

Westmeston Parish Council

Minutes of the Council meeting held on Tuesday 12th March 2024 at 6.30 pm at Westmeston Parish Hall

Present: Councillors Cathy Mills (Chairman), Mark Clark, Joyce Dudeney, Tessa Haughton and Rob Mills
Paul Vidler, Clerk

No members of the public were present.

- 1. Apologies for absence:** Apologies were received from Councillor Clare Farrands.
- 2. Declarations of interest:** None.
- 3. Public questions:** None.
- 4. Minutes of the previous meetings held on 9th January 2024:**

RESOLVED: The minutes of the previous meeting on 9th January 2024 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman.

5. Financial matters:

(a) RESOLVED: Payment of the following invoices:

Payee	Reason	Amount
Cathy Mills	Reimbursement for website hosting	£78.00
Lewes District Council	Election expenses 4 th May 2023	£139.97
Paul Vidler	Clerk's pay January to March 2024	£941.10
HMRC	PAYE	£235.40
Paul Vidler	Clerk's expenses January to March 2024	£22.95

(b) 2023/24 Quarter 3 Budget Report and Bank Reconciliation: To note.

RESOLVED: Members noted the 2023/24 Quarter 3 Budget Report and Bank Reconciliation and resolved to consider the continuation of the NS&I account at the next meeting.

6. Annual Risk Assessment:

RESOLVED: Members resolved to adopt the Annual Risk Assessment.

Councillor Vincent Tickner joined the meeting at 6.42pm.

7. Planning:

(a) land opposite Westmeston Place, east of Lewes Road and Blackdog Farm east of Lewes Road: To receive updates.

NOTED: Members noted the SDNPA planning register indicated the appeal on land opposite Westmeston Place was dismissed, but the inspector's decision was unavailable. The advertisement for camping on the land and the current planning restrictions in place were also noted. There was no further update on Blackdog Farm.

(b) Submitted responses to the following applications:

NOTED: Members noted the responses made on the following applications since the previous meeting:

(i) SDNP/23/05134/FUL Ditchling Rugby Club, Keymer Road (in Ditchling)

Engineering works, to consist of re-profiling of site and realignment of pitch, new drainage system, creation of new access from Clayton Road leading to new parking area, erection of groundsman's store/facilities, associated landscaping, and extension to the existing allowed playing season.

Westmeston Parish Council objects to this development. The development is contrary to policy CONS 7, "Protect important gaps between settlements" of the Ditchling, Streat and Westmeston Neighbourhood Development Plan. This is development on the gap between Ditchling and Keymer, the protection of which had overwhelming public support during the consultation part of the preparation of the NDP.

The scale of the development is excessive. A car park for 133 cars and two coaches. A groundkeeper's store extending over 225 square metres. An approximately 250-metre-long access road running from the B2112 to the far side of the site. A new pillared 20-foot-wide gateway giving access from the B2112.

Previous developments on this site were predicated on agreement between the rugby football club and the cricket club to share existing facilities. It is now claimed that this is not possible, although the reasons given lack detail.

(ii) LW/24/0044 Lone Oak Farm, Spatham Lane (in Ditchling)

Lawful Development Certificate for the continuous use of static home as a dwelling for a period in excess of 4 years.

No comment submitted.

(c) Inter Parish Working Group on Housing/Eton College Site/Lewes District Local Plan/South Downs Local Plan:

NOTED: Comments have been submitted by the parish council on the Lewes District Council Local Plan consultation. In addition, the parish council has also been included in comments submitted jointly by other East Sussex parish councils.

8. East Sussex Local Transport Plan consultation:

NOTED: Comments have been submitted by the parish council on the East Sussex Local Transport Plan consultation.

9. Lewes District Council Climate and Nature Strategy Refresh consultation:

NOTED: Comments have been submitted by the parish council on the Lewes District Council Climate and Nature Strategy Refresh consultation.

10. East Sussex Local Nature Recovery Strategy:

NOTED: Councillors Cathy Mills and Tessa Haughton and the Clerk had attended an online briefing on the East Sussex Local Nature Recovery Strategy. There will be future opportunities to engage with the strategy.

11. Weald to Waves nature recovery corridor:

RESOLVED: To defer this item to the next meeting.

12. East Sussex Highways Rural Grass Cutting:

NOTED: Following comments received from residents about visibility and road safety, the parish council has opted for the standard grass cutting option, being two cuts per annum of 1 m width along verges, together with cutting at junctions and on the inside of bends.

13. B2116 Lewes Road potential extended 40mph speed limit:

NOTED: Progress will be reported at the next meeting.

14. South Downs National Park Authority Board vacancy:

RESOLVED: Details of the candidates have been circulated and hustings arranged on 15th March 2024. Members to submit their preferred candidate to the Clerk.

15. Any other information for noting:

Spatham Lane Speedwatch: Results are available to trained and registered speed watch operatives.

Plumpton College: Members should raise any issues with Councillor Cathy Mills who is attending a meeting with the college on 29th April 2024.

16 Date of next meeting: 14th May 2024: Annual Parish Meeting at 6.30pm and Council Meeting at 7.15pm.

Meeting closed at 7.08pm.