



WEST DEAN PARISH COUNCIL

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FULL COUNCIL MINUTES

Meeting Date: Wednesday 27th November 2024

Location: Pillowell Village Hall, Pillowell

Present: Cllrs A Bruce (Chair), B Freshwater, S Dunford, M Costley, J Richmond, R Chance, S Lewis, A Betensen & D Wheeler

Clerks: K Carpenter & P Holland

(These minutes are still in draft form until approved at a subsequent meeting of the Council)

PUBLIC FORUM

8-10 members of the public were in attendance.

A member of the public wanted to bring the Councils attention to the flooding of their home during Storm Bert and that this water was coming from the retaining wall, which also forms part of the foundation for Lower Road, Pillowell. They had contacted Severn Trent to be told it was a Highways issue, they are aware that it's a land drainage issue under the highway and the wall is scheduled for repair but has not yet been completed.

It was suggested that Councillors J Dale from FoDDC and B Hoyland from GCC be contacted about this issue but Cllr A Bruce added that she would be taking this forward.

A member of the public came to provide information about a well-attended meeting held on Monday 25th November about the Nags Head Inn and their plans to have the inn registered as an Asset of Community Value, this plan is gaining support within the community.

Cllr Bruce advised that she bring the proposed motion from Cllr S Dunford forward from the chair's items.

24111	<u>Council Formal Business</u>	
24111.1	Apologies Apologies for absence were received from: Cllr S Francis – Hospital Cllr B Evans – Illness Cllr S Yeates – no reason given Cllr A Grant – Family issues Cllr A Moore – Family issues	

Signed by Chair _____ Date _____

	FoDDC Cllrs J Dale and B Llewellyn – prior commitments at FoDDC Apologies for absence were approved by Council where a valid reason was given.	
24111.2	Declarations of Interest No declarations of interest were received at this point of the meeting, but Councillors were reminded of the need to make a declaration of interest if they need to during the meeting.	
24111.3	Minutes of the Previous Meeting The minutes of the meeting held the 30th October 2024 were proposed by Cllr Bruce as an accurate record of the meeting, this was seconded by Cllr Dunford and agreed by resolution of Council. There were some actions for the Clerk to chase officers from FoDDC about letters and emails sent requesting information.	
24111.4	County and District Reports No District or County Councillors were present to provide a report, but the FoDDC Councillors had previously shared brief email updates for Council. It was noted that the staff were delighted at their return to FoDDC.	
24113.4	Chairs Items The following motion was proposed by Cllr Dunford – That West Dean Parish Council submit the application to have the Nags Head Inn, Yorkley to be considered for listing by the Forest of Dean District Council as an 'Asset of Community Value'. In submitting this application, it is noted that WDPC are acting on behalf of the community of Yorkley and Oldcroft and the Community Interest Group established on 25th November 2024. The motion was seconded by Cllr freshwater. There was a discussion about what makes this particular pub significantly different from others locally. The issue that many local communities were facing was the potential loss and closing of a public house with the potential for a change of use to the building. Many Councillors felt that communities needed to be more aware of this potential loss of a local pub and start to think about how they could protect these important places for socialising etc from closure. The Chair called for a vote on the motion, as there had been no amendments proposed, and the vote was unanimously in supporting the submission of the application. Cllr Wheeler also wanted it noted that the Planning Appeal opened on the 25th November and written submissions could be made to the Planning Inspector until the 30th December 2024.	Submitted 9/12/24

Signed by Chair _____ Date _____

	The members of the public left the meeting following this resolution. There was some general discussion about the potential Government grant funding available to purchase such buildings.	
24112	<u>Items for Consideration and Resolution</u>	
24112.1	Finance and Staffing The budget information for WDPC and WDC was noted by Council with no questions being asked.	
24112.1i	The October 2024 expenditure payment schedule, Direct Debits, Standing Orders, and credit card transactions totalling WDPC = £16,078.11 excluding VAT and WDC = £2,043.04 excluding VAT were proposed by Sd , seconded by JR and agreed by resolution of Council.	
24112.1ii	Cllrs Costley and Dunford were selected to approve the December payments.	
24112.1iii	Cllrs A Bruce and M Costley are to authorise payments on the banking system for WDPC and WDC.	Completed 28/11/24
24112.1iv	It was noted that Cllrs A Moore & B Freshwater will undertake the November financial inspection of the WDPC and WDC accounts.	
24112.1v	The Clerk recommended that the precept be increase by 2% to £229,357 this was proposed by DW, seconded by JR and approved by resolution of Council. Cllr Bruce wanted her thanks to the Clerk for her work on this budget proposal.	
24112.1vi	There was some discussion about the West Dean Centre budget as it was currently running at a loss. During the budget meeting it was proposed and accepted that the WDCMC would revisit the budget and provide a costed business plan within 6 months for Councils consideration. BF added that this need to be done in an open and transparent manner so that Council knows the issues and may require a change of policy as the parish office is also based in the building. There was concern from some councillors about this situation and others also detailed other centres which were also operating at a loss. There was also a need to add an additional Councillor to the management committee, as there should be 5 nominated councillors but there is currently only 4. Cllr Bettensen volunteered to take up this vacant position, which was agreed by resolution of Council.	
24112.1vii	Cllr Freshwater gave a brief update of the October financial inspection, where all information was found to be good, and all questions were answered satisfactorily by the Clerk.	
24112.2	Clerks Reports It was proposed by DW , seconded by JR and agreed by resolution of Council that meeting be closed to the public Under the Public Bodies (admission to Meetings) Act 1960, 2. The Clerks recommendation was proposed by JR, seconded by BF and agreed by resolution of Council to contract with a provider for 5yrs rental of a MFD.	Actioned 5/12/24

Signed by Chair _____ Date _____

	The meeting was then reopened to the public. There was some discussion about the old BT boxes, and it was agreed that we need to promote their use and call for community groups to take over their use through the newsletter and social media sites. There was also discussion about selling those not taken on by a community group within a predetermined timeframe. BF advised that the parish had purchased these as they wanted to keep them as part of the local character of the villages and that any that were taken on by a community group should have official agreements and also understand any safety issues with the electrics. ACTION – Newsletter article to be written with examples of good practice to encourage community take up of the BT boxes. The Clerks recommendation was proposed by SD, seconded by BF and agreed by resolution of Council. There was much discussion about the difficulties that arise from remote meetings, especially hybrid ones and there were concerns raised about the loss of privacy especially when backgrounds are blurred or replaced as you don't know who else might be in the room with the participant. It was generally agreed that if all participants were meeting remotely it was ok, but still very difficult to manage and monitor but there were also concerns about older members struggling with technology. It was agreed that the Clerk would submit a response to the Remote attendance and proxy voting consultation on behalf of Council based on this discussion and the recommendations from the report. ACTION – Clerk to submit consultation response.	Submitted 9/12/24
24112.3	West Dean Centre Management Committee & Deputy Clerks report To receive and approve the minutes of the West Dean Centre Management Committee held on 24th October 2024 and to approve the following recommendations: The placement of an advert in the Forest Bee to promote the centres facility at a cost of £15 for three editions was discussed and BF proposed this be done, this was seconded by MC approved by resolution of Council. ACTION – Deputy Clerk to arrange for advert to be placed. There was a discussion about the purchase of an additional baby changing facilities for the exterior public toilet and also family toilet seats to be installed in the internal ladies & gents, disabled and the external public toilets. It was proposed that WDPC purchase the baby changing facility and one family toilet seat and the remainder be purchased by WDC. This was agreed by resolution of Council. ACTION – Orders to be placed for these items.	Ordered on 3/12/24

Signed by Chair _____ Date _____

	The Deputy Clerk also spoke about the broken WDC Christmas decorations and was seeking Councils approval to purchase new decorations. SD proposed that a budget of £100 be allocated, this was seconded by BF and agreed by resolution of Council. ACTION – Deputy Clerk to arrange purchase of decorations The West Dean Centre roof needs tiles replaced and although quotes had been sought from a number of providers only 1 had responded, the Deputy Clerk also wanted it noted that the Friends of Bream Community Centre had funds which would cover the costs of these works. Cllr Freshwater declared an interest as he knew the builder and would therefore not be voting on this matter. This proposal was agreed by resolution of Council and they also requested that the builder be asked to check the damp patch in the main hall. ACTION – Deputy Clerk to arrange for works to be completed.	Purchased 3/12/24
24112.4 24112.4i 24112.4ii	Road Safety and Traffic Calming The following motion was proposed by Cllr Richmond to purchase two additional vehicle solar powered activated signs whilst Elan City have a discounted offer which runs until the end of December. There is sufficient budget for this purchase. This motion was seconded by BF and agreed by resolution of Council. ACTION – Clerk to arrange purchase with Elan City. The following motion was proposed by Cllr Richmond to purchase white gates for the entrance to Ellwood as a traffic calming measure and to try and make drivers aware they are entering a village and close to a primary school. The costs is slightly above the agreed amount set at the June 2024 meeting of Council by some £300 but these costs do not include installation. There was some discussion about the potential options for installation and it was agreed that these would be explored prior to purchase of the gates, which could be held over until April 2025. This proposal was seconded by BF and agreed by resolution of Council. ACTION – Clerk to discuss installation with GCC Highways Area Manager and Community before order is placed. Deputy Clerk to speak to supplier to establish if price can be held.	Order placed 4/12/24 – delivered 6/12/24
24112.5	Cannop Ponds Update Cllr S Lewis proposed a motion to contact Forestry England for a full update of the works and progress for the Cannop Valley and in particular Cannop Ponds. This became a discussion about the recent flooding due to Storm Bert and the need for WDPC to engage with Forestry England and the GCC Flood Team so that we were aware on a strategic level local plans etc for such events. Cllr Bruce suggested that rather than approaching for an update being involved in discussions and information sharing would provide more	

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	opportunities for closer working on flooding issues with FE and other agencies including the District Council flood officer. ACTION – Clerk to request a presentation update from Forestry England and also engage with LTC flood group via the Clerk.	
24113	<u>Items for Information – Councillors to note.</u>	
24113.1	Planning Committee The minutes of the Planning Committee held on 5th & 19th November 2024 were noted and approved by Council. BF proposed that Standing Orders 10, a)x be suspended to extend the time limits for speaking to allow an additional 30mins for the completion of the meeting, this was agreed by resolution of Council.	
24113.2	Chairs Items There was a discussion about the need to identify local flood wardens for Parkend and Whitecroft following the recent flooding due to Storm Bert. The role is to make people aware of flood warnings and report back to GCC, who provide the training for the wardens. This discussion moved onto the need to develop the Emergency Planning document and the liaison with village halls and community centres about opening etc and also the need to co-ordinate with FoDDC on these plans. AB advised that this item would be discussed at the next Climate & Biodiversity Committee meeting to be held on 19th December 2024. Cllr Freshwater raised the issue of flooding at the Gamekeeper Inn, Five Acres and the difficulties that were being experienced with response from the GCC Highways Area Manager and suggested that meetings with senior officers needed to be arranged. Cllr Bruce also mentioned the contact from Forest Fighting Fit following the flooding in Parkend and it was suggested that they be advised to contact FoDDC, their landlord and insurers for assistance. Cllr Dunford wanted to thank WDPC on behalf of Yorkley Community Centre for the grant award and advised that the production was scheduled for the coming weekend. ACTION – Clerk to email reminders to all about the Christmas Drinks at the Fountain Inn, Parkend on Wednesday 11th December at 8pm. The meeting closed a 21:45	Email with this advice sent 9/12/24 Email sent 9/12/24
24103.5	Public Round-up – 10 minutes A time set aside for any members of the public to comment or ask further questions about agenda items following the meeting.	

Signed by Chair _____ Date _____

24093.5	Public Round-up – 10 minutes				
	As all members of the public had left the meeting following Agenda Item 24092.4 there was not public round-up session.				
24094	<u>Forthcoming Meeting Schedule:</u>				
Nov-24					
Tues	4th November 2024	5.00pm	Planning Committee	West Dean Centre	
Thurs	14th November 2024	1:30pm	Budget Setting Meeting – Closed Session	West Dean Centre	
Thurs	14th November 2024	7:30pm	Budget Setting Meeting – Closed Session	West Dean Centre	
Tues	19th November 2024	11.00am	Governance & Scrutiny	West Dean Centre	
Tues	19th November 2024	5.00pm	Planning Committee	West Dean Centre	
Weds	27th November 2024	7.00pm	Full Council	Pillowell Village Hall	
Dec-24					
Tues	3rd December 2024	5.00pm	Planning Committee	West Dean Centre	
Tues	17th December 2024	2:30pm	Highways & Footpaths Committee	West Dean Centre	
Tues	17th December 2024	5.00pm	Planning Committee	West Dean Centre	
Thurs	19th December 2024	4:30pm	Climate & Biodiversity Committee	West Dean Centre	
NO FULL COUNCIL MEETING THIS MONTH					
WEST DEAN PC WISHES ITS RESIDENTS A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS					
1	The Public Questions & Comments is designed to give electors the opportunity to make representations to the Council or to ask questions. It takes place before the formal meeting of the Council.				
2	The time allocated to the whole period of the open forum is 30 minutes.				
3	Whether your attendance is part of a deputation or as an individual, the spokesperson will be invited to put the case with a maximum time limit of 10 minutes. Follow up speakers will be allowed 5 minutes in total. Speakers may only speak once.				
4	The Chair will decide whether he/she can advise the deputation immediately or if he needs to sound out members and/or consult the Clerk. The Chair will then inform the deputation what action the Parish Council intends to take.				
5	The initial response by the Council will be to establish if the matter is something which the Council should be involved in as a matter of public interest or is a private matter for the electors to deal with themselves.				
6	What the Council may not be able to do at this initial stage is to attempt to solve the actual problem itself. What the Council will do is to decide the best method to deal with the problem and this can take several forms as follows – The Council can decide - (i) The degree to which the Council can act as advocate on behalf of the individual or group of electors. (ii) To refer the matter to a Committee of the Council for action. (iii) To place the matter on a future Parish Council agenda. (iv) To instruct the Clerk to make further enquiries or conduct correspondence on behalf of the deputation or arrange meetings as considered necessary. (v) If the matter is already on the Council agenda the Chair will invite electors to make any points they feel are relevant regarding the agenda item. The deputation can then remain and listen to the debate in Council.				

Signed by Chair _____ Date _____

(vi)	If, during the formal meeting, the Chair feels that the deputation has information which will be useful to the Council, the Chair with the agreement of members can invite a spokesperson to address the Council.	
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