WEST DEAN PARISH COUNCIL

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GOVERNANCE & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting held on 17th March 2026

Present: **Cllrs S Francis, A Grant, S Dunford, J Richmond, S Lewis & B Freshwater**

Clerks: **P Holland**

	MINUTES	ACTION
1	**Apologies** Apologies were received from Cllr S Yeates	
2	**Declaration of Interest** None	
3	**Minutes of the last meeting** The minutes of the meeting held on 20th January 2026 were proposed by Cllr Grant, seconded by Cllr Francis and agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.	
4	**Scrutiny & Review of Council Policies & Procedures**	
4.1	▪ Capability Procedure vr1 was reviewed with no amendments required. ▪	**Recommendation to present the Policy to Full Council for adoption**
	▪ Conflict of Interests Policy & Procedure vr1 was reviewed, Cllr Freshwater proposed an amendment to the first point under "What Types of interests need to be declared?" to include "where financial benefits accrue to **Councillors** or to" Cllr Richmond proposed an amendment to the end of this point to add the word **associate t**o the list. This was agreed by all present.	**Recommendation to present the Policy to Full Council for agreement of amendments and adoption.**
	▪ Councillor Co-Option Policy & Procedure vr1 was reviewed, Cllr Dunford proposed an amendment be made to the Application Form taking out the question "**Please tell us something about the life experience**" and replace it with "**Please briefly tell us about what you can bring to the Council"** This was agreed by all present	**Recommendation to present the Policy to Full Council for agreement of amendments and adoption.**

	▪ Member Absence and Apologies Policy vr1was reviewed, Cllr Freshwater proposed an amendment to "This will include " point 1 to read "**Attendance at meetings of the Full Council and Sub Committees."** Taking out point 2 and an amendment to point 3 to read "Responding to correspondence from officers **directly relating to Council Business".** Cllr Dunford proposed an amendment to the first paragraph under "Non-attendance at Meetings" to add the sentence **" Dealing with correspondence does not equate to attendance at meetings".** This was agreed by all present. ▪ Privacy Notice vr1 was reviewed with no amendments required. ▪ Probationary Policy and Procedure vr1 was reviewed, Cllr Grant proposed that this document be thinned out to remove non-essential reviews and brought back to the next Governance and Scrutiny Committee meeting. This was agreed by all present It was also noted that the Clerk was still to expand the IT Policy version 2 for next Governance & Scrutiny meeting.	**Recommendation to present the Policy to Full Council for agreement of amendments and adoption.** **Recommendation to present the Policy to Full Council for adoption** **Cllr Grant to liaise with Clerk to amend document and put to next meeting.** **Clerk to expand IT Policy and put to next meeting.**
5 **5.1** **5.2** **5.3**	**New Policy Requirements** The committee discussed the need for an Infrastructure Policy/ Framework to ensure that the correct process is followed in any future projects. It was agreed that there was a need to define what constituted an Infrastructure Project. Cllr Freshwater agreed to produce a document for the next meeting. The new VAS Policy & Procedure, was discussed and after some discussion it was agreed that this document would be revisited for amendments and updates, and brought back to the next meeting. The new Risk Management Policy – to be used in conjunction with the Risk Management Schedule was discussed, Cllr Grant proposed an amendment to section 6, point 5 "Monitoring and Review" to read "Risks are reviewed **annually**" This was agreed by all present	 **Item for next meeting.** **Item for next meeting.** **Recommendation to present the Policy to Full Council for agreement of amendments and adoption.**
	Cllr Francis asked if there was anything else that needed to be discussed. Cllr Lewis asked about the Chair's authority to remove items from an agenda without discussion with the Cllr who requested it. After full discussion Cllr Freshwater proposed that a new paragraph be added into Standing Orders, section 3 Meetings generally, to read	**Recommendation to present Policy to Full Council for agreement of**

	"**Any meeting agenda shall be constructed by the Clerk in liaison with the chair of the Committee"** This was agreed by all present. Cllr Dunford then proposed that another sentence be added to this to read "**Any item put forward to an agenda shall not be refused without discussion and agreement with the proposer, unless it contravenes Standing Orders, or would be best placed on a Sub Committee agenda**". This was agreed by all present.	**amendments and adoption.**
7	**Date of Next Meeting** The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 19th May 2026 at 11.30am. It was agreed that this would be held at Cllr Francis address. The meeting closed at 12.30pm	