

Westwell Parish Council
Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council
Held on Wednesday 4 June 2025 at 7pm, Westwell Village Hall, Westwell

1. Open Forum

No members of the public were present.

2. Present and apologies

Present: Cllrs Bainbridge, Drury, Ward, Richards, Hutchinson, Farrington, Lister and Wyatt. Clerk – Sonia Young.

Apologies: Cllr Bartlett.

No members of the public were in attendance.

3. Declarations of Interest

All those Cllrs living close to sites submitted under the call for sites for the 2042 Local Plan. No Cllrs have pecuniary interests to declare.

4 4.1 Approval of the minutes of the meeting held on 7 May 2025 and matters arising.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of Westwell Parish Council held on 7 May 2025 be approved and confirmed as a true record.

Proposed: Cllr Drury. **Seconded:** Cllr Ward. **All in agreement.** Cllr Hutchinson abstained as not present at the May meeting.

Resolved:

It was resolved to approve the minutes as a true record of the meeting.

4.2 Matters Arising

No matters arising.

Decision Items

5 5.1 Planning applications received for comment.

5.1.1 OTH/2025/0655 – Sandbar Business Park, TN26 1AR

Details submitted pursuant to conditions 25 (lighting) of planning permission 1900356/AS

WPC view: Westwell Parish Council was not notified of this application, but having come across it, the council is very concerned that what is being proposed is contrary to what has already been determined for this site under the approved lighting proposals from Whitecroft. This site is prominent on the A20 through the parish and is a significant development site for employment in rural hinterland of Ashford, and in the immediate setting of the national landscape. Lighting is therefore very important.

WPC will comment on the application as follows:

This is an out-of-town site in a rural area. The lighting plans need to be based on BREEAM E2 (rural) as are the Whitecroft plans. The initial proposals from Tamlite in OTH/2025/0655 were E3 (suburban). This was incorrect and is a material error because the site is both rural and in the setting of the Kent Downs National Landscape. This was noted in the process of granting the planning permissions under 19/00356 and 16/01387. We are reassured to note that the revised proposals posted on 25/5/25 are based on E2.

The proposed plan showed 10m high perimeter flood lighting. This is materially higher and more intrusive than the 8m poles distributed through the storage area in the previously approved Whitecroft plan. We note the revised proposals reduce from Y4 (10m) to W6 (8m); however, these are still perimeter not distributed as in the approved plan.

The approved lighting equipment from Whitecroft is specified in the PA Grant project reference 8826 (and the accompanying BREEAM tables). This 8826 project is listed as an approved planning document. The TamLite proposals have different equipment and no supporting evidence for the change. TamLite concentrates mainly on internal lighting, and it appears the TamLite engineer was only able to include external lighting by listing it as "Room 10".

There is also no cross reference in these proposals to the hours of work (Condition 12).

The lighting scheme as proposed to discharge condition 25 is not fit for purpose and ignores what has already been approved for this sensitive rural site.

If the TamLite proposals have been submitted to support a different use of the site, then that also needs to be explained. Until that happens, these proposals to discharge condition 25 need to be withdrawn or refused as contrary to the approved lighting plans for this site. Westwell Parish Council understands the original Apta pots customised use no longer applies since those operations moved to East Yorkshire. The alternative use has to be material to any variation of the approved lighting scheme. As yet there is no information on alternative use.

Resolved

It was proposed to submit the comment as circulated.

Proposed: Cllr Drury. **Seconded:** Cllr Wyatt. **All in agreement.**

Resolved.

WPC will submit the comment as circulated.

Action: The Clerk will email planning officer Oliver Peel to ask to be looped into all submitted planning matters relating to the Sandbar site as it is sited in such a sensitive location.

5.2 Update on planning matters in progress

5.2.1 Works at the Sandbar Business Park

A meeting was held on 3 June between Cllrs, residents neighbouring the development, and the site's agent and contractor.

Cllrs Bainbridge and Drury said it was a positive and open meeting. They advised recent loud noise was the result of a rotating leveller used to compact aggregate needed for drainage. They confirmed that this phase of development had finished. A bund needs to be built before the soundproof fencing can be installed; the contractor said that this work could be carried out earlier than planned to help deaden noise pollution.

Not yet known are the planned final working hours for the site which is now owned by a Turkish freight company – or levels of lorry traffic. What had been confirmed, said Cllrs, was that the company plans to retain the site for its own use rather than selling it on.

It was agreed to hold similar meetings every three months.

5.2.3 ABC Local Plan 2042

No further updates expected until the end of July after the ABC Cabinet meeting.

5.2.4 Elvey Cottage – appeal to Planning Inspectorate vs planning enforcement.

Ref: 3352530. In progress. No decision yet.

6.

6.1 WPC Risk Register

An updated document was circulated to all Cllrs in advance of the meeting.

Resolved

WPC resolved to approve the document as circulated subject to three minor amendments.

Proposed: Cllr Ward. **Seconded:** Cllr Richards. **All in agreement.**

Resolved

The Risk Register 2025 was approved.

7.1 Financial Report

7.1.1 Approval of payments for June in accordance with the budget

WPC main account

Expenditure to approve for June 2025		Method	£
Salary payment May	Clerk	BACS	920.75
Tax and NI	HMRC	BACS	353.59
Mowing inv 5166	All Seasons Gardening Services	BACS	678.60

Annual parish meet refreshments	Reimburse C Drury	BACS	69.54
Annual insurance	Hiscox Insurance Co	BACS	779.82
Cemetery tap repair	MA Brice & Son Moling	BACS	264.00
Cemetery fencing	Mealham Metals	BACS	2210.00
Adult gym taster session	Hayley Orange Health & Fitness	BACS	40.00
Clerk expenses	Reimburse clerk	BACS	38.43
Total			£4574.91

Income			
Transfer	Reversal error	BACS	6519.00
Total			£6519.00

Bank Reconciliation Balance at 31 May 2025: £15,586.70 less unpresented cheques as follows:

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Actual balance = £15,586.70 as at 31 May 2025

WPC deposit account

Expenditure			£
Total			£00.00

Income			
9 May	Interest	BACS	27.52
Total			£27.52

Bank Reconciliation Balance £49,547.36 as at 31 May 2025 less un-presented cheques as follows:

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Actual balance: £49, 547.36 as at 31 May 2025

General reserve	16,952.17
Grant	2, 279
HiP	7,859.42
Deposit	15,937.77
Special reserves:	6519.00
£2,100 picnic tables	
£374 health safety signage	
£450 tidy undergrowth Gold Hill	
£2,500 metal fencing	
£340 plot map	
£755 crown reduction sycamore	

WPC No 2 Account

Expenditure		Cheque No	£
Total			£00.00

Income			
Total			£00.00

**Bank Reconciliation Balance £3.44 at 31 May 2025. Actual balance = £3.44 at 31 May 2025.
Resolved**

WPC resolved to approve the accounts as noted and payments in accordance with the budget.

Proposed: Cllr Bainbridge. **Seconded:** Cllr Hutchinson. **All in agreement.**

Resolved. WPC approved the accounts as noted and payments to be made in accordance with the budget.

7.1.2 Approval of the Annual Governance Statement (*page 4 of the AGAR*)

Resolved

To approve the Annual Governance Statement as read.

Proposed: Cllr Bainbridge. **Seconded:** Cllr Lister. **All in agreement.**

Resolved

The Annual Governance Statement was approved.

7.1.3 Approval of the Accounting Statement for the year 2024-25 (*page 5 of the AGAR*).

Resolved

WPC resolved to approval the Accounting Statement for the year 2024-25

Proposed: Cllr Bainbridge. **Seconded:** Cllr Lister. **All in agreement.**

Resolved

The Annual Accounting Statement was approved.

Information items

8. 8.1 Correspondence

No items for further discussion.

9. 9.1 Playground

9.1.1 Adult gym equipment – update on training sessions

Cllr Farrington said seven people undertook the training and enjoyed themselves. All have committed to the full six-week course on offer. Each participant will pay £20 upfront by cheque and receive their money back on successful completion and participation on the course. Cllrs agreed that the trainer will be paid £300 in two instalments. Cllr Farrington said she hoped word of mouth might attract a few extra residents to apply for the course.

9.1.2 Health and Safety signage

The Clerk collected the finished sign. Cllrs Hutchinson and Bainbridge will install it adjacent to the adult gym equipment.

9.1.3 Renewal of Picnic tables

Cllrs agreed that as one existing table had been fixed, only one new round table was needed.

Action: Clerk to order from FSF in Bethersden.

10. 10.1 Cemetery

10.1.1 Update on the installation of CCTV

Surveillance not required currently as the rope and post system installed has stopped cars from using the area in the evenings. Cllrs agreed that as the temporary ropes had worked well, a permanent installation would be a worthwhile investment.

Action: clerk to approach Mealham Metals for an estimate on metal bollards with metal chain links between. The last chain link to be removeable with a padlock to allow access for hearses, the gravedigger, and groundsmen.

10.1.2 Update on the plan to install a plot map

The plot map has been loaded to the WPC website and a QR code created.

Cllrs tested the code prior to the meeting and agreed it worked well.

Action: Clerk to draft wording for the cemetery sign and circulate for approval.

When time permits, the Clerk will add more information to the new website cemetery page.

10.1.3 Position and management of the dog waste bin

A resident has complained about the smell and location of the dog waste bin which was replaced by Ashford Borough Council last year with a non-lidded bin; ABC no longer supplies lidded bins. Cllrs agreed that first step is to ask ABC to relocate it further into the cemetery. If they cannot, then WPC will ask ABC to remove it and employ professional contractors to empty the WPC bin located in the cemetery as it will inevitably be used for more dog waste vs normal waste.

Action: Clerk to contact ABC.

11. 11.1 KALC report

Cllr Bartlett circulated a report from the KALC meeting to all Cllrs ahead of the meeting.
Taken as read.

12. 12.1 Highways

Cllr Drury said that a remote meeting is scheduled for 10 June with East Kent Highways Hip manager. Cllrs Lister, Drury and Bainbridge will attend and report back at the July meeting.

13. 13.1 Village Hall Management Committee

No meeting to report on. A new metal storage cabinet that will sit outside the rear of the hall is being considered.

14. 14.1 Parish Priority Projects

Cllrs agreed a survey put out via Westwell Events would be a good way to ask residents to rate the ideas. A pull-out leaflet in an edition of Westwell Eye will be created to allow residents not on-line to comment.

15. 15.1 Westwell Eye

Another volunteer is being sought to help with the folding. It was also agreed that a meeting with the editor would be beneficial to look at evolving the design.

The clerk confirmed that advertising revenues were not keeping pace with costs and that the WPC budgeted amount of £600 would need to transfer to the Westwell Eye bank account to meet the next invoice for print and paper.

Resolved

It was proposed to move the budget of £600 from WPC to the Eye account.

Proposed: Cllr Bainbridge. **Seconded:** Cllr Wyatt. **All in agreement.**

Resolved

The budget will transfer to the Eye account

Action: Clerk

16. 16.1 Community Resilience Plan

Update at the next meeting.

17. 17.1 Annual Parish Meeting - outcomes

Cllr Bainbridge, who chaired the Annual Parish Meeting, said he felt the events was successful and well received, with Katie Lam MP (Con) as the guest speaker and new County Cllr Jeremy Eustace (Reform), also able to attend and speak. Over 55 residents attended to hear the reports from WPC and parish groups and societies.

18. Additional Items**18.1 Hare and Hounds public house, Sandyhurst Lane.**

The gates to the garden have been closed and secured and a security firm is monitoring it.

18.1.1 A20 property

A property on the A20 was discussed as there is concern boundary markers have been moved.

The meeting closed at 22.15 hrs. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 2 July 2025.

Chairman's Signature.....