

WESTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held at 7.00pm on Monday,
17 November 2025 at The Amenity Hall, Stone Cross School,
Adur Drive, Stone Cross, BN24 5EF

Present: Cllr P Baldwin, Cllr L Comfort, Cllr F Durling, Cllr M Fairweather*, Cllr K Farley, Cllr M Hallett, Cllr C Hanson, Cllr A Taylor, Cllr D Upton*

(* denotes WDC Councillor)

Also present at the meeting:

ESCC Cllr N Geary, ESCC Cllr D Shing, WDC Cllr C Primett

S. Sanders (Clerk)

1 member of the public

Before the Meeting started the Chair of the Council, Cllr Daniel Upton called on Councillors for a minutes silence to mark the death of Mr Keith Stevens who was a past Chairperson of Westham Parish Council

273. Apologies

Cllr D Axell, Cllr B Mayfield, Cllr P Quanstrom

274. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Fairweather expressed an interest in Item 9 (Minute 282) of the agenda. He stated he would withdraw from the room while the item was discussed

275. Questions from members of the public

A member of the public enquired about the progress of a Feasibility Study to install a pedestrian crossing near Stone Cross Primary School

276. Draft Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Monday 20 October 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 20 October 2025 were agreed and signed as a correct record by the Chair of the Council

Proposed and Seconded

Unanimous decision

Resolved: That the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 20 October 2025 be agreed and signed by the Chair of the Meeting

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

Cllr N Geary – East Sussex County Council

Cllr Geary had previously circulated a monthly report on ESCC activities but asked that she could update Councillors on the on recent events. These included a ‘National Hate Awareness Week’ and ESCC offering small to medium businesses and funding advice. Also, a home check service to advise on keeping warm in the winter. All details are on the ESCC website under ‘Keep Warm.’

ESCC is still waiting to hear from central government about Local Government Reorganisation. This should be before next March as a decision has to be made about the local county elections which have be held over from May this year. All the Sussex leaders at County level have united in an informal ‘partnership board’ to deal with any information from central government.

On a local note ESCC have the go ahead to carry out works on the Exceat Bridge in the spring months.

Cllr D Shing – East Sussex County Council

Cllr Shing also spoke about the Highways Department and how they were working to improve the service and relationships between Councils. A new team of Highway Supervisors would be available for contact in the local area.

Cllr C Primett – Wealden District Council

Cllr Primett spoke of the Budget Scrutiny Committee that had been set up. The Budget may be tight this year with a government review that had been carried out forecasting the government grant to be significantly reviewed.

The Councillor Ward budgets are still available and will be until March 2026. He asked that if anyone was thinking of applying for a grant then please contact your local Wealden Councillor.

Cllr M Fairweather – Wealden District Council

Cllr Fairweather said that although the Crowborough Camp situation had been a major preoccupation at the District Council normal council business had continued as usual.

278. Financial Items recommended for approval:

- (i) Reconciliation and Financial Expenditure Reports and payment lists for September 2025

The reconciliation reports and payment list for September 2025 previously circulated were agreed by Council and signed by the Chair of the Council
That the Payment List of £20,461.86 for September 2025 is approved

Proposed and seconded

Majority Agreement – one abstention (statements not read)

**Resolved: That the reconciliation report and payment list for
September 2025 are agreed and signed by the Chair of the Council**

279. Bank Statements for September 2025

- (i) The statements for September 2025 had previously been circulated to Councillors

Proposed and seconded

Majority Agreement - one abstention (statements not read)

Resolved: That the bank statement for September 2025 is agreed and signed by the Chair of the Council

(ii) External Auditors Certificate of Audit for the year ended 31 March 2025

Councillors unanimously agreed to note the Certificate of Audit for the year ending 2025/26 has been received with no comments

Proposed

Seconded

Unanimous agreement

(iii) Resolved: That the External Auditors Conclusion of Audit for the year ended 31 March 2025 be noted

(iv) Councillor to independently to check bank reconciliations

The member shall sign and date the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of this. This activity, including any exceptions, shall be reported to and noted by the council.

These reconciliations and bank statements for September were signed independently by a Councillor and shown at this Council meeting

Proposed and seconded

Majority agreement – 1 abstention (statements not read)

Resolved: That the checked reconciliation reports were signed by an independent Councillor

280. Recommendation for the following Draft policy to be considered and adopted by Full Council:

IT & AI Policy November 2025

A new IT a& AI Policy was presented to Councillors. A copy was circulated to all Councillors to consider. The policy was found to be satisfactory and was adopted at the meeting

Proposed and Seconded

Unanimous

Resolved: That the above policy be adopted at this meeting

281. Recommendation for a Feasibility Study to be carried out by East Sussex County Council on the possibility of installing a pedestrian crossing on Adur Drive adjacent to the Primary School

It was agreed at the October meeting that a process for a feasibility study for a pedestrian crossing by Stone Cross School, Adur Drive, Stone Cross should be progressed.

There is no Crossing Warden and although there are 20 mile an hour signage and road humps traffic still continued to speed along Adur Drive in the morning

Adur Drive is used as a short cut to avoid the traffic lights at Lion Hill and there is a high amount of traffic using this road, particularly in the morning

The Councillor has followed up enquiries they made with the County Council and have contacted various departments. The Council is now awaiting a response from the County Council which should be in a ten day period.

This survey would be carried out by East Sussex County Council and cost around £700.00.

The Councillor then explained to the member of public who had enquired about the feasibility study the need for a pedestrian crossing and why a feasibility study had to be carried out.

282. Planning Application – Land to the North of Dittons Road, Stone Cross, BN24 5NU. Construction of a retail unit (Class E) with associated servicing and

vehicular access, car and cycle parking, hard and soft landscaping and other associated works

Councillors discussed the planning application at length and although they had no objection to the development they were very concerned about the following issues.

The major concerns were about access to the site for pedestrians, cyclist and vulnerable people.

There is no proper crossing to access the site with the small crossing area opposite the entrance to the site not large enough for mobility scooters, bikes, and prams.

There is varying amounts of pathway on either side of the road and whichever way the site is approached there is inadequate room to safely cross Dittons Road.

With increased traffic leaving the site it would seem that walking / cycling and mobility scooter use to the site has not been considered by the developers.

Proposed and Seconded

Unanimous agreement

Resolved: No Objection but the Council ask that the above concerns be considered by the planning officer

283. Wealden Police crime statistics for the Stone Cross, Hankham and Westham area for August 2025

Councillors received an update on the September crime figures for the Parish area. The figures had risen which was of concern to everyone.

A Councillor then informed the meeting that the Parish Church in Westham had been vandalised the previous Sunday afternoon. This had caused great upset to the congregation and clergy of the church.

The Clerk said that she would meet with the local PCSO in the next week and would discuss the vandalism at the church and other crimes in the area.

284. New surfacing is required at the Adur Park basketball court

Upgrading a basketball court with new, safe surfacing can significantly improve play quality, reduce injury risk, and extend the lifespan of the facility. Modern outdoor sports surfaces—such as polymeric rubber (EPDM), macadam, or cushioned acrylic coatings—are designed to provide excellent grip, weather resistance, shock absorption, and consistent ball bounce. The choice of surface will depend on the court's usage level, budget, and maintenance expectations. To ensure safety, surfaces should meet relevant UK and European standards, including BS EN 14877 (synthetic sports surfaces) and Sport England design guidance. These standards help ensure proper drainage, slip resistance, and impact performance. Professional installation and periodic maintenance—such as cleaning, line-marking renewal, and surface inspections—are essential for long-term safety and usability.

A number of companies have been contacted and in the new year estimates will be sought for this work.

285. To recommend a letter be sent on updated procedures from the Parish Council to Stone Cross School

This item would be held over to the next meeting to enable all Councillors to take part in the discussion

286. Clerks Report

(i) Communication between Parish/Town Councils and Wealden District Council

The Clerk has concerns about the communication between Parish/Town Councils and Wealden District Council. There needs to be clearer and more accessible ways of contact in an emergency. It's important that and local councils can easily reach the right people and receive timely responses.

The issue must be raised with the appropriate officers and emphasise the need for improved channels of communication, including clearer contact

points and more consistent updates. In the meantime, the only way to contact anyone at Wealden DC is through a form. As a Council officer I have experienced specific difficulties with having particular issues that need help with speedily. I would like more information on how to reach assistance or direct a query to the correct department.

(ii) Update on the email address change to gov.uk

The Clerk explained that they were still waiting for the website manager to fulfil the procedures of the change to gov.uk. she will contact them again to see if there is any progress.

The Clerk reported that the website is now compliant with WCAG 2.2 standards and therefore also complies with the Public Sector Bodies 2018 Accessibility Act. The Accessibility Statement reflect these changes. Also, a Transparency statement has been added.

287. ESCC Urban Grass Cutting 2026

Option 1 - Standard: Two cuts over the course of a year to be carried out by ESCC at no cost to the Parish Council. Urban grass will be managed for safety purposes only.

Option 2 – Extra cuts: Town/Parish Councils may fund an additional four cuts to be carried out by ESCC, totalling six cuts (two standard and four extra) over the course of the year. This would cost the Parish Council a total of £7,256.12 for the year.

Option 3 – Self delivery: Town/Parish Councils take on responsibility to deliver all urban grass cutting in their area. This must include a minimum of two cuts over the course of the year. ESCC will not carry out any urban grass cutting within the Town/Parish's urban area. ESCC would pay the Parish Council the sum of £3,628.06 to cover the 2 cuts they would have been providing in other options.

After a short discussion Councillors decided to continue with **OPTION 3** self-delivery for the following year. It had worked well this year and the grass cutting service had been to a very good standard.

Proposed and Seconded

Unanimous decision

Resolved: That Councillors agree to continue with OPTION 3 self-delivery for the year 2026.

- 288. 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