

# WARBLETON PARISH COUNCIL

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## Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Warbleton Parish Council held on Thursday 28 May 2026 7pm at Bodle Street Green Village Hall

1. **Attendance:** Councillors Andy Long, Katy Waterman, Bob Bowdler, Buster Ansell, Chris Wells, David Turton and Jeanne Peterson (Clerk)  
  
**Apologies for absence:** Councillors David Jarrold, Liz Ansell and Tom Guyton-Day  
**It was resolved** to accept the apologies as given.  
  
District Councillors Greg Collins and Diane Gould attended the meeting.
2. **Election of a Chairman to the Council:** It was proposed and seconded that Cllr Long be re-elected. There were no other nominations, and **it was resolved** to elect Cllr Andy Long as Chair. The Declaration of Office to be signed.
3. **Election of a Vice-Chair to the Council:** It was proposed and seconded that Cllr Waterman be re-elected. There were no other nominations, and **it was resolved** to elect Cllr Katy Waterman as Vice-Chair. The Declaration of Office to be signed.
4. **Appointment of Standing Committees**
  - 4.1 **Planning Committee – It was resolved** that committee membership would remain with all council members appointed to the Planning Committee apart from Cllr Guyton-Day who had previously indicated his preference not to attend.
  - 4.2 **Staffing Committee – It was resolved** that Cllrs Andy Long, Chris Wells and Buster Ansell remain appointed as members of the Staffing Committee with Cllr Katy Waterman joining as an additional member.
5. **Election of Chairman & Vice-Chair to each of the following Committees:**
  - 5.1 **Planning Committee – It was resolved** that Cllr Waterman continues as Chair to the Planning Committee. A Vice-Chair will be elected at the next meeting.
  - 5.2 **Staffing Committee - It was resolved** to appoint Cllr Andy Long as Chair to the Staffing Committee.
6. **Appointment of Representatives to Outside Bodies**
  - 6.1 **Dunn Village Hall –** The appointment was deferred until the next meeting
  - 6.2 **Bodle Street Green Village Hall –** The appointment was deferred until the next meeting.
  - 6.3 **Wealden District Association of Local Councils (WDALC) – It was resolved** that Cllr Waterman will represent the council at WDALC, with Cllr Turton acting as reserve when necessary.
  - 6.4 **East Sussex Association of Local Councils (ESALC) – It was resolved** to appoint Cllr Bowdler to represent the council at ESALC.
7. **Declarations of Interest –** There were no declarations of interest
8. **Minutes**
  - 8.1. **It was resolved** that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 23 April 2026, were a correct record and were signed by the Chair.  
The minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on 16 April 2026 were not available.
  - 8.2. **Matters Arising:** None

**9. Public Participation:** No members of the public were present.

**10. Reports**

**10.1. County Cllr:** The council wished to note its thanks to outgoing County Cllr Bowdler for all his work and efforts in supporting the Parish over the past years. The clerk was asked to write a formal letter of thanks to Cllr Bowdler.

It was noted that the clerk will invite the incoming County Councillor to the next meeting of the parish council

**10.2. District Cllrs:**

Cllr Collins reported the following:

- Wealden held an extraordinary council meeting to record their response to the proposed boundary changes which were suggested as part of Local Government Reorganisation.
- Wealden Members attended compulsory planning training in relation to the draft NPPF, the final version will overwrite only those policies at odds with clauses in the draft. Further training is planned but not booked.  
It is understood that the policy will apply from Autumn when minor classified applications will not be able to be called in by district councillors. Under the new National Policy, Officers will decide on the minor applications. As this is contra to existing Wealden constitution rules, it will be voted on by full council.
- Under the new planning framework, any application for 100+ homes that the local authority may be minded to refuse, will immediately be referred to the Secretary of State.
- Areas of AONB do not have as rigid protection as people think. There are bits scheduled to take large developments e.g. in Tunbridge Wells.
- As a consequence of the new framework, it was noted that Local Plans could be overwritten. Locally, Parish Councils should frame any argument on planning applications strictly by material planning terms.
- Applicants will still have the right to appeal, but costs will be awarded against them if it is called to committee outside of the rules.
- Planning fees are to be set nationally
- Cllr Collins was thanked for circulating the rule of thumb information on market testing in relation to the Three Cups Inn, and it appears the wind is not in favour of applying the test for this site.

Cllr Gould reported the following:

- The food waste collection has hit some snags. There have been missed collections. It was confirmed that the contractors do work to performance targets so they would get financially punished.  
It seems that some people are leaving the small inner caddies inside the large bins so they are being dumped into food waste.  
It was noted that the road surface is breaking up on the corner at the junction of Forest Lane and Blackdown Road because the lorries are cutting across. ESCC has reported this to BIFFA.
- The 1<sup>st</sup> May saw the start of the next round of the Ward funding scheme with funds now available for community projects.

**10.3. PCSO:** No report was available and it was noted that this is likely due to operational duties. However, there is a lot of rural crime within the parish, and it would help to develop strong links with the local serving PCSOs. The clerk was asked to follow this up.

**10.4. Cllr Wells:** Reported that there were two leaks of raw sewage across a road and ditch which needed urgent reporting to environmental health. The clerk will be provided with exact location details to file the report, copying in the District Councillors.

10.5 **Clerk's Report:** A written report had been circulated and was taken as read. Other points raised were:

- Highways to be contacted again to nail down their exact land ownership re the verge outside Osborne House v Parish land.
- Outstanding SLR maintenance items to be chased up following a check by the council.
- The clerk was asked to check with the grass cutting contractor as to when the extra cuts at Spring Hill and Dog Corner would take place as they are looking overgrown.

## 11. Committee reports

11.1. The proceedings of the following committee meetings were noted:

Planning & Development – minutes of the 21.04.2026 and 12.05.2026 draft minutes meeting had been circulated.

## 12. Finance – End of Year Accounts at 31 March 2026 (the papers had been circulated and taken as read):

The council was asked if they had any questions. It was raised that the Asset Register in item 12.5 did not appear to be the latest version as updated in January 2026. Also, the asset value in the explanation of variances did not agree with Section 1 and the Asset Register. The clerk was asked to check this and report back to the council, it was noted however that the Asset Register value and Section 1 were correct.

12.1 **It was resolved** to approve the 2025-2026 Annual Governance Statement (Section 1)

12.2 **It was resolved** to approve the 2025-2026 Accounting Statements (Section 2)

12.3 **It was resolved** to acknowledge and approve the Internal Audit Reports 2025-2026

12.4 **It was resolved** to approve the Explanation of Variances Report subject to verification and update of the asset value.

12.5 **It was resolved** to approve the Asset Register subject to confirmation of the correct version as updated January 2026.

12.6 **It was resolved** to approve the Revenue Budget Monitor at year end 31 March 2026

12.7 **It was resolved** to approve the Bank Reconciliation at year end 31 March 2026.

12.8 **It was resolved** to approve the Council's Risk Assessment

12.9 **It was resolved** to authorise the Clerk to submit the Council's year-end financial papers to the External Auditor by the deadline of 1 July 2026.

12.10 **It was resolved** that that the Exercise of Public Rights to view the Council's accounts will commence on 09.06.26 until 20.07.26

Details will be published on village noticeboards and on the council website.

**To Note:** The correct version of the Asset Register was subsequently circulated to members for their record and is published on the council's website. The clerk confirmed that the Explanation of Differences report had been updated to show the correct Asset Value of 88,273 as recorded on the Section 1 paper and on the Asset Register, and this is published on the council's website.

## 13. Finance – Monthly Reports

13.1 **It was resolved** to approve the Bank Reconciliation April 2026

13.2 **It was resolved** to approve the Budget Monitor and Reserve Movements Report at April 2026

13.3 **It was resolved** to approve the payments list May 2026 with the additions of:

James Todd & Co Ltd – payroll services April £30.24

Hugo Fox – Monthly website services £11.99 and Monthly .gov.uk clerk email account £2.99.

#### 14. Council Policies

It was noted that there are no current revisions required, simply updates to any reference of the council's website or email to .gov.uk

#### 15. Horse & Groom Pub Sign

The clerk updated the meeting; Information had not yet been received back from the Henry Smith Charity in connection with existing covenants on Rushlake Green. They [the Charity] must grant permission before the request can be considered.

If this is not granted, nothing further can be progressed. If granted, then the next step would be for WPC as landowner to consider the proposal.

Wealden as Planning Authority is responsible for all signage in the district. As the site has not been used continually for the preceding ten years for the display of advertisements the applicants should, once the above two stages (if positively) are completed, apply to Wealden for either pre-planning advice or for planning permission.

While the council awaits a decision from the Charity, it has a few further questions for the applicants and the clerk was asked to request details on the following points:

- i. Proposed insurance liability cover
- ii. Risk Assessment & maintenance plan (it should be constructed in a way to not cause injury).
- iii. Willingness to negotiate a peppercorn rent payable to the council for the use of Rushlake Green for advertising purposes.
- iv. A proposed condition that the sign is linked in perpetuity to the property currently known as the Horse & Groom.

Due to the above points raised, the council deferred its decision to consider the request until the next council meeting.

#### 16. Fire Beacon – Rushlake Green

The Henry Smith Charity has, in accordance with the necessary permission required under the land transfer covenants, given its approval for the installation of the Beacon as a permanent feature on Rushlake Green.

Pre-application advice from Wealden Planning has also been positive, and an existing petition supporting the installation by some 275 signatories will accompany any application.

**It was resolved** by a majority vote that the council was in favour of submitting a planning application to install the Beacon as a permanent feature on Rushlake Green and the clerk was asked to investigate the application process.

Cllr Chris Wells abstained from the vote and asked for that to be noted.

#### 17. Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) – ESALC Survey

It was generally agreed that there remained a lack of detail around LGR, and there was no consensus from the parish for the council to respond to the survey on its behalf.

Although the ESALC survey would allow the council to add 'a voice' to the second consultation, it was agreed that the deadline of 31 May 2026 did not allow enough time to form a valid response. **It was resolved** not to take part.

#### 18. Urgent matters at the discretion of the Chairman for noting and/or inclusion on a future agenda: None

#### 19. Date of next Council Meeting – Tuesday 23 June 2026 at Bodle Street Green Village Hall 7pm.

**The meeting closed at 8.25pm**