



NOTICE OF FULL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
7pm Monday March 13th 2023 Westerleigh Village Hall

Please do not attend if you, or a person you have been in close contact with are ill

Members are reminded that the Council has a general duty to consider the following matters in the exercise of any of its functions: Equal Opportunities (race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status and any disability), Crime & Disorder, Health & Safety and Human Rights.

AGENDA

1. Welcome & Introduction
2. Apologies for absence
3. Declarations of Interest under the Localism Act 2011 relating to this meeting
4. Reports from South Gloucestershire Councillors on matters relating to the Parish

Bus Service Withdrawals and Demand Responsive Transport (DRT)

In the last year, following the withdrawal of the financial support the government provided bus companies during the pandemic and its aftermath, we have seen swingeing cuts to bus services across the West of England. This has been driven by sharp increases in the cost of fuel, lower passenger numbers due to unreliable services, as well as a chronic shortage of drivers due to better contracts being available in the haulage industry. There are currently 250 vacancies for bus drivers across the region.

The Y5 service was withdrawn in October. Now the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) has been forced to cut the number of supported, commercially unviable bus services from the start of the 2023/24 financial year. This is because the budget from the transport levy, provided by the three constituent local authorities (South Gloucestershire Council, Bristol City Council and Bath & Northeast Somerset Council), has not kept up with the high rate of inflation in the public transport sector. The First 47 service, as a result, will be withdrawn on 2nd April. The villages of Westerleigh, Iron Acton and Rangeworthy will not have access to any bus service.

For a two year period, starting on 3rd April, the West of England, working in partnership with Via and WeDRT, will be trialling Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) under the name WESTlink. This minibus trial is being funded from £105m of funding awarded to the West of England and North Somerset Council, by the Department for Transport, for their *Bus Services Improvement Plan* (BSIP). Due to the conditions attached to the BSIP funding it must be used to fund new services and cannot be used to support existing bus routes. Under DRT residents will book a journey, either through an app or by telephone, and be given a pickup time from a nearby bus stop. Journeys can be anywhere within one of WESTlink's DRT zones and passengers are able, at the same time, to book a return journey later in the day. DRT is not allowed to compete with existing services nor will journeys follow a fixed route. They will, however, connect rural villages to major transport hubs (e.g. Yate, Thornbury, etc.) and facilitate longer journeys across the West of England.

There have been calls for WECA to explore bringing the regional bus network back under public control via bus franchising. Last year Bristol City Council passed a motion calling for franchising to be examined. A report before the Cabinet of Bath & Northeast Somerset Council this week recommends formally asking Dan Norris, the West of England Mayor, to commission an independent review of options for bus franchising in the West of England. Franchising would take years to establish nor would it, by itself, resolve the driver shortage but the collapse of the regional bus network underlines the vital importance of such a review.

Planning Appeals

South Gloucestershire Council (SGC) has now suffered two major appeal defeats – Land South of Badminton Rd, Old Sodbury and Land West of Park Farm, Thornbury – that will have a significant impact until the next Local Plan is submitted for public examination.

In the former appeal the Planning Inspector ruled that, as SGC has not carried out a methodical review of all defined settlement boundaries within the authority in 30 years, those boundaries should be considered to be out of date. In the latter appeal a different Inspector determined that SGC can only demonstrate a housing land supply of 4.77 years rather than 5 years as the government requires. Both Inspectors independently concluded that the spatial strategy set out in SGC's adopted planning documents, the *Core Strategy* and the *Policies, Sites & Places Plan*, are out of date and that the tilted balance set out in paragraph 11d) ii) of the *National Planning Policy*

Framework should be applied. This states there should be a presumption in favour granting planning permission unless **“any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits”**.

There is a strong likelihood that SGC, as a Local Planning Authority, is going to have to start regularly applying the tilted balance when arriving at planning decisions. Even if SGC, in the coming months, can increase its housing land supply to 5 years the tilted balance will still come into play due to the settlement boundaries being out of date. This is unlikely to change until the new Local Plan is in what is termed “an advanced stage” (i.e. it has been formally submitted for public examination). As the *Local Plan Delivery Programme* only envisages submitting the draft Local Plan to the Secretary of State for examination in August 2024 there is likely to be an increase in speculative applications and appeals in the intervening period. There are strong incentives for developers to pursue this path rather than wait for the Local Plan to be adopted. Land outside of the Green Belt but close to the current settlement boundaries is particularly vulnerable.

Development Management Committee Referral

As ward councillors Cllrs Young and Clark have requested planning application P22/05289/F, to construct a grounds store at The Kendleshire, be determined by the Development Management Committee (DMC). The reasons for calling this application in were principally that the site is located within the Green Belt and the size of the proposed building, along with the proposed mitigation measures, requires members to consider the overall impact upon the openness of the Green Belt. Whilst residents have objected on various other grounds (e.g. impact upon residential amenity), and may well raise such issues as public speakers when it goes before DMC, those reasons were not material considerations we have raised in our referral.

Cllr Keith Burchell, Chair of DMC, has subsequently authorised this referral. It will go the DMC meeting on Thursday 13th April at 11 a.m. with the site visit being on Friday 31st March (details will be announced nearer the time). A representative of the parish council can speak at both. Residents can attend site visits but are not permitted to address the committee. Speakers wishing to address the committee on 13th April can do so either in person at the Kingswood Civic Centre or remotely via Microsoft Teams. At that meeting objectors, supporters, the applicants and the parish council each have a total of 5 minutes to address the committee (20 minutes overall).

5G Phone Mast Installation in Coalpit Heath

A new, larger 5G phone mast has been installed at the Woodside Road/Badminton Road junction, in place of the old one. Unfortunately, the government changed permitted development rights governing phone masts in April 2022. This explains why a planning application has not been submitted; the 5G mast is within the permitted limits that companies can install without needing to seek prior approval from the local planning authority.

King's Coronation Grant Scheme

South Gloucestershire Council has launched a King's Coronation grant scheme to support community groups as a contribution to organisations planning commemorative events to celebrate the Coronation of His Majesty the King. The minimum award is £100, and the maximum award will be £1000, depending on demand and budget availability. The closing date for applications is midday on Friday 24th March 2023.

For further information please visit <https://beta.southglos.gov.uk/the-kings-coronation-award>.

5. Pre-arranged items from members of Public **Please contact the Clerk before the meeting if you wish to speak.**

6. **PLANNING:**

(a) i To note Circulated Schedule Referral - P22/05289/F The Kendleshire, Henfield Road, Coalpit Heath BS36 2XG

ii To note appeal letter - P20/23743/RVC Wentwood Nurseries Ram Hill Coalpit Heath South Gloucestershire BS36 2TZ

(b) Council to NOTE comments submitted since last meeting

(c) Council to NOTE planning decisions made by SGC since last meeting

(d) Council to discuss/comment on any necessary Planning Applications or other Planning Matters including: P23/00514/F Land Off Ram Hill Coalpit Heath South Gloucestershire BS36 2TX Erection of 1 no. detached dwelling with associated works.

7. Parish Councillor Reports – written submissions, taken as read with questions taken as necessary.

8. Council to APPROVE [Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on February 13th 2023](#)

9. Council to NOTE receipt and APPROVE February 2023 finance documentation.

10. Council to receive and consider information from Avon Wildlife Trust about current year and future activities and APPROVE any arising budget requirements

11. Council to receive report from Wotton Tree Consultancy on large trees at Bitterwell and agree next steps

12. Council to receive update on Bitterwell Lake netting audit and matters arising

13. Council to receive update from Edventure Project at Newman Field and consider approval of matters arising

14. Council to DISCUSS/APPROVE quotations to supply and fit new swings at Westerleigh Playing Field

15. Council to consider request for use of Westerleigh Playing Field Sunday mornings for 1 football match every week from Sept 23 until mid-April 2024 (St Nicholas Youth FC Chipping Sodbury)
16. Council to consider request for Non-Standard Use of Westerleigh Playing Field on Aug 5th by Ye Olde Inne
17. Correspondence/Communication with Westerleigh Parish Council:
From SGC:
- Shared Approach to vehicles obstructing the highway
- Other received items
- Swift Sports Coaching – report on February half term activity days
 - VALID campaign group public meeting 14th March 7.30pm at Crossbow House - Risk of speculative planning applications in Coalpit Heath, Frampton Cotterell & Winterbourne areas
 - Avon Pension Fund | 2023/24 Employee Contribution Bands
 - Avon & Somerset Police - Beat Officer to attend September Parish Council meeting
18. Council to receive information from Clerk & Deputy Clerk regarding ongoing matters/required approvals including:
Pension contact update (LGPS53); Zoom Pro subscription; ICO Registration; Proludic play equipment works at WPF;
19. Council to DISCUSS/APPROVE submissions for any required CONSULTATIONS.
20. Items considered urgent or exempt by the Chairman.
21. **Briefing on application process for candidates for election to Westerleigh & Coalpit Heath Parish Council on May 4th 2023**
22. Dates of upcoming public Parish council meetings www.westerleighparishcouncil.org.uk/meeting-dates/
Annual Parish Meeting TUESDAY April 11th at Henfield Hall at 7pm immediately followed by
Full Parish Council meeting