

MINUTES OF WESTMILL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING ON 19 May 2021 AT 7.30PM in Westmill Village Hall**Councillors: Michael McRae (Chair)****Winston Pickup****Anne Downes****Ray Partridge****Officer attending: Sarah Kubica (Clerk and RFO)****Present: 1 member of the public****Present: Cllr Jeff Jones****APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

21.035 Apologies received from Cllr King, and approved. Cllr Bowtell has resigned creating a vacancy and a new councillor will be co-opted in due course.

DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

21.036 Cllr McRae declared an interest in matters relating to the T&M Greg Trust in his capacity as a Trustee of the T&M Greg Trust and reminded those present that Cllr King is also a Trustee of the the T&M Greg Trust.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

21.037 M Mason advised that the new WPC website does not rank highly on a google search making the new website hard to find. The Clerk will add a redirect message to the old website directing users to westmillpc.org.uk. M Mason asked if 'lost footpaths' in Westmill could be re-instated and what was the process for this. dontloseyourway.ramblers.org.uk maps various local paths. Jeff Jones advised that HCC should have a definitive right of way (ROW) map and review was due in 2019. Jeff Jones will take up with ROW Officer nicholas.maddex@hertfordshire.gov.uk.

MINUTES OF MEETING

21.038 The minutes of the WPC meeting held on 17 February 2021 were amended to show that under 21.021 new comments were made rather than 're-submitted'. The minutes were approved unanimously as a correct record.

FINANCE

21.039 Audit requirements for the year ending 2020/2021

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| a) To approve the Annual Accounts 2020/2021 | approved unanimously |
| b) To approve the Certificate of Exemption 2020/2021 | approved unanimously |
| c) To approve the Annual Internal Auditor Report for the year 2020/2021 | approved unanimously |
| d) To approve Section 1, the Annual Governance Statement 2020/2021 | approved unanimously |
| e) To approve Section 2, Accounting Statements 2020/2021 | approved unanimously |
| f) Dates for the public rights period (14 June to 23 July 2021) | approved unanimously |

21.040 The payments before Council were agreed, including grass cut payments for May-July at £49 per cut. The list of payments is an appendix to these minutes.

21.041 RFO circulated information on payments expected to July 2021. Cllr McRae advised an increase to Clerk's salary by 20p/hour from April 2021, agreed unanimously. After brief discussion of minute ref: 21.011 regarding reserves for unforeseen large expenses, Cllr Downes asked at what point are councillors made aware of any over-spend on the budget. Cllr McRae advised that over-budget expenses last year were due to new Clerk's training and salary and the unforeseen costs for removing dead wood from large Lime tree on the village green. We also had a professional inspection on the health of this tree carried out in October 2020. This was identified in the PC risk assessment and agreed that a survey should be carried out on this tree. Councillors were made aware of these additional costs at that time. Cllr Downes suggested a more regular update on budget and Clerk advised that the new format banking spreadsheet with additional tabs to cover budget calculations would provide clearer comparison information going forward.

PLANNING

21.042 Planning application details attached as an appendix to these minutes.

HCC HIGHWAYS SPEED/TRAFFIC SURVEY

21.043 Cllr Jones shared that Herts County Council (HCC) has allocated funding for speed monitoring equipment and he agreed to add Westmill to a list for consideration of monitoring equipment and a possible 20mph zone. Cllr Jones explained that a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) would be needed for any change. Cllr Downes raised the problem of road markings not being reinstated after road resurfacing in C16-U2 and Cherry Green Lane and where road speed signs and markings on approach to the village from C16-U2 to the children's playground, appear to be displayed in an opposite direction to that expected. Cllr Jones to discuss with Highways Officer and engineer in a June meeting. Cllr Downes reiterated the difficulty in reporting incidents due to unnamed roads in the village, but does use online reporting to highlight location on a map.

RISK ASSESSMENT

21.044 After a brief discussion it was agreed to review inspection requirements for the village green Lime Tree at the next meeting. Cllr Jones advised that he has a 'locality budget' that WPC can apply to him for and that small grants were also available from EHDC via Cllr Huggins, after Cllr Partridge raised the topic of possible investment in new benches and future budgeting in the event that works are recommended after Lime Tree inspection at a later date. Telephone Box requires paint retouching (due every 3 years) and it was noted that if the noticeboard required replacement this may be considered in the next budget for 2022/23.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

21.045 Cllr Downes reported: Police recorded no crimes in Westmill since the last meeting. Fire Services attended to hay stack fire near Whatbarns. Fly tipping regularly reported, an increase noted recently of fridge/freezer and cabling dumped in the village.

GREG TRUST

21.046 Cllr McRae provided an update: Greg Trust (GT) is in discussion with the Charity Commission looking to amalgamate sub-charities into one main charity and agree that any surpluses raised from the almshouse rents can be used for other GT facilities if required, after adequate provision for maintaining the almshouses. This is subject to a consultation with Westmill residents as benefactors of the GT assets. Consultation deadline is the end of May and so far 45% of responses have been submitted. Nursery continues to operate, and the August Bank Holiday Art Exhibition is scheduled in the village hall in line with and dependant upon government guidelines. Track outside the village hall has been repaired, weed killer sprayed and gravelled and stones replaced to improve join between the existing tarmac and track. Company engaged to attend to maintenance of children's playground, which had some low risk issues raised at the last inspection. Next inspection in June/July. Allotments are full, with some villagers sharing since the start of the pandemic due to increased demand. 2 people on the waiting list. The next Trustee meeting is 14 June.

CLERK'S REPORT

21.047 Clerk retains last 4 months email bulletins from Countryside Alliance and Rural Services Network and will forward on request. Reminder to councillors of 2 June 'town and parish engagement' virtual meeting with EHDC. Clerk will attend.

MATTERS ARISING

21.048 Cllr Partridge asked Cllr Jones when the Aspenden waste site would reopen. Cllr Jones confirmed that the site will remain closed while social distancing requirements can not be met and is hoping for the possibility of a new site if social distancing remains inadequate. Cllr Partridge referred to plans for the zero carbon school at the Bury to which Cllr Jones has given his full support. Cllr Downes asked about widening pavements along the A10 to which Cllr Jones responded that funds had been diverted away from the A10 Buntingford roundabout project, so this will not go ahead, but there is final planning for cycle lanes along London Road.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

21.049 8 September 7.30pm in Village Hall

MEETING CLOSE

21.050 The meeting closed at 9.20pm. Cllr McRae thanked everyone for their contribution

Planning Application Consultation	Location	Deadline/ Decision Date	Description/Comments	Decision	LPA Appeal Ref
3/21/0265/AGPN	Land At Gaylors Farm	24/02/21	Proposed road	Prior Approval is not required	N/A
3/21/0756/LBC 3/21/0755/HH	Coles Hill House	19/04/21	Part demolition outbuildings, link extension, single storey rear extension. Two storey side extension. External stairs, patio creation, replace foul drainage.	Pending	N/A
3/21/1118/HH 3/21/1119/LBC	Woolpack Croft	25/05/21	Single storey oak framed orangery rear extension Remove section of wall/ remove, reinstall internal wall	Pending Pending	N/A
3/21/0795/LBC	Keepers Cottage	17/05/21	Ground floor remove internal wall, first floor install new door opening	Appeal	20/00134/REFUSE 20/00135/REFUSE
3/21/0788/HH 3/21/0549/HH	Dowers	19/04/21 29/04/21	Raise height of annex roof 500mm New red brick wall, NE boundary	Pending Pending	N/A
3/21/0909/LBC 3/21/0908/FUL	Knights Hill Farm	10/05/21	Convert agri building to 3 bedroom dwelling. Demolition of ancillary outbuildings/ stairs. Install new walls, internal stairs. Change of use.	Pending Pending	N/A
3/21/0406/HH 3/21/0407/LBC	1&2 Knights Hill Cottages	17/03/21 15/03/21	Erection of two storey side extensions & rear single storey extensions. Replace roofs and garages	Pending	N/A

Cheque/DD	Item Description	Amount (VAT incl)	Payee
Payments since last meeting 17 February 2021			
BACS	LITTER FEBRUARY	96.00	M.MASON
BACS	LITTER MARCH	96.00	M MASON
BACS	LITTER APRIL	96.00	M MASON
BACS	ELECTRICITY FEBRUARY	0.83	EON
DD	ELECTRICITY MARCH	0.64	EON
DD	ELECTRICITY APRIL	0.65	EON
BACS	HAPTC ANNUAL SUBS	192.06	HAPTC
BACS	CLERKS SALARY	192.00	S KUBICA
DD	WEBSITE & EMAIL FEBRUARY	3.60	IONOS
DD	WEBSITE & EMAIL MARCH	3.60	IONOS
DD	WEBSITE & EMAIL APRIL	3.60	IONOS
BACS	GRASS CUT	98.00	M FOSKETT
BACS	ZOOM EXPENSES	28.78	S KUBICA
CHEQUE	GRASS CUT & BIN FEE	98.00	M FOSKETT
BACS	AUDIT FEE	100.00	JANET JAMES
Payments expected to August 2021			
BACS	PARISH COUNCIL INSURANCE	393.56	ZM
BACS	PAYROLL ACCOUNTANTS	90.00	PURE BALANCE
DD	WEBSITE & EMAIL MAY	3.60	IONOS
DD	WEBSITE & EMAIL JUNE	3.60	IONOS
DD	WEBSITE & EMAIL JULY	3.60	IONOS
BACS	CLERKS SALARY APR-JUN EST	270.00	S KUBICA
DD	ELECTRICITY MAY	0.44	EON
DD	ELECTRICITY JUNE EST	0.45	EON
DD	ELECTRICITY JULY EST	0.45	EON
BACS	DOG FOUL BIN EMPTYING ANNUAL	131.60	EHDC
BACS	GRASS CUT MAY	98.00	M.FOSKETT
BACS	GRASS CUT JUNE	98.00	M.FOSKETT
BACS	GRASS CUT JULY	98.00	M.FOSKETT
BACS	LITTER MAY	96.00	M.MASON
BACS	LITTER JUNE	96.00	M.MASON
BACS	LITTER JULY	96.00	M.MASON