

Minutes of the meeting of Westbere Parish Council held on Monday 15 July 2024 in Westbere Village Hall at 7.00pm.

Present: Parish Councillors:

Paul Glover (Chairman), Sylvia Harlow (Vice Chairman), Ken Dekker, Kathy Fielding, Dave Wilson, Georgina Glover, and Granville Glover.

KCC Cllr Alan Marsh (for part of the meeting)

Clerk to the Council, Amanda Sparkes.

5 residents

18. The Chairman's opening remarks

Cllr P. Glover welcomed everyone to the meeting. He reminded residents that whilst parish council meetings are meetings in and open to the public, they are not public meetings, and asked for adherence and respect about the public participation opportunity only in the adjournment:

19. Adjournment of the meeting for Parishioners' questions and comments.

A resident commented that he'd received a copy of a letter from Sir Roger Gale MP, sent to the Clerk/Parish council following residents' comments and correspondence to Sir Roger about the Bread and Cheese Field. Sir Roger had offered the council a meeting with him. Cllr P Glover confirmed the Clerk had communicated with Sir Roger but that no meeting was considered necessary yet.

Another resident explained that two residents of Westbere were at the Guildhall for the General Purposes Committee meeting being held at the same time as this parish council meeting – and which is making a recommendation about the Bread and Cheese Field boundary review.

A resident commented that they'd walked to the river/lakes, and seen the new WVPS benches, but padlocked gates prevent residents gaining access to the lakes area. Cllr P Glover confirmed that the public right of way is open but the lakes are privately owned and not open to the public. Some areas are under fisheries licences from Bretts. The resident felt that the restrictions were a shame. Cllr Wilson commented that this was one of the reasons the lakes have been identified by the parish council as a potential asset of community value. Cllr P Glover commented that Bretts won't want people unlicensed, or with dogs, for example.

Another resident commented that the hedging at the Bushy Hill Road junction onto the A28 is still affecting sightlines for drivers exiting. Cllr Dekker confirmed he'd contacted the KCC Warden for Hersden after the last meeting who has a works number for contractors. It has been trimmed a little some Cllrs believed. Cllr Dekker offered to speak to an alternative contract for a further cutback.

There were no further questions or comments. The meeting continued.

20. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from CCC councillors Cllr Harry McKenzie and CCC Cllr Keji Moses.

21. Declarations of Interests

Cllr Dekker advised he no longer works for Tesco. He will amend his DPI Form held with CCC.

22. Minutes of the last meeting held 17 June 2024

Cllr Dekker proposed and Cllr Harlow seconded and all councillors agreed they were a true record of the meeting, and the Chairman duly signed them.

23. Defibrillator – Now on the village hall since 24 May 2024. A training demonstration guide and

FAQS is at <https://vimeo.com/557677120/e7524918c5>

NOTED an offer has been made of a free hour-long practical training session (with donations to trainer welcomed by attendees) - The Chairman explained the trainer is free on Monday nights and after discussion RESOLVED he should set a date for such an event for late September if possible.

24. Feedback from village green event held Sunday 07 July 2024

The event was very well attended. It was held in the hall due to unfavourable weather which worked better for demographics of those attending, allowing sufficient seating, and space. Cllr P Glover advised the parish council will plan for holding the event in the hall next year. Cllr Dekker recorded a thank you to Cllrs P Glover, Georgina Glover and Granville Glover for all their efforts organising the event.

25. Parish Councillors' reports

Cllr Fielding advised that the Village Hall Management Committee's Secretary had written an update report – this has been circulated to all councillors by the Clerk.

Cllr Wilson and Cllr Harlow had nothing to report.

Cllr Dekker explained he'd reported faulty lights on Westbere Lane – these have now been fixed.

Cllr Georgina Glover advised several residents' properties have overhanging vegetation including the convent too – which makes walking around the village difficult. An article about this will be added to the next newsletter. Cllr Harlow reminded everyone that hedge cutting is not allowed in birdnesting season currently. Cllr Wilson advised KCC could help with enforcement if necessary. The clerk commented that requests to residents to deal with encroachments from their properties is a highways authority responsibility, not the parish council. It was agreed though that the Clerk and Chairman would do a walk about and identify households for a gentle reminder letter in the first instance.

Cllr Granville Glover spoke about blocked drains again – the Clerk explained that she had reported five but less than 28 days ago. She will check on the condition of the A28 drains – KCC Cllr Marsh asked to be kept informed to chase for the parish council.

Cllr P. Glover had nothing not already covered within the meeting agenda.

26. Report from City Councillors, Cllr Keji Moses and Cllr Harry McKenzie

CCC Cllr Keji Moses and Cllr Harry McKenzie's had given apologies, but also sent the following report to the meeting:

- Keji managed to get replacements for two benches on each end of Hillbrow Avenue (in Sturry).
- Harry dealt with an issue regarding polluted tarmac and an illegally parked roller on Popes Lane. KCCs cabinet member for highways provided formal correspondence.
- We are currently dealing with several cases in Sturry regarding housing which we are making progress on.
- We received a high volume of responses to our survey regarding the number 7 bus (especially from Broad Oak residents). We are going to arrange a follow-up meeting with Stagecoach and we'd be delighted if a representative from Sturry Parish Council could join us.
- Harry is liaising with the Environment Agency regarding foul water runoff from the Woodlands development in Broad Oak into Bluebell Woods.
- We are delighted to announce that 67 of the houses built on the Woodlands site in Broad Oak as part of the 30% requirement of affordable housing have been purchased by CCC to be used as council housing. The rents will be affordable rents (80% of market rate) and will be covered by housing benefit. The cost of buying them was £9.45million and will be paid for through capital receipts, selling unsuitable homes, and borrowing (debt to be paid back by rent income). Having been on a site visit earlier this year, we've seen the homes firsthand and they are of great quality - they will provide secure, cosy, and affordable accommodation to more people in our district and lower the waiting list. More information here:

<https://news.canterbury.gov.uk/news/main-item/lives-to-be-transformed-in-9-45-million-deal-for-67-affordable-homes/>

Please let us know of any matters arising for us in the meeting or any questions regarding our report.

Councillors Harry McKenzie and Keji Moses

27. KCC Cllr Alan Marsh

KCC Cllr Alan Marsh explained KCC options and policies needed to be changed due to changes in central government policies – there is a Full Council meeting on 18 July 2024. Streetlights in Fordwich, Sturry and Westbere are historical from when CCC had responsibility. The same for drains. He invited the clerk to send him copies of reports for any with problems.

There are five further weeks' of work on the Chestfield Tunnel for fans replacement but the contraflow system is working well.

Cllr Marsh explained he has already briefed five parish councils to be aware of planning – the rules and restrictions are to be diluted or changed.

He congratulated the parish council on provision of the new defibrillator.

Cllr Wilson commented that whilst he appreciated restricted budgets but for routine repairs, especially road repairs, patchwork doesn't solve the issues and asked what the policy was on what gets repaired and when and how more could be done during road closures. Cllr Marsh said KCC knows it has 5,500 miles of road but doesn't know how much funding will come from government – full resurfacing is expensive – and road closures are not always planned – for example utilities companies can close with no notice for emergencies. He confirmed KCC has its contracted teams for works.

Cllr Marsh left the meeting at this point.

28. Planning matters

Bread and Cheese field – currently in Hersden parish – Community Governance Review by CCC ended 20 May 2024 asking “*Should the parish boundary for Westbere be moved to incorporate the Bread and Cheese Field site?*”

The General Purposes Committee is meeting the same night as this parish council meeting. The committee report recommends that the field be returned to Westbere. The General Purposes committee recommendation goes to Full Council on 18 July 2024.

The Parish's application to record three public footpaths across “The Two Fields”

The parish council submitted an application in July 2019 to try and get 3 new paths across the Two Fields registered on the definitive map. This has now been allocated to a KCC officer (claim number C428).

The Clerk and Chairman met with the officer on 12 July 2024. Cllr P Glover explained that the reason the application has longer than normal is that the village green application would have meant this application was null and void so the village green application was heard and determined first. Whilst that was refused the Inspector's report will help the footpaths application. The outcome is likely to be a Public Inquiry and the timescale to be 12-18 months.

Canterbury District Local Plan

CCC's 12-week consultation on the latest Regulation 18 draft of the Local Plan closed on Monday 3 June.

Cllr Wilson advised that the Alliance of Canterbury Residents Associations (ACRA is pushing CCC to publicise all individual responses – and ACRA has written to public bodies for their responses too.

An update on the CCC website which outlines what happens next and when is [here](#).

The Indicative timetable is:

Analysis and consideration of consultation feedback, changes to the draft plan considered by the cross-party councillor working group	June 2024 to December 2024
Canterbury City Council's Cabinet and then Full Council to consider approval of revised draft plan for Regulation 19 consultation and submission to planning inspector	Expected January 2025
Regulation 19 consultation (six weeks)	Expected February/March 2025
Submission to Planning Inspectorate	Expected by 30 June 2025
Examination in Public	Expected to begin Autumn 2025

Neighbouring application to note:

CA/22/01845 - Land To The North Of Hersden, Canterbury, Kent, CT3 4HY

Proposal: Hybrid planning application comprising: Full planning application for development of 261 residential dwellings (including affordable housing); with vehicular, pedestrian and cycle access from A28 Island Road; open space; landscaping; internal roads and car parking; sustainable drainage system together with associated earthworks and infrastructure., Outline application (with all matters reserved) for up to 539 dwellings (including affordable housing); 1 ha of land for employment floor space (accommodating a café, use class E-b; office floorspace, use class E-g; light industrial, use class E-g); 0.8 ha of primary school extension land; new community building (use class F2); new sports pavilion (use class F2); open space, including equipped play, playing pitches and landscaping; mobility hubs; sustainable drainage system; landscape bund together with associated earthworks and infrastructure. Location:

The above application is being discussed by the Planning Committee on 23rd July 2024

CA/22/01388 - Walnut Tree Livery, Bushy Hill Road, Westbere, CT2 0HE – application still undetermined by CCC for Retrospective application for change of use of land to campsite in addition to existing use for livery/horse keeping. There is no update.

Appeal for CA/22/01158 - Walnut Tree Farm Walnut Tree Lane Westbere - Agricultural building for use of drying fruit and vegetables. Application ref: CA/22/01158 Appellant's name: Dr G Mason. Appeal ref: 3334121 Appeal start date: 3 April 2024. There is no update.

Notifications: None this month.

29. **Use of Section 101 Scheme of Delegation** to the Clerk in conjunction with a minimum of two councillors since the last meeting: None.

30. **Finance**

The June bank statements and bank reconciliations were signed by a Councillor, and the latest invoices initialled by two Cllrs.

NOTED a payment of £35.00 taken by direct debit on 21 June 2024 for the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) annual fee.

NOTED that on 01 July 2024 the Clerk submitted an online VAT refund claim for the period 01 March 2024 to 30 June 2024 totalling £371.83.

KCC Pension – policies review notification - The Clerk attended a KCC Pension Forum on 13 June 2024. Under the 2013 Regulations employers were required to make policy decisions under parts of the Regulations (the parish council joined the KCC scheme on 01 April 2016 and did this and approved its policy on 18 April 2017). TO NOTE KCC is now in the process of reviewing and updating its materials and it is anticipated that in September 2024 KCC will write out to all employers and will ask all employers to review their policies and will request a copy of the reviewed Employer Policy. The Clerk will watch for this notification.

End of Quarter One report of expenditure against budget

Cllr Wilson raised concerns about a budget overspend for the year and wanted a year end forecast. The Clerk will do this. She explained that quarter one has one off items of expenditure like the insurance premium, and the concurrent function payment usually fell in Quarter One but was not paid until July so will fall in Quarter Two's report.

Concurrent function funding for year 2024-2025 - Westbere Parish received its CFF Payment of £4,503 for 2024-2025 on 01 July 2024. (The Clerk attended the Canterbury Area Kent Association of Local Councils meeting on 27 June 2024 and under AOB asked that the Minutes Secretary seek an update from CCC re the audit/future of the concurrent function funding for parish councils).

CCC Capital grant of £1,095 paid towards two further replacement recycled benches on the village green. The Clerk ordered the seats on 29 May 2024 and they are now with the contractor awaiting installation by him.

Model Financial Regulations – RECEIVED revised Financial Regulations to reflect the new NALC Model template. The Clerk has explained that the values are either the NALC suggested values or based on the parish council's previous values. Cllr Dekker proposed and Cllr Wilson seconded and all councillors were happy to ADOPT these – although Cllr Wilson proposed a set without brackets around the financial values, for the Chairman to sign, and this was agreed. And NOTED the council's Financial Regulations will be replaced with the new version on the parish council's website.

C/fwd – suggestions/recommendations from Internal auditor – to come to a future meeting.

- i) That the Council researches interest bearing options for some of the council's finances.
- ii) Data Protection Act 2018 & GDPR: It is recommended that the Council conducts a data audit and keeps this on file.
- iii) Biodiversity policy – under the 2021 Environment Act, Parish Councils are required to develop a Biodiversity Policy. The Clerk will look at this and report back.

Village Hall insurance – a new updated legal document between The Diocesan Board, the PCC, Westbere Parish Council, plus now the hall committee also (as discussed over recent meetings) - to make the hall committee responsible for buildings cover for the hall as well, has been signed by Westbere Parish Council Chairman and Clerk, and two Westbere Village Hall committee representatives. Cllr Glover explained she'd given the 4 copies and covering letter to the PCC – the PCC Church warden has some queries and she's asked him to contact the Clerk. Once the PCC has signed then the Clerk will take/give all 4 x copies next to The Board for signing – with ultimately a copy signed by all 4 parties to be held and retained by each of the 4 parties.

31. Authorisation of online payments

The payments were listed on the agenda. The Chairman signed the Finance Appendix x2 for the Minute book and Invoice file.

J. P. Cabbage – rub down and paint handrails at village green yellow	120.00
J. P. Cabbage – clean and sand Paddy's bench in churchyard and coat with external oil	180.00
J. P. Cabbage - Refurbishment of Village Green sign and plaques on post	825.00
Clerk salary July and Mileage	578.05
HMRC PAYE and NIC July 2024	154.67
KCC LGPS Pension July 2024	246.15

32. Next inspection of the parish council's Assets

The next annual inspection is now due – the Clerk will undertake this.

Cllr Wilson suggested that the parish council's assets have plaques affixed to them to denote that they are parish council's assets – the Clerk will look at this and seek a quote.

33. **Whether the parish council should register with CCC assets in the village as Assets of Community Value, such as The Yew Tree pub**
 Community Right To Bid legislation came in as part of the Localism Act. It means that the parish council may look to getting assets of community value in the village added to a register of assets, held by Canterbury City Council, whereby if there is any notice of their disposal or sale, the parish council be notified and the parish council/community then have a limited amount of time to raise finance and have a right to bid to buy the asset before it can be sold on the open market. (If any assets are successfully added to the register, this gives a right to bid on an asset – but not a right to buy).
 As previously reported, residents and councillors feel that it is worth trying to register everything:
- The Yew Tree Pub
 - The Church
 - The village hall
 - The lakes
 - The Two Fields
 - The Bread and Cheese Field – but could be more difficult as it's currently not in Westbere but in Hersden parish, and the criteria for its inclusion as an asset used by the community might not be met.
- Cllr Wilson reminded councillors he has compiled a draft spreadsheet – this is to be further populated and All councillors to have input to it based on the questions asked on the application form. He urged all councillors to give comments on his document.
 He suggested that the Yew Tree Public House application be submitted first.
 (Then there is a need to think about priorities, risks, likelihood, and funding, prior to any submission).
34. **Clerk report** – The Clerk reported five x blocked drains on 26 June 2024
 Nothing else not noted elsewhere on this agenda/meeting paperwork.
35. **Neighbourhood Plans: “Locality” is the government sponsored neighbourhood planning team.** The clerk has booked on to two free Locality training surgeries: 16 July 2024 - Getting grant ready and preparing an application. And on 25 July 2024 - Preparing a neighbourhood plan - all you need to know about the process and support available.
 The Clerk will attend these sessions and gather more information and report back.
36. **Future Newsletters** – Cllr P Glover asked all councillors to think over the summer break what content the future newsletters will have – then the content will drive the format. He asked Cllrs to consider whether we should continue to do one? Just publish on the website or consider other methods of communications?
 Cllr Glover reminded councillors that not everyone is IT literate, and she suggested other parish councils' examples could be collected? Sturry don't do one, but the Clerk will speak to the Herne and Broomfield parish clerk.
37. **Community Pay Back Team possibility**
 Cllr P Glover advised he is still pursuing the possibility of help with the hall – possible interior painting and vegetation clearance of the bank in the hall garden area – by the Community Payback Team. The team needs access to a toilet so it needs to be a day when the Preschool is not in the hall. Availability is still being discussed and Cllr P Glover will liaise with the hall booking clerk before confirming any dates.
 It was noted that Newlands Care Home use the hall on a Friday morning and there are occasional weekend bookings. Cllr P Glover reiterated that final details are still tbc.
38. Any new residents that a Westbere Parish plan may be delivered to – None.

The meeting closed at 8.10pm.

Next Meeting dates: the third Monday of the month except none in August and December: 16 September, 21 October, 18 November 2024.

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 Signed: Cllr Paul Glover, Chairman

Date:

Please note these Minutes remain as draft Minutes until they are approved by the parish council at their next parish council meeting