

**WEST WICKHAM PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of the Parish Council held on Monday**  
**24th March 2025 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall**

Those present were: Councillor A. Schuilenburg (Chairman), Cllr D.Sargeant (Vice Chair), Cllrs.,C. Mulley-Richards, R. Temple. Dist. Cllr. Harvey,County Cllr. Batchelor, the Parish Clerk and 6 members of the public.

- 1. Apologies:** Cllr.A. Hazelhurst, G. McNeillie, R. Ling.
- 2 Declaration of Interest:** Cllr R Temple under item 6 Finance.
- 3 Minutes** of the meeting held on Monday 27th January 2025 were signed as correct.
- 4 Correspondence:**
  - a) *Email from Age UK regarding increase in warden's fees:* The Chairman suggested an increase of £15, making it £315 in line with the 5% precept increase. This was agreed.
  - b) *Information from Lloyds regarding lowering of interest rates on business accounts:* Record it.
  - c) *Email request from SARS for a donation:* Reply unable.
  - d) *Letter from Friends of the Roman Road & Fleam Dyke update on work.*
  - e) *Email from CCC regarding Care Together grants re community benches:* Reply our interest.
  - f) *SCDC email Parish Forum Consultation:* Cllr Sargeant will respond to this.

**5 Planning:**

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Applicant</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>PC Response</i>	<i>Status</i>
24/03435/FUL	M Bennett	33 Burton End	Change of use from agric.land to gdn use.	17/9/24	support	refused
23/01780/PRIOR L	W Stone	The Meadow, Streetly End	Change of use from agric.bldg. to dwel.hse.	17/2/25	no action	

- a. 24/03435/FUL - This has been refused.
- b. 23/01780 - No action taken as this is an approved previous application with a minor change.
- c. *Streetly Hall Biodigester plant* – Chris Covey and Julie Copas were present but had nothing new to report.
- d. *Kingsway Solar Park* - Council complained that they had been unaware of the latest meeting. Cllr Harvey said he would send a copy of the discussions to the Council and the Chairman was grateful for this information as the residents are interested in the effect such a large solar park will have on the villages around it. Cllr Harvey criticised the Environment Scoping document concerning safety aspects and did not feel it had been looked at properly. Also concern was expressed on the scale of the project and possible difficulties in joining up such wide areas to the grid. West Wratting appears to be surrounded by solar panels right up to house boundaries. The suggestion that the parishes involved join together to deal with the various issues which will arise within the time slots given was a sensible one. Another concern is the cable route which will affect other parishes outside the immediate area. The Chairman will contact Simon Chandler, Chairman of West Wratting p.c. for further information and stressed that Wickham is not opposed to Solar Energy but it must be suitably located and sympathetic to the communities it will affect. Our response to the PINS scoping proposal was submitted and recorded.

**6. Finance:** Accounts spreadsheet distributed to Councillors.

- a. *Authorised payments:*
  - £174.20 HMRC Paye for 4th qtr. of 2024 **BACS payment** 28/3/25
  - £469.60 J Richards salary for Feb/Mar + exp. re purchase of photocopy paper.. BACS
  - £116.00 E&E Plumridge Inv. 4427 & 4345 **BACS payment** 16/3/25

£100.00 West Wickham & District Gardening Club - plants for raised beds. **BACS pay 27/1/25**  
 £ 16.80 E Temple - inv. for 2 fence posts from MKM Bldg. Supplies. **BACS 16/3/25**  
 £198.26 R Temple re St. Ives Bouncy Castle Hire Inv. 964 - part payment. **BACS 16/3/25**  
 £ 23.88 R. Temple re Inv. 349503 Sign Supplies. **BACS 24/3/25**  
 £156.42 R. Temple re Inv. 28951 DH~F Products Ltd. Rail & post clips. **BACS 16/3/25**  
 £504.00 ABC Tree Surgery Inv. 1218 for hedging & wild flower area cutting. **BACS 24/3/25**

- b. *Monies received:* None
- c. *Precept for 2025:* Confirmed and agreed by South Cambs District Council.
- d. *Audit for 2024/25 re internal auditor:* The Parish Clerk has asked “Running Total” (Jackie Dockerill) if she will carry out the internal audit and has replied she will.

## 7. **Traffic & Parking issues:**

### *Potholes & Flooding:*

474852*	Road into West Wickham from Streetly End, before bridge
472555*	Road into West Wickham from Streetly End, after bridge
473753*	Church Corner
483808 476802 487315	99 High Street (Reported 3 times - July, Aug, Oct).
Numerous 70+ reports	Potholes in Balsham on West Wickham Road as you exit the village.
503331 14	Bridge on West Wrattling Footpath

- a. The Chairman repeated his frustration with the County Councils ReportIt website that when potholes are reported and tickets made, they are closed and disappear from the website yet nothing happens with the process being repeated again and again without progress. This is extremely frustrating to all residents and time consuming for those who take the time to report the issues, only for the reports to be discarded. Cllr Batchelor asked the Chairman to forward his frustrations to Cllr Beckett, who oversees the department, which he said he would gladly do. However there is now a date to do the work on 7th April when the road will be closed. Work on the Balsham flooding and the large pothole is scheduled for 5th May, when again the road will be closed.
- b. *Dean Road Junction onto A1307:* Nothing new to report.
- c. *Broken 30mph speed sign ref. 492315:* Still not replaced.
- d. Church Corner flooding ref 473753: Ditch and blockage still not cleared
- e. MVAS Unit. The speed indicator has arrived at the County Council but are still waiting for the speedwatch equipment).

## 8. **Maintenance:**

- a. *Footpaths:* Cllr Temple reported that he had replaced a post on footpath 21. The sign in Webbs Road has been made and is ready to be fixed with thanks to Chris Covey for paying for this. The person who did the work would be happy to make or repair others that might be in need. Cllr Temple had done a quick calculation and there are over 20 such signs in the parish. He will check to see if any are in need of replacement or repair. The bridge on West Wrattling Footpath 14 has been replaced.
- b. *Hedging:* The Chairman asked Rob Giles when the next hedging will be done and was told sometime in April.
- c. *Wildlife area:* This is on hold at the moment.
- d. *Wildflower area:* Posts are going to be put in front of the wildflower area in order to prevent the flowers flowing over onto the pavement and also, hopefully, stopping dogs fouling the area. Di Licence and Nicki Trudgeon have been asked if the Hub Night could contribute something towards the cost of the rope which will link the posts and any remaining contributions towards the raised beds could be considered to also go towards this scheme. The Gardening Club will take this into consideration. The rope will cost approx. £80 and the posts £120.

**9. Village Hall & Recreation Ground:**

- a. *Post Office van visits:* No further development. Cllr Mulley-Richards will try again to get some response.
- b. *RoSPA safety inspection:* Two pieces of equipment need to be checked annually. The cable on the zip wire needs checking and the Rotorway needs greasing. The Chairman said the grease gun needed replacing and would Council agree to the purchase of a larger one. This was agreed.
- c. *Goal posts and 5-a-side proposal:* The Parish Clerk has received a response from the Balsham recreation field groundsman who said, in principle, we could borrow the paint marker in the summer. The Chairman has spoken to Sara and Tony Humphries asking if they would be prepared to roll the area as they had the necessary equipment, to which they agreed and has now been done. The Parish Council expressed their gratitude for this work. The field looks better but obviously needs cutting which will be done on 28th March. Cllr Temple asked Rob Giles if this area would be cut lower than the rest of the rec. and he agreed to do this. Rob Giles has asked if the Play Area gate could be changed to a double gate as his new equipment would not be able to get through the single gate and said he would donate a gate. The gate would need to be locked and suggested we get quotes for a 5-bar gate and he would be happy to put money towards its cost. The Chairman and Vice Chairman will also look again at the top fencing which is in better condition than the lower fencing, so maybe we will not have to replace all of it or defer the replacement. The Parish Clerk will reply to the groundsman at Balsham giving him more information on what is being done and when.
- d. *Raised Flower Beds:* These have just been completed in front of the Village Hall.
- e. *Sign on road for Village Hall and Recreation Ground:* This is in hand and will probably be put up this weekend.

**10. Home Close house letting:** The Chairman was pleased to announce that Keith Jolly has been allocated the house in Home Close.

**11. Big Garden Party:** Cllr Temple said that various jobs had already been allocated but was still looking for volunteers and would like to put a notice in the Village Voice which was agreed.

**12. Meetings attended by councillors:** None

**13. Reports by County Cllr Batchelor & Dist.Cllr Harvey.** (Jan/Feb. reports on website)

Cllr Batchelor spoke of the central government's wish for local government to be reorganised with larger unitary authorities and elected Mayors and doing away with smaller councils, such as District and possibly County councils. However as Cambridgeshire already has a directly elected Mayor and has been designated as a 'non-priority' area for reorganisation there is unlikely to be any further action for some years.

**14. Any Other Business:**

- a. Cllr Sargeant will circulate the biodiversity policy he has written and it will be published on the website after it has the approval of the Council.
- b. Cllr Temple had noticed when walking past the Village Hall how overgrown the front area was. There is a wire going through the trees which could be a safety hazard if it was damaged by the trees. A suggestion was made that the overgrown thicket be removed in its entirety - the Chairman said he would approach the Chairman of the Village Hall committee in this regard.

**The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Monday 19th May as the 26th May is a Bank Holiday. The Annual Parish Meeting will be held at 7pm followed at 7.45pm by the Parish Council Meeting.**