

WESTMESTON PARISH COUNCIL

Draft minutes of the council meeting held on Tuesday 16th March 2021 at 7.30 pm via Zoom

Present: Councillors Rob Mills (Chairman), Cathy Mills (Vice-Chairman), Mark Clark, Clare Farrands, Tessa Haughton and Vincent Tickner
Andy Beams, Locum Clerk and Paul Vidler, Clerk

The Chairman welcomed Paul Vidler, the newly appointed Clerk to his first meeting with the council.

1 Apologies for absence: None.

2 Declarations of interest: None.

3 Public questions: There were no members of the public present.

4 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 23rd February 2021:

RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting held on 23rd February 2021 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting, subject to the date of the previous meeting in Item 4 being amended to 2nd February 2021, and will be sent to the Chairman for signing.

5 Financial matters:

RESOLVED: Payment of the following invoices:

Payee	Reason	Amount
Tessa Haughton	Defibrillator battery	£81.00
Andy Beams	Locum Clerk February 2021	£425.00

6 Data Protection, Freedom of Information and Subject Access Requests:

Further to the resolution at the previous meeting, the Locum Clerk provided details of three contractors approached to provide support, if required, in dealing with any request. Each contractor suggested a similar approach and quoted hourly rates for the work, although one offered a fixed fee for local authorities.

RESOLVED: The council agreed to appoint K&L IT Services at a fixed fee of £100 + VAT. The Locum Clerk to advise the contractors of the decision and request a method statement for the work.

7 Planning:

(a) **To agree a response to the following planning applications**

Application LW/21/0151

Spring Farm, Hundred Acre Lane, Wivelsfield, BN6 8SH

Alterations as shown on the proposed plans and described briefly in the spec of works show the additional windows and doors.

Cllr Clark highlighted the previous planning history on the site. Members considered the building is not in an isolated location, is set back from the road and the external alterations to be acceptable.

RESOLVED: Members agreed to respond with ‘no comment’ subject to the alterations conforming with the previous prior approval and requested the Locum Clerk make this response to the application.

Application SDNP/21/07771/HOUS
Two storey rear/side extension.

Haileywood Cottage, Streat Lane, Streat, BN6 8RU

Members considered the property is largely screened from the lane and the extension to be small scale.

RESOLVED: Members agreed to respond with ‘no comment’ and requested the Locum Clerk make this response to the application.

- (b) **Inter Council Steering Group:**
- (c) **Eton College Site:**
- (d) **Lewes District Council Local Plan:**

These items were considered together. Cllr Tickner attended the meeting of the Inter Council Steering Group on 8th March 2021. He reported this was the first meeting of the parish councils and LDALC. Whilst Westmeston was not likely to have new housing sites, traffic impact from new developments was a concern. A watching brief should be kept on developments in adjoining parishes.

Clarity was required on the MP letter and LDC response on housing figures. It had been agreed for the Steering Group to meet Maria Caulfield and LDC planning officers.

Cllr Tickner was thanked for attending the meetings and keeping the council informed.

RESOLVED: Members agreed to appoint Cllr Tickner as the Westmeston Parish Council representative on the Steering Group.

- (e) **South Downs National Park Authority Consultations:**

Members noted the two consultations in progress on the Camping and Glamping Technical Advice Note and Parking Supplementary Planning Document.

8. Councillor vacancy:

The draft Co-option Policy was circulated in advance of the meeting. The Locum Clerk reported that a poll had not been called following the publication of the notice of vacancy.

RESOLVED: Members agreed to adopt the Co-option Policy, to fill the casual vacancy by co-option and request the Locum Clerk to prepare the necessary co-option paperwork.

9. IT:

The Locum Clerk, in consultation with the Clerk, produced a breakdown of the suggested IT requirements for the role, including a laptop, associated software, printer, Zoom subscription and mobile telephone, including initial and ongoing costs. It was emphasised that the equipment would remain the property of the council, be added to the council asset register, and then be provided to the Clerk for use during their tenure.

RESOLVED: The council agreed the suggested requirements and authorised the Locum Clerk to make the purchases and reclaim the cost via an expenses claim. The Clerk was authorised to purchase a suitable mobile phone, again reclaiming the cost via an expenses claim.

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10. Payroll:

The Locum Clerk had circulated a paper in advance of the meeting on establishing a payroll.

RESOLVED: To agree the recommendation in the paper.

11. Verbal updates on items for information:

Spatham Lane speed limit – Members noted that Westmeston and Ditchling Parish Councils had agreed to commit £8,750 each towards the total cost, with the remainder coming from ESCC match funding. Westmeston has raised its share of the commitment. Ditchling Parish Council has a meeting scheduled for 29th March to discuss the scheme and whether it will commit to its previously agreed share. Members considered that given the importance of the scheme, residents of Spatham Lane should be informed of progress to date and the current position regarding funding.

RESOLVED: Members agreed to request the Locum Clerk to write to residents along both sides of Spatham Lane to inform them of the progress to date on funding and the Ditchling Parish Council meeting on 29th March.

MP attendance at future meetings – Members discussed inviting the MP to future meetings. The Locum Clerk advised it was established practice for parish councils to send meeting agendas to the MP and district and county council members for information and to invite the MP or members to attend for specific items.

RESOLVED: Members agreed for meeting agendas to be sent to the MP and district and county council members for information and invitations to attend meetings when specific items were to be considered.

ESALC – The Locum Clerk reminded Members that SSALC would cease to trade from 31 March 2021, and while arrangements were in place to continue to provide support to local councils in West Sussex and Surrey, there was no confirmation in East Sussex. Members agreed for the Locum Clerk to write to Trevor Leggo for answers.

Litter pick – Cllr C. Mills advised members the parish PCSO will be joining the next litter pick.

12. Date of next meeting:

Members discussed the arrangements for forthcoming meetings given Covid and noted that further guidance was awaited from government on holding meetings after 7th May. In these circumstances it was agreed to defer the Annual Parish Meeting which would have preceded the Annual Council Meeting.

The Annual Council Meeting was agreed for **Tuesday 11th May at 7.30pm.**

The meeting closed at 8.42pm.

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