

Westcott Parish Council

Amanda Ludlow – Clerk

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Meeting Minutes

9th September 2025 1930hrs at Westcott Cricket Club

Attendees

Parish Councillors

Cllr Sue Pusey	Chair	SP	Cllr Jo Hooper	JH
Cllr Tony Wilkinson	Vice Chair	TW	Cllr Sue Lacey	SL
Cllr Grahame Pusey		GP		

Officer of the Council

Amanda Ludlow	AL
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Agenda Point		Person /s to action
	Part One Meeting opened at 1930hrs.	
55	Apologies for Absence Cllr James Sisk	
56	Bucks Recycling Fire Bucks Recycling (BR) – represented by Tricia Murray (TM) Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service (BFRS) – represented by Aaron Brinklow (AB) and feedback to questions asked prior to the meeting sent. Buckinghamshire Council – Represented by Cllr Ashley Waite (AW) Environmental Health (EH) – Unable to attend and feedback to questions asked prior to the meeting sent. Environment Agency (EA) - Unable to attend and feedback to questions asked prior to the meeting sent. Westcott Venture Park (WVP) – unable to attend and feedback to questions asked prior to the meeting sent. Savills (S) - unable to attend and feedback to questions asked prior to the meeting sent. Minerals and Waste Planning Department, Bucks Council (M&WP) - Unable to attend and feedback to questions asked prior to the meeting sent. Greg Smith MP (GS) – invited and no response. 45 Members of the public in attendance. SP welcomed the members of the public to the meeting and explained the proceedings of the meeting to all present.	

	As the topic of the recent Bucks Recycling Fire was a significant part of the regular Parish Council meeting the meeting will focus on the Bucks Recycling Fire for the first part and then normal Parish Council business will resume following the Bucks Recycling topic and everyone is welcome to stay if they wish. On inviting all representatives of all agencies involved a list of questions collated from the Residents and Councillors of Westcott Village was sent in advance of the meeting. These questions were as follows: 1. Questions for All Parties involved • Air Quality • Health Protection • Demolition and Remediation 2. Questions for Bucks Recycling 3. Questions for Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service 4. Questions for Westcott Venture Park, Patrizia and Savills 5. Questions for the Environment Agency 6. Questions for Buckinghamshire Council 7. Questions for the Local Councillor and Member of Parliament 1. Questions for All Parties involved Air Quality Questions for the agency/business with responsibility for monitoring and air quality, or for all parties involved. 1. What air quality monitoring has been carried out since the fire began? 2. Who (which agency or business) has taken the responsibility for carrying out monitoring of the air quality? 3. Which pollutants are being measured, for example, PM2.5, PM10, dioxins, benzene, heavy metals, etc.? 4. Where are the monitoring stations located? Are they in the village or only near the fire site? 5. How can the public access the results, how often, and in what format? 6. What does the monitoring show compared to UK air quality standards and WHO guidelines?	
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	7. What additional measures have been considered to reduce smoke in conjunction with BFRS, Bucks Recycling and all other parties? Health Protection Questions for the Local Authority, EA, Bucks Recycling, etc. 1. What short-term health risks are associated with the smoke? 2. What are the possible long-term health risks if exposure continues? 3. Are vulnerable groups (children, elderly, those with asthma/COPD) being given special advice or protection? 4. What ongoing guidance is being provided to residents? 5. Who is tracking any health impacts reported by residents? 6. Is independent monitoring of the air quality being monitored on site for employees? Demolition and Remediation Questions for Bucks Recycling, the Local Authority, EA, WVP/Patrizia, etc 7. How are BR and the Savills, on behalf of the landlords Westcott Venture Park and Patrizia, ensuring the site is cleaned up afterwards? 8. Has permission for demolition been applied for to Buckinghamshire Council? 9. Where and when will residents be able to review the full application for demolition? 10. What additional protections will be in place to ensure people living in the village are not subject to debris, ash and further pollution during demolition? 11. Will the air quality be monitored during demolition? Please outline how this will be done, how often and where the results will be available. 12. Which authority, business or named individual is responsible for the demolition, specifically for ensuring the safety of the public and residents, including but not limited to clean air, working hours, noise mitigation, etc. 13. Which agency or business will residents be able to escalate concerns or emergencies to (in real time) during the demolition and remediation phase? 2. Questions for Bucks Recycling 1. What type of waste was stored on the site, and in what quantities? 2. What are the toxin profiles of the types of waste stored in the facility? 3. Was the waste stored legally and managed properly in compliance with the site's environmental permit?	
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	4. Were hazardous or prohibited materials (e.g., asbestos, chemicals) present? 5. What fire prevention measures were in place, and how were they successful? 6. What fire detection measures were in place and how were they successful? 7. What fire suppression measures were in place and how were they successful? 8. What fire prevention plans did BR have in place before the fire incident? 9. Were all measures and actions in the fire prevention plan work on the day of the fire? 10. What responsibility will the business take for clean-up, compensation, and health impacts to residents in the village? 11. Will Bucks Recycling commit to funding independent monitoring of air contamination? 12. Are Bucks Recycling liable for costs of firefighting, clean-up, and compensation? 13. What risk assessments guided the decision to leave the fire to burn rather than fully extinguished? 14. Why have BR chosen not to update the public regularly on progress? 15. How is the business assessing and mitigating the ongoing health risk to the community (and its employees)? 16. How does BR square its environmental aims with the emissions caused by the fire? 3. Questions for Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service 1. Why was the decision made by Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service to let the fire burn rather than extinguish it immediately? 2. What risk assessments relating to residents living within close proximity to the site guided the decision to leave the fire to burn rather than fully extinguish? 3. What assessment of risks to public health was carried out before making that decision? 4. Will BFRS release the incident log and risk assessments for public review? 5. Since the fire is still burning what progress updates are being provided by BFRS to residents, and how often? 6. What additional measures have BFRS considered to reduce smoke?	
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	4. Questions for Westcott Venture Park, Patrizia and Savills 1. What oversight do WVP and Patrizia have of potential hazards from tenants' operations on the site? 2. Were Patrizia/WVP aware of and confident in the fire prevention plan that BR had in place? 3. Are Patrizia/WVP/BR confident that employees of BR and other businesses are safe working in such close proximity to the site of the fire? 4. What responsibility will the Patrizia take for clean-up, compensation, and health impacts to residents in the village? 5. Will Patrizia/WVP commit to funding independent monitoring of air contamination? 6. What risk assessments did Patrizia/WVP have sight of that guided the decision to leave the fire to burn? 7. Are Patrizia/WVP liable for costs of firefighting, clean-up, and compensation? 8. Why have Patrizia/WVP chosen not to regularly update residents/the public? 9. How is Patrizia/WVP assessing and mitigating the ongoing health risk to the local community, and the site's tenants and employees? 10. Does allowing the fire to burn for four weeks just 50 metres from the nearest homes reflect Patrizia's usual standards of responsibility to its neighbours and environmental stewardship? 5. Questions for the Environment Agency 1. Was the operator fully compliant with all permit conditions before the fire? 2. At the time of the incident BR was found to be in breach of an aspect of its operations, what was the breach and was it related to the fire? 3. What inspections took place in the last three years, and what were the findings? 4. What enforcement or legal action will be taken against the business? 5. Was BR's fire prevention plan up-to-date and fit for purpose? 6. When was BR's fire prevention plan last reviewed by the EA? 7. How are the EA ensuring contaminated runoff or ash does not pollute local land and water? 8. Will you publish real-time monitoring data online for residents to see? 9. What enforcement action is being taken because of the fire?	
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	10. How are BR able to continue to operate 'business as usual' sorting waste in the outside when this was previously only permitted inside the hangar? 11. What is the permit number and dated variation to the permit that allows for these new methods of working? 12. How regularly will this be monitored? 13. Will the EA oversee compliance of the demolition? 6. Questions for the Local Authority (Environmental Health & Public Health) 1. What independent monitoring of air quality and pollutants has the council carried out? 2. What advice is being given to vulnerable groups (children, elderly, people with asthma/COPD)? 3. Are residents being advised to use masks, air filters, or stay indoors? 4. Will health checks or clinics be provided for affected residents? 5. How will you ensure long-term monitoring of possible health impacts? 6. How are BR being able to continue to operate 'business as usual' sorting waste in the outside when this was previously only permitted inside the hangar? 7. How regularly will this be monitored? 8. Will Buckinghamshire Council's Environmental Health oversee compliance of the demolition? 7. Questions for the Local Councillor and Member of Parliament What steps are you taking to ensure accountability from the business, fire service, council, and EA? 1. How will you press government to support the community with independent monitoring and health protection? 2. Will you lobby for stronger national regulations on waste storage and fire prevention? 3. Can you ensure residents receive more updates from the parties responsible, particularly in the demolition and clean-up phase approaches? 4. Will you commit to supporting compensation or remediation for residents if harm is proven? 5. What steps are they taking to represent residents' concerns to central government and agencies?	
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6. What action for transparency, accountability, and a long-term solution to push for

SP read out and displayed the following Joint Statement received at 16.27 on 09.09.25.

Joint statement on the ongoing fire incident at Bucks Recycling

Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service
Environment Agency
Buckinghamshire Council
Bucks Recycling
Savills

Background

Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service (BFRS) attended a fire inside a large hanger type building at Bucks Recycling on the Westcott Venture Park estate on the morning of Sunday 10 August.

The material on fire was construction and demolition, industrial and commercial waste. The site is not permitted to accept asbestos or waste wood that has been treated with any hazardous material.

The cause of the fire is unconfirmed.

BFRS commanders on scene completed a thorough risk assessment and deemed the building itself unsafe to enter without an assessment by a suitably qualified structural engineer as it could pose a significant risk to firefighters through the potential for collapse. This decision has subsequently been proven correct as the building has been condemned and must be demolished.

The assessment resulted in an operational decision to adopt a defensive strategy and carry out a controlled burn with the primary objectives of maximising firefighter safety and protecting surrounding buildings from fire spread. This decision was communicated to and agreed with partner agencies.

At this stage of incident response BFRS was providing approximately 1,200-1,800 litres of water per minute onto the fire from a safe distance. This continued until the threat from fire to life or property was eliminated.

At around 6pm on Tuesday 12 August BFRS replaced continuous resourcing at the Westcott site with four hourly re-inspections, with firefighters returning to the site to monitor the situation and ensure the fire remained contained.

BFRS liaised with their partner agencies, which include the Environment Agency (EA) and UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) throughout the incident.

The National Air Quality Technical Advisor which includes the UKHSA, were consulted and it was established that the smoke emanating from the fire posed a minimal risk to public health and no air quality monitoring arrangements needed to be made, but if the situation deteriorated this should be reviewed.

On Wednesday 13 August, BFRS officially handed the scene back to Bucks Recycling, with the understanding it would continue to monitor the situation and seek advice from a structural engineer as to whether the building requires demolishing or if safe entry can be made to fully extinguish the fire. The building remains cordoned off with no one allowed to enter due to the health and safety risks it presents.

One point to clarify is that the EA is the regulating authority for normal operations of the site, which it controls through the site's operating permit. The permit sets out the EA's requirements for how the site must be managed, and how certain nuisance factors such as odour, noise or dust generated through the normal day to day running of the site, must be controlled. However, the operating permit and the EA's regulatory responsibility does not extend to nuisance factors resulting from accidental fires on site, as with this incident.

The site operates under a planning permission issued by the local planning authority which is Buckinghamshire Council. The planning permission contains a number of conditions which controls on-site operations but does not extend to controlling accidental fires on site.

Current situation

For a number of reasons, including weather conditions and the fact that the materials in the building cannot be safely moved and spread out to accelerate the ongoing controlled burn, the fire has continued for longer than expected. This has caused an extended period of disturbance to the local community.

Bucks Recycling and the other organisations involved in this incident recognise how frustrating this has been for the local community. Communication and engagement with the local community could also have been better co-ordinated and managed. However, all the organisations involved – Bucks Recycling, Westcott Venture Park, Savills, BFRS, the EA and Buckinghamshire Council would like to reassure the local community that they continue to work together to resolve the situation as quickly as possible.

Next steps

The process for appointing a contractor to demolish the unsafe building is currently underway and should be concluded soon. Once appointed, work to demolish the building will begin as quickly as possible, subject to relevant permissions being granted by the Local Authority (Buckinghamshire Council).

This will enable the remaining material that is still burning to be extinguished. Ongoing liaison between the various organisations involved will ensure the best course of action will be implemented.

In the meantime, and while the remaining waste continues to smoulder BFRS advice is always to try and avoid breathing smoke in, so wherever possible please keep windows closed if there is smoke in the area.

Regular updates on the situation will be posted on the Bucks Recycling website.

Should you have any enquiries please contact Bucks Recycling on 01296 651678 or use the online contact form at [Contact - Bucks Recycling](#).

	Should you have any health concerns regarding the smoke coming from the site, please contact the NHS on 111 For any concerns about normal operations on the site please contact Bucks Recycling or the EA on 03708 506 506 or: enquiries_thames@environment-agency.gov.uk This joint statement has already been placed on the Parish Council Website and Facebook. The Environment Agency response / feedback read out and displayed for all from Jason Purnell Environment Manager Team Leader: 1. Questions for All Parties involved Air Quality Questions for the agency/business with responsibility for monitoring and air quality, or for all parties involved. The Environment Agency have not conducted any air quality monitoring. 1. Was the operator fully compliant with all permit conditions before the fire? The Environment Agency conducts inspections of permitted waste sites to ensure compliance with environmental regulations The last time the Environment Agency attended Bucks Recycling was on 7th January 2025 for a regulatory inspection. During the inspection two non-compliances were identified (See Q 3) 2. At the time of the incident BR was found to be in breach of an aspect of its operations, what was the breach and was it related to the fire? The Environment Agency did not attend the site at the time of the incident. Officers from the EA attended the site on Wednesday 13th August. During that visit one non-compliance was found, relating to a pile of construction and demolition waste stored outside which was found to be higher than the site's management system allows. However, this was unrelated to the fire. 3. What inspections took place in the last three years, and what were the findings? · The site was visited on 7th January 2025. During that visit one non-compliance was identified, relating to the storage of material that was not in line with the stockpile control procedures outlined in their Fire Prevention plan. (FPP) This related to plasterboard previously being stored inside the hanger, now being stored outside. The site was observed to have implemented several changes to their working practices and were requested by the EA officer to update their site plan, their FPP, the dust and odour management plan and the Environmental Management System to reflect the changes. · The site was not visited in 2024 · On the 30th of March 2023 the site was visited for a regulatory inspection. On that occasion one non-compliance was identified relating to spreading hardcore	
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	type material on the ground to create a hardstanding area for machinery which their permit does not allow them to do. An issue of water pooling behind the hanger was also highlighted. 4. What enforcement or legal action will be taken against the business? We are still reviewing what parts of the fire prevention plan was utilised, how effective they were and if further improvements are required. 5. Was BR's fire prevention plan up-to-date and fit for purpose? The site is required to have a fire prevention plan (FPP) in place and to follow it as part of the conditions of its Environmental Permit. The FPP version 1.4 (Document reference: EPR/BB3634RA/19) was submitted and approved as part of the permit variation in February 2020. The FPP was updated by the Operator and was being reviewed by the Environment Agency at the time of the fire. (See Q 3). 6. When was BR's fire prevention plan last reviewed by the EA? See above. 7. How are the EA ensuring contaminated runoff or ash does not pollute local land and water? The site has a drainage system in place which is connected to an interceptor and a storage tank used as a containment on site for subsequent disposal off site at an appropriate facility. 8. Will you publish real-time monitoring data online for residents to see? See Q7 9. What enforcement action is being taken because of the fire? We are still reviewing what parts of the fire prevention plan was utilised, how effective they were and if further improvements are required. 10. How are BR able to continue to operate 'business as usual' sorting waste in the outside when this was previously only permitted inside the hangar? The site operates under a permit which allows the treating and storing of waste as long as it's done on an impermeable surface with sealed drainage. Environment Agency officers attended the site on Thursday 28th August to check the proposed new operating procedure and were satisfied that it complies with their existing permit. 11. What is the permit number and dated variation to the permit that allows for these new methods of working? (See Q10) 12. How regularly will this be monitored	
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	The Environment Agency conducts a risk-based inspection and audit programme across all industrial and waste management sites in England. We will assess if additional inspections/audits are required and then action if considered necessary. 13. Will the EA oversee compliance of the demolition? No, demolition is not an activity regulated by the Environment Agency and this will be the responsibility of the local planning authority and/or environmental health. Bucks Fire and Rescue Service – Read out and displayed from Simon Tuffley – Deputy Chief Fire Officer Questions for Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service 1. Why was the decision made by Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service to let the fire burn rather than extinguish it immediately? Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service (BFRS) attended a fire inside a large hangar type building at Bucks Recycling on the Westcott Venture Park estate on the morning of Sunday 10 August. The commanders on scene completed a thorough risk assessment and considered the risk to life, which of course is always in the forefront of an incident commander's mind. They deemed that the building was not safe to enter without an assessment by a suitably qualified structural engineer and could pose a significant risk to firefighters through the potential for collapse. The material on fire within the hangar was construction and demolition, industrial and commercial waste. The site is not permitted to accept asbestos or waste that has been treated with any hazardous material. At this stage of incident response BFRS was providing approximately 1,200-1,800 litres of water per minute onto the significant fire from a safe distance. This continued until the threat from fire to life or property was eliminated. At around 6pm on Tuesday 12 August BFRS replaced continuous resourcing at the Westcott site with four hourly re-inspections, with firefighters returning to the site to monitor the situation and ensure the fire remained contained. On Wednesday 13 August, BFRS officially handed the scene back to Bucks Recycling, with the understanding it would continue to monitor the situation and seek advice from a structural engineer as to whether the building required demolishing or if safe entry could be made to fully extinguish the fire. In situations like this, where it is not possible to access the burning material to pull it apart and accelerate the burn, simply pouring water to the top of the debris pile from a safe distance becomes quite futile, and is not effective in extinguishing the fire. Instead, it only serves to produce large quantities of contaminated water runoff, which would need to be dealt with and would possibly prolong the burning period.	
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	Throughout the incident response, and over the following subsequent weeks, our officers have liaised with our various partner agencies and organisations. The building remains cordoned off with no one allowed to enter due to the health and safety risks the building presents. The cause of the fire is unconfirmed. 2. What risk assessments relating to residents living within close proximity to the site guided the decision to leave the fire to burn rather than fully extinguish? Our firefighters and commanders are trained in an all-hazards approach to managing emergencies. All our operational staff are trained to follow national guidance and conduct dynamic and analytical risk assessments of the incidents they attend, which includes assessing the hazards and risks to firefighters, the public and the environment. Furthermore, our specialist officers are trained to undertake specific environmental risk assessments which help inform decision making. Our on-scene commanders completed a thorough risk assessment and deemed the building itself unsafe to enter without an assessment by a suitably qualified structural engineer as it could pose a significant risk to firefighters through the potential for collapse. This decision has subsequently been proven correct as we understand the building has since been condemned and must be demolished. The assessment, and conversations with partner agencies, resulted in an operational decision to adopt a defensive strategy and carry out a controlled burn, with the primary objectives of maximising firefighter safety and protecting surrounding buildings from fire spread. This decision was communicated to and agreed with partner agencies. 3. What assessment of risks to public health was carried out before making that decision? BFRS routinely deploys a Hazardous Materials Adviser to incidents of this nature. Their role is to assess the risks in liaison with partner agencies and advise the incident commander on command decisions. BFRS liaised with their partner agencies, which include the Environment Agency (EA) and UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) throughout the incident. The National Air Quality Technical Advisor which includes the UKHSA, were consulted and it was established that the smoke emanating from the fire posed a minimal risk to public health and no air quality monitoring arrangements needed to be made, but if the situation deteriorated this should be reviewed. 4. Will BFRS release the incident log and risk assessments for public review? Requests for information such as this are handled through our Freedom of Information processes.	
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bucksfire.gov.uk/publications/making-a-request-for-information/

You can make a request for information in a number of ways:

Email – enquiries@bucksfire.gov.uk or
InformationGovernance@bucksfire.gov.uk

Post – Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters, Stocklake,
Aylesbury, HP20 1BD.

Note: All general telephone enquiries should be made through our HQ
switchboard: 01296 744400. Please note the main reception is staffed between
8.30am and 5pm Monday to Thursday and 8.30am to 4.30pm Friday.

5. Since the fire is still burning what progress updates are being provided by
BFRS to residents, and how often?

For a number of reasons, including weather conditions and the fact that the
materials in the building cannot be safely moved and spread out to accelerate
the ongoing controlled burn, the fire has continued for longer than expected.
This has caused an extended period of disturbance to the local community.

Since the incident was handed back to the occupants/landowners BFRS has
been responding to community concerns about the smoke and working with
those responsible for the site to support their response and community
updates.

All organisations involved in this incident recognise how frustrating this has
been for the local community and would like to reassure the local community
that they continue to work together to resolve the situation as quickly as
possible.

6. What additional measures have BFRS considered to reduce smoke?

While the remaining waste continues to smoulder BFRS advice is always to try
and avoid breathing smoke in, so wherever possible please keep windows
closed if there is smoke in the area.

Savills Property Management – Read out and displayed from Paul Phipps –
Director

1. What oversight do WVP and Patrizia have of potential hazards from
tenants' operations on the site?

Savills (prior to the incident) started the process of creating an emergency plan
for the site which includes requesting information from tenants on any
potential hazards. If tenants fall within the requirements of the Control of
Major Accident Hazards Regulation 1999 they have been requested to provide
their notification, hazardous substance consent and major accident prevention
policy. All tenants are to also provide their site specific emergency plan
detailing their arrangements for dealing with emergencies, including fire and
explosion, Fire risk assessments and where relevant DSEAR assessment in
relation to the storage and use of dangerous substances.

	2. Were Patrizia/WVP aware of and confident in the fire prevention plan that BR had in place? Yes 3. Are Patrizia/WVP/BR confident that employees of BR and other businesses are safe working in such close proximity to the site of the fire? BR are working within their demise outside of the exclusion zone of the Hangar. It is their decision to continue to operate on the site based on their own risk assessments and assessments made by the EA who regulate the site. 4. What responsibility will the Patrizia take for clean-up, compensation, and health impacts to residents in the village? WVP/Patrizia will be managing the demolition and clean up of the site. 5. Will Patrizia/WVP commit to funding independent monitoring of air contamination? As per the advise from the National Air Quality Technical Advisor, it was established that the smoke emanating from the fire posed a minimal risk to public health and no air quality monitoring arrangements needed to be made. 6. What risk assessments did Patrizia/WVP have sight of that guided the decision to leave the fire to burn? The decision to leave the fire to burn was made by BFRS on the basis of environmental factors and maximising firefighter safety and protecting surrounding buildings from fire spread 7. Are Patrizia/WVP liable for costs of firefighting, clean-up, and compensation? The demolition and clean up of the site will be covered by the building insurance. 8. Why have Patrizia/WVP chosen not to regularly update residents/the public? Updates have been provided via the Parish Council and a joint statement released along with BFRS, the EA, Buckinghamshire Council and Bucks Recycling 9. How is Patrizia/WVP assessing and mitigating the ongoing health risk to the local community, and the site's tenants and employees? As per the advise from the National Air Quality Technical Advisor, it was established that the smoke emanating from the fire posed a minimal risk to public health.	
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	10. Does allowing the fire to burn for four weeks just 50 metres from the nearest homes reflect Patrizia's usual standards of responsibility to its neighbours and environmental stewardship? As above, the decision to leave the fire to burn was made by BFRS not by WVP/Patrizia Minerals and Waste Enforcement and Monitoring– Olivia March - Team Leader 1. Has permission for demolition been applied for to Buckinghamshire Council? No application for planning permission has been sought as of 09.09.2025 2. Where and when will residents be able to review the full application for demolition? When a planning application is received, it will be available to view and comment on, on the Council planning pages in the usual way. 3. What additional protections will be in place to ensure people living in the village are not subject to debris, ash and further pollution during demolition? If a planning permission is in place, authorising the demolition, then there is likely to be a Demolition Management Plan, which will secure the requirement for dust suppression and noise management. 4. Which authority, business or named individual is responsible for the demolition, specifically for ensuring the safety of the public and residents, including but not limited to clean air, working hours, noise mitigation, etc. Again, a planning permission will secure hours of operation and other matters such as noise mitigation. 5. Which agency or business will residents be able to escalate concerns or emergencies to (in real time) during the demolition and remediation phase? If there is a planning permission in place and the residents think that a breach of any conditions (including management plans) is occurring, then they should report it to the planning enforcement team via the website. No further reports or feedback received. Attended agencies and Public discussion Question from the floor (Q) - What happened and what will happen? AB - responded that meetings are held weekly / daily with BFRS / Savills and BR. BFRS are unable to put the fire out due to the high level of risk to life. The least risk is to allow it to burn and allow the smoke to dissipate.	
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	BFRS contacted UKHSA on the day of the fire and explained the situation. UKHSA stated no air quality monitoring required at that stage. High risk of contamination of water courses if water was to be continued to be applied to the fire. 20,000 litre containment tanks would have overflowed. BFRS chose to allow fire to burn and contaminates to be released into the air. Q – what was in the hanger? Q – I work on WVP and have looked at the skips – polystyrene, expanded foam, vinyl, rubber conveying belts in the building, builders rubble. Q – if not toxic why red eyes / sore throats? Q - Who has overall oversight as EA has passed back to BR? Q – I took a photo of the hanger – fire on one end and dust cloud on the other – why no dowsing or water suppression of the dust? Are BR a responsible employer? Q – so the buck is passed from EA to BR to EA? Q – Why were comments blocked from Westcott village residents on Facebook due to negative comments? TM - stated she visited the village daily since the fire. Posts that she was adding to the fire and wanted the building to burn were negative and untrue so they were blocked. She was advised by Savills to communicate through Westcott Venture Park or Savills Media team, Information you all want is not known so I couldn't respond to questions over the weeks. 2 separate structural engineers have attended the site and we are awaiting reports – one from insurance and one from Patrizia. WVP need to apply for planning permission before demolition. A statement was made on BR website and sent to WVP. Q – this statement was incorrect, Q – you just needed to update the village – nothing mentioned about inspections or monitoring. TM – met with Savills daily, EA twice, air monitoring was mentioned. The EA report has not been released or seen. AB - confirmed that it was the UKHSA who would be responsible for Air monitoring. Q – who advised UKHSA of what was burning? AB – advised industrial waste and they stated to leave to slow burn. Q – did you hand back to UKHSA when thick smoke was present for days?	
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	AB – stated they attended the site on a number of occasions following calls from public to fires and smoke. Q – The smoke had changed – why was this not reviewed? AB – you will need to ask UKHSA and the EA for this response. AW – Did BFRS act on information given to you from BR? Did you not need to know what was actually burning in the building not what BR stated to you? Q – communication is not good enough. One post from BR blaming vapes and nothing else. No other statements. I spoke to others and then we were blocked on Facebook and no one cares. TM – I gave Sue Pusey a statement for the village. SP – TM gave me an infactual statement, so it was posted and removed shortly afterwards. You were awaiting the air quality report? JH – we were worried about the air, as a business owner you should have chased the air quality report. TM – I tried to chase until it was made known that there wasn't one. Q – as we are a small village and not a large town or city does no one bother about us? AB – we were advised to let the fire burn out. Issues now known will be looked at. We should have communicated to all in a better way. We are attending tonight to respond to your questions, but we cannot extinguish the fire. Q – I have lived in this village since 1960 – you don't live in this village – you need to do something now. Q – concerned about what goes into your skips TM – the route of the skip is onto the venture park, onto the weighbridge and then tipped in front of a banksman. Anything that shouldn't be in there will be rejected. All rejections are identified, isolated and removed in 24 hours. Asbestos will be reported to the EA. The fire started after midday on the Saturday when the site was not manned. Contents of the hanger were plastics, wood, metal, soil, paper. Predominately soil, brick and metal left on the ground burning currently. Q – Research has been done on the toxicity of burning plastics Q – more concerning is petrochemicals, roofing felt, demolition materials. Should we all go to the Dr's to get tests? Q – what caused the fire?	
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	TM – fires like this are increasingly common. This was not definitely caused by a vape but in other fires at recycling plants this was the case. Vapes are too small to detect. AB – there has been no evidence of maliciousness. Q – What will stop this recurring in the future? TM – good question. The industry as a whole is addressing this with technology. Should we get the opportunity we would look at fire protection plans that now have infrared technology to detect heat. We did have that already, but no one was there to monitor it after working hours. Q – What about sprinklers? TM – No sprinklers in the hanger. We will have sprinklers and Infra-red technology. Q – if you do rebuild can you move further across the venture park and away from the village? Q – What specific things were communicated to UKHSA to give their direction and follow up plans? AB – UKHSA look at the site online at the time. There has been no further contact with them. Q – UKHSA – what contact have they had in total re Westcott? TM – stated stakeholder meetings to commence next week with all relevant parties involved. Q – How will this be communicated? AW – Minutes will be taken of the meeting and published in 48 hours. Will be held by end of next week. Q – How much longer will the fire burn? AB – no idea, we cannot enter the building. Q – does BR get H&S advice on how to store and manage the facility and its contents? SP – BR have a permit from EA and are monitored. Q – skips have continued to go into the Venture Park TM – since the fire alternate arrangements have been made. We have had to lay off people that do the processing and picking inside the hanger. We have been tipping to other skip companies. We are working to a temporary working plan with the EA.	
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	Planning for the woodyard and inert material kept outside on an impermeable base. Polytunnels / marquees to be used for cover. Permit – Initially the hanger was for all sorting, then permit changed to a bespoke permit to allow external sorting for some materials. Cover is now over the plasterboard kept outside but not covered just yet. Q – Who will take on UKHSA? SP – Parish council and the Ward Councillor AW Q – What about planning concerns for the future? AW – planning permission needs to be applied to demolish and then to rebuild. JH – what about the remaining contents and air quality during demolition? TW – no visit to site to comment on air quality by UKHSA. Q – Anything could be in that building which is still on fire causing smoke and fumes across the village? TM – Planning department visited today and will put controls in place for demolition in the planning. SP – The planning and enforcement statements states ‘likely to be a demolition plan’. JH – stated there will be a planning consultation which will be shared on receipt with the village. Q – Can the site be moved< very concerned regarding a new building and another fire TM – this is not a BR decision. We have asked to move to a different site before. We are trying to talk to Patrizia. We were operating from a 1935 WW2 Hanger, if we rebuild, we will build with closed doors – fire prevention system alone will be over £1m. Q – Fire suppression system – why wasn’t it there? Are you limited to how much you can store in there? TM – it was not a volume issue and there was no water suppression system. Revised fire plan was sent to the EZ in March 25. No response as yet back. Water cannon will cost just over £1m. Q – A dry riser system would not be that expensive and the Fire brigade could have attached hoses to it? AB – We wouldn’t have used a dry riser system due to the runoff issue. Q – There are multiple issues waiting to happen due to the failure of the planning and monitoring systems	
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	TM – if the fire had been observed we would have intervened and put it out. This means either 24-hour supervision or an automatic system. Q – why can the fire brigade no enter the building AB – cannot comment due to the age of the building. Q – why is being demolished so early SP – explained the post mentioning early demolition was removed as advised this was misinformed to WPC. She has recently had further information from Paparomeo (Savills PR company) and refused to put it on Facebook and Website due to factual inaccuracies. AW also contacted them but the statement was not changed. Q – why didn't the venture park post it themselves? SL – very worrying that you are stating no air quality monitoring. Who knew about this? Q – When they demolish the building will they know what has been burnt? TM – No Q – Concern regarding what's disposed of during the day-to-day business. TM – skips are tipped, inspected and sorted. Q – you can't test asbestos – can be a small amount – less than a vape. Can be in tiles and can be just fibres. TM – there is no asbestos in the building before the fire. TW – You would be unable to say that if it was in Artex scrapings. JH – very concerned as have personal experience of asbestos and its impact. SP – brought this part of the meeting to a close with all agreeing to the following actions: • Clerk to contact UKHSA. • AW to arrange stakeholder meetings on a weekly basis with a minute taker. • All questions and responses will be shared with the village on the website. • FOI request to be submitted re current fire prevention plan for BR.	AL AW AL AL
	Break for a few minutes at 2045 and agreed by Parish Council. 7 members of the public remained for the remainder of the meeting. Recommended at 2100hrs The Ward Councillor also left at this point as he had not had the opportunity to prepare a report due to the time spent on dealing with BR Fire.	

57	Open Forum (other than Bucks Recycling) One member of the public commented that the Village is looking very well looked after and thanked the PC for its hard work.	
58	Declarations of Interest None	
59	Approval Of Minutes JH raised that point 50 should read 'PC to seek clarification on whether they need to apply for retrospective planning or not'. SP signed final filed copy.	AL
60	Matters Arising (not contained in the agenda) NOTED. Spreadsheet of actions list shared ahead of the meeting. SID's to be updated with new software. Field rent for horses is paid to two separate parties. BC and AVE. Conflicting requests from War grave Group – await further information on next visit. Action point to be removed. Research into the listing of the school currently being undertaken by SL. Mulch / woodchip – JH to measure the green to ascertain the amount required. AL will then source quotes for aged woodchip or mulch.	GP SL JH AL
61	Clerks Report RECEIVED Circulated to all Councillors ahead of the meeting. 1. Action points tracker spreadsheet updated and shared and sent ahead of the meeting. See 25-26 tab for this Council Years actions inclusive of last year's outstanding actions. 2. Burial Ground Payment for memorial for Howell received. 3. Thames Valley Police Ongoing communications between Susan Goodway and myself. Any issues or concerns that are non-urgent should be sent to: waddesdonNHPT@thamesvalley.police.uk	

	Matthew Barber – Conservative Police and Crime Commissioner, Thames Valley local update sent to all. WVP have joined the Southeast Cyber Resilience Centre, and I will review and share anything that may be of benefit to the Council moving forwards. They offer a fully funded staff awareness training session – 2.5hr session for up to 5 members of staff. 4. Waddesdon, Westcott and Winchendon Newsletter. Recent edition contained a report for Westcott Parish Council. I will submit an update following the next meeting. Copy needs to be submitted by the 20th. 5. Westcott Church Reverend Caroline will now attend the meeting in October to talk about raising funds for the church roof. Verbal estimate for ceiling repairs of £10k to 20k. 6. AGAR and external Audit External Audit submitted 25.06.25. Variance clarification returned same day as request 25.08.25. variance due to overpayment received of precept for 2023 – 2024 to 2024 -2025. Should be a lot simpler for this year hopefully. 7. Defibrillator Training delivered on the 2nd of September. Great turnout of 21 residents. Certificates to be issued and emailed to all attendees on receipt from St Johns Ambulance. A second workshop has been requested by some residents – perhaps schedule for later this year? 8. Land ownership / drainage / Riparian Ownership Queries returned regarding specific ditch details. As we are unable to give this, I have replied stating any ditches that feed onto the main streets in Westcot to be cleared. 9. Land at Lower Green Spoke to Paul Redstone, Head of Property for Bucks Council on 25.08.25. Summary of conversation as below: • John Grossart left the Council and has not yet been replaced - they are currently looking for a replacement who will hold the Bucks Council Land portfolio. • Our case was passed to Paul Redstone (PR) who normally deals with larger developments. • PR expressed that we are not alone in terms of length of time taken to reach any resolution	
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- Bucks Council has a 'call for sites ' currently active which is due to finish before Xmas. This involves all sites being put forward for a change in use in Bucks. The planning department will decide which sites are good and which ones are not.
- AVE have submitted their site at Lower Green into the call for sites program but as, yet PR is debating whether to submit the site or not.
- 3 options - talk to parish council, submit to call for sites or team up with AVE. AVE have asked to meet with PR but no conversation had as yet. PR asked me re suitability of site, which I said is a small strip of land near a stream and very limited access. The infrastructure of the small neighbouring road was not good and other sites around the village more accessible. He asked what we wanted it for, and I explained the discussions have been about allotments, community orchard, community green space.
- PR said they are waiting for the politicians and explained from a commercial view the PC need to prepare their bid and business plan. ie PC offer of £0 and public sector offer of £0.5 million needs to be mitigated by the offer to the community, who runs the offer and the benefits of it.
- Currently our case is allocated to PR, and he will contact Amy Bridgeford (John Reid's replacement) and cc us into the email. Amy is Head of the Communities team that JG was in and is also part of the larger Devolution programme.
- Similar case in Wing also being looked at.
- PR strongly suggests: certainty in a business plan for our use of the site, bene-fits to the village state, 2 reasons as to the need for the PC to own the land, reasons why the alternatives are not appropriate to the community, develop thinking processes - how run, ongoing costs etc.
- PR said we should definitely bother with this and continue to engage as no meeting with AVE has been held yet
- PR is happy to arrange a meeting in the near future but cannot make the 9th of September. It will probably be us going to them at Bucks Council rather than a PC meeting.

10. Street Lighting

Street light number 16 in Lower green was attended to in February but requires a new Lantern. Quote chased up and awaiting response
Quote received for LED lighting £10964.26 exc VAT 02.09.25.

11. Westcott School buildings

Contacted Gordon Joyner on 25.08.25 regarding update on the buildings, need to have the hedge cut urgently and the general external areas of the grounds needing attention.

GJ emailed on the 01.09.25 with the following response:

Dear Amanda

Thank you for your email.

I have arranged for a contractor to cut back the hedge and all being well that will start today.

In terms of the longer-term future for the site, you will be aware that that the area at the rear of the school is owned by a separate trust which, I understand, is planning to develop it.

	In terms of the buildings and the area at the front, half the site is subject to a Crown reverter. We have recently been advised that the Crown wish to sell their part and take the proceeds. Clearly it will have to be sold a single plot, so we will be moving forward on that basis now. Best wishes. Gordon Hedge clearance began 01.09.25 by Alan Gibbons who will be there for a while. He is awaiting instruction as to what height to bring the hedge down to. 12.WPC Insurance Final quotes received: Quotation 1 Gallagher (Hiscox) and current provider - £931.48 Quotation 2 CF insurance (Zurich) 3-year deal £year 1 £588.85 and year 2 and 3 £570.48 All cover includes all limits as previously except hirers liability on CF insurance £2m and Zurich £5m. Covers includes new posts, gate, trees and shrubs. Agreement given to proceed with CF Insurance. 3-year fixed deal of £570.98 per annum. Premium paid and policy documents received. 13. Bucks Funding Search On the advice of Ashley Waite, I have signed up for this funding search engine for Bucks. I will review and identify those funds / grants applicable to us throughout the year. 14. Westcott, Winchendon and Ashendon meeting re WVP and light pollution Date and time currently being finalised. 15. Litter Station Litter stations to be collected and site to be agreed to place it. 16. Highways devolved services update request Actual costs of devolved services agreement sent. 17. Local Election Recharge As agreed at the WPC meeting recharge paid. 18. Anti Vandal Sign for Village Green Quotation received for £214.92 – impact signs 19. New Planning Portal – One Uniform	
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	Log in details created and will cover all planning applications from the 11th of August. Email regarding this forwarded to all Councillors. Planning forum to be held 25th September. 20. Pension Regulator Following an email from the Pension Regulator a redeclaration of compliance completed for 2023 retrospectively. Due to immediate response to email we will not receive a financial penalty. Next redeclaration will be due mid-October 25. Details changed to me and their system updated. 21. Information Commissioners office All contact details updated with the ICO. Due for renewal 25th June 2026 22. Green Retreats / Bus Shelter discussion Green retreats marketing department are keen to support the Village by providing a bus shelter on the A41 by the Venture Park in return for advertising their products. They are currently exploring two options: working with a specialist bus shelter company to build one, or the potential of funding one for you to provide. This is mainly due to the labour demand on our side and our aim to get the project moving quickly. They have asked for quotations of the bus shelter itself which I will look into. 23. Reinstatement of verge due to solar panel ducting works – opposite side to Station House to Cricket Club Concern raised from a resident of the quality of the backfilling of trenches following the installation of ducting for the solar panels in the Venture Park Spoils of clay had been packed on the top and other spoil ended up in the ditches, previously cleared by Mr Cripps. Reported on Fix my street initially and then I reported to WVP – Paul Phipps – Director of Savills property management. Mr Phipps immediately acted on this and the ground has been redug, compacted, topsoil added and grass seed. We have been advised that this is a long-term project so more disruption may be experienced in forthcoming months. 24. Local Area Technician – Alison Poland Due to a reshuffle of the highways department, we now have a new Local Area technician (LAT). Alison will be coming to the village for a walk round on the 9th of September at 11.15hrs to meet with myself and Sue Pusey.	
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	We want to ensure that all agreements made with Colin Woolford will be honoured and to continue to work closely with them. Current issues: to check repaired verge, ensure annual clearance will be undertaken ahead of us taking this on as a council, ditch clearance and highways drainage clearance, discuss the ownership of the verges at the Ashendon end of the village between the 30mph sign and white gates and responsibility for verge cutting, reinstatement of 30mph repeater sign, sign on the roundabout to be replaced as on the ground, sign on the A41 to be replaced due to large hole. 25. Waddesdon Greenway meeting I have accepted a team's meeting invite for the Waddesdon greenway meeting to be held on the 18th of September at 10am. Invite extended to SP and JH if they wish to join as discussed in the last meeting. 26. Donkey Field – planning breach Report of planning breach sent 03.09.25 with recent photo of piles of stone. Have informed that we do not have Mr Giddins address other than the field address. Also informed that that we have a walk round with our new LAT on the 9th of September. 27. Declarations Of interest Fully scanned and sent to Bucks Council 28. Unity Trust Bank – confirmation of eligibility for FSCS Information completed and eligibility confirmed. 29. Bucks Recycling Fire Fire commenced on 10.08.25 and remains burning to date. The feedback and information received has been shared with all Councillors. The forthcoming Parish Council meeting will commence with open discussion and information sharing between residents, Bucks Recycling, Westcott Venture Park, Environmental health, Environment Agency, Cllr Waite, Greg Smith MP, Minerals and waste management, Bucks Fire. All have been invited and will send reports if they cannot attend. TW – Would like to know the cost effectiveness of LED lighting so the PC can decide the way forward. AL to obtain. SL – currently following up the history of the school. Asked if the PC should write to the king and ask if the land is to be sold, can it be for the benefit of the village?? AL to draft a letter.	AL AL
62.	Ward Councillors Report No report received due to the time spent on Bucks Recycling Fire issues.	

63.	Finance Report NOTED Cllrs noted the financial report sent prior to the meeting. Bank accounts as at 31.08.25. <table><tr><td>Current Account</td><td>£5832.34</td></tr><tr><td>Savings Account</td><td>£21686.96</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>£27519.30</td></tr></table> Payments to be made: £204.96 for AL Salary £536.57 for EON Energy DD £1179 for Blades grass cutting. £663.63 to G Pusey for purchase of laptop and mouse. (We were given an anonymous donation of £500 to go towards this purchase.) £570.48 Community Insurance – 3-year fixed deal All present agreed these payments. Budget status Total spend YTD £9237.58 Total Budget £ 18148 Current overspends – upgrade of Lap top software to Microsoft 365 and website 1/4ly review	Current Account	£5832.34	Savings Account	£21686.96	Total	£27519.30	
Current Account	£5832.34							
Savings Account	£21686.96							
Total	£27519.30							
64	External audit report Fully submitted and additional variance questions responded to. No further feedback AL to follow up.	AL						
65.	Wage increase of Clerk As received from BALC and NALC, new NJC guidance of Clerks wage increase approved. AL current hourly rate to be increased by £0.46p Back pay to be paid from 1st April 2025. Approx. £46 total. AL to update the payroll person.	AL						
66	Planning Matters Planning Register shared prior to the meeting. 25/02127/APP Algeco UK, WVP site 6030. Retrospective planning for the erection of a new workshop building and minor works on site. Due 18.09.25.							

	WPC agreed to oppose the application due to yet another retrospective planning request. Concern regarding additional lighting required that is not mentioned and no opportunity to object to planning when the building was erected and works undertaken in the first place which was on the 27.05.25. AL to respond.	AL
67	To NOTE Councillor Vacancies 1 vacancy for a Parish Councillor.	
68	Urgent matters of note AL / JH to meet to resolve access to website for AL	AL / JH
54	Date of next meeting: Parish Council Meeting Tuesday 21 st October 2025 at 1930hrs at Westcott Cricket Club	
	Part 1 of the meeting closed at 2130hrs	

-----End-----

Date Agreed:

Signed:

Position: – Chair/Vice Chair/Councillor