

**WETHERSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL**  
**REPRESENTING WETHERSFIELD, BLACKMORE END & BEAZLEY END**



**MINUTES of the Wethersfield Airbase Scrutiny Committee Meeting held at Shalford Village Hall on Monday 25 March 2024, commencing at 7:30pm.**

Present: Cllr A Hull (Chairman) (Shalford PC)  
Cllr R Duffin (Vice Chairman) (Finchingfield PC)  
Cllr A French (Shalford PC)  
Cllr J O'Brien (Little Bardfield PC)  
Cllr C West (Wethersfield PC)  
Mr R Aggis  
Mr J Pearce  
D Roder (Clerk and RFO)

In Attendance: Members of the Public: 0

**WA103/23-24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr N Nicholson (Hellions Bumpstead PC) and Cllr B Foulkes (Sible Hedingham PC)

**WA104/23-24 MEMBERS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS**

None declared.

**WA105/23-24 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 26 FEBRUARY 2024.**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 26 February 2024, copies of which had been previously circulated to Members, were confirmed as a true record, and signed by the Chairman. Proposer Cllr A French, Seconder Cllr R Duffin.

**WA106/23-24 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None.

**WA107/23-24 CLERKS REPORT**  
**COMMUNICATION:**

- 1. The Home Office meeting together with PC's was cancelled in March** and rescheduled for April however a date has yet to be set.
- 2. The Home Office has stated that both Scampton and Wethersfield service user numbers is to be capped at 800** under normal operating conditions. The SDO will however be for 2000 beds in Scampton and 1700 in Wethersfield should they be required in exceptional circumstances.

**3. The Clerk wrote to Alex Chalk at the MOJ for clarity on the mega prison proposal at Wethersfield** and confirmation that the Home Office spokesman was correct that these would be highly unlikely to go ahead now. Response received as follows:

“ Dear Ms Roder, Thank you for your enquiry of 7 March 2024, addressed to Mr Alex Chalk, regarding the Ministry of Justice’s interest in the Wethersfield site for new prisons. MoJ are currently delivering 20,000 additional, modern prison places, the largest prison build programme since the Victorian era, ensuring the right conditions are in place to rehabilitate prisoners, helping to cut crime and protect the public. Of these, 10,000 places will be provided at six new prisons. HMP Five Wells and HMP Fosse Way are now open and HMP Millsike is under construction. We have recently secured outline planning permission for two new prisons in Leicestershire and Buckinghamshire and one, in Lancashire, is subject to an ongoing planning appeal. We are cognisant that the Home Office plan to use parts of the Wethersfield site for the foreseeable future and we do not anticipate progressing a prison scheme whilst they have a presence on the site. However, we will continue to maintain an interest in Wethersfield as part of our long-term pipeline strategy. Should you have any questions, the Prison Supply team can be contacted via: psdenquiries@justice.gov.uk. Yours sincerely Prison Supply Directorate”

**4. The Clerk sent the following letter to various MP’s regarding the SDO** to be laid in parliament:

Stephen Kinnock

Yvette Cooper

Thangam Debbonaire

Lloyd Russell-Moyle

Nadia Whittome

Olivia Blake

Dawn Butler

Kim Johnson

Tim Farron

“Dear [ ]

We write to you today representing the views of 13 Parish Councils surrounding Wethersfield Airfield in Essex. As you will be aware, since 13<sup>th</sup> July 2023 the Home Office has been using Wethersfield Airfield for the large-scale housing of asylum seekers. The Home Office has confirmed that it will be extending the use of Wethersfield Airfield for housing up to 1700 men for a further 3.5 years by way of a Special Development Order. We have been advised that the SDO is likely to be laid in Parliament this week.

We write to ask if you would be willing to oppose the SDO through the tabling of a prayer motion and allow this development to be subject to proper Parliamentary scrutiny and

debate. Quite apart from the morally questionable approach of the current Government to people seeking asylum, there are a number of pragmatic reasons why the use of Wethersfield for asylum seeker accommodation is a particularly bad one.

### **Background to Use of Wethersfield as an asylum centre**

The decision to use Wethersfield Airfield for housing asylum seekers was made by the Home Office in March 2023 and declared to be in response to an "emergency situation", albeit one of the current Government's making. The Home Office relied upon permitted development rights (Class Q), which allows emergency development on Crown Land for up to 12 months. Despite having sufficient time to do so, the Home Office has deliberately avoided submitting a planning application in the usual way for either the original period of use and the proposed extension of that use and is using devices whereby any public comment is excluded. This has prevented any meaningful scrutiny of the impact of these proposals on either the local area or the welfare of the asylum seekers and excludes any engagement with the local community and local planning authority. We refer you to the excellent letter from Dan Gascoyne chief executive of our local district council (Braintree DC) to Liam Burns of the Home Office (attached to this e-mail) dated 29<sup>th</sup> January 2024, which outlines the many reasons why both the council and the local community object to the SDO.

Further to the reasons stated in Braintree District Council's letter as to why the site is inappropriate for use as asylum accommodation, we would like to highlight the following concerns:

#### **Isolated nature of the site**

Wethersfield Airfield sits 9 miles from the nearest town by road and 1.7 miles from the nearest village of Wethersfield, with no footpaths or pavements to allow easy walking access into the village. Wethersfield is a third-tier village within the Councils hierarchy, the lowest category of settlement. These villages lack most of the facilities required to meet day to day needs, with poor public transport links and where travel by private vehicle use is usually required. When considering the tests of sustainable development, these will not normally be met within a third-tier village. The Parish of Wethersfield has a population of 1,298 and the SDO proposes to locate up to 1,700 men on site.

Like most people, our community want to help those in need. A twice weekly conversational English class is run on site by members of The Fields Association (our local residents association) and is the main on-site provision for men housed there. This has recently been expanded to offer a weekly music session with a gardening group to start next month. All of these are being run by local volunteers coming together to try to make a difference. However, despite the community doing all they can to help, sending hundreds of the most desperate people in the most desperate of circumstances in the middle of a quiet rural community is not right for them and is not right for the local community. It is not the solution to a complex problem.

#### **Site is failing the asylum seekers and the staff/contractors working there.**

Concerns regarding the safe operation of the site have been repeatedly raised. On 8<sup>th</sup> February, following several inspections of the Wethersfield site, the former ICIBI, David Neal, wrote in a letter to Tom Pursglove MP that "Nothing substantive has been delivered to relieve and to mitigate the risks resulting from the tensions that will inevitably arise when a sizeable population of men is being accommodated in a remote location with very limited information on what the future might hold for them and with very little to do....I spoke to a number of men and it was clear there was an overwhelming feeling of hopelessness caused by boredom which inevitably in my experience leads to violence". He also raised concern regarding the possible expansion of numbers on the site from just under 600 to 800 men, "I am concerned that this expansion in numbers would significantly increase the risk of a serious incident impacting the safety and wellbeing of Home Office staff, contractors, and service users on site."

Our local MP, the Rt Hon James Cleverly MP, (who also currently holds the position of Home Secretary), has expressed opposition to the proposal highlighting "the remote nature of the site, the limited transport infrastructure and narrow road network and that these factors would mean the site wasn't appropriate for asylum accommodation." At a meeting between Mr. Cleverly and members of The Fields Association on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2024 the Home Secretary said that there was an operational peak capacity with which the site could be run and indicated that he felt this limit was close to being reached at almost 600 men, referring to operational problems such as staffing issues and security. However, despite this acknowledgement he said that the SDO would allow the use of Wethersfield for housing **up to 1700 men** and that the Home Office would not agree to formally reduce that number.

Medecins Sans Frontiere have been so concerned about the inadequacy of healthcare provision on site, in particular mental health care, they have been compelled to hold mobile health clinics just outside the security gates.

A report by The Helen Bamber Foundation and Humans for Rights Network in December 2023 entitled "Ghettoised and Traumatized: The experiences of men held in Quasi-Detention in Wethersfield" highlights their findings, via clinical assessment and casework, that the use of Wethersfield airfield as a large "open prison camp" for men seeking asylum has already caused irreparable and profound harm to the residents.

### **No Environmental Impact Assessment**

On 5<sup>th</sup> February 2024 the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities issued a screening direction in respect of Wethersfield Airfield, which concluded that its use for asylum accommodation across 4.5 years in total did not amount to EIA development. Despite requests from our district council and other interested parties a copy of the information on which the screening direction was based or the decision itself has not been provided. The screening direction issued by the Secretary of State in relation to the initial development of the site for a 1 year period concluded that this "emergency" development was not EIA development due to the limited impacts of the temporary 1 year

use of the site. Typically, development of this scale has required an Environmental Statement, which would need to be considered in advance of the SDO.

Reports undertaken by our own series of consultants show that an EIA is essential, specifically in regards to the high risk of class A contaminants likely to be on large areas of the site, a legacy of US military cold war deployment. As highlighted in Braintree District Councils letter, concerns regarding the capacity of the local sewage system, the road network, light and noise pollution and the effect on the sites woodland and grassland habitats all need to be considered in an EIA.

### **Not value for money**

The Government has portrayed the use of ex military bases and barges for housing asylum seekers as necessary due to the spiralling cost of hotel accommodation. Internal Government memos from March 2023 in relation to Wethersfield advised that the "value for money case is marginal" and that the cost of 1,130 bedspaces in modular accommodation would be up to £72m for a year. However, no details of actual costs nor the breakdown of comparative costs has been provided by the Home Office and our repeated FOI requests for the Accounting Officers Assessment for the Wethersfield asylum centre (as recommended by the national audit office) have been repeatedly refused.

Whilst Wethersfield is not within your constituency, as our local MP is the current Home Secretary, we would welcome a conversation with yourself, or someone in your office about how to effectively oppose the SDO. Should you be in a position to do so, please telephone Andrew Hull on [REDACTED] or Juliet O'Brien on [REDACTED]. Given the urgent nature of this request we would be extremely grateful for a response at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely”

**As of today 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 2 MP’s have moved a motion on the SDO to annul it.**

### **5. THE NATIONAL AUDIT OFFICE (NAO)**

The NAO has released its report regarding the Investigation into asylum accommodation.

**In December 2023, the Home Office paid £274 million for up to 64,000 beds in hotels,** 45,800 of which were being used. It is not possible for all hotel beds the Home Office pays for to be occupied at any given time, as it takes time to clean, maintain and move people into hotel rooms once the previous occupant has left. The Home Office keeps aside a ‘buffer’ of around 5,000 beds in hotels to ensure it has enough space to accommodate people newly arrived in the UK to seek asylum (paragraph 2.2). By the end of January 2024, the Home Office had stopped using 60 hotels. In October 2023, the Home Office announced that it would stop using 50 hotels (housing 3,600 people at the time of the announcement) by the end of January 2024. At the time of the announcement, the Home Office was using approximately 400 hotels to house people seeking asylum. Between the announcement and the end of January, it stopped using 60 hotels, and it intends to stop using a further 84 by the end of April 2024. It has managed to move out of these hotels because it has:

- increased the amount of room-sharing in hotels, adding hotel beds without needing to source new hotels;

- slightly increased the amount of dispersal accommodation; • increased the number of asylum decisions it is making, which allows people to flow through its accommodation quicker; and
- moved some people into its new large sites (paragraphs 2.3 to 2.12 and Figures 3, 4 and 5).

**By the end of March 2024, the Home Office expects to have spent at least £230 million** on developing four large sites and, in January 2024, it was accommodating nearly 900 people across two of them. The Bibby Stockholm vessel docked at Portland Port was providing accommodation for 321 single adult males at the end of January 2024 and the Home Office had expected it to be accommodating 430. The former RAF base at Wethersfield, Essex was accommodating 576 single adult males and the Home Office had expected it to be accommodating 1,445.

The Home Office expects to move people into the former RAF base in Scampton, Lincolnshire by April 2024 and former student accommodation in Huddersfield by

**May 2024. In total it expects its Large Sites Accommodation Programme to cost £1.2 billion** (paragraphs 2.12 and 3.2 and Figures 5, 6 and 7). The Home Office has incurred losses of at least £3.4 million developing sites that it will not use. While trying to find alternative accommodation quickly, it has looked at a range of options, including vessels, ex-military sites, holiday camps, converted office buildings and hard-sided tents. Some options incurred costs before the sites were found to be unsuitable or unavailable. For example, the Home Office spent £2.9 million in 2022-23 preparing the former RAF base in Linton-on-Ouse to accommodate people, but it later cancelled plans for using the site. It also paid around £0.5 million to reserve vessels it had earmarked as asylum accommodation but was unable to use as it could not secure a suitable port (paragraphs 3.3 and 4.2 and Figure 6).

**The Home Office’s analysis suggests that large sites will cost more than hotels.** The Home Office proceeded with its large sites on the basis that they would cost less than hotels. It also hopes that the large sites will be more “appropriate and sustainable” than hotels. But its latest assessments of value for money do not consider these benefits and suggest that, when sunk costs are included, **the four large sites will cost approximately £46 million more than using hotels.** The Home Office’s estimates contain significant uncertainty and are sensitive to its assumptions, specifically the following.

- **Hotel costs:** The Home Office initially assumed that hotel costs would rise to approximately £143 per person per night (excluding VAT) by the time large sites were ready to accommodate people. In subsequent analysis, the Home Office recognised that hotel costs fluctuate. In January 2024 the Home Office estimated that a £10 change in the cost of hotels per person per night could change the savings from large sites relative to hotels by approximately £60 million. **Between April 2023 and January 2024, the cost of hotels ranged from around £127 to £148 per person per night.**
- **Set-up and fixed costs:** The Home Office initially expected refurbishment and **set-up costs to be approximately £5 million each for Wethersfield and Scampton.** These costs have **since increased to £49 million for Wethersfield** and £27 million for Scampton.
- **Occupancy of sites:** **The Home Office assumed sites would be about 85% to 90% full** within a few months of opening. On this basis, the Home Office expected to have **around 1,875 people in large sites by January 2024, but they accommodated nearly 900 people (approximately 48% of expected occupancy).** The Home Office is now considering reducing the maximum number of people it accommodates at sites in Wethersfield and Scampton. At Wethersfield, it estimates that this could reduce savings relative to hotels by up to £54 million (paragraphs 3.4 to 3.9, and Figures 7, 8 and 9).

Risks associated with the Home Office’s plans. **The Home Office rated its plans to deliver large sites as high risk or undeliverable, as did the Infrastructure and Projects Authority (IPA).** The IPA, which

scrutinises the deliverability of major government programmes, has undertaken three reviews of the Home Office’s work on asylum accommodation since November 2022. **All reviews rated the plans as ‘red’, meaning that “successful delivery of the programme to time, cost and quality appears to be unachievable”.** The IPA recommended that the Home Office be clearer about the scope and objectives of its programmes and said its plans were unrealistic. **The Home Office also recognised the challenges to delivery, rating its own assessments of progress as ‘red’, and has repeatedly revised its targets for beds in large sites accommodation downwards** (paragraphs 4.3 and 4.4).

To meet its ambitious accommodation timetables, the **Home Office has prioritised the speed it awards contracts over generating competition. In several instances, the Home Office has chosen to modify existing contracts, use Crown Commercial Service frameworks, and use contracts awarded by the Ministry of Justice to help increase its asylum accommodation.** It has also developed some of the contractual requirements after or alongside writing contracts and, **in some instances, work began before contracts were in place. The Home Office sought legal advice about its commercial approach, but it acknowledges that it has not been able to eliminate the risk of successful legal challenges entirely.** The Home Office also acknowledges that these practices mean there is a risk of **not getting the best prices and that competition could have enabled it to obtain improved terms** (paragraphs 4.5 and 4.6 and Figure 11).

**The Home Office has secured some large sites before communicating with the local stakeholders** about its plans, to reduce the risk of local opposition affecting its negotiations. It has also used emergency planning regulations so it can start work on sites quickly. The Home Office has faced legal challenges on the grounds of planning regulations, the impact on local populations, and the impact on planned regeneration projects. After confirming sites, the Home Office has engaged with local groups, and taken steps to respond to some of the challenges faced by local communities, for example, by providing additional funding. **The Home Office acknowledges its engagement was limited, but it is trying to improve this** (paragraphs 4.8 to 4.10).

**The Home Office is responsible for the safety of people it is accommodating, but in January 2024 it was still working with providers to develop specific measures to assess how well accommodation providers were keeping residents safe in large sites.** The Home Office told us it was discussing with contractors a set of measures it would use to monitor performance at the Bibby Stockholm vessel. The large sites at Wethersfield and Scampton are covered by the Asylum Accommodation and Support contracts, which set out safeguarding expectations for accommodation providers. **The Home Office received its first reporting pack specific to Wethersfield in January 2024, which included complaints and incident reporting for the site, and highlighted it was still developing the key performance indicators, reporting and governance structures. There have been high-profile incidents in large sites, and the Home Office seeks to identify lessons from these** (paragraphs 4.11 to 4.15)

**The Home Office expects to have developed a 10-year accommodation strategy by spring 2024.** It expects this will consider the type and amount of accommodation it wants to have, how it will work with partners in local authorities and options for funding. Alongside the strategy, **it is resetting the Large Sites Accommodation Programme. It is reducing the number of beds it intends to provide through such sites and proposing to identify smaller sites that will accommodate between 200 and 700 people** (paragraphs 5.2 to 5.5).

Full report : [Investigation into asylum accommodation \(nao.org.uk\)](https://www.nao.org.uk/publications/2024/march/investigation-into-asylum-accommodation/)

## **6. BDC PRESS RELEASE 22 MARCH 2024.**

**Government confirms its plans for the ongoing use of Wethersfield Airfield**

Central government have confirmed its ongoing plans for their continued use of the Wethersfield Airfield site, for both the Home Office asylum accommodation centre and Ministry of Justice (MoJ) prison proposals.

This week the Home Office confirmed with Braintree District Council that it has laid a Special Development Order (SDO) which gives planning permission for the Secretary of State at the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to extend the use of the asylum accommodation centre at Wethersfield Airfield for a further three years, with up to six months decommissioning following.

This comes as their emergency permitted development rights (known as Class Q) expire in April.

The Council was given the opportunity to provide its comments on the SDO process where it raised various concerns, including the lack of information initially provided to us and the failure to ensure meaningful engagement with stakeholders and the local community. However, this is the first time the Council has seen the detail of the SDO.

A letter has also been received from the MoJ by Braintree District Council stating they are not looking to use the Wethersfield airfield site to progress two new prisons whilst the Home Office are on site, but still maintain an interest in Wethersfield as part of their long-term prison strategy.

This comes after they held a public consultation in 2021 asking for resident's views on their plans to develop two new prisons on the site and the district council requesting for updates on their position over the past three years.

Braintree District Council still believes the MoJ would need to submit a planning application to Braintree District Council, as the local planning authority, if they wanted to pursue any potential prison plans in the future. This would give the council, residents, businesses and stakeholders the opportunity to submit their views and comments through the planning process.

Councillor Graham Butland, Leader of Braintree District Council, said: "Having direction on the government's ongoing plans for its use of the Wethersfield airfield site will finally give our communities clarity, especially for the MoJ prison proposals since they announced the plans over three years ago.

"As we've said since day one, the Home Office have bypassed us as the local planning authority and applied directly to the Secretary of State as a way of getting around planning permission for asylum accommodation which we don't think is appropriate, and therefore the opportunity for the communities' voices to be heard was lost. Braintree District Council did not have sight of the SDO prior to it being laid and will be reviewing its content and considering any implications arising from it.

"We still oppose the use of the site for the purposes of asylum accommodation, for the many reasons we have outlined before including its isolated location, scale of development and lack of capacity in local services. With the site in operation, we continue to share and raise feedback from the community with the Home Office and work alongside partner agencies to ensure that the needs of residents, both local people and those living at the site, are met."



Following a review of occupancy capacity at Wethersfield site, the Home Office confirmed they have decided to cap the regular occupancy to a maximum of 800 service users from the original 1,700 to reduce impact on the local community.

A monthly newsletter is published on the GOV website which provides updated accurate and factual information about the asylum accommodation centre:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/asylum-accommodation-wethersfield/wethersfield-community-update-newsletter>

The latest update on the prison proposals can be found on the council website [www.braintree.gov.uk/mojproposals](http://www.braintree.gov.uk/mojproposals) including the recent letter from the MoJ.

### **JOINT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

Governance report in respect of the further £8K grant for the NP, must be completed and closed end of March 2024. Any unspent funds must then be returned.

### **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST.**

A law firm acting on behalf of asylum seekers at Wethersfield was received in December and declined under exemption 12, requests where the cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit. The request was then narrowed, and the clerk retrieved and sent a 139-page bundle of redacted correspondence to the requester covering all communication between the clerk and all other stakeholders from March 2023 to date.

### **WA108/23-24 SUB-COMMITTEES.**

Cllr A Hull gave an update: The FOI to the MOD was since escalated to the ICO. The ICO however are solely concerned over access, and not accuracy of any information.

Cllr J O'Brien entered the meeting at 7.37pm.

FOI requests to the HO Accounting Officer has been escalated to the ICO, as to why the accounting assessment has not been publicised.

A meeting was held with ECC today together with Cllr A Hull and Dr R Sidebottom, member of the technical sub-committee. Aspirations of the site including a large-scale decentralised community grid and bio diversity net gain. ECC were very interested and have significant climate ambitions to deliver.

### **WA109/23-24 JOINT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

The working group are also looking at alternative uses for the site in collaboration with The Fields Association alternative uses sub-committee. A first draft plan has been developed and being fine tuned currently which will then go to various groups for further consultation. The airbase is key and includes 15-20 criteria of what is approvable. Sessions with local schools including Sampford have been held to get insights from a younger generation. In a month or so the draft will be submitted and then referendum schedule 14 where BDC goes out to consult on it. The team expect the adoption of the plan will be around spring 2025.

### **WA110/23-24 FINANCE**

<b>WASC Finance</b>			
<b>Updated 1/3/24</b>			
<b>Invoices Received</b>			
<u>Date</u>	<u>Supplier</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Amount ex VAT</u>
27/02/2022	Captial Road Safety	Traffic Monitoring	£ 600.00
10/03/2022	Sedley Place	Prison Model	£ 2,137.50
01/03/2022	CBA	Mobilisation Payments	£ 2,000.00
28/02/2022	Andrew Martin Planning	Briefing note and research	£ 1,000.00
05/05/2022	CBA	Consultancy	£ 2,800.00
15/07/2022	Spectra Studios	Prison Model	£ 1,200.00
01/08/2022	CBA	Landscape assesment	£ 3,895.00
10/11/2022	CBA	Heritage application	£ 5,000.00
15/03/2023	T ROBERTS	WASC POSTAGE COSTS	£ 141.49
20/04/2023	BURO HAPPOLD	WASC DESKTOP CONTAMINATION	£ 4,950.00
20/04/2023	BURO HAPPOLD	WASC DESIGN NOTE ON EIA SCREENING	£ 500.00
04/07/2023	TRANSPORT PLANNING CONSULTANTS LTD	TRAFFIC ASSESSMENT	£ 4,750.00
		<b>Total</b>	<b>£ 28,973.99</b>
<b>Income Received</b>			
<u>Date</u>	<u>Payee</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Amount</u>
21/02/2022	Shalford Parish Council	10% Contribution 21/22	£ 2,150.00
14/03/2022	Toppesfield Parish Council	Contribution	£ 500.00
11/04/2022	Little Bardfield Parish Council	Contribution	£ 300.00
08/04/2022	The Fields/SWAP	Grant	£ 5,000.00
05/05/2022	Great Bardfield Parish Council	Contribution	£ 1,000.00
18/05/2022	Finchingfield Parish Council	Contribution	£ 4,474.20
20/06/2022	Sible Hedingham	Contribution	£ 500.00
01/08/2022	The Fields/SWAP	Grant	£ 5,000.00
10/08/2022	Castle Hedingham	Contribution	£ 300.00
25/10/2022	Helions Bumpstead Parish Council	Contribution	£ 100.00
01/12/2022	Finchingfield Parish Council	Contribution	£ 4,748.50
17/06/2022	Shalford Parish Council	10% Contribution 22/23	£ 2,150.00
12/12/2022	Sible Hedingham Parish Council	Contribution	£ 2,375.00
24/01/2023	The Salings Parish Council	Contribution	£ 500.00
28/04/2023	The Fields/SWAP	grant	£ 3,500.00
22/05/2023	Little Bardfield Parish Council	Grant	£ 315.00
11/07/2023	Toppesfield Parish Council	Contribution	£ 500.00
06/10/2023	Shalford Parish Council	Contribution	£ 1,121.00
02/10/2023	Finchingfield Parish Council	Contribution	£ 2,000.00
24/11/2023	Gosfield Parish Council	Contribution	£ 250.00
		<b>Total</b>	<b>£ 36,783.70</b>
		<b>Current Position</b>	<b>£ 7,809.71</b>
		<b>EARMARKED RESERVES:</b>	
		<b>Finchingfield Parish Council balance remaining</b>	2000
		<b>Shalford Parish Council balance remaining</b>	1121
		<i>Wethersfield Parish Council contribution Clerk and Hall Hire (£6500.00)</i>	
		<b>Spending in the pipeline resolved:</b>	
		Water testing	1000
		Photo's	200
		BH report	5000
		Total:	6200
		Current balance	7809.71
		less spending agreed	6200
		<b>Current actual position minus pipeline spending:</b>	<b>1609.71</b>
		Plus 50% of earmarked reserves:	
		finchingfield pc	2000
		shalford pc	1121
		<b>Current balance minus pipline spending plus earmarked reserves</b>	<b>4730.71</b>

- Cllr A Hull confirmed that the £200 allocated for photographs is no longer in the pipeline and should be removed.
- On the 50% remaining earmarked reserves for this fiscal year, the clerk will follow-up with Shalford and Finchingfield PC and confirm what is budgeted for 24/25.

**WA111/23-24 SPECIAL DEVELOPMENT ORDER (SDO) AT RAF WETHERSFIELD.**

Cllr J O'Brien has written to MP's regarding the SDO laid before parliament on March 21<sup>st</sup>. The SDO will come into force on April 11, however parliament has 40 days to stop it. Targeted MP's included Labour MP's. Priti Patel and Sir Edward Lee have currently prayed a motion to stop the SDO. TFA and WASC are collaborating on evidence to submit to the Lords Scrutiny Committee which they will discuss on April 16. Mr J Pearce confirmed he will write to BDC for a copy of the screening direction.

**WA112/23-24 TRAFFIC MODELLING DATA.**

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed not to commission a further traffic count. Proposer Cllr C West, seconder Cllr R Duffin.

**WA113/23-24 ITEMS FROM COUNCILLORS TO BE ADDED TO THE NEXT AGENDA**

- Special Development Order

*All items should be sent to the Clerk by 22 April 2024.*

**WA114/23-24 NEXT MEETING OF THE WETHERSFIELD AIRBASE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:**

The next meeting of Wethersfield Airbase Scrutiny Committee will be held on Monday 29 April 2024 at Wethersfield Village Hall.

The Chairman thanked everybody for attending and declared the meeting closed at 8.52pm.

Signed: .....  
Chairman

Date: .....