D-Day celebrations for 6-8 June, including the lighting of the village beacon.

Cllr Bartlett said that fibre to the home would be installed into Sandyhurst Lane shortly.

10. 10.1 Highways update

Ditch in Watery Lane. Cllr Lister to follow up on what plans KCC has for making this area safe for all highways users.

11. 11.1 Village Hall Management Committee

No update.

12. 12.1 Preparations for the Annual Parish Meeting Wednesday 20th March

There will be the regular presentation of reports followed by a Q&A.

Cllr Drury will talk to The Clerk regarding the event and the organisation needed.

County Cllr Simkins and Borough Cllr Krause have both confirmed their attendance.

The event will start at 7pm

Chair Drury resolved to propose a closed session at the end of the meeting to discuss the confidential nominations for the Citizenship Award.

13. 13.1 Management of the trees on Gold Hill bank – proposal opportunity

The trees on Gold Hill bank require urgent attention. It was agreed that it will be a complex logistical job as the trees have grown through the telephone wires – and costly. It was agreed to co-opt Dave Chapman onto the WPC Working Group for trees to agree the scope of the works, how and who might undertake the work, and to secure competitive quotes. It was agreed that a site meeting would be the first step in tackling this major project, that an expert arborist would be required to help advise not only on the potential scope of works but also on the Tree Application as this is in the Conservation Area, and the evidence required to support that. Cllr Drury advised that a community donation from a resident has been offered to help WPC with the costs of the works.

Action: Cllr Drury to contact Dave Chapman to see if he would be happy to join the working group with Cllrs Farrington, Bainbridge, and Richards.

14. Additional items

- Financial regs.

The Clerk to review and propose an amended policy for consideration and approval at the April meeting.

- Westwell Eye to be discussed at the next meeting.
- Asset Register. Work to update this has started. An update report will be presented at the March meeting.

15. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 13 March 2024

16. Closed Session

A minute of the Closed Session will be produced and approved in a Closed Session at the next meeting and held in a Confidential File.

The meeting closed at 21.10pm

Chairman's Signature.....

Parish Council Minutes 7th February 2024 Initial.....