



WEST DEAN PARISH COUNCIL (WDPC)

Jo Miles
Clerk to the Council

Phil Holland
Deputy Clerk

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FULL COUNCIL MINUTES

Date Issued: **xx.xx.xx**

Meeting Date: **Wednesday 26th August 2026 @7pm**
Location: **West Dean Centre, High Street, Bream**

Present: Cllrs S Lewis (Chair), A Grant, S Dunford, B Freshwater, S Yeates, A Batchelor, M Costley and M Bennett

Also Present: District Cllrs J Dale & B Llewellyn
County Cllr L Challis

Clerks: J Miles & P Holland

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

	Public Forum:	
	There were no Members of the Public in attendance of this meeting.	
26080	<u>County & District Reports</u>	
	Cllr Hoyland gave a verbal report to Council including • Her response to the Reablement query posed by WDPC. • The extension to Forest Road , road closure until June 2027 • Whitecroft to Lydney, Road Closure - this is not the main road into Lydney but the link from Park Hill to Bream Road. • The major road closure from Parkend through to Viney Hill in October/November 2026 Cllr Freshwater asked if Cllr Hoyland could confirm if these works would be daytime or overnight? Cllr Hoyland advised it would be daytime but would be closed in stages as it was such a long stretch of road being closed. Cllr Batchelor asked if she would be contacting the Doctors Surgery to advise them of the details, and Cllr Hoyland confirmed she would contact the surgery and the school. Discussion was also held on the legal reasoning behind the diversions.	Clerk to arrange meeting with GCH

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	The Clerk advised the Council that County Highways had offered to meet with them to explain the extension to the Forest Road, road closure, this offer was accepted by Council and the Clerk was asked to arrange this meeting. Cllr Freshwater spoke on the reablement service changes, Cllr Hoyland advised Council that these changes had been agreed in July 2025, but there is a motion to have a 6-month review of the changes, County Cllrs will pose questions to the next County Full Council Meeting. Cllr Challis gave a verbal report to Council including • Japanese Ambassador's visit to Suntory, which included our MP Matt Bishop, and the local grant funding they have available at present. • The Battle of Coleford, which she had attended. • And the upcoming consultation regarding the 20mph zones which will include the Bream area. This gave rise to discussion on the best areas for this to be rolled out.	
	Cllr Dunford arrived at 7.07pm	
26081	<u>Council Formal Business</u>	<u>Actions Completed</u>
26081.1	Apologies The following apologies for absence and reasons were received:- • Cllr Betenson - Holiday • Cllr Richmond – Holiday • Cllr Crick – Work Commitments These were proposed for acceptance by Cllr Batchelor seconded by Cllr Freshwater and agreed by resolution of Council by Council and noted. It was noted that there were others missing who had not sent apologies.	
26081.2	Declarations of Interest • Cllr Yeates declared he is a Heritage Expert and also a trustee of Berry Hill Memorial Institute.	
26081.3	Mintes of the Previous Meeting The minutes of the previous meeting held on 29th August 2026 were reviewed, and these were proposed by Cllr Freshwater, seconded by Cllr Batchelor and accepted by resolution of Council as an accurate record	
26082	<u>Items for Consideration and Resolution</u>	
26082.1	Finance The budget monitoring information for WDPC and WDC was noted	
26082.1i	The August 2026 expenditure payment schedule, Direct Debits, Standing Orders, and credit card transactions totalling WDPC = £13,321.44 exc. VAT and	

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26082.1ii 26082.1iii 26082.1iv 26082.1v	WDC = £946.59 exc. VAT were received and proposed by Cllr Costley, seconded by Cllr Dunford and agreed by resolution of Council. It was noted that Cllrs Dunford & Grant are to authorise payments on the banking system for WDPC & Cllrs Grant & Richmond for the WDC. It was noted that Cllr's Batchelor & Yeates will undertake the August 2026 financial inspection of the WDPC and WDC accounts. Cllr Bennett advised Council that the July 2026 financial inspection dated 10.08.26 giving a reconciled bank balance for WDPC of £296,441.39 and WDC of £38,206.98 including transactions for WDPC totalling £57,461.35 and WDC totalling £5,816.23, which was undertaken by Cllrs Bennett and Betenson had not raised any issues. The final External Auditors Report and Certificate 2025/26 was considered and discussed, with the Clerk giving an explanation where needed of actions required, which included • to ensure that a minute reference for the 2027/28 budget, being formally approved by the Council is noted. • Financial Regulations and Standing Orders to be updated as per the Internal Auditors response. • We noted that WDPC provided the appointed Auditor with an adequate explanation for noncompliance and details of the action necessary to address weaknesses identified. • To ensure the correct information in the notice of Public Rights (Internal Auditors Report) is published in future years. Acceptance of this was proposed by Cllr Freshwater, seconded by Cllr Yeates and agreed by resolution of Council.	Email sent 27.08.26 for payment authorisation. Financial Inspection arranged for 2.30pm on 03.09.26
26082.2	Noise Complaint Rising Sun, Moseley Green. Discussion was held on the noise complaint at the Rising Sun, Moseley Green, which had been brought to Council's attention. After some discussion on the local culture and tourism this attracted and the cause of this complaint, that being live music events throughout the Summer, usually held between 3pm to 5pm. Cllr Freshwater proposed that WDPC support the Rising Sun with regard to the live music events held in the Summer but would ask that they show due diligence towards their neighbours, and ensure they comply with the law, seconded by Cllr Yeates and agreed by resolution of Council.	Clerk to write letter of support.
26082.3	Road Closure, Forest Road, Lydney The extension to the road closure for Forest Road Lydney, had already been discussed as part of Cllr Hoyland's report.	
26082.4	New West Dean Parish Council representative for 'The Health Forum' The election of a new West Dean Parish Council representative for 'The Health Forum' was discussed with a decision being made that WDPC would not appoint a new representative at this time.	
26082.5	Election of Vice Chair of Finance Committee The election of a Vice Chair of Governance & Scrutiny Committee was discussed. Cllr Grant explained that this committee only met when necessary	Clerk to write to Cllr Betenson

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	and being Vice Chair was not too onerous. After much discussion it was suggested that an invitation be sent to Cllr Betenson to take up this position.	
26082.6	Forest of Dean Biosphere Cllr Freshwater asked Council, after the last meeting, if they thought WDPC should Write to UNESCO about WDPC position on the Forest of Dean Biosphere bid. Cllr Dunford suggested that the Council should wait until after the meeting which had been arranged with Forest of Dean District Council, as this would show due diligence. After further discussion it was agreed that the Clerk would try to get a good turnout of Councillors to attend the meeting and Cllr Freshwater was asked to draft a letter to be brought back to the next Full Council Meeting.	Clerk to remind Cllrs of importance of attending the meeting with FODDC Cllr Freshwater to draft letter for next Full Council meeting.
26082.7	Christchurch Graveyard The complaint/e-mail received from a member of the public about the conditions in the graveyard was discussed with Cllr Costley giving some background on the person who used to do a lot of the maintenance, who had unfortunately passed away, with no-one picking up the extra work. After further discussion it was agreed that it should be noted that as the graveyard was still active, and under the ownership of the PCC, WDPC could not take on the responsibility of grass cutting. This was proposed by Cllr Freshwater, seconded by Cllr Grant and agreed by resolution of Council. Cllr Freshwater asked that thanks be given to the Clerks for their professionalism in handling this complaint.	
	Cllr Yeates left the meeting at 8.36pm	
26082.9	FDG Update Cllr Dunford asked that this item be discussed before item 26082.9, as it had a bearing on that item too. This was agreed by all present. Cllr Dunford gave a verbal update on the position of the Planning Application for the Forest of Dean Gateway. Including all the work to documents and reports which had been done at the Planning Officers request, and now submitted to the Planning Officer for the FODDC Planning meeting in October. Cllr Freshwater asked that thanks be minuted for all the work which Cllr Dunford had done on this project to ensure it did not just die in the water. This was seconded by Cllr Lewis and agreed by resolution of Council. Cllr Dunford thanked Council for this but stated it was a team effort.	
26082.8	NatureSpace District Licensing: Forest of Dean Gateway (202102011) Cllr Dunford explained that money had been promised by FODDC to cover these works, but as yet, had still not been received by WDPC. The Clerk explained that there was still money in the FDG Budget (including reserves) which could be used to pay for this work and that the funds could be put back to this budget wen they were received from FODDC. Other budgets were also discussed. Cllr Dunford proposed using the Gateway project budget, seconded by Cllr Freshwater and agreed by resolution of Council.	

Signed by Chair _____ Date _____

26082.10	WDPC – Autumn 2026 Grant Awards The opening and closing dates for the Autumn Grant Awards were discussed and agreed to be 1st September 2026 to noon on 5th October 2026. Cllr Freshwater spoke of the need for the applications received to be in line with the WDPC Grants Policy, and the Clerks contact applications if any errors are found upon receipt. Any not meeting the criteria should not be presented to the committee for consideration.	Grants to be opened on 1st September 2026 on website.
26082.13	Clerks Report A verbal report from the Clerk was received which included - the Budget for 2027/28 and a request for Councillors to consider what budget their Committees would need to achieve their goals in that financial year. Cllr Grant spoke of the task he had given the Deputy Clerk in relation to the Play Park Budget. Cllr Bennett mentioned the Play Area at Worcester Walk, Broadwell and was advised that the Deputy Clerk was still trying to ascertain ownership details of this land. and - Co-option of Councillor for Bream Ward can now take place.	
26083	<u>Items for Information – Cllrs to note.</u>	
26083.1	Planning Committee The list of Applications received by West Dean Parish Council in August was received and noted by Council. Cllr Dunford gave an update on Planning Enforcement issue which had been raised in Yorkley, regarding flood lights, Cllr Freshwater gave an update on Planning Enforcement at Land at Yorkley. Cllr Freshwater proposed that a letter be sent to Planning Enforcement to clarify what the time frame for the correction of these points is, seconded by Cllr Dunford and agreed by resolution of Council.	Letter to be written to Planning Enforcement.
26083.2	Highways & Footpaths Committee The minutes of the Highways & Footpaths Committee held on 18th August 2026 were received and noted	
26083.3	Environment & Heritage Committee The minutes of the Environment & Heritage Committee held on 20th August 2026 were received and noted. Cllr Bennett advised that he would be sending out an email to all Councillors to ask them to consider what the Objectives of this committee should be.	
26083.4	Chair's Items - Cllr Lewis advised Council that Forestry England have advertised public engagement events on 24th and 30th September (booking required) for Working to keep Cannop Ponds safe for future generations. - Cllr Freshwater raised a suggestion, with the agreement of Cllr Costley, that Cllr Costley be allowed to change his Ward Representation to	

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	Bream due to a change of address, this will need to be done with a formal application being completed. This was proposed by Cllr Freshwater, seconded by Cllr Batchelor and agreed by resolution of Council.	Clerk to arrange application paperwork.
26083.4	Public Round-up – 10 minutes There were no members of public at the meeting	
	The meeting finished at 9.24pm	

26084 **Forthcoming Meeting Schedule:**

Sep-26				
Tues	1st September 2026	5.00pm	Planning Committee	West Dean Centre
Tues	15th September 2026	11.30am	Governance & Scrutiny	West Dean Centre
Tues	15th September 2026	5.00pm	Planning Committee	West Dean Centre
Weds	30th September 2026	7.00pm	Full Council	West Dean Centre

Oct-26				
Tues	6th October 2026	5.00pm	Planning Committee	West Dean Centre
Tues	20th October 2026	7.00pm	Highways & Footpaths	West Dean Centre
Tues	20th October 2026	5.00pm	Planning Committee	West Dean Centre
Weds	28th October 2026	7.00pm	Full Council	West Dean Centre

Nov-26				
Tues	3rd November 2026	5.00pm	Planning Committee	West Dean Centre
Tues	17th November 2026	11.30am	Governance & Scrutiny	West Dean Centre
Tues	17th November 2026	5.00pm	Planning Committee	West Dean Centre
	TBC		Budget Meeting	West Dean Centre
Weds	25th November 2026	7.00pm	Full Council	West Dean Centre

- 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 Chairman 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 –

Signed by Chair _____ Date _____

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.
- (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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