



WESTBERE PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Amanda Sparkes. Tel: 07759 263725. Email: clerk@westbereparishcouncil.gov.uk

Website: westbereparishcouncil.gov.uk

TO: ALL MEMBERS OF WESTBERE PARISH COUNCIL: Councillors are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of Westbere Parish Council on **21 July 2025** 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 for 21 July 2025 parish council meeting

1. **The Chairman's opening remarks** and reminder of rules for public participation during the meeting – whilst parish council meetings are meetings in and open to the public, they are not public meetings, and to ask for adherence and respect about the public participation opportunity:
2. **Adjournment of the meeting for Parishioners' questions and comments.** The meeting will be adjourned for parishioners' questions and comments. *This is the only opportunity during the meeting for residents to speak.* The period for public participation will last no longer than 10 minutes and a single member of the public is afforded no more than 3 minutes to make their representation, with the discretion of the Chairman.
3. **The parish council meeting to now resume: there is no public participation from this point forward.**
4. **Apologies for absence.**
5. **Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**, Other Significant Interests & Voluntary Announcements of Other Interests, & reminder for any changes to the DPI register held at CCC, such as change of job or home.
6. **To agree as a correct record the Minutes of the last meeting held 19 May 2025**
7. **To receive feedback from Village Green Summer Party "Bread, Cheese and Ale Feast" event held Saturday 21 June 2025**
8. **Parish Councillors' reports**
9. Any update from the Chairman re the Community Payback Team to attend the village
10. **TO NOTE the Broad Oak reservoir Stakeholder Advisory Group meeting**, originally planned for June 18 will now take place on **Wednesday 10 September 2025**. However an update from South East Water about Ground Investigation works received 09 July 2025:
As the scheme progresses, to start supplying water by 2035, South East Water is now carrying out Ground Investigation work on the Broad Oak reservoir site.
From 21 July to end October 2025, Ground Investigation work will be carried out in agricultural fields in proximity to the reservoir site, to provide the information South East Water needs to assess the proposed location and move forward with the scheme. This means that machinery, personnel, a site office, vehicles and high levels of activity will be visible on site for the first time.
However, this is not construction work, and does not signal the start of the reservoir build – it is exploratory survey work to provide us with the data necessary to plan a reservoir design and build. It is not fracking, or drilling for substances, or detrimentally impacting wildlife.
How will this exploratory work affect local residents and businesses?
Ground Investigation works will take place during normal daytime working hours, and within noise limits which are set by the relevant local planning authority, to minimise disruption and impact to the environment. Unfortunately, there will be unavoidable noise and activity that may affect those living or working close by, and South East Water has contacted those whose land will be directly affected.
Find out more about the Ground Investigation works, and the Broad Oak reservoir project as a whole at www.southeastwater.co.uk/broad-oak.
11. **Reports from County and City Councillors**
12. **TO NOTE that the annual inspection of the parish council's Assets is now due and determine who will undertake this.**
13. **Planning matters**

Revised Canterbury District Local Plan timetable

Cabinet considered at its 16th June 2025 meeting a further updated timetable for the Local Plan

<https://democracy.canterbury.gov.uk/documents/g13837/Public%20reports%20pack%2016th-Jun-2025%2019.00%20Cabinet.pdf?T=10>

The revised NPPF was formally published in December 2024 and contained a series of amendments to national policies, including a significant increase in CCC's Local Housing Need figures. This has increased the minimum annual need figure from 1,149 at the time of the last Regulation 18 consultation to 1,216.

The government's deadline for submission of Local Plans for examination under the current system has also been formally extended to December 2026.

In response to these changes the council launched an additional Call for Sites exercise, with a particular emphasis on land availability from brownfield sites.

Given this background CCC will undertake a "focused" Regulation 18 consultation on a limited number of new or amended policies, before proceeding to the Regulation 19 stage

Timeline summary:

September 2025 – Focused Regulation 18 consultation on new or amended policies

Spring 2026 – Regulation 19 publication of submission version of Draft Canterbury District Local Plan

Autumn 2026 – Submission to Secretary of State for Examination

Winter 2027 – Adoption

New planning applications:

CA/25/01103 – Tree works in the Westbere Churchyards:

T20 Scots Pine located in the West churchyard- deadwood removal.

T02 Horse Chestnut located in the East churchyard- deadwood removal.

T10 Scots Pine located in the West churchyard- deadwood removal.

T19 Tree of Heaven located in the West churchyard deadwood removal.

T24 Oak located in the West churchyard- deadwood removal.

T28 located in the West churchyard- deadwood removal.

T05 Sycamore located in the East churchyard- prune 3-4 metres.

T08 Field Elm located in the West churchyard- prune 1-2 metres.

T12 Oak located in the West churchyard- secondary stem removal.

T16 Sycamore located in the West churchyard- prune 1-2 metres.

T17 Tree of Heaven located in the West churchyard- deadwood removal and secondary stem removal.

T21 Western Red Cedar located in the West churchyard- 30% reduction.

T22 Holly located in the West churchyard- fell.

T23 Western Red Cedar located in the West churchyard deadwood removal and prune 2-3 metres.

T25 Holly located in the West churchyard- prune 2-3 metres.

G01 Elder x4 located in the East churchyard- fell.

T03 Sycamore located in the East churchyard- sever ivy at the base.

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

Notifications:

CA/25/00124 - Old School House, 6 Church Lane, Westbere, CT2 0HA

Single-storey front extension. GRANTED by CCC

14. **Use of Section 101 Scheme of Delegation** to the Clerk in conjunction with a minimum of two councillors since the last meeting: None.
15. **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 Cllrs.
TO NOTE a payment of £47.00 taken by bacs on 21 June 2025 for the ICO Information Commissioner's Office annual renewal fee.
TO NOTE that on 02 June 2025 the Clerk submitted a VAT Refund Claim online for the period 01 July 2024 to 31 May 2025 totalling £362.35. This was paid in June.

TO RECEIVE an End of Quarter One income and expenditure report

Tree inspection – A visual tree inspection was undertaken on 04 April 2025. TO NOTE that the Clerk applied to CCC on 24 June 2025 to undertake tree works for the 18 trees that need work (– 16 in this financial year) hence the planning application above (some were exempt as removal of deadwood does not require permission).

TO NOTE that the Clerk undertook a site meeting with a tree surgeon on 10 June 2025 and TO DISCUSS quotes for the required tree works.

Internal Auditor Services for 2025-2026

TO CONSIDER quotes for Internal Audit service for year ending 31 March 2026.

Kent Pension Fund - Pooling of Town & Parish Council - Formal Consultation

TO NOTE that in preparation for the 31 March 2025 triennial valuation results, the Kent Pension Fund is formally consulting with town and parish councils currently participating in the Fund, on proposals to form a Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) funding pool specifically for town and parish councils as at 31 March 2025, with a possible universal LGPS pooled employer contribution rate for all involved, operative from 1 April 2026. (Full details on the Finance Appendix)

Bread and Cheese and Ale Feast event held 21 June 2025

TO NOTE Westbere Parish Council donation to this event totalled £200.71 (Made up as £100 Morris Dancers; £59 printing of tickets, leaflets and posters; and £41.71 Bookers invoice).

TO NOTE the event made overall profit of £252.02 which the WVPS paid to the Westbere Charities.

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

The Sustainable Printworks – printing of Bread and Ale Feast event leaflets, posters and tickets £59
Bourne to Garden – May grounds maintenance £350.00 (£291.67 excluding vat)
SMS CIS & Payroll Solutions Ltd – payroll services for April, May and June 2025 £36.00
Clerk salary and Mileage June 2025, £557.46, HMRC £196.78 and KCC LGPS Pension June £237.80
To WVPS for donation to Westbere Charities as part of the donation towards the Bread and Ale Feast event held 21 June 2025 £41.71
Bourne to Garden – June grounds maintenance £350.00 (£291.67 excluding vat) £350.00
Annual payment to the Clerk for use of own computer and printer £100.00
Clerk salary and Mileage July 2025, £557.66, HMRC £196.58 and KCC LGPS Pension July £237.80

BANK BALANCES - bank balances are as follows: At **30 June 2025**: Unity Trust £38,375.54.

17. CCC Capital Grants 2026-2027

TO NOTE CCC Parish Capital Grants for projects to be delivered in 2026-2027 is now open and closes on Tuesday 28th October 2025 – TO CONSIDER any capital project to apply for.

18. For Annual Return 2024-2025

TO NOTE that on 25 May 2025 the Clerk returned the Certificate of Exemption for the AGAR for 2024-2025 with other relevant information to the external auditors Forvis Mazars.

TO NOTE that on 02 June 2025 the Clerk made arrangements for the 30 working day period for the exercise of public rights publishing the Notice of Public Rights along with 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.

19. Internal Auditor's report – suggestions and recommendations:

- To carry out a Review of the Clerk's hours since the 01 January 2025 reduction in hours after six months (July 2025);
- The 2025 edition of the Practitioner's Guide has a new requirement for 2025-2026 that the parish council's website should meet the new minimum accessibility standard WCAG 2.2 AA – C/fwd: the Clerk to investigate this and report back.

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

A letter dated 17 June 2025 was posted to the Clerk, enclosing by way of service on the Parish Council (and all parish councils in the Canterbury district) a notice under section 45 of the local government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 Part II. The notice states the intention of Canterbury City Council's to pass a resolution that the provisions of Part II of the above Act (apart from section 45) are to apply throughout the area of the council.

Part II of the above Act contains the provisions relating to Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles. At CCC's request the Clerk acknowledged receipt of the letter on 19 June 2025.

The Act can be found at: [Local Government \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) Act 1976](#)

21. WVPS benches: As reported to the May 2025 parish council meeting, last year WVPS paid for and installed (with support from Bretts) two benches on the riverside between Fordwich and Westbere. One of those benches has been removed and is presumed to be lost in the river. The Kent Wildfowling and Conservation Association has offered to install a replacement. WVPS has no insurance cover for these assets. It was resolved therefore that the parish council approach the WVPS to discuss offering to WVPS that the parish council takes over ownership of the one remaining bench and adds it to the parish council's insurance schedule (which will bring an uplift in the insurance premium which the parish council would meet). The Clerk has done this and WVPS will discuss this at its 15 July 2025 meeting.

(There is a need to understand if WVPS has an intention for a new replacement bench and whether that cost will be met by the WVPS? And if WVPS would like the parish council to insurance one or more there will be the need for the transfer of ownership of the bench(es) in writing from the WVPS. Plus thoughts about the benches being on private land; and also which body would be liable for their future maintenance responsibility).

22. **Two Fields "ransom strip" running between the two fields and option for the Parish Council to acquire it.** As reported to the May 2025 parish council meeting, Cllr Wilson has had a conversation with one of the 5 local shareholders of the company which owns the "ransom strip" running between the two fields. He understands that the majority of the shareholders would like to close the company, and one option which maintains control of the ransom strip might be for the Parish Council to acquire it at little or no cost. Even if there would be no cost there would clearly be legal costs involved, depending on the mechanism for the transfer e.g. taking over the shares of the company would be small cost, a legal transfer of the land would obviously have more costs attached. If Westbere Parish Council takes over this land then protection from development would be retained. It was resolved at the May 2025 meeting that Cllr Wilson, Cllr P Glover as Chairman and the Clerk as the Proper Officer, formally discuss it with the shareholders on a no-commitment basis, at this point in time, to learn more and consider implications and future benefits/liabilities and future maintenance responsibilities etc that a transfer might bring to the parish council. Cllr Wilson agreed to find out the landowners' availability for a meeting.
Update: No meeting has taken place yet - the shareholders have to have a discussion to see if they all agree, and if not whether there is a mechanism to force the minority to accept the majority decision. Feedback is awaited.
23. **Welcome Pack** – to consider any new households to receive this
24. Closure of the meeting

Meeting dates for 2025: - The parish council meets bi-monthly on the third Monday of each month: 21 July, 15 September, 17 November.