



WEST MEON PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk's Report for May 2026

HR/Staff/Payroll

- **Payroll and Pension Contributions:** the approved increase in employer pension contributions from 3% to 5%, backdated to 1 April 2026, has been actioned by CB Reid and reflected in the Clerk's May payslip.
- **Overtime:** additional hours worked by the Clerk up to and including 29th May is 8 hours, contributing factors included preparation of internal audit and two bank holidays in May.
- **Training/Event:** Cllr Davies booked to attend NALC Flood Resilience event

Audit

The internal audit for the 2025/26 financial year took place on 19 May 2026, carried out by Do The Numbers. The Annual Internal Audit Report was completed with all internal control objectives marked as "Yes", confirming that the Council met the required internal control standards. A small number of matters arising and recommendations (circulated) were also noted by the Internal Auditor and are included as a separate agenda item for Council to review and agree any actions required.

IT / Parish Council Website & Email

- Councillors' areas of responsibility and points of contact for community and external groups are now available on the Parish Council website.
- The results of the Hampshire Wildlife Trust survey have been added to the Biodiversity page on the Parish Council website.
- CloudNext have upgraded the Council's email hosting package from Premium to Advanced and waived the pro-rata cost for this year as a gesture of goodwill.

Finance:

Changes to the Unity Bank mandate have been submitted, after Cllr Fowler confirmed that she now has the required access to authorise payments. Clerk to update members when Unity Bank have implemented the changes.

Correspondence

Correspondence – East End Speed Limit

Correspondence was received from a resident raising concerns about the location of the national speed limit signs on East End, close to the Coombe Lane junction and the entrance to Westbury Manor and Westbury Manor Farm. The resident has raised highway safety concerns with Hampshire Highways but has now requested Parish Council

support in asking Hampshire Highways to reconsider the position of the signs. The correspondence has been circulated to the Traffic Working Group for review and has been placed on the June agenda.

West Meon & Warnford Sports Club

Correspondence was received from West Meon Sports Club:-

- confirming that the heating is now installed and is working efficiently. The Club thanked the Parish Council for the grant funding.
- Girls' football will be provided again. Two teams are expected to play on Saturday mornings from September, with a possible additional team on Sundays. There will be a 30-minute gap between games to ease parking. Training has been proposed over the summer, Thursday evenings and Saturday mornings and the Sports Club are seeking permission from the WM Primary School.
- Clanfield coaches are offering to repair the goalmouth (9x9 pitch), soil and seed and corner off while the seeds take hold. For discussion at meeting.
- The tennis practice area has also been marked out for pickleball, with Neil McLeod acting as section lead.
- Sports Club are holding their first sports afternoon with the school on 9 July.

Tree Donation/Biodiversity Volunteer

Correspondence received from a resident offering a young Blue Atlas Cedar tree for possible planting within the parish, and that they are also a volunteer ranger with SDNPA, working on water vole and river fly schemes on the River Meon. They would be happy to support the Parish Council's Biodiversity group. The Clerk has forwarded their details to the Biodiversity Working Group to respond.

COMMUNITY

Defibrillator West Meon High Street

Clerk advised that the defibrillator was used over the bank holiday weekend but there was not that much more information available. The Clerk was away at the time of the event but checked the device on Bank Holiday Monday. Pads and battery both 'emergency ready' and it is unclear whether the device was used before the ambulance arrived. The Circuit website checked and defibrillator status correctly reading 'emergency ready'.

Speed Indicator Device / SAM Locations

Hampshire County Council has responded to the Council's Speed Indicator Device application and raised concerns regarding proposed Locations 1 and 2. Concerns include visibility, foliage, lack of safe verge or footway access for installation and removal, clearance from the carriageway, traffic safety for operatives, and suitability for solar power.

HCC has indicated that an alternative position near the 40mph repeater sign may be suitable for Location 2, subject to possible repositioning of the post. The correspondence has been circulated to councillors and will be considered at the June meeting.

Planning

The Clerk submitted a holding objection for planning applications SDNP/26/01509/HOUS and SDNP/26/01510/LIS, pending resolution of matters raised by Hampshire Highways. The Clerk also submitted a “No objection” response for application SDNP/26/01412/LDE.

Tree Works Application – Holm Oak

Update from Winchester Council indicating that, following assessment of the tree works application, the proposal to remove the Holm Oak is likely to be supported, subject to a suitable replacement tree being planted. It was also noted that there may be a slight delay in the issue of the decision notice. The Clerk has contacted Sapling Arboriculture for advice on the replacement tree process, including suitable species, site considerations and when the replacement tree should be agreed.

South Downs Local Plan: Open Space Study

SDNPA has invited parish councils to review the draft Open Space Study and interactive map as part of the Regulation 19 consultation on the Proposed Submission South Downs Local Plan. The Clerk has circulated the information to the Planning and Open Spaces working groups for review, with any comments to be considered at the next meeting ahead of the **23 June 2026** deadline.

Annual Parish Meeting

Findings of Annual Parish Meeting have been circulated by the Clerk in advance of the meeting, so that Council members can consider how to move forward. Goal post pegs are now installed in the goal nets on the lower pitch.

Bernice Gibson-Ost
Clerk – West Meon Parish Council

Ref	Area	Task / Topic	RAG Status Green 0-3 months Amber 3-6 Red + 6 months	Progress Status	Updates / Action Needed	Meeting Agenda
12	Village Maintenance	Tree On The Cross: Survey and options appraisal	Amber	In Progress	<p>May 26: received response from Winchester Council, who are inclined to support the planning application, on the condition that a suitable replacement is found.</p> <p>Apr 26: 'no comment' submitted to application due to a conflict of interest.</p> <p>Mar 26: Planning Application received for consideration.</p> <p>Mar 26: Notice of Intent confirmed as 26th January. SDNP Planning confirmed the application was sent to the wrong department. The application has now been given priority, however as the tree has a TPO the application is being sent to Winchester for further investigation.</p> <p>- For earlier entries to this issue, revert to previous Clerks Report.</p>	
14	Legal	Land Registry: application Status	Red	In Progress	<p>22/10/25: email sent to Bramsdon & Child: Application had stalled pending solicitor action. This has been confirmed as resolved by Bramsdon & Child. Email sent requesting Land Registry reference, confirmation all information is now submitted, and an updated completion timescale. Awaiting response.</p> <p>3/10/25: Bramsdon & Child confirmed that Land Registry do have the application. Land Registry advised Bramsdon & Child (by letter) to say it could not be expedited through the portal. Bramsdon & Child advise they have not seen the letter. Furthermore Bramsdon & Child claim they have expedited this over the phone (27th August 2025)</p> <p>27/08/25: Email sent asking for a progress update, reference to the Title Deeds on Land Registry and access to original deeds.</p> <p>19/8/25: Bramsdon & Child have confirmed they have located the original deeds in their South Sea office.</p> <p>5/8/25: email sent to all members of Bramsdon & Childs, escalated due to lack of response.</p> <p>28/7/25: Email sent as no response since previous call. Have asked for the issue to be escalated.</p> <p>June 25: Chaser email sent as application status unclear, so issue remains unresolved (Bramsdon & Childs Solicitors). No response as 5/07/25.</p>	

17	Working Groups	Flood Action: Weir, Culverts, Drains, Bridges - Reporting Issues	Red	In Progress	<p>April - SDNP Infrastructure Grant submitted by Cllr Davies, on potential funding to address the revetments.</p> <p>Mar 26: Following summary from the Environment Agency on works to address the revetments, three quotes have been requested from Eco-Librium, Earlcoate and Cabin BioEngineering. Cabin BioEngineering have declined due to current commitments and SDNP deadline for the funding application.</p> <p>Feb 26: A meeting is scheduled for 27 February with Cllr Bolton, a representative from the Environment Agency and the Chair to scope the required works and obtain contractor recommendations. The information gathered will support a CIL funding application to SDNP.</p> <p>Jan 26: Received from Cllr Bolton information received regarding weir revetments and potential CIL funding. Cllr Davies to lease with Cllr Bolton on the application.</p> <p>- For earlier entries to this issue, revert to previous Clerks Report.</p>	
18	Legal/Property	Legal Advice: Sports Club & Village Hall	Amber	In Progress	<p>Mar 26: Advice letter received from HALC Legal Services setting out their recommendations. To be circulated with Council members and discussed at the next meeting.</p> <p>Jan 26: see issue 29 for update.</p> <p>- For earlier entries to this issue, revert to previous Clerks Report.</p>	Apr
22	Projects	Woodlands Entry Signs: Confirmation of location	Red	In Progress	<p>April 26: JK Engineering instructed to install 3rd location.</p> <p>Feb 26: There have been no objections received regarding the third location.</p> <p>Jan 26: received from Clerk that Bramdean Parish Council have approved the location and will formally note it in their minutes at the next meeting. Cllr Davies included the 3rd location in the Parish News, as part of the consultation period.</p> <p>Dec 25: a third location for the Woodlands sign has been submitted to the Clerk of Bramdean. This was checked during the Xmas break, and the site looks acceptable, with sufficient space and no obstructions. My only concern is that the location is some distance inside the Bramdean boundary, https://w3w.co/turkey.passively.crystals but will wait to hear back from Bramdean Parish Council, their views.</p> <p>- For earlier entries to this issue, revert to previous Clerks Report.</p>	Apr
23	Projects	Woodlands Fingerpost Signs	Red	In Progress	<p>22/08/25: HH confirmed they are still waiting for a date from contractor who has been assigned the work.</p> <p>18/08/25: Update requested from Hampshire Highways</p>	

					<p>June 25: Awaiting update from the contractor about timescales. Delayed due to the restructure at HCC. HCC Traffic Dept. will be in touch when more information is available (last response 6th June).</p> <p>- For earlier entries to this issue, revert to previous Clerks Report.</p>	
26	Working Groups	Car Park: Resurfacing and Space Optimisation - 3 quotes	Red	In Progress	<p>Feb 26: meeting was held between Chair of the Village Hall, Cllr Burke, Cllr Fowler and the Clerk to review the proposed changes to the car park. There were no objections received from the Chair. A decision by members is proposed at the meeting to move forward with securing quotes.</p> <p>Nov 25: proposal for works to the car park have been submitted by the Car Park Working Group and circulated for discussion in December meeting.</p> <p>22.08/25: I have sought quotes for resurfacing the car park and received one quotation with a price to do the initial survey at £6941.00 ex VATt . However, it at this stage may be more appropriate to obtain estimates so that the Council has an indication of likely costs before considering whether to proceed further. Two estimates have been received for discussion in September meeting.</p> <p>28/7/25: initial enquiry sent out to Nidagraveluk.co.uk, info@slatterestatesurfaces.com, info@randcgroundworks.com and Ed Bagshaw Ltd.</p>	
29	Legal/Property	Leases and Land Ownership	Red	In Progress	<p>Mar 26: Advice letter received from HALC Legal Services setting out their recommendations. To be circulated with Council members and discussed at the next meeting.</p> <p>Feb 26: A meeting has been arranged between a representative from HALC Legal Services and the Clerk to review scope and options for progressing matters. The Clerk will report back following the meeting.</p> <p>Jan 26: received response back from HALC Legal Services advisor confirming receipt of the documents and will respond with any questions, noting that the advisor is on limited work time due to a broken arm. Scope of the work to be confirmed in February meeting.</p> <p>DEC 25: Discovery piece is now complete and the document and supporting evidence prepared for HALC Legal Services. The document has been circulated for consideration at the next meeting.</p> <p>Sep 25: see issue 18 update.</p> <p>- For earlier entries to this issue, revert to previous Clerks Report.</p>	Apr
32	Public Rights of Way	Missing Signpost	Amber	In Progress	<p>May 26: Reported again against 260588555 using Hampshire Rights of Way map.</p> <p>Jan 26: Fingerpost sign incident still reported as open.</p> <p>18/08/25: Fingerpost sign reported missing from Drs Lane, location 242/1/1. Reported to Hampshire Country Council reference number</p>	

					250850735HCC Rights of Way: a job has been issued to Countryside Access Ranger Team - advised this make take some time before it is completed.
33	Projects	Neighbourhood Plan	Amber	Complete	<p>April 26: SDNP advised of council response as resolved at meeting held April 2026. This issue will be closed. When Council have decided to move forward with a Neighbourhood Plan a new issue will be raised.</p> <p>Mar 26: SDNPA has requested an update on the Parish Council's current position regarding progression of a Village Design Statement or a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP), to inform a report to Members. They have also advised that, from 30 June 2026, design statements can no longer be adopted as SPDs and will carry limited weight.</p> <p>28/10/25: Initial discussions held with neighbouring clerks; seeking advice from HALC (Steve Tilbury) for an independent view on developing a neighbourhood plan, including any funding options and if they recommend professional services in the area. I've been advised by the neighbouring clerk that funding has been withdrawn but will follow-up when discussing with HALC.</p> <p>- For earlier entries to this issue, revert to previous Clerks Report.</p>
36	Planning	Planning Application	Amber	In Progress	<p>Nov 25: the planning application is still awaiting review. They have a significant backlog, and no timescales are available as to when it will be seen.</p> <p>22/10/25: progress update requested from Winchester Council on Planning Application SDNP/24/03257/FUL. There has been no response so I have also asked Cllr Wallace if he can assist, as I note he was involved previously.</p>
41	Finance	Peppercorn Rent	Green	In Progress	<p>Feb 26: response received from Chair of Village Hall. We have now heard back from our lawyer and as we suspected he says that it would not be appropriate for the charity to be charged a peppercorn rent in respect of its occupation and use of the Village Hall. Equally, the charity should not enter into any agreement in this regard. This is because the Village Hall property is held by the Parish Council on trust for the charity and must therefore be made available for the charity accordingly. The payment of a peppercorn rent or use of an agreement would suggest that the charity has some form of tenancy of the property which is not the case. Jan 26: Payment received from the Rifle Club, but they would like to see a Rental Agreement.</p> <p>Dec25: The Chairman of the Village Hall and Rifle Club have both been sent an agreement document to cover unrecovered Peppercorn rents for 2025, with future years to be collected on the 1st of April. This issue was logged by the internal auditor as it needs to be addressed. Rifle Club are raising</p>

					this with their committee, and the village hall are raising this with their lawyers, to get advice on potential impact - if any.	
42	Governance	Trust: Recreation Ground: 301982: Removal of Existing Trustees	Amber	In Progress	Nov 25: received in writing formal written notice from the existing trustees that they would like to be removed.	
43	Open Spaces	Ash Dieback	Green	In Progress	May 26: for resolution at June meeting. April 26: Trees removed, this has highlighted 3 other trees considered at risk. See Clerks note. Mar 26: confirmed dates for the removal of trees identified as 'at risk' is April 13th - 17th April inclusive. Start time between 0800-0900 hours. Partial road closure expected on the Monday or Tuesday. Subject to change e.g. weather conditions may make the ground unsuitable. WM Sports Club advised of the proposed dates.	June
44	Open Spaces	Meonwara - Fencing	Green	In Progress	April 26: Contractor approved at April meeting instructed by the Clerk to carry out the work, as proposed. Mar 26: Three contractors have been invited to assess the condition of the fence at Meonwara Crescent and submit quotations for remedial works. It is anticipated that these will be available for Member consideration at the next meeting.	
45	Legal/Property	Meonwara - Lease Renewal	Green	In Progress	April 26: Winchester City Council have advised that the Heads of Terms have changed from 5 years to 10 years, with the remaining terms unchanged. they have appointed their solicitor to draw up the paperwork. Mar 26: Winchester City Council has been advised that the Parish Council wishes to renew the lease for a further five-year term on the existing arrangements. Documentation is currently being prepared by their solicitors and will be issued to the Clerk for review. Winchester has been informed that, should the terms remain unchanged, the Parish Council does not intend to instruct a solicitor.	