



**Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on
Monday 15th September at 19:00 at King George's Hall, West Dean.**

COUNCIL MEMBERS

	In Attendance	Apologies	Absent
Councillor Higgins	✓		
Councillor J Camilleri	✓		
Councillor Seabrooke	✓		
Councillor M Camilleri		✓	
Councillor M Lee	✓		
Councillor B Livesey	✓		
Vacancy	-	-	-

Also, in attendance:

Amanda Owen – Clerk, Wiltshire Councillor Gregory Cooper & 3 members of the public.

107/25	<p>To receive Chair's opening remarks. Councillor Higgins welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised that Nick Hiddleston has resigned from the Parish Council and that his efforts have been gratefully acknowledged. Nick's resignation leaves a vacancy.</p> <p>A big thank you to those of you who have done work during the summer break with regards to footpaths, recreation ground and Glebe Farm.</p>
108/25	<p>To receive and accept apologies for absence. Apologies were RECEIVED and ACCEPTED from Councillor M Camilleri.</p>
109/25	<p>To receive declarations of interest relating to items on this agenda. No declarations of pecuniary interest were received.</p>
110/25	<p>To approve the minutes of the full council meeting held on Monday 21st July. The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 21st July were signed as a correct record of the meeting.</p>
111/25	<p>Public Forum. A member of the public asked with regards to the river now that it is dry, is it the opportunity to do something now? Councillor Higgins advised that an update would follow later in the agenda at item 114/25.</p>
112/25	<p>To receive reports from Wiltshire Council & Wiltshire Police. Wiltshire Councillor Gregory Cooper provided an update with regards to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If you have requests for replacement road signs, consolidate the requests and send to Councillor Cooper. - SWAB meeting. Two issues in public discussion were flooding and Wessex Internet (lack of engagement). - Wiltshire Council has a £4.53 million over spend. A large part of that was children's services and adult care. Projection is £6 million overspend for the full year. - Government has released funding for Rural hubs. More details to be provided at the next meeting. - Feedback received on Wiltshire Council's public consultation about policy held at Five Rivers has been poor. The deadline has been extended. <p>PCSO John Taylor, Wiltshire Police advised that there is nothing urgent to report.</p>

113/25	<p>To receive updates with regards to: Glebe Farm SWAB meeting (Flooding) Footpaths Glebe Farm</p> <p>Councillor J Camilleri addressed the meeting and provided the following update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - S106. Suggested amendments have been made and a new version is due for imminent arrival. All suggested requests have been considered and submitted by Test Valley Borough Council. - This update has been reviewed by the Developers. - The only grey area that requires clarification is how the Rectory Hill funds for the pathway will be made available, given that it is Wiltshire and not Hampshire. - Once the S106 is received, it will be reviewed by the Solicitor engaged by the Parish Council. - Councillor McDonald has been very supportive in the progress of the S106. <p>Following discussion, a resident advised that they have been studying differences between the current Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) and the latest National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). As the NDP requires review, the resident offered to support the Parish Council with regards to any potential updates with the NDP and the NPPF.</p> <p>SWAB meeting (Flooding)</p> <p>Councillor Lee & Councillor Higgins attended the Southern Wiltshire Area Board meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It was a long agenda but the item on flooding and riparian boundaries was informative and very well presented. Several PCs talked about issues in their parishes, often with groundwater problems. <p>Councillor Higgins advised those present to report potholes via the MyWilts app.</p> <p>Footpaths</p> <p>Councillor Lee addressed the meeting and advised the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Walked the footpaths over summer, some with Councillor Cooper and it was noted how much room there is for improvement. - Parishioners have reported some issues which will be reported eg. Unmaintained styles, encroaching vegetation, footpaths obstructed by electric fencing, the reinstating of ploughed footpaths. - Overall, it is noted that footpath signage is bad, with some signage obstructed by trees. - Some way markers to keep you on paths, have also been removed, and generally there are not enough. - An exercise will take place to review all footpath signs and to cost improvements particularly to those with serious problems eg. the steep bank which currently descends straight to the road on Moody's Hill. <p>Wiltshire Councillor Cooper advised that the signage would fall under 'highways' and that the Moody's Hill footpath which ends in the road would be a good case for the Footpath Officer. There may be a case for some funding subsidy from Wiltshire Council.</p> <p>An update has been received from Hampshire County Council with regards to application DMML757. The original application was submitted in 2006 to reinstate a footpath. A Definitive Map Officer has advised that the application is under consideration, and they will advise / update when a decision has been reached.</p> <p>Howe Farm planning application decision. The menage, now properly mapped is considerably smaller than originally interpreted, therefore the footpaths are not covered.</p>
114/25	<p>To note the updated River plans from Wessex River Trust.</p> <p>The updated River plans from Wessex River Trust were NOTED and can be found HERE or via the Parish Council website.</p>
115/25	<p>To confirm the time & date of the River Clearance as 9:00 – 11:00 on Saturday 20th September.</p> <p>The time & date of the River Clearance was AGREED as 9.30 on 11th October, owing to the availability of willing helpers from the village.</p>

116/25	To agree a gov.uk email provider. It was AGREED to purchase gov.uk emails from HugoFox at a cost of £251.88 (inc VAT). Proposed by Councillor Higgins, seconded by Councillor Lee. All members voted unanimously to accept this resolution.																																																								
117/25	To agree the purchase of a replacement noticeboard. It was unanimously AGREED to defer this decision to the October meeting. Meanwhile Councillor Livesey will investigate the quality of the boards made by Winterslow Men’s Shed.																																																								
118/25	To agree a contractor to complete recreation ground repairs. It was AGREED to accept the quote for recreation ground repairs from Vitaplay at a cost of £3050.72 to repair the superstructures ‘climbing wall, flat & cradle swing’. Proposed by Councillor Higgins, seconded by Councillor Seabrooke. All members voted unanimously to accept this resolution. Councillor Higgins thanked Councillor Livesey for his work at the Recreation ground.																																																								
119/25	To complete a mid-year budgetary review. The mid year budget was noted.																																																								
120/25	To note the conclusion of the external audit. The conclusion of the external was NOTED and can be found at APPENDIX A . Councillor Higgins thanked the Clerk for her successful work.																																																								
121/25	To note the financial situation. The current financial situation and the reconciliation of the bank balance were NOTED with the bank balance at 31 st August 2025 being £29,616.17. The bank reconciliation can be found at APPENDIX B .																																																								
122/25	To approve the requests for payments for August & September. The payments as listed in the table below were APPROVED for payment. Proposed by Councillor Seabrooke, seconded by Councillor Livesey. All members voted unanimously to accept this resolution. <table><tr><th colspan="4">August Payment Requests</th></tr><tr><th>From</th><th>Item</th><th>Invoice Number</th><th>Amount</th></tr><tr><td>Staff</td><td>Salary</td><td>August</td><td>£939.09</td></tr><tr><td>Staff</td><td>Back pay</td><td></td><td>£100.64</td></tr><tr><td>Lloyds</td><td>Bank Charges</td><td></td><td>£4.25</td></tr><tr><td>Parish Online</td><td>Mapping Software</td><td>Inv 00HY233-0006</td><td>£28.80</td></tr><tr><td>Clive Francis</td><td>Grass Cutting - July</td><td>Inv 010725</td><td>£846.00</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td>Total</td><td>£1,918.78</td></tr></table> <table><tr><th colspan="4">September Payment Requests</th></tr><tr><th>From</th><th>Item</th><th>Invoice Number</th><th>Amount</th></tr><tr><td>Staff</td><td>Salary</td><td>September</td><td>£920.98</td></tr><tr><td>Lloyds</td><td>Bank Charges</td><td></td><td>£4.25</td></tr><tr><td>PKF Littlejohn</td><td>Limited assurance review for year ended 31 March 2025</td><td>SB20251251</td><td>£252.00</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td>Total</td><td>£1,177.23</td></tr></table>	August Payment Requests				From	Item	Invoice Number	Amount	Staff	Salary	August	£939.09	Staff	Back pay		£100.64	Lloyds	Bank Charges		£4.25	Parish Online	Mapping Software	Inv 00HY233-0006	£28.80	Clive Francis	Grass Cutting - July	Inv 010725	£846.00			Total	£1,918.78	September Payment Requests				From	Item	Invoice Number	Amount	Staff	Salary	September	£920.98	Lloyds	Bank Charges		£4.25	PKF Littlejohn	Limited assurance review for year ended 31 March 2025	SB20251251	£252.00			Total	£1,177.23
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123/25	To agree the date of the next meeting as Monday 20th October. The date of the next meeting was AGREED as Monday 20 th October. Councillor Livesey provided his apologies for this meeting.																																																								
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124/25	To note staff salary. Staff salary was noted.																																																								

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 20:41.

Section 3 – External Auditor's Report and Certificate 2024/25

In respect of **West Dean Parish Council – WI0244**

1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit**, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02) as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – <https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/>

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2025; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

2 External auditor's limited assurance opinion 2024/25

On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with *Proper Practices* and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

In the prior year, the smaller authority was exempt from our review, thus we have not reviewed any evidence to support the prior year comparatives on the AGAR.

3 External auditor certificate 2024/25

We certify that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2025.

External Auditor Name

PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP

External Auditor Signature

PKF Littlejohn LLP

Date

31/08/2025

APPENDIX B

WEST DEAN PARISH COUNCIL							
Bank Reconciliation for the Year 2025 / 26							
Opening Balance Community Account at 01/04/2025		£963.60		Opening Balance Instant Access Account at 01/04/2025		£25,394.00	
Receipts 2024/25		8,331.50		Receipts 2024/25		11,137.27	
Payments 2024/25		8,210.20		Payments 2024/25		8,000.00	
Unpresented Cheques 2024/25							
Closing Balance Community Account 31/08/2025		£753.40		Closing Balance Business Bank Instant 31/08/2025		£28,862.77	