

**Minutes of Westmill Parish Council Meeting**  
held on **Wednesday 4 September 2024**  
at **7.30pm** in **Westmill Village Hall**

**Present:** Cllrs Jim Beaven, Anne Downes, Bernadette King, Tom McMullen (Chairman)

**In attendance:** Sarah Kubica (Parish Clerk), District Cllr Aubrey Holt

**24.41 APOLOGIES**

To receive or accept apologies for absence

Cllrs Cowler and Debono unavailable. Apologies from Cllr Jones

**24.42 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda

Cllr King for T&M Greg Trust in her capacity as Trustee

**24.43 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

To allow members of the public and councillors to raise matters of concern

None

**24.44 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

To approve the [Minutes of the Westmill Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 1 August 2024](#) as an accurate record of proceedings

**Resolved**, that the minutes be accepted as a true and accurate record of proceedings and duly signed. Agreed unanimously

**24.45 RURAL POLICING**

To receive report

July: 2 x attempted burglary, 1 x criminal damage, 1 x burglary. A brief discussion followed on opportunist car crime late at night being experienced nationally. Suggestions on policing priorities can still be submitted on the survey links via Herts Connected

**24.46 COUNCILLORS' REPORTS**

To receive reports from parish, district and county councillors on activities undertaken in the parish

Various grants available from East Herts, contact Cllr Holt. It was noted that East Herts has underestimated its 5 year land supply. Cllr Beaven continues to inspect and report the defibrillator status and keep the kiosk clean

**24.47 PARISH COUNCIL DOCUMENTATION**

To adopt the following [policies](#):

- a) Training and Development policy
- b) NALC Model May 2024 Financial Regulations
- c) Financial and Management Risk Assessment

**Resolved**, to adopt the policies. Agreed unanimously

**24.48 FINANCE**

- a) To authorise payments made in accordance with the budget

PAYMENTS SINCE THE LAST MEETING				
15/05/24	52.00	Litter pick April	13/06/24	47.00 CT Gardens (5)
15/05/24	210.45	HAPTC	13/06/24	90.00 Pure Balance
15/05/24	192.10	East Herts	13/06/24	10.00 Hundred Parishes
24/05/24	47.00	CT Gardens (3)	01/07/24	47.00 CT Gardens (6)
24/05/24	47.00	CT Gardens (4)	01/07/24	530.10 Clerk April - June
30/05/24	9.60	1&1 Internet	02/07/24	22.80 1&1 Internet
04/06/2024	466.97	Insurance CAS	29/07/24	47.00 CT Gardens (7)
04/06/24	52.00	Litter pick May	31/07/24	10.80 1&1 Internet
			06/08/24	35.00 ICO

13/08/24	47.00	CT Gardens (8)	EXPECTED PAYMENTS TO NOVEMBER
13/08/24	104.00	Litter pick June July	47.00 x 4 grass cuts
			10.80 x 3 web hosting
			530.10 clerk salary Jul-Sep estimate
			52.00 x 3 litter pick
			192.10 dog bin emptying annual fee
			151.20 defibrillator annual fee
			200.00 St Mary donation
			500.00 transfer grant to Buntingford Festival Choir

b) To note receipts

#### RECEIPTS SINCE THE LAST MEETING

03/06/24	38.92	bank interest
13/06/24	500.00	HCC locality budget grant held on behalf of the Buntingford Festival Choir

c) Consider request for donation to Citizens Advice East Herts

**Resolved**, not to donate at this time, use the precept for village expenses. Agreed unanimously

d) Transfer HCC locality budget grant (received on 13/06/24 on behalf of Buntingford Festival Choir while waiting to set up bank account, minute ref 24.22)

**Resolved**, to approve agenda items a,b,d. Agreed unanimously

#### 24.49 PLANNING

To receive Planning Report and current Planning Applications

Planning Application Ref	Location	Deadline/ Decision Date	Consultation Description	Comments	LPA Appeal Ref
3/24/0570/HH	Orchard House SG9 9LL	12/04/24	Demolition of garage. Erection of double garage	Appeal lodged	4/00063/ REFUSE
3/23/1228/LBC	Archers Hall SG9 9LW	18/07/23	Single storey rear extension to main dwelling. Creation of patio with planting beds, demolition of garden wall and erection of new garden wall	Granted	N/A
3/24/0921/FUL	Land East Of Wakeley Farm Cherry Grn	25/06/24	Change of use of the land for the siting of 2 glamping cabins. Hard surfacing for parking areas (retrospective)	Refused	N/A

A discussion followed regarding funding for highways safety improvements on the A10 and if any funds would be available through planning obligations from developers for housing approved in Buntingford. Cllr Holt to investigate

#### 24.50 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

To respond to the formal request from East Herts Council to be involved

**Resolved**, to confirm that WPC will not be involved. Agreed unanimously

#### 24.51 HIGHWAYS

To receive an update on faults, signs and repairs

Cllr Holt to speak to Cllr Jones about siting of blue 'unsuitable for HGVs' sign

#### 24.52 VILLAGE GREENS

To discuss grass cutting and any damage to village green

No concerns due to dry conditions

**24.53 VILLAGE SIGNS**

To receive an update from Cllr King and consider replacing directional signs on the village green  
Greg Trust holding funds from the art exhibition for a sign, no plans at present

**24.54 RISK ASSESSMENT**

To receive an updated risk assessment from Cllr Downes (circulated to councillors)  
Cllr Downes requested work to the large lime tree, 3 quotes to be obtained. Cllr McMullen to book biennial tree pollarding of the 18 lime trees

**24.55 T&M GREG TRUST**

To receive a report on activities from Cllr King:

*Village Hall Project - Progress is being made, a building consultant, Matthew Stearn of Whitworths, Stortford (listed building specialists), is now appointed to produce estimates of phases of work to be carried out and to submit the necessary planning applications. Research on grants available for this restoration continue. The Trust recently had a remote heating survey conducted by Utility Aid and funded by EHC. This identified improvements to the heating system for consideration. A bat survey has revealed that there is some bat habitation which will need to be addressed.*

*Village Hall - The Nursery has changed ownership, approved by Ofsted*

*Cottages - Works completed include: Damp problems at VHC resolved, external repairs at No1 and chimney work at No4 carried out*

*Playground - Monthly risk assessments continue. New gates have been installed.*

*Allotments - A new plot has been created and the holders are working on improving the drainage.*

*Jackson's Meadow - The ungrazed grass is to be cut by the tenants. The oak tree has been registered with the Woodland Trust as a veteran tree and is now listed on their site.*

*Grazing field - Tenants will continue to graze horses on this field. Fence posts and rotten rails to be replaced. The field will be weeded on a regular basis.*

*Westmill Art Exhibition and Events Committee Fund - The T&MGT will hold the funds on its behalf and consider applications for funding from any villager organising an event in Westmill.*

*Westmill Football Club Car Park - WFC is not in a financial position to fund this project currently.*

*WFC will tidy the existing parking area behind the pavilion to create a few more spaces.*

*Environment Agency River Inspection - scheduled 10/09/24*

**24.56 CLERK'S REPORT**

Items for information only

Cllrs encouraged to attend Growth and Environment meeting with HCC on Thursday 26

September 6-7.30pm Robertson House, Stevenage or online. East Herts Environmental and

Climate Forum online 7 October 7-8.30pm. Bank reconciliation and statements signed off on 12

July by Cllr Debono

**24.57 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS**

Proposed: 27 November 2024, 5 February and 21 May 2025

*The meeting closed at 8.22pm. The chairman thanked everyone for their contribution*