

WESTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

**The Annual Council Meeting was held at Westham Village Hall, on the 19 May 2025
at Westham Village Hall, Peelings Lane, Westham BN24 5HE**

Present: Cllr D Upton* (Chair), Cllr D Axell, Cllr P Baldwin, Cllr L Comfort, Cllr F Durling, Cllr M Fairweather*, Cllr K Farley, Cllr C Hanson, Cllr M Hallett, Cllr R Mayfield, Cllr P Quanstrom

Also at the Meeting:

ESCC Cllr N Geary, Wealden DC Cllr C Primett

S. Sanders (Parish Clerk)

(* denotes WDC Councillor)

222. To agree the Quorate of the Council

A quorate of the Council was agreed.

Proposed and Seconded

Unanimous Decision

Resolved: That a Quorate of the Council was present

223. Election of Chairperson of the Council

There was one proposal for Chair of the Council.

Cllr Daniel Upton was proposed and seconded for the position.

Unanimous approval

Resolved: Cllr Upton is elected Chair of the Council for the year 2025/26

224. To receive the Chairpersons Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Cllr Upton accepted the Declaration of Acceptance of Office for the year 2025/26

224A. Election of Deputy Chairperson of the Council

There were two proposals for Deputy Chair of the Council. Both proposals were proposed and seconded and a vote was taken

Resolved: Cllr C Hanson from Hankham ward was elected Deputy Chair of the Council for the year 2025/26

225. Record members present

Members present had been recorded earlier when the quorate vote was taken

226. Apologies

ESCC Cllr D Shing, Cllr A Taylor

227. Declarations of Interest

None

228. Questions from members of the public

None

229. Draft Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Monday 28 April 2025 to be agreed and confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair of the Meeting

The Minutes had previously been circulated to Councillors

The Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Monday 28 April 2025 were agreed and signed as a correct record by the Chair of the Council

Proposed and Seconded

Majority decision – 2 abstentions

Resolved: That the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 28 April 2025 be agreed and signed by the Chair of the Meeting

230. To receive reports from East Sussex County Councillors and Wealden District Councillors

ESCC Cllr N Geary

Cllr Geary had previously updated Councillors on all matters concerning ESCC at the Annual Public Meeting. The Chair thanked Cllr Geary for stepping in to inform the Council and public of the work and initiatives of the East Sussex County Council in the area

Cllr C Primett – Wealden District Council

Cllr Primett informed Councillors of various decisions made at Wealden DC including:

The new constitution has now been voted and agreed. There are minor changes throughout the document such as changes in law and updates etc.,

The major changes include:

There will now be new Planning Committees (Planning North and Planning South have been disbanded). The new Planning Committees are now called Major Planning Committee and Minor Planning Committee. The planning meetings for May have been cancelled. The new committee meetings will start in June this year.

The number of planning meetings will remain the same.

Which members will be on the new committees has not yet been decided. Also, the number of members and substitutes has changed.

All these changes and planning meeting details will soon appear on the Wealden District Council website.

The two Scrutiny Committees responsibility has changed. They will now be chaired by members of the opposing parties.

Other information included:

All Councillors will be given £10,000 to spend in their ward. The criteria is not yet known but it may target small local groups that cannot access all funding streams.

More information will follow on the Wealden DC website.

Cllr M Fairweather – Wealden District Council

Cllr Fairweather informed Council that the Wealden Annual Council meeting had been held and that the Council strategy would not change.

Also, a funding stream call CLIF worth £2 million pounds was being launched.

The newly approved CLIF funding can be used for community infrastructure projects (such as multi-use community spaces, creative innovation spaces, green spaces or sport & leisure facilities).

231. To adopt the Code of Conduct for Westham Parish Council

Proposed and Seconded

Unanimous approval

Resolved that the Code of Conduct for the Westham Parish Council is agreed for the year 2025/26

232. To agree Standing Orders for the Year 2025/26

Standing Orders for the year 2025/26 were proposed and seconded

(i) To agree bank signatories and additional new signatory

There are currently two bank signatories; Mrs Susan Sanders Clerk (RFO) and Cllr Robert Mayfield. Cllr Phillip Baldwin has been recommended to be the third signatory and agreement will be sought from Councillors

Proposed and Seconded

Resolved: That Cllr Robert Mayfield and Mrs Susan Sanders the two bank signatories with full banking access and one to sign on the account are agreed. Cllr Baldwin is to be added to the account on a one to sign basis and full banking access to both accounts.

(ii) Agreement for Mulberry & Co to be the Council Internal Auditors for the year 2025/26

All Councillors agreed that Mulberry Auditors would continue for the year 2025/26 this was proposed and seconded

(iii) Agreement for the Renewal of Council Insurance for the year 2025/26

After considering a small increase in Insurance Councillors agreed to the amount of £4,201.08 this was proposed and seconded

(iv) Adoption of the Annual Financial Risk Assessment 2025/26

Copies of the Annual Financial Risk Assessment had been circulated to Councillors previously. There were no comments and the Financial Risk assessment was proposed and seconded

(v) Payment of ESALC Invoice of £2025.60 for the year 2025/26

Agreement of payment of this invoice was deferred to the next meeting

(vi) To adopt the Financial Regulations May 2025

Financial Regulations for the year 2025/26 previously supplied to Councillors were proposed and seconded.

Resolved: Item 232 and (i) to (vi) had all been proposed and seconded and now were unanimously agreed

233. Agreement of the payment for the installation of solar lighting on the car park next to Stone Cross School

The solar lighting was installed during the Easter Holidays and is now working well. The path and car park is now well lit at night with the lighting being set with sensors.

Proposed and Seconded

Resolved: That the cost of installing the lighting was over £30,900 including VAT should be paid by bank transfer

234. Agreement to sign the Deed of Dedication which will enable Butchers Field in Westham to become a Field in Trust

The Deed of Dedication was signed and witnessed by three Councillors. It will now be returned to Fields in Trust for their signatories.

The Chair informed Councillors that the process to protect Open Spaces land at Castle Bolton would now begin. This land was an important boundary and should be protected.

Proposed and Seconded

Resolved: That the Deed of Dedication be signed and returned to Fields in Trust

235. To resolve to exclude Members of the Press and Public (Public Bodies [Admission to Meetings] Act 1960

There were no matters to be discussed

The Meeting closed at 20.50pm