



AGREED Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at 7pm on Monday 18th November 2024

<p>Present: Cllr Deborah Harwood (DH); Cllr Graham Zacharias (GZ); Cllr Tony Marshall (TM); Cllr Jeremy Rigby (JR); Cllr Karen Nash (KN); Cllr Peter Gattrell (PG) Cllr Jeremy Hunt (JH WSCC); Cllr Henry Potter (HP CDC) 12 members of the public also attended.</p>	
<p>Agenda Item 1 – Apologies for Absence –</p>	
<p>Agenda Item 2 – Chairman Update – DH gave a huge thank you to everyone who helped with the Village Clear Up, it was a great turn out of all the usual supporters, it would be nice to have others join in. In the future we are considering budgeting for paying for outside help to carry out clearing work throughout the year, so that all the work is not left to the two village events in the year. She also reported that Graham Zacharias has agreed to chair the January meeting in her absence.</p>	
<p>Agenda Item 3 – Declaration of Interests/ Dispensation Requests - There were no declarations of interest or dispensation requests.</p>	
<p>Agenda Item 4 - Minutes of the last Parish Council Meeting – to approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting and Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 23rd September 2024. It was Resolved that that the minutes were correct, all councillors agreed, DH signed the minutes.</p>	
<p>Agenda Item 5 – County Councillor Report – Mr Jeremy Hunt, Chichester North Division WSCC</p> <p>Council Budget and Priorities. West Sussex County Council wants to hear your views about its budget and priorities and how it spends taxpayers’ money as it works to close a budget gap of up to £38.5m for the coming year (2025-2026). The county council reported in July that it was facing a budget gap of £60m in 2025-2026. This figure has now reduced, and projections show the figure could be brought down further to £8.2m if a decision is made to increase council tax. We now also have the added pressure of the recent increases in employer’s NI and we wait to see what support the government propose to give us. That will be set out in the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement which should be published in mid December.</p> <p>The county council provides around 80% of local government services to more than 900,900 people and touches the lives of every resident and business in West Sussex, as well as tens of thousands of visitors. Services provided by the county council include adults’ and children’s social care, education, public health, fire and rescue, roads, libraries, trading standards, economic development, and waste disposal and recycling.</p> <p>However, the demand for these services costs more than the funding available, which includes council tax paid by residents. Despite these challenges, WscC remains committed to delivering services that support our communities and vulnerable people, but we will face tough decisions if levels of funding are not addressed nationally. We are continuing to feel the pressure of increased demand on our services and the increasing complex needs of the residents in our care. We are also working hard on transformation programmes that will make the council more efficient including Children’s and Adults’ Services improvement programmes, Smarter Working, a new Digital Strategy, and increased Highways funding.</p>	

Residents' input is vital to the budget process, and we want to hear whether people think we are spending the right amount on services and what approach they think we should take to balance our budget.

The breadth of the services provided by the county council is vast. You may have come into contact with the county council if you've ever:

driven or cycled on the roads

- needed social care as an adult or child
- visited a Recycling Centre
- needed foster care
- suffered domestic abuse
- wanted help to start up a business
- read a book from the library
- been a school pupil or have children of school age
- registered a birth or death
- enjoyed a walk along a countryside footpath
- needed the support of the Fire and Rescue Service

People are encouraged to find out more about the consultation by visiting: www.westsussex.gov.uk/budget. An Easy Read version of the consultation is also available. Anyone without access to the internet [can visit a library](#) or [family hub](#) to complete the consultation. For anyone needing further support completing an online form, help can be arranged from a digital volunteer. Alternatively, people can request a printed version is sent to them, with a freepost return envelope, by calling **01243 777 100**.

The consultation closes at 11.55pm on Sunday 15 December and all comments will be considered as part of the budget setting process for 2025/26. You can find out more about what the county council does and the services it provides in its Annual Report for 2023/24

at www.westsussex.gov.uk/AnnualReport

Highlights for 2023/24 include:

11,211 people received long-term adult social care support

5,335 people visited by our fire service to improve their fire safety

4,616 local businesses supported to start, revive, innovate, and grow

540+ road, footpath, drainage and transport improvement schemes delivered

7.89m uses of our libraries' digital and virtual services

94% of pupils attend a West Sussex school rated 'outstanding' or 'good'

2m+ visits booked to a Recycling Centre via our online booking system since it was introduced

115,276m² of operational property, reduced by 3.5% from previous year

7 libraries, 6 fire stations, 1 day centre renovated to reduce their carbon footprint

10.5km of new cycle infrastructure. Almost 40,000 safety related defects on highways across West Sussex have been repaired in the last six months as the county council retains its commitment to better roads.

Better Roads Campaign. This year the council invested an extra £13 million to actively tackle the problem of our deteriorating roads and keep the county moving. This was in addition to the base budget for the year of £42.8 million, plus £2.1 million received from the Department for Transport's Road Resurfacing Fund. And our investment is paying off. Between April and September this year, our Highways Team worked hard on surface treatments and patching, and repairing safety defects across the network. This includes completing:

- More than 95% of pothole repairs – around 18,000 were completed using the 'sidesawn and sealed' method
- 9,600 pothole repairs covering approximately 10,500sqm using the velocity jet patchers
- 23,625 sqm worth of small and medium scale patching across 299 jobs
- 4.2 miles (6.9Km) of large-scale carriageway patching
- 116 miles (187Km) of surfacing treatments

To help keep the roads open, we maintained our efforts to ensure the repair techniques we use are long-lasting and cost effective. As part of this, we have completed 3,000 sqm of durable, highly waterproof repairs during a three-month trial of using mastic asphalt to repair potholes on stretches of road that undergo the most stress, such as junctions.

Over the last six months our highways teams have clearly demonstrated our ongoing commitment to better roads, improving our highways and keeping the network open for all users. This work underscores the priority in Our Council Plan for a sustainable and prosperous economy for West Sussex. West Sussex has one of the most extensive highways networks to monitor and maintain, with over 2,500 miles, or around 4,000km, of roads. This is roughly the same as driving from Chichester to Rome and back. We have also had two consecutive winters with extreme weather, from low temperatures to record rainfall, that has disrupted and damaged our roads.

This year, we are investing a further £4.5million into our winter resilience programme - meaning currently we are carrying out additional works ahead of the winter. Ahead of the coming winter months, we are increasing work to clear drainage systems and ensure water can run off the roads as effectively as possible should we get more heavy rain, providing extra resources to clear more gullies, ditches and areas where leaves build up. So far this year, we have also carried out more than 43,000 drainage gully cleanses, brought in extra CCTV resource to monitor and identify issues, and provided an additional jetting unit to clear flooded areas and get them moving as soon as possible. West Sussex County Council's Highways Team will continue this work over the coming months and is calling on road users to them keep the network open by continuing to report any issues you encounter using our [online reporting tool](#). You can also keep up to date with the work we're doing to improve the condition of our roads on our [Better Roads campaign page](#).

Meals on Wheels. West Sussex meals on wheels provider Health & Independent Living Support (HILS) made some special visits recently to highlight National Meals on Wheels Week, and to promote the valuable service they offer to customers across the County.

Commissioned by West Sussex County Council, HILS delivers 2,983 meals each week to homes across the county, 365 days a year to residents in the community who are elderly, disabled, or housebound that want to remain independent in their own homes.

To mark Meals on Wheels Week, Ben Applin, Rural Engagement Officer from West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service, helped HILS deliver a meals to customers, while conducting a Safe and Well Visit. Audrey, one of our valued customers, said: "Our daughter-in-law set up the service for us both as we were struggling to prepare and cook a hot meal for ourselves. We enjoy the selection of food on offer and the meals are very good. The drivers are always lovely, and we enjoy having a chat with them when they deliver our meals. We would not be without it."

Ben added: "Keeping people safe and independent in their own homes is the main aim of our Safe and Well visit. For our officers and crews, knowing we can easily refer residents to one of our partner services such as HILS ensures that we continue to take a joined-up approach to community safety and make sure those who are most at risk have professional, ongoing support."

The Meals on wheels service not only ensures that vulnerable residents receive regular nutritionally balanced meals, but it also gives family and friends reassurance that every day someone will be looking in on their loved one. The service plays a vital role in helping residents to live independently at home, which is one of our key priorities.

For further information visit www.hils-uk.org/ or call the Support Team on **0330 2000 103**. Hot meals start from £8.99 (for two courses), and every visit includes a caring wellbeing check from Community Team Members. Please pass on this information to anyone you might know who would benefit from this excellent service.

Awards for WSCC children's care Teams at the Social Worker of the Year Awards. These awards celebrate the very best achievements in social work across the whole of England. The winners were announced at a ceremony held in London on Friday, 8 November. A former West Sussex County

Council social worker and a team supporting children and young people with their mental health have both been honoured at the Social Worker of the Year Awards. Susan Banyard won the Gold Award for Lifetime Achievement for her outstanding dedication to helping children and young people for more than 30 years. She was recognised for her contribution to improving the wellbeing of children in foster care, as well as furthering the support provided to foster carers.

The Children's Mental and Emotional Health team won the Silver Award in the Children's Services Team of the Year category. This award was in recognition of the council's pioneering approach to suicide prevention and the role played by the local authority and social care. West Sussex County Council staff were also shortlisted for a third nomination, for the Supportive Social Work Employer Award, which is in acknowledgement of the council's work to support a cohort of overseas social workers who are new to the UK.

Our social workers face many challenges with increasing pressures felt by the diverse and unique communities throughout the county and it is important that we celebrate and pay tribute to the amazing work they all do, especially in keeping people safe from vulnerable situations. You can read more information on the Social Worker of the Year Awards [here](#) and to find out more about a career in Children's or Adults' social care in West Sussex, take a look at the county council's latest [opportunities](#).

Local Issues:

Charlton 20MPH Scheme - The police have raised no objection to the scheme and so it will now go out for public consultation. Once this is completed it will come back to me for final sign off. I have chased up when the consultation will start, but to date I haven't had an answer. I will chase again on Monday ahead of your meeting.

WSSC Residents News Letter. Lastly, just a reminder from my last parish update, that every month we issue a Residents News Letter, which is sent to all residents who subscribe to our free email service. Signing up for our email alerts means you don't need to check our website to find out the latest information. Instead, it will be delivered free, straight to your inbox. To subscribe just go to: <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKWSSC/subscriber/new>

Finally, please don't forget to keep an eye on our website, especially our news and campaigns page where you can keep up to date with all our latest news. <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/about-the-council/news-and-campaigns/>

Also, a reminder that all our public meetings are webcast live and are also archived, so you can always view them later. <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/about-the-council/how-the-council-works/watch-county-council-and-committee-meetings-online/>

Agenda Item 6 - District Councillor Report – Mr Henry Potter, Goodwood Ward

The government budget of 31/10 has raised possible problems for the Council with the introduction of an increased Employers contribution towards employee National Insurance contributions. Unless this increase is waived for Local Authorities, which is unlikely, this increase will cost CDC in the region of £500,000 per annum. Consider the liability for Council Officers, office staff, Street cleaners, refuse collectors, parking staff, parks attendants and £1/2 million is near the mark. So we must prepare for increases in Council precepts. Magnify this by WSSC and Sussex Police any increase will be considerable. There are circa 373 Local Authorities in England, Scotland, Wales and N Ireland so any relief will cost the Government circa £200 million which is why I fear that relief from this increase is unlikely.

In the matter of the Southern Gateway Redevelopment Scheme, which was on the Agenda for Cabinet and was presented to full Council last month, there is still little progress due to the uncertainty of relocating the numerous bus stops which are currently contained in the bus terminal. It has been suggested that these bus stops be moved into the Avenue de Chartres and South Street.

However, at the Cabinet Meeting on 05/11 a public question was tabled suggesting 'how wrong it was to divert bus passengers onto a busy road adjacent to the Avenue de Chartres multi story car park, the bus terminal should remain' The response by the Leader of the Council was 'the vision of a Transport Hub in this location will be close to a railway station, bus stops, toilets, EV charging points???, bicycle racks, cafes and of course car parking. How all of these facilities will be accommodated within this Southern Gateway area remains to be seen. And yet again another member of the public addressed the Cabinet last Tuesday saying that the bus terminal must stay. Always in mind is to have improved pedestrian routes towards the City centre which, considering the ageing population of Chichester, shouldn't feature high in priorities. However, further assessments of the Scheme will proceed using monies from the Local Enterprise Partnership which was secured to support the Southern Gateway Proposals. This was initially £5 million but it is gradually being used. Following a request from Councillors, the Cabinet will receive and note a 5 year Resource Monitor Update. Concerns have been recorded about the high levels of funding for various projects which resulted in this request. At end of October funding approvals have amounted to £4.46 million but at the 05/11 meeting Cabinet were asked to agree further funding of £8.228 million! This will include £0.25 million for the purchase of replacement Refuse collection and a Green Waste collection vehicle. I will add that the two year trial of 2 Electric Refuse collection Vehicles is less than successful. £8 million will be set aside for refurbishment and investment in the Councils Leisure Centres. The contract with 'Everyone Active', who currently manage the three Leisure Centres, expires in 2026, after 10 years, and preparations are being considered for the re-tendering process. These Centres clearly need reinvestment.

Though it is just over your Parish boundary in Lavant CP, the many developments to The Rubbing House have resulted in Enforcement action to have these infringements of Planning Laws removed and these are extensive. This Enforcement action has been appealed and the Planning Inspectorate are holding the Appeal at East Pallant House on the 28th of this month.

Finally I must praise Southern Water for the effort and steps they have undertaken during the past summer months, and are ongoing, moving to West Dean early next year. Rainfall in the recent months, barring any late deluges, indicate that this winter should be drier than the last two. Fingers crossed.

Agenda Item 7 – Southern Water – Floyd Cooper, Joff Edevane, Glenn McCubbin

DH reported that there was a proactive meeting with Southern Water (SW) and Andrew Griffith and that there is a phenomenal amount of work being carried out by SW. SW circulated a few copies of their presentation covering the intended works in Charlton and Singleton. Copies of the presentation will be emailed to all who have given their email addresses for receiving information and will also be on the website. Floyd Cooper (FC) outlined the plans for the over pumping equipment this year, this equipment will be positioned approximately 90 metres into the meadow so as to elevate the noise issue. Two new groundwater treatment tanks are currently being built, these are much more effective and achieve sewage treatment results that replicate the same conditions as the large treatment works. A handout about the new filtration system will be provided by SW. An MOP raised the issue of pumps in Singleton, SW stated that there were no pumps, it was agreed that SW would meet with the MOP to confirm whether or not there are still pumps in Singleton. It will still be necessary to have the over land pipe across the meadow because of the inadequate flow through the underground pipe. The camera's did not reveal any damage to the pipe, the issue is that it undulates across the meadow so that the flow is affected. It is recognised as a problem but currently there are no funds to replace the pipe which would cost approximately 1 million pounds. All joints along the pipe will be sealed, to solve the infiltration of ground water, this may solve the problem. The pipe is sized correctly for the flow rate and number of properties and can cope with normal levels of sewage in the summer but can't cope with the additional ground water. There was a question about the route of the sewer in Singleton and Floyd agreed to make available information on sewer mapping. There was another question about the issue last year near The Fox Goes Free, SW are hopeful

that the work that is being carried out will solve this problem, however, there is an option to put a pump in the field by the Fox but all being well that will not be needed. There is a plan to avoid lorries in North Lane, SW are currently having discussions with the landowner of the field to enable the lorries to be off the road. This would hold up to 2 tankers and the holding takers will be situated somewhere else to cause less disruption in Charlton. Over pumping can only be used if there is a risk of flooding to properties, tankers have to be used as a first line of defence to try and avoid that situation. Work has started in Charlton and that will be completed during January'25. The investment period for East Dean and Charlton ends in March'25. It is hoped that the funding will be available to continue through to Singleton but this is providing the funding can be pushed into this investment period, if that is not possible Singleton work will commence in April'25. Glenn McCubbin will be on the ground 2 or 3 days a week whilst work is taking place, any queries contact the parish council who will contact him, no need to contact the hotline. There was a question about sealing joints, they are actually sealing the whole pipe, the mention of joints is because that is where the ground water can enter the pipes. With regard to sealing the private sewers, the team will knock on doors to ask for permission, the homeowner does not need to be at home for the sealing to take place. SW do not have to fund this process as it is normally the homeowners responsibility, however they are doing so in a bid to solve the ingress of water problem. It is important that the residents work with them and be patient if there are vans in the lanes around Charlton. If during this work it is found that rain from roofs is going straight into the sewer SW will look at water butts or planters at their cost to stop the water going straight into the sewers. There will be weekly updates as to how work is progressing and what work that is being carried out, these will be posted on the parish council's website. The question was asked about the pumps capacity, it was confirmed that the pumps can cope with the flow of water. There was a question about blocked drains, if they are on the highway it is the responsibility of WSCC, please report them using this link - <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/make-an-enquiry-or-report-a-problem-with-a-road-or-pavement/> JH thanked SW for all the work that is being carried out and DH thanked them from the honest communications.

Agenda Item 9 - Council Matters-

New Financial Regulations – GZ explained that a lot of work had taken place to make the document relevant to a small parish council and it was agreed to approve it on the proviso that section 5.24 bullet point 2 and 3 were checked and amended.

Clerks Annual Salary Increase – It was agreed by all councillors to increase the clerks hourly rate to £20.48 and to keep the contracted hours to 9 hours a week. There will also be an increase in the employers NI and the pension contribution will increase.

Budget/Precept – If the increase was 15% we would have £4,000 to cover any unexpected expenses not covered in the budget. This increase would mean an increase of 35p a week on a Band D property for the parish council precept portion of the council tax. There was a discussion on the suggested increase, JH made the point that it should be considered that the goodwill of a group of villagers who give their time for free to carry out maintenance tasks around the village and any other projects that require funding, should include a figure in the budget to allow for some of the cost of these tasks to be covered by outside contractors and to accumulate a reserve for other projects. TM is not in favour of an increase of 15% however, all other councillors agreed with the increase, therefore the increase was agreed at 15%.

With regard to the budget for 2025/26 JR asked if we have any liability for the Village Hall, he had noticed that we had made some payments for the VH in the 2023/24 budget, it was explained that was so that VAT could be recovered, this was paid to the VH and they reimbursed the parish council for the invoices that had been paid. Although the parish council own the Village Hall they do not have any liability for it, all expenses e.g. insurance, maintenance etc are covered by them. JR also queried

the figure of £300 for an event, is there one planned for 2025/26 and if so is that enough money. DH said that yes there would be one this year as there wasn't one last year and it was felt that these events bring the community together, it was then queried whether that figure was sufficient. It was explained that there is £500 in 2024/25 budget that will go into the reserves, therefore making the figure £800, for the last event we spent just over £700. GZ asked that given that the CHS Scheme is due to start in January will that involve any expenses for the parish council for any damage to verges etc? Any damage would be the responsibility of the contractors. All councillors agreed the budget for 2025/26.

Agenda Item 10 – Village Matters

Playground – DH reported that there is money in the budget to go ahead with the installation of a wet pour surface around the roundabout. It was agreed by all councillors to proceed with this project.

EV Chargers – It was a surprise to all when the sign went up about the installation of chargers, however, we did apply for them some time ago as it was a condition of the grant from Rees Jeffries. Connected Kerb are installing them and there is no charge to the parish council. At present the only details we have is that they are installing three units with 2 connectors on each. There is no information about the type of chargers with regard to whether they are slow or quick chargers, there appears to be no paperwork and nothing has been signed by the parish council. We will endeavour to get more information. It is important that the area is made good, JR will monitor this.

Agenda Item 11 – Finance

Total in Current Account (15/11/24) – £19,712.81

Current Reserves (held in the Current Account) – Playground Repairs £3,158.68.

Playground Roundabout Surface £500.00

General Maintenance £500.00.

School Parking – £2,100

Total Reserves - £6,276.68 (includes CDC Grant)

Balance in Savings Account – £7,151.56

Funds Received - CDC Grant for Bike Posts - £518.00. Bike Posts have already been paid for so this grant will go into our reserves. It was agreed that this money would go into the General Maintenance Reserves.

TM raised the point that the SID battery is playing up, VN will find out the cost of a new one.

PG asked who runs the website, it was confirmed that the clerk carries out any work that is required and there is support from the company who created the website. PG offered to help if required.

Meeting Closed – 20.42

Confirmed that these minutes are a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Signed: DEBORAH HARWOOD

Name & Position: CHAIRMAN

Date: