



WESTBERE PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Amanda Sparkes

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TO: ALL MEMBERS OF WESTBERE PARISH COUNCIL: Councillors are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of Westbere Parish Council on **28 April 2023** in Westbere Village Hall at **7.00pm** for the transaction of the business described in the following Agenda

Amanda Sparkes

A SPARKES, CLERK TO THE COUNCIL

A G E N D A

Please note this is a rescheduled meeting from the original published date of 17 April 2023

1. The Chairman's opening remarks and reminder of rules for public participation during the meeting.
2. Apologies for absence.
3. TO NOTE the parish councillors to be elected for the Parish Council's Uncontested 4-yearly Election on 04 May 2023: Paul Glover, Sylvia Harlow, Kathy Wilson, Ken Dekker, Georgina Glover, Granville Glover and Dave Wilson. They take up office on 09 May 2023.
4. TO NOTE the Sturry ward is contested. Ward council results / the two Canterbury City councillors will be known on 05 May 2023.
5. Declarations of Interests.
6. To agree as a correct record the Minutes of the last meeting held **27 March 2023**
7. Parish Councillors' reports
8. **Adjournment of the meeting for Parishioners' questions and comments.**
9. Reports from County and City Councillors
10. **Planning matters**

CA/23/00657 - 4 Walnut Tree Lane, Westbere, CT2 0HG

Change of use of garage to dog-grooming clinic together with alterations to fenestration.

Comments by 12 May 2023.

Proposed response:

Westbere Parish Council has grave concerns regarding this proposal. Walnut Tree Lane is a narrow lane leading to a dead end with a minimal turning area. It has no pavements and joins Westbere Lane and Bushy Hill Road at a three-way junction where visibility is very poor. Although the village is covered by a 20mph zone, recently there was an accident involving damage to a parked car at this very junction. The entrance from Bushy Hill Road into Walnut Tree Lane is a blind corner into a narrow road where two cars are, essentially, unable to pass easily.

Therefore, any additional traffic should be considered with extreme caution.

Changing a garage into Dog Grooming Parlour will encourage traffic flow and increase noise levels in a quiet neighbourhood with nowhere to park. With the garage only being single-skin there is the very high probability of excess noise at times, particularly from dogs barking but also from the high velocity air dryers used by groomers. Sadly, this proposal would have a direct and severe negative impact on the neighbourhood.

CA/23/00509 - Rowans, 4B Church Lane, Westbere, CT2 0HA

Single-storey side extension following demolition of existing car port.

The parish council has no concerns or comments.

CA/22/01388 - Walnut Tree Livery, Bushy Hill Road, Westbere, CT2 0HE

Retrospective application for change of use of land to campsite in addition to existing use for livery/horse keeping. TO RECEIVE any update re this application.

TO NOTE any new applications that are validated prior to the meeting since the Agenda was posted.

Notifications: None this month.

For the Village Green application by The Two Fields Action to KCC for the Two Fields site:

A Public Inquiry will commence on 05 June 2023 at 10am in The Guildhall, Canterbury. A copy of the Inspector's Note setting out the procedure to be followed for the submission of evidence and the format that the Public Inquiry will take is available on the County Council's website at:

<https://letstalk.kent.gov.uk/>

TO NOTE that for the parish council's application to KCC for more footpaths to be registered, the Clerk asked the officer for an update – she advised on 17 April 2023 that she has checked the Schedule of Applications and the application is currently 9th in the queue. She therefore anticipates that it will be allocated to an officer in approximately 12 months' time.

TO RECEIVE Chairman's verbal update (if any) of latest meeting with Fordwich, Sturry and Westbere Parish council representatives re the Bretts owned Westbere Lakes/Fordwich site.

11. TO NOTE use of Section 101 Scheme of Delegation to the Clerk in conjunction with a minimum of two councillors since the last meeting: None.

12. **Finance** - Financial matters, including bank statements and bank reconciliations to be signed by a Councillor (not the Chairman), and Authorisation of payments, and initialling of invoices by two councillors.

TO NOTE that on 06 April 2023 the Clerk submitted an online VAT Refund claim for the period 01 July 2022 to 31 March 2023 totalling £634.40.

TO NOTE on 09 March 2023 the £500 Opportunities Fund grant from CCC Cllr Georgina Glover for a Replacement Storage shed at Westbere Village hall for use by Westbere Playgroup was paid. The new internal auditor questioned this. The Clerk confirmed the parish council will not purchase the shed. The internal auditor advised that the preschool should be asked to source and provide details of what they wish to buy and provide these details to the Clerk and formally request the £500 as a grant from the parish council towards it. The Clerk sent an email to the preschool on 06 April 2023 for this.

Parish council's Annual Insurance: TO NOTE The Long Term Agreement (LTA) is due for renewal on 01 June 2023 and if policy details remain unchanged, TO RESOLVE one of the following options: (i): A 3-year LTA premium of £608.95 OR (ii) A 1-year standard premium of £653.28

UPDATE Re request to CCC for three new bins at the three entrances to the village – Bushy Hill Road, Church Lane and the entrance to Westbere Lane – if the parish council purchase bins CCC has now given agreement to add them to the emptying schedule. CANENCO prefer litter bins that do not require a key. The Clerk has asked the officer for details of their preferred supplier and bin.

TO NOTE the Chairman has now received 'dual-waste' stickers from CCC – and TO DISCUSS actioning these.

13. **TO CONSIDER residents' request for more/a repeat print of the 'slow' wheelie bin stickers**
Cost is in multiples of 6 at £10.50 plus vat per sheet.

14. **Authorisation of online payments** (Chairman to sign Finance Appendix x2 for Minute book and Invoice file)

March 2023 further payments:

The Kent Tree Company Ltd – tree works in churchyard and felling of village green tree £2,760.00
Printing by CCC of the February 2023 newsletter £60.00

April 2023 payments:

Dynamix Consultancy Ltd – payroll for quarter ending March 2023 £25.20
Office supplies £70.97
Clerk April salary £533.60 and March mileage £59.15 - Mileage 91 miles, total payment £592.75
HMRC employee April 2023 £147.80
KCC LGPS Pension April 2023 £232.19
Dynamix Consultancy Ltd – year end return to HMRC and employee P60 preparation £24.00
Mrs D. O'Brien – for internal audit service for year ending 31 March 2023 £120.00
Kent Association of Local Councils annual subscription £201.94

BANK BALANCES - bank balances are as follows: At 31 March 2023: Unity Trust £25,124.41

15. **CCC capital grant**

TO NOTE it was agreed at the 27 March 2023 parish council meeting that for the CCC capital grant a residents' vote be sought at the Annual Electors' meeting on 24 April 2023 on whether to proceed or not with a pergola and Christmas lights on the village green. Assuming CCC agreement for changes, and based on residents' feedback (which will be available after this agenda is posted) the parish council now TO RESOLVE favoured option accordingly:

- i. Do nothing – keep the open space – decline the grant offer
- ii. Proceed with the pergola and lights – as per original grant application
- iii. Proceed with Christmas lights only in the hedge – grant figures revised as necessary
- iv. Proceed with the Christmas lights only on an alternative tree – grant revised
- v. Proceed with Christmas lights and a temporary Christmas tree, potentially each year. (Grant for lights only - A temporary tree does not meet capital criteria.)

16. For Annual Return 2022-2023

TO RESOLVE that Westbere Parish Council meets the criteria for 2022-2023 to be an exempt authority, and wishes to be an exempt authority, not subject to a Mazars external auditors review for that year.

TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE :

- i) The Year End Bank reconciliation to 31 March 2023 – year-end balance is £25,124.41
- ii) Office and Finance Risk Assessment
- iii) The Parish Council's Statement of Internal Control
- iv) The Parish Council's Statement of Accounting Policies
- v) TO NOTE the Internal Auditor conducted internal audit remotely on 03/04/2023 and 11/04/2023 and has completed Section 4 of the Annual Return – There are 3 negative responses to boxes C, D and L which may be explained as follows:

Box C: Relates to risks – The internal auditor drew attention to the need for a further parish council owned trees inspection, and to undertake and record assets inspections.

Box D: Appropriate reserves and budget: The internal auditor drew attention to High earmarked reserves and lack of unrestricted running costs/contingency levels.

Box L: The Transparency Code requires meeting paperwork as well as the Agenda to be published not later than 3 clear days before a meeting. (This has now been implemented with immediate effect.)

(The Internal Auditor's report and her full recommendations are detailed below and/or in the meeting paperwork to be considered later in the meeting)

- vi) Breakdown of Income, Staff Costs and All Other Payments in 2022-2023
- vii) The Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR Form Part 2) for the financial year ended 31 March for submission to PKF Littlejohn:
 - Section 1 : the Annual Governance Statement –

There are 2 negative responses to box No's 3 and 5, which may be explained as follows:

Box 3: Whilst previously payments and receipts have been published quarterly, and financial details included in meeting Minutes, to comply with The Transparency Code meeting paperwork including finance as well as the Agenda has to be published not later than 3 clear days before a meeting. (This has now been implemented with immediate effect.)

Box 5: For risks, earmarked reserves are too high leaving no running costs contingency, and the parish council owned trees are overdue an inspection.

TO RESOLVE to accept Section 1 in advance of approving Section 2 - and section 1 to be signed by the Chairman (and the Minute No. subsequently noted later)

- Section 2 : the Accounting Statements –

TO NOTE that the figures for 2021-2022 in Section 2 have been RESTATED as the £117.60 payroll services shouldn't be included in Box 4 Staff Costs – they are contractors and therefore an administrative cost, not a staff salary cost. Practitioner's guide states: "The amount in line 4 should comprise gross salary, employer's National Insurance, employer's pension contributions and any taxable allowances processed through the payroll" and "Payments for agency staff and other contractors should go into box 6".

TO RESOLVE to approve Section 2 – and when resolved Section 2 should be signed by the Chairman (and the subsequent Minute No entered later)

AND TO RECEIVE

- Statement of Variances proforma and the explanations of significant variances.
- Current Ear Marked Reserves schedule up to 31 March
- The Parish Council's Register of Fixed Assets at 31 March

AND TO NOTE that the council will make arrangements for the 30 working day period for the exercise of public rights irrespective of claiming exemption from a review, publishing, before 03 July 2023, the Notice of Public Rights (which MUST include the first 10 working days of July), along with Publication of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return Section 1 and Section 2 (approved and signed), along with a copy of the Internal Auditor's report, on both its parish noticeboard(s) and website

TO NOTE that the Accessibility Statement on the parish council's website has been reviewed.

17. Internal Auditors report – comments, suggestions and recommendations:

TO NOTE some recommendations are already implemented and the detail included/reported within this meeting Agenda.

TO NOTE the Code of Conduct and S101 Scheme of Delegation are now added to the policies page on the parish council's website.

TO NOTE End of Quarter payments and receipts reports to be signed by the Chairman in future.

TO DISCUSS AND RESOLVE outstanding Internal Auditor recommendations:

- TO CONSIDER provision of a council debit card.
- For bank mandate, to discuss and resolve Cllrs to be either signatories or non-signatories from May 2023.
- TO DISCUSS purchase and provision of a dedicated laptop for the Clerk.
- TO RESOLVE to add the Church flint walls to the parish council's insurance schedule.
- TO IMPLEMENT regular recorded inspections of parish owned assets.
- TO RESOLVE commissioning an arboriculturist tree inspection
- TO REVISIT earmarked reserves schedule and agree any new items, and any virements to unrestricted reserves.
- TO DISCUSS the gifting of the village green and recording of this on the website and Asset register.
- TO DISCUSS Accessibility compliance and testing of this of the parish council's website.
- TO NOTE that the Clerk will update the ICO's Model Publication Policy on the website.
- TO CONSIDER provision of dedicated .gov.uk emails for parish councillors from May 2023.

18. Clerk report – for anything not noted elsewhere on this agenda/meeting paperwork

19. TO CONSIDER any new residents that a Westbere Parish plan may be delivered to.

20. Closure of the meeting

Parish Council meetings: Friday 28 April, Mondays 15 May, 19 June, 17 July, 18 September, 16 October, and 20 November 2023.