

Minutes of Westmill Parish Council Meeting

held on **Tuesday 3 February 2026**
at **7.30pm** in **Westmill Village Hall**

Present: Cllrs Jim Beaven, Steve Cowler, Sue Debono, Tom McMullen (Chairman)
In attendance: Sarah Kubica (Parish Clerk), Luke Clifton (candidate for co-option), 3 members of the public

26.1 APOLOGIES

To receive and approve apologies for absence
District Cllr Aubrey Holt

26.2 INTERESTS

- a) To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda
Cllr Beaven for T&M Greg Trust in his capacity as Trustee **Noted**
- b) To receive written requests for dispensations for declarable interests; and **None**
- c) To grant any requests for dispensation as appropriate **None**

26.3 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

To allow members of the public and councillors to raise matters of concern
A resident attending a meeting for the first time asked each member to introduce themselves and summarise their role. A resident reported a pothole in the centre of the road just after the bend beyond The Terrace and repeated a request for 20mph in the village

26.4 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

To approve the Minutes of the Meeting of Westmill Parish Council held on [Wednesday 26 November 2025](#) 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

26.5 RURAL POLICING

To receive update from officers if present, or the clerk
The clerk advised that there was one crime reported, a communication threatening harm on 18/12/25, The Rookery. Residents reminded to ensure that vehicles are locked with nothing on display inside and key fobs stored in a faraday pouch

26.6 COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

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

Cllr Beaven noted concern from a resident that a bench on the village green faces their property

26.7 FINANCE**PAYMENTS SINCE THE LAST MEETING**

02/12/2025	Ionos Cloud Ltd	£10.80
09/12/2025	Christmas lights	£63.94
09/12/2025	Litter pick November	£53.35
31/12/2025	Ionos Cloud Ltd	£10.80
31/12/2025	Clerk salary Oct-Dec	£518.40
14/01/2026	Litter pick December	£53.35
26/01/2026	Bench repair parts	£11.62

EXPECTED PAYMENTS TO NEXT MEETING

WEBSITE/ EMAIL FEB-APR	3 x 10.80
LITTER PICK FEB-MAR	2 x 53.35
LITTER PICK APR	£55.50
CLERKS SALARY JAN-MAR	£518.40
DEFIBRILLATOR MNGMNT	£151.20
NEW COUNCILLOR TRAINING	£34.00
GRASS CUT MAR-APR	3 x £50
CHRISTMAS TREE	£156.00
AUDIT FEE	£60.00
DEFIBILLATOR BATTERY	£215.00
PAYROLL ANNUAL FEE	£90.00
HAPTC SUBS	£219.75

RECEIPTS SINCE THE LAST MEETING

08/12/2025 BANK INTEREST £29.88

a) To authorise payments made in accordance with the budget

b) To note receipts

Resolved, to approve a-b. Agreed unanimously

c) Bank statement verification

Bank statements verified since the last meeting by Cllr Debono

Noted

d) To agree auditor for 2025-26 accounts

Resolved, to instruct the usual auditor. Agreed unanimously**26.8 PLANNING**

To receive Planning Report and current Planning Applications

Planning Application Ref	Location	Deadline/ Decision Date	Consultation Description	Comments	LPA Appeal Ref
3/25/1739/HH	Holly House Westmill SG9 9LL	27/01/26	Single storey rear extension	Granted	N/A
X/25/0535/CND	Gaylors Farm SG9 9LD	22/10/25	Approval of details reserved by conditions 3 (Contamination), 4 (CEV Charger) and 8 (Cycle Storage) pursuant to planning approval 3/22/1915/ARPN	Part Discharge/ Part Refuse	N/A
X/25/0534/CND	Gaylors Farm SG9 9LD	21/10/25	Approval of details reserved by conditions 3 (Contamination) and 4 (Electric Vehicle Charging Point) pursuant to planning approval 3/22/1914/ARPN	Part Discharge/ Part Refuse	N/A

26.9 HIGHWAYS

a) 4-6 February, The Rookery, utility repair and maintenance

Noted

b) 16-18 February, Cherry Green Lane junction with U20: Surface Dressing Prep under road closure 7.30am-6pm

Noted

c) 16-18 February 2026, Cherry Green Lane road closure, Affinity Water

Noted

d) To receive update from Cllr Smith on reported faults and the costs and process for HCC or WPC to install speed indicator devices on A10

Cllr Smith was not present at the meeting

e) Update on application to Police and Crime Commissioner to fund vehicle activated devices to deter speeding on the A10

Cllr Cowler is waiting for a response from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) with advice and information on funding

26.10 VILLAGE DIRECTIONAL SIGNS

To review quotes

Quotes and images compared for directional 'fingerpost' signs on the village green and a simple village name sign at the village entrance. The preferred style for fingerposts is Leander, contact supplier for confirmation of quote, request village name sign in same style 1000 mm wide.

Resolved, Agreed unanimously

Supplier	Large finger post £	Byway finger post £	name sign 1200 x800 £	name sign 600x 400 £	P&P £	Total £	Comments	Raised lettering	Finial
Fitzpatrick Woolmer	1178.00	643.00	593.00	493.00	165.00	3072.00	2 arms quoted - double sided, name sign includes posts	Y	Y musket
The Sign Maker	2318.33	923.33	410.67	239.67	145.83	4037.83	3 arms quoted - single sided, name sign includes posts	Y	Y polo
Shelley Signs	1030.00	875.00	890.00			2795.00	2 arms quoted - double sided, name sign includes posts	N	Y polo
Croft Castings	1920.00	540.00			180.00	2640.00	3 arms quoted	Y	Y polo
Leander	2655.00				150.00	2805.00	4 arms quoted	Y	Y polo
Cheapest	Shelley Signs vinyl	Croft Castings	The Sign Maker						

26.11 RENEWAL OF GRASS CUTTING ARRANGEMENT

To confirm arrangement and price per cut for 2026 season

Resolved, retain present contractor and increase to £50 per cut. Agreed unanimously

26.12 RENEWAL OF LITTER PICKING ARRANGEMENT

To confirm arrangement and fee for 2026-27

Resolved, retain present contractor and increase to £55.50 per month. Agreed unanimously

26.13 DEFIBRILLATOR

To discuss upgrading the device at 10-12 years, present defibrillator in its eighth year

Current management service has been slow in responding to invoicing and parts enquiries

Resolved, Cllr Beaven to chase up the current service provider and if the response is not satisfactory, look to move to another company. Agreed unanimously

26.14 RISK ASSESSMENT

To receive an updated risk assessment from Cllr Debono (circulated to councillors)

Cllr Debono completed the risk assessment. The tiles on the pump roof continue to be monitored, no sign of water ingress

26.15 T&M GREG TRUST

To receive a report on activities (circulated to councillors)

Village Hall Project - four grants secured to help with roofing repairs to the hall and cottage to be carried out in summer 2026

Village Hall - electricity smart meter fitted, grant received from East Herts Council to upgrade the main hall's heating system in mid February, installing high heat retention electric storage heaters

Pilgrims Close Almshouses - trustees agreed to some repair and renovations at number 1 cottage

Village Hall Cottage - some property improvements and general repairs underway

Playground - monthly risk assessments continue

Allotments - one smaller allotment plot is available

Jackson's Meadow - ash tree on the boundary to be reduced in height this spring

Grazing field - continues to be rented for grazing

Recreation Field - WFC continue to maintain grass cutting and use the field for Sunday matches and training. Trustees are grateful to The Sword for use of its car park on Sundays

Next meeting - 20 April

26.16 CO-OPTION OF PARISH COUNCILLOR

To co-opt a new parish councillor and consider how to publicise the remaining vacancy
The council considered Luke Clifton as a candidate for co-option

Resolved, to co-opt Luke Clifton to fill the vacancy for the office of Parish Councillor for Westmill Parish Council, one vacancy remains. Agreed unanimously

Cllr Clifton signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and joined the meeting

26.17 CLERK'S REPORT

Items for information only

The expenditure limit under the Local Government Act 1972, s137 has risen to £11.60 per elector for 2026-27. Deadline for nominations to attend the Buckingham Palace Garden Party is 5 February. Government consultation on local government reorganisation is running for 7 weeks and begins sometime this month. Buntingford Town Council charity quiz night on 25 April. VAT return is awaiting outstanding invoices for defibrillator. A reminder that to retain the General Power of Competence in May 2027, the council should have elected members equal to or greater than two thirds the number of required councillors (ie coopted members do not count)

26.18 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

Proposed: 13 May, 2 September, 25 November 2026

The meeting closed at 8.08pm. The chairman thanked everyone for their contribution