**WESTOW**

# PARISH COUNCIL

**Westow Parish Council Meeting AGM – 7th May 2025 – Westow Village Hall**

**Attendees:**

Helen Crews (HC) Chair; Angela Fothergill (AF) Clerk; Pennie Hamer (PH); John Smith (JS); Christine Smith (CS); Richard Bannister (RB) Peter Siswick (PS)

**Apologies:**

Elizabeth Shields (ES); Fiona Scarlett (FS)

**Annual General Meeting**

**Adoption of 2024 Minutes**

The minutes of the AGM held on 1st May 2024 were proposed by RB and seconded by JS as a correct record.

**Election of Officers**

HC informed the Council that she would like to stand down as Chair but was happy to stay on the Parish Council. PH nominated and JS seconded RB to be Chair going forward. HC nominated and RB seconded JS as Treasurer, AF agreed to continue as Clerk.

Two new members were co-opted onto the Council, Peter Siswick (PS) and Fiona Scarlett (FS).

CS on behalf of the Council thanked HC for all her hard work over the years as Chair.

**Treasurer’s Report**

JS had distributed the Treasurers Report.

*Westow Parish Council    Responsible Financial Officer’s Report for the Financial Year 2024/25*

*£7550 was brought forward from financial year 2023-4 consisting of £2539 from the Westow Parish Council account, £4852 from the Westow Parish Club Commitee (Village Hall) account and £158 from the Village Hall Deposit account.*

*Income of £4974 included the Precept from North Yorkshire Council of £2500 and £408 from village hall hire. Non Domestic Rates of £1060.38 was offset by Transitional Relief (£80.59) and Small Business Rate Relief (£979.79).*

*Expenditure amounted to £6725. Financing the work of the Parish Council, including the salary of the Parish Clerk and Parish insurance accounted for £1584. The cost of utilities (water and electricity) for the Village Hall amounted to £430.*

*Compliance with the Transparency Code (to maintain the Parish Council website) accounted for £318 of spending.*

*£5799 \* is being carried forward into 2025-26. This includes remaining Transparency Code funds of £266 and £3045 Parish Club Committee (Village Hall maintenance) restricted fund.*

*\* 2 unpresented cheques to the value of £97.90 have been included in the 2024/25 accounts to agree with bank reconciliation.*

*J Smith, Responsible Financial Officer*

*The accounts have been circulated.*

*I am grateful to Robin Graham for his advice and conducting the Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25.*

*Westow Parish Council is a ‘Smaller Authority’ with neither gross income nor gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 in the financial year. With the Parish Council’s approval it will certify itself as exempt from a limited assurance review under Section 9 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015 by submission of a Certificate of Exemption – AGAR 2024/25 Form 2.*

*Westow Parish Council acknowledges its responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control and to approve the Annual Governance Statement 2024/25.*

*Westow Parish Council confirms that the authority website (westow.ork.uk) is up to date and the information required by the Transparency Code has been published. Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights will be displayed on the notice board.*

The PC agreed to submit a Certificate of Exemption form a limited assurance review which was signed by the Chair.

The PC agreed to accept the Annual Governance Statement which was signed by the Chair and the Clerk.

The PC approved the Accounting Statement 2024/25 which was signed by the Chair

HC thanked JS for all his hard work as Treasurer.

The PC unanimously accepted the accounts as a correct record and they will be placed on the website.

If parishioners are unable to view documents on the website they should contact the Clerk who will make the accounts available to them. A notice will be placed on the Noticeboard in this regard.

RB suggested that it may be a good idea to have a mid-term financial review.

**Chairmans Report**

**Chair’s Report – AGM 7 May 2025**

***Village Hall***

*Since our last AGM we have seen progress in refurbishing the village hall with the new tables and chairs, purchased with the help of a Community Grant, delivered in May. Work is planned to upgrade the kitchen and toilet facilities with help from volunteers. Particular thanks to Tim Saxby.*

*Temporary work has been done on the stone wall in front of the hall with more permanent repair work to be carried out this spring/summer. Many thanks to Paddy Hill for his kind help.*

*The PC has no formal records relating to the history of the Village Hall. Last summer, Dennis Cook, in conversation with Christine Smith, told her that the Hall was gifted to the village by the Langton Estate. Dennis’ father built the foundations and platform and it was used by many in days gone by for playing billiards, darts and card games. Dennis said that the Langton Estate owned a lot of property and land within the village and he thought that the village green land was also probably gifted to the village.*

***Westow War Memorial***

*Many thanks to Jaynie Pateraki and Peter Burton for cleaning the memorial and painting the railings.*

***Kirkham Bridge***

*The bridge was repaired again in spring 2024. The PC had pursued the use of signage to limit the weight of traffic able to use the bridge and for the main part this seems to have helped reduce its use by heavy vehicles.*

***Precept for 2025***

*The PC took the decision not to increase the Precept reasoning that people already had various increases in household costs in the forthcoming year.*

***Ongoing issues***

* *The PC has been chasing Yorkshire Water to solve the leak that floods the road at Firby corner. It seems to have reduced but we are not clear what the cause is or was.*
* *We are looking at replacing the village noticeboard and know that the Parish Church Council also wants to update theirs so hopefully we can work together on this.*
* *Some of the posts around the village green to protect it from parked cars need replacing again. The parking space is needed by the residents of the adjacent cottages.*
* *The PC has expressed a willingness to learn more about a Local Nature Strategy Fund*

***New councillors***

*Finally, during the last year two of our councillors Neil Johnson and Geraldine Burton left the PC. Our many thanks go to them both. Additionally, thank you to Geraldine for offering to continue to look after the Defibrillator*.

*Following a request for new volunteers to join the PC we will welcome two new colleagues – Fiona Scarlett and Peter Siswick – who will join from May 2025.*

*Last but not least – thank you to all the PC members who volunteer and to our Clerk Angela Fothergill for keeping us in order.*

**May Regular Meeting –7th May 2025**

**Minutes of the last meeting**

The Minutes of the March meeting were proposed as a correct record.

**Matters Arising from Action Log**

**Water leakage at Firby corner –** AF to chase this up on the Parish Portal. PH seemed to think there was a spring there and this could be causing the problem.

**Westow Sign –** AF had heard nothing from North Yorkshire re the replacement sign, AF to email North Yorkshire to see if they could return the sign they took as it was not damaged it was only the post that was damaged**.**

**Posts around village green –** Peter Siswick (PS) said that he would be happy to get a quote for some new posts and sand/concrete in regard to the replacement posts on the village green.

**PS to get quote and email Councillors re posts**

**Clerks Update**

AF had received communication from North Yorkshire re removal or adoption of the village phone box. The PC could adopt the phone box without the phone in it for £1. RB had placed something on the Facebook page for Westow Village Forum for any views from the parishioners on whether they would like to adopt the phone box or have it removed. The consensus was that it would be a shame to lose the phone box.

After discussion AF to email NYCC to say that the Parish would like to keep the phone box as it is a listed building and also the consensus was that most of the parishioners want to keep the phone box.

Some suggestions were put forward as to what the phone box could be used for in future i.e. a noticeboard could be placed in there or a library.

**AF to email NYCC and to put on action log**

**Budget and Finance**

The PC had received the Precept of £2500 which was now received in one amount. Going into the new financial year the account stands at £5093 (£265.92)being the transparency fund). The Village Hall account stands at £3045.

**AF to send a cheque to Zurich for the Village Hall insurance of £732.55**

**Planning Applications**

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| An application had been received from Steve Tetlow the Hollies for some replacement rooflights, the Council had no objection.A retrospective change of use application had been received for Fishers Yard, the Council had no objection to this. HC would email in this regard.**Items from the Website**Nothing to report. |

**The meeting ended at 7.50 p.m.**

**Next Meeting – Wednesday 16th July**