

# WETHERSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

REPRESENTING WETHERSFIELD, BLACKMORE END & BEAZLEY END



## MINUTES of the Wethersfield Airbase Scrutiny Committee Meeting held at Wethersfield Village Hall on Monday 29 April 2024, commencing at 7:30pm.

Present: Cllr A Hull (Chairman) (Shalford PC)  
Cllr B Foulkes (Castle Hedingham PC)  
Cllr A French (Shalford PC)  
Cllr J O'Brien (Little Bardfield PC)  
Cllr C West (Wethersfield PC)  
Cllr T Strudwick (Gosfield PC)  
Cllr N Nicholson (Hellions Bumpstead PC)  
Mr J Pearce  
D Roder (Clerk and RFO)

In Attendance: Members of the Public: 0

### **WA01/24-25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr R Duffin (Vice Chairman) (Finchingfield PC), Mr Richard Aggis, Cllr P Kennedy (Great Bardfield PC).

### **WA02/24-25 MEMBERS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS**

None declared.

### **WA03/24-25 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 25 MARCH 2024.**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2024, copies of which had been previously circulated to Members, were confirmed as a true record, and signed by the Chairman. Proposer Cllr T Strudwick, Seconder Cllr C West.

### **WA04/24-25 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None.

### **WA05/24-25 CLERKS REPORT**

**Home Office and Parish Council meeting – Monday 15 April 2024.**

- Under conditions of the SDO, Wethersfield service users have now been capped at 580 pending ground contamination survey to be undertaken.
- 700 users had been on site and will ramp up to 800.
- Calmer period past 6 weeks.
  - o Classes and activities are being expanded.
  - o Challenges around mealtimes however during Ramadan and Eid.

- NAO report review of costings £5M V £49M actual due unforeseen issues
  - o The Clerk asked if the £15M MOJ spend with Kier Group are included in the £49M.
  - o Kiron Lyons unable to confirm and asked the clerk to send them info as had no knowledge of it.
  
- The Clerk asked if all the contamination surveys had been completed and when they will be published.
  - o Kiron Lyons advised most had been done and all clear.
  - o Kiron Lyons advised the most expensive, lengthy, and intrusive one on ground conditions. Should be completed next 3-4 months. Reason why SDO cap currently at 580 service users. HO think they will be made public once all completed. 10K pages currently being redacted on the other surveys.
  
- RAF Museum hosting on site ongoing – SDO team need to look at it and obtain specialist advise.
  
- 1700 users are the legal cap under SDO. 800 is operational cap currently which will increase to 1245 users where required. 580 currently due surveys not all completed under SDO conditions.
  
- No of portacabins will stay and users will be spread out more i.e. less users sharing per room
  
- Next meeting will be F2F in may – date tba.

**WASC and TFA wrote to several Labour MP’s, the Secondary Scrutiny Committee at the House of Lords, and Priti Patel**, regarding the SDO which was laid in Parliament on March 21, asking them to move a pray motion to annul it. Current position as follows:

The screenshot shows a webpage from the UK Parliament. At the top, it says 'UK Parliament' with the logo. Below that is a dark blue header with 'Early Day Motions' in white. A breadcrumb trail reads 'UK Parliament > Early Day Motions > Town and Country Planning'. The main content area has a green background with the title 'Town and Country Planning' in white. Below the title, it says 'EDM 540: tabled on 22 March 2024'. Further down, it states 'Tabled in the 2023-24 session.' and 'This motion is a prayer against a Negative Statutory Instrument, and has been signed by 10 Members.' At the bottom, there is a white box with the title 'Prayer against a Negative Statutory Instrument' and a hand icon. The text in this box reads: 'This motion is Prayer against the Negative Statutory Instrument Town and Country Planning (Former RAF Airfield Wethersfield) (Accommodation for Asylum-Seekers etc.) Special Development Order 2024 (S.I. 2024, No. 411)'. There is a blue button that says 'View Statutory Instrument on legislation.gov.uk'.

## Motion text

That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, praying that the Town and Country Planning (Former RAF Airfield Wethersfield) (Accommodation for Asylum-Seekers etc.) Special Development Order 2024 (S.I., 2024, No. 411), dated 20 March 2024, a copy of which was laid before this House on 21 March 2024, be annulled.





## Signatures (10)

Supporters (10)    Withdrawn signatures (0)

The first 6 Members who have signed to support the motion are the sponsors. The primary sponsor is generally the person who tabled the motion and has responsibility for it. The date shown is when the Member signed the motion.

 <b>Starmer, Keir</b> Labour 25 April 2024 Holborn and St Pancras    ★ Primary	 <b>Cooper, Yvette</b> Labour 25 April 2024 Normanton, Pontefract and Castleford	 <b>Kinnock, Stephen</b> Labour 25 April 2024 Aberavon
 <b>Jarvis, Dan</b> Labour 25 April 2024 Barnsley Central	 <b>Clark, Feryal</b> Labour 25 April 2024 Enfield North	 <b>Campbell, Sir Alan</b> Labour 25 April 2024 Tynemouth

In addition to the sponsors, the following Members have signed to support the motion.

 <b>Patel, Priti</b> Conservative 22 March 2024 Witham	 <b>Leigh, Sir Edward</b> Conservative 22 March 2024 Gainsborough	 <b>Davies-Jones, Alex</b> Labour 25 April 2024 Pontypridd
 <b>Norris, Alex</b> Labour 25 April 2024 Nottingham North		

**The Secondary Scrutiny Committee at the House of Lords thanked WASC for its evidence submitted for their meeting with the Home Office.**

**WASC also wrote to several members of the House of Commons Accounts Committee.** They invited WASC to submit evidence to their meeting with the HO even despite the submission date had ended. Below is a link to watch the meeting.

[https://parliamentlive.tv/event/index/5a73328b-cebe-4853-8cfb-18c3b3960a3b?in=15%3A42%3A26&fbclid=IwAR3g2hAPsnFJpTB-DqVu9-97SojZCOVpoSExWAU9rKxF9uFbY8SE0Pyr2uM\\_aem\\_Afy46OdXDG4Ql82F3QriuP7UgbtjalPbKwm-Q1UwFg80\\_fYvJJQYHhUhwEzYr2aL5SU](https://parliamentlive.tv/event/index/5a73328b-cebe-4853-8cfb-18c3b3960a3b?in=15%3A42%3A26&fbclid=IwAR3g2hAPsnFJpTB-DqVu9-97SojZCOVpoSExWAU9rKxF9uFbY8SE0Pyr2uM_aem_Afy46OdXDG4Ql82F3QriuP7UgbtjalPbKwm-Q1UwFg80_fYvJJQYHhUhwEzYr2aL5SU)

Cllr J O'Brien entered the meeting at 7.34pm.

#### **WA06/24-25 SUB-COMMITTEES.**

Cllr A Hull gave an update: SDO was laid in Parliament 21 March by the Home Office. The SDO is laid for 40 days but becomes effective after 19 days. Sir Edward Lee and Priti Patel have prayed a motion to annul it. It could then be debated in Parliament and potentially revoked. If so, the HO would need to apply for planning permission from BDC.

Cllr N Nicholson entered the meeting at 7.40pm.

Cllr J O'Brien advised the SDO conditions are very detailed. The current cap of service users currently is 580 until further contamination surveys are undertaken. Other conditions include traffic measures and operational plans. Labour front bench including Keir Starmer have since prayed a motion to annul the SDO. Stephen Kinnock Labour MP thanked WASC for their communication on it. The Publics Accounts Committee will be publishing their report around May Day.

Cllr A Hull further advised that contact had been made with Yvette Coopers special advisor Danny Shaw and dialogue was ongoing. He further confirmed that the JR appeal of Gabe Clarke-Holland would be going ahead with the support of The Fields Association.

#### **WA07/24-25 JOINT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

A draft plan is almost completed and will then be further discussed with focus groups to ensure the details of the plan have been understood and agreed by all. The plan will then be submitted to BDC and publicised under regulation 14. With regard to the airbase, the plan will support uses of certain criteria's, local needs, and nature in consultation also with businesses and major land owners. The Plan is on target to be finalised 1 year from now but as it evolves, it already starts to carry weight.

#### **WA08/24-25 FINANCE**

<b>WASC Finance</b>			
<b>Updated 23/4/24</b>			
<b>Invoices Received</b>			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Supplier</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Amount ex VAT</b>
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 ASSESMENT	£ 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 banked</b>	<b>£ 7,809.71</b>
		<b>EARMARKED RESERVES:</b>	
		Finchingfield Parish Council balance remaining 23/24	2000
		Shalford Parish Council balance remaining 24-25	2500
		Shalford Parish Council balance remaining 23-24	0
			<b>£ 12,309.71</b>
		<i>Wethersfield Parish Council contribution Clerk and Hall Hire (£6500.00)</i>	
		<b>Spending in the pipeline resolved:</b>	
		Water testing	1000
		Photo's	0
		BH report	5000
		<b>Total:</b>	<b>6000</b>
		Current balance banked + earmarked reserves	12309.71
		Minus spending agreed but not yet paid	-6000
		<b>Current position including earmarked reserves minus pipeline spending:</b>	<b>6309.71</b>

**WA09/24-25 SPECIAL DEVELOPMENT ORDER (SDO) AT RAF WETHERSFIELD.**

It was agreed that the next steps regarding a JR were not financially viable.

**WA10/24-25 ITEMS FROM COUNCILLORS TO BE ADDED TO THE NEXT AGENDA**

*All items should be sent to the Clerk by 20 May 2024.*

**WA11/24-25 NEXT MEETING OF THE WETHERSFIELD AIRBASE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:**  
The next meeting of Wethersfield Airbase Scrutiny Committee will be held on Wednesday 29 May 2024 at Wethersfield Village Hall (due spring bank holiday).

The Chairman thanked everybody for attending and declared the meeting closed at 8.36pm.

Signed: .....  
Chairman

Date: .....

DRAFT