

## WEST WICKHAM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

### Minutes of the Parish Council held on Monday

25<sup>th</sup> September 2023 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall .

Those present were: Councillor A.Schuilenburg (Chairman), Cllr. D.Sargeant (Vice Chair), Cllrs. R.Ling, C.Mulley-Richards, G. McNeillie, R.Temple and County Cllr. H Batchelor, the Parish Clerk and 1 members of the public

1. **Apologies:** Cllr Hazelhurst.

2. **Declaration of Interest:** Cllr Schuilenburg under item 6a (Finance).

3, **Minutes:** Minutes of the meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2023 were signed as correct.

4. **Correspondence:**

- a) *Email from BHIB* – this was concerning the Parish Online invoice for 2022. **The Parish Clerk will check that we are still subscribers to this.**
- b) *Kingsway solar farm:* An email had been received from Downing Renewable Developments concerning this solar farm. Cllr Sargeant had checked any information on this project but had found nothing. The Chairman suggested inviting them to the next Parish Council meeting to give us more details.
- c) *Letter regarding donation made towards Parish Nurse funding:* Due to the fact that this position was not filled after Kim Cox resigned and the Charity Commission requires those who had recently donated to either receive the money back or allow it to be used for similar functions e.g. the Community Ministry. It was agreed that more information is needed as to whether this money would be used towards local projects which include West Wickham. **The Parish Clerk will enquire.**

5. **Planning:**

23/0209/TT CA		Peacock Cottage Streetly End	Tree work	23/2/23
23/1780/PR IOR	W.Stone	Annexe Meadow,S.E .	Change of use to dwelling	11/5/23 Granted
23/02043/H FUL	R Giles	Streetly End Farm	Replacement single storey outbldg. With solar panels	1/7/23 Granted
23/1096/TT CA	R.Giles	61 Streetly End	Elm tree in need of cutting down as rotten	14/10/23

1. *Webbs Road* - Nothing to report at present and the Parish Clerk was asked to contact CCC Highways again for their report. County Cllr Batchelor, who arrived later at the meeting, told Council that the road had been inspected and the worst holes marked. Cllr Temple confirmed he had walked part of the road and some patching has been carried out. County Cllr Batchelor will follow up with CCC Highways to establish “Single Track with Passing Places” signs at the entry of both ends of Webbs Road .

2. *Devana Centre for Environment Recovery*: Ground Control had a stand at the Climate Change event and spoke about the proposed Centre. Some Parishioners wondered how they were going to make any money from it? Cllr Sargeant pointed out that the scheme appears to be part of Ground Control's corporate social responsibility program and not profitable. There are aspects of their plan which are of concern to the Parish Council. For example, the area is extremely popular with dog walkers whose access through the area may be restricted. As yet no work has commenced.
3. 22/00556 – Land SE of Burton End: There is now an Appeal in progress following refusal.

## 6. Finance:

### a) *Authorised payments*

£ 25.00 Martin Chamberlain (making plaque for oak tree) (chq. 1067)chq.1054 cancelled)  
 £ 58.00 HMRC 2nd qrt PAYE re P.Clerk's salary (chq.1068)  
 £464.60 Mrs J Richards Aug/Sept. salary less PAYE (chq. 1069)£ 22.00 Gift of wine + card for Martin Chamberlain for repairing village sign (chq. 1070)  
 £ 26.96 A.Schuilenburg for fixings etc. for village sign. (cvhq.1071)  
 £19267.66 Greenscape Energy for solar panels on village hall (BACS payment)

b) *Monies received*: £6,300.00 2nd tranche of Precept.

The Chairman explained that the large cheque was payment for the solar panels which were now installed and working. The Appeal Fund now stands at £16,890.07 and he has asked for another appeal to go into the Village Voice as £6000 is still needed. The VAT reclaim will be £4000 approx.

## 7. Traffic & Parking issues:

a) *Sinkhole outside Orchard Cottage*: The Chairman was emailed by the owners and he told them to report it to Highways. He subsequently looked for the hole but could not find any, and nothing has been reported on the County Council's website so the problem has presumably been fixed.

b) *"Road Narrows" signs (coming into West Wickham past Ivy Todd Farm)*: The Chairman said he would look into applying for a LHI grant to restrict traffic to priority/give way access through the narrow road as there have been three recent incidents, two of which were cars had struck wing mirrors and the third "hit-and-run" where an electric car was shunted in the back and became immobile requiring the police to close the road until the vehicle could be recovered. Cllr McNeillie said that speeding traffic in Streetly End was non-stop at peak times probably due to various road works being carried out on the A1307. It was suggested that the "Speed Watch" be restarted as it had been quite effective when used. Volunteers would be needed. Trevor Hall said he would speak to Balsham about the availability of the equipment. Cllr Batchelor said he would support any LHI application for speed reduction measures put in by West Wickham P.C.

## **8. Maintenance:**

- a) *Footpaths – posts & discs:* Cllr Temple reported that almost all the footpath posts had now been put in place, with the exception of Yen Hall Farm, and some of the disks. Not all the harvested fields with footpaths have yet been reinstated following the recent harvests and ploughing of the field. He will follow up with the landowners to ensure they are re-established in a timely manner.
- b) *Village Sign:* This has now been repaired, painted and re-erected. Martin Chamberlain who made the sign was thanked for his help in repairing it and also the Chairman was thanked.
- c) *Fencing repairs:* All the repairs have been completed.
- d) *Wild flower area:* Rob Giles has said he will cut and clear the area in October.
- e) *Hedges growing over pavement:* All the hedges have now been cut back.
- f) Cllr Sargeant said there was still a ‘No Climbing’ sign missing on the MUGA and he would deal with this. Also the wire tension on the zip wire needs tightening up. The Chairman said he would help Cllr Sargeant with doing this as it was a two-man job.

## **9. Village Hall & Recreation ground:**

- a) *Solar Panel Project:* This has now been completed and is up and running successfully. The insurance has been increased on the hall to cover this equipment. A smart meter gives all the information and performance and is showing that on an average day 0.01 units is taken from the grid. It is a very efficient system.
- b) *Play Area:* The repairs have been carried out but the posts are not yet protected with a sleeve to protect from strimmer damage. Trevor Hall has offered to provide material to Rob which could be used for this purpose.
- c) *Hub Night & Coffee Morning cookery recipes:* These are in the process of being collected by Di License and will be published in the Village Voice.
- d) *Multi-user Games Area (MUGA):* It was clarified that the MUGA was purchased by the Parish Council and therefore it is the Parish Council’s responsibility to maintain.

**10. Standing Orders:** Cllr Hazelhurst who volunteered to update the orders from the latest CALPAC template was unable to attend.

**11. Anaerobic biodigesters:** No Planning application has yet been submitted for the Streetly Hall Farm proposal. The Acorn BioEnergy application for the site between Withersfield and Haverhill has been submitted and Cllr Sargeant felt we should support the other parishes in trying to stop this development and he will draft an objection.

**12. Allotments:** Cllr Mulley Richards reported that the gate had been purchased but not yet erected. She asked Trevor Hall to work out how much allotment holders owed for their use of water so it could be collected on the 7<sup>th</sup> October when the rents for 2023 2024 would be paid.

**13. Meetings attended by Councillors:** No meetings had been attended

14. *Reports by Council Cllr. Batchelor and District Cllr Harvey:* Distributed to all Cllrs and put on the website. Cllr Harvey was not present.

**Cllr Batchelor:**

- a) He reminded councillors that the A1307 would be closed at Linton this following weekend 30<sup>th</sup> Sept & 7<sup>st</sup> Oct. for final work. There is better signage for HGV routes than last time
- b) Congestion charge: The executive of the GCP are meeting this Thursday and the whole idea may be scrapped. However the county will need to show the government what their plans are for improving traffic flow etc. The Chairman remarked that the congestion area should have been much smaller.

**15. Any Other Business:**

a) Cllr Temple spoke on behalf of the Gardening Club, who had held their annual Garden Show on 2<sup>nd</sup> September. Unfortunately some classes only had a single entry. The Chair, now held by Sarah Boase, is anxious to find a way to improve visibility and attendance. He asked if the Parish Council would be willing to fund a fete which would include the garden show, to replace the annual show, with stalls, teas etc. The Chairman thought this a good idea but it needed to be a village show, perhaps combining with the Church fete and the Village Hall fund-raising events into a single annual community event. Cllr Sargeant suggested that the Garden Club put forward a proposal for support from the Parish Council. Put on the next Agenda.

b) Trevor Hall is stepping down from Chairing the Village Hall Management Committee, along with Di Hazlehurst as Social Secretary, and replacement volunteers are needed.

c) WhatsApp Group: A volunteer support WhatsApp group was set up at the start of covid to bolster community spirit, which has since morphed into a Village Wants/Needs group through which residents can request or offer information, items, help, etc., deviating from the original chit-chat social-media intent of the creators of the group. Many residents have requested a more formal method through which immediate, important and non-trivial information such as road and school closures, roadworks, changes to services, can be communicated without being inundated with topics which are of no interest to them.

To address this need, the Chairman has established a “West Wickham” Community Group through which such information can be conveyed, and incorporated the original WhatsApp into this community, and will publish an article on this topic in the next issue of the Village Voice.

**The next meeting will be held on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> November at 7.30pm. All are welcome to attend.**

**Chairman.....**