

WESTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

The Annual Council Meeting was held at the Amenity Hall on the 26 May 2026
Stone Cross School, Adur Drive, Stone Cross, BN24 5EF

Present: Cllr D Axell, Cllr P Baldwin, Cllr F Durling, Cllr M Fairweather*, Cllr K Farley, Cllr C Hanson, Cllr M Hallett, Cllr R Mayfield, Cllr P Quanstrom, Cllr A Taylor

Also at the Meeting:

ESCC Cllr M Caira,

S. Sanders (Parish Clerk)

(* denotes WDC Councillor)

342. 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

343. Election of Chairperson of the Council

This item would be taken to the June Full Council Meeting and the present Chairs period in office extended for one month

344. To receive the Chairpersons Declaration of Acceptance of Office

This item would be taken to the June Full Council Meeting and the present Chairs period in office extended for one month

345. Election of Deputy Chairperson of the Council

There was one proposal for Deputy Chair of the Council. The proposal was 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 2026/27

346. Record members present

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

347. Apologies

Cllr L Comfort, ESCC Cllr R Lincoln

348. Declarations of Interest

Cllr M Fairweather & Cllr R Mayfield expressed an interest in relation to item 10 (j) on the agenda

349. Questions from members of the public

None

350. Draft Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Monday 20 April 2026 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 April 2026 were agreed and signed as a correct record by the Chair of the Council

Proposed and Seconded

Majority decision – 1 abstention

Resolved: That the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 20 April 2026 be agreed and signed by the Chair of the Meeting

351. To agree Standing Orders for the Year 2026/27

Standing Orders for the year 2026/27 were proposed and seconded

Resolved: Proposed and seconded and unanimously agreed

352. To agree bank signatories

Agreed that the Clerk, Cllr Mayfield and Cllr Baldwin are signatories

Resolved: Proposed and seconded and unanimously agreed

353. (i) Agreement for Mulberry & Co to be the Council Internal Auditors for the year 2026/27

All Councillors agreed that Mulberry Auditors would continue for the year 2026/27 this was proposed and seconded

(ii) Agreement for the Renewal of Council Insurance for the year 2026/27

After considering a small increase in Insurance Councillors agreed to the amount of £4,285.12 this was proposed and seconded

(iii) Adoption of the Annual Financial Risk Assessment 2026/27

Copies of the Annual Financial Risk Assessment had been circulated to Councillors previously. The Clerk explained that ongoing charges for the ESCC Streetlighting contract were a financial risk. The new contract was not financially viable for Westham Parish Council who owned a large number of street lights in the Parish. It was agreed that the new contract should not be signed. Another provider was agreed.

The Financial Risk assessment with amendments was then proposed and seconded

(iv) Payment of ESALC Invoice of £2,488.73 for the year 2025/26

Agreement payment of this invoice was proposed and seconded

(v) To adopt the Financial Regulations May 2026

Financial Regulations for the year 2026/27 previously supplied to Councillors were proposed and seconded.

(vi) Review of Council policies, procedures and practices in respect of its obligations under Freedom of Information and Data Protection legislation (all were reviewed in November 2025)

(vii) Review of Councils policy for dealing with the press, media and communications

To be carried out during the forthcoming year

(viii) Adoption of the Complaints Policy

Agreement of the policy was proposed and seconded

(ix) To agree no rise in the rental charges for allotment plots at the Rattle Road Site

After a short discussion regarding a nominal increase in allotment rents it was decided to not raise the rents in the forthcoming year but a caveat was agreed that the rents may be increased in the next year

Resolved: Item 353 and (i) to (x) had all been proposed and seconded and now were unanimously agreed

354. ANNUAL RETURN & FINAL ACCOUNTS 2025/2026 FINAL ACCOUNTS DOCUMENTS PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED FOR RESOLUTION:

Annual Return – Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2025/26 (to be agreed at the meeting)

Resolved: That the Annual Governance Statement for the year 2025/26 is agreed

355. Annual Return – Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2025/26

- (i) Accounting Statements 2025/26
- (ii) Final Internal Audit Report 2025/26
- (iii) Working Details for the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2025/26
- (iv) Explanation of Variances in the Accounting Statements
- (v) Bank – Cash and Investment Reconciliation as of 31 March 2026
- (vi) Bank Reconciliation Statement as of 31 March 2026 for Cashbook 1
- (vii) Bank Reconciliation Statement as of 31 March 2026 for Cashbook 2
- (viii) Bank Reconciliation Statement as of 31 March 2026 for Cashbook 3
- (ix) Bank Reconciliation Statement as of 31 March 2026 for Cashbook 4
- (x) Supporting Reserves Reconciliation for Annual Return 31 March 2026
- (xi) Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31 March 2026
- (xii) Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 31 March 2026
- (xiii) Asset register 2025/26

Proposed and Seconded

Unanimous agreement

Resolved: That the Annual Return – Section 2 – Accounting Statements for the year 2025/26 is agreed

356. Expression of Interest in Swan Lake House, 2 High Street, Westham

This item would be discussed further at the June Full Council meeting

357. 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 20.15pm

