Virtual Meeting hosted by Lucy O'Connell from MVDC
27th August 2026. Attendees invited from Box Hill, Dorking and Westcott

Tim Way and Paul Goddard attended representing Westcott in their roles as Village Forum Chairman for WNDP and as WVA Secretary respectively

MVDC material presented in the meeting is pages 1- 8
Pages 8 and 9 added by PRG/TEW as indicated

Establishing New Parish Councils: Purpose of meeting

Today we are looking at how parish councils come into existence, not what the newly created parishes and the elected councillors may choose to do in the future.

Recap of CGR:

The outcome of the Mole Valley Community Governance Review was to create three parishes - Box Hill, Dorking and Westcott.

Overview of the MVDC Reorganisation Order – covering the number of Councillors by Parish and the proposed precept amount to be raised for April 2027 – March 2028

Parish	No of Cllrs	Year One Budget
Box Hill	8	£17,000
Dorking	14 (7 in each ward)	£88,000
Westcott	9	£20,000

Next Steps by MVDC:

To ensure the new Parish Councils are operational and lawful from 1 April 2027 by;

- ensuring the necessary governance arrangements are in place
- making arrangements for a parish election
- setting the parish precept to enable collection from 1 April 2027

This does not include:

- looking at possible services the parish may wish to offer or assets it may want to take on by trying to determine the future programme of the council before it exists
- or in anyway predetermine decisions that belong to future elected councillors

The future priorities of the parish council are for the newly elected councillors and community to determine together.

Role for MVDC/ East Surrey Unitary Authority

- Aligning the Council Tax system with the new parish boundaries
- Set the parish precept - in line with the budget set out in the Reorganisation Order - & enable collection from 1 April 2027 (added by PRG: It was said by the MVDC Officers that MVDC would agree the precept in Feb 27 – not earlier)
- Making the necessary arrangements for the parish elections on 6 May 2027
- Fixing the date of the inaugural meeting of the Parish Council
- Progress recruitment – underway as at the date of the meeting - for an interim parish clerk to ensure that necessary governance requirements are in place for 1 April 2027 for all three parish areas

Role for the Community

- Use local communication channels to promote the new parish council and encourage local residents to stand as a parish councillor
- Looking for people who want to help shape the role the parish council will play in the local community going forward
- The possible challenge – communities need to recognise that year 1 and likely year 2 are more about engagement and future planning over service delivery

(Added by PRG: Note – Conclusion reached in the meeting is that no assets and no services would be transferred to the new parish council for the forseesable future once that parish council is in place on 1st April 2027)

Parish Elections – outline timetable & election scenarios:

- Notice of election published – likely around mid to end March 2027
- Publication of the notice is the start of the 'nominations period' for Councillors to stand
- 'Nominations period' ends mid April
- Election Day set for Thursday 6 May 2027

At close of nomination period:

Scenario A: More candidates than seats:

- Election is held

Scenario B: Exactly enough candidates – for Westcott this would be nine

- No election is needed - All nine candidates are elected uncontested

Scenario C: Fewer candidates than seats

- All candidates are elected uncontested
- Remaining vacancies can be filled by co-option, subject to the relevant legal process

NOTE: in all cases, the newly elected Parish Councillors would take up office on Monday 10th May 2027. They would have no decision-making powers before this date.

On 1st April 2027:

- The new Parish Council goes live
- East Surrey Councillors will act as the Parish Councillors until the elected Parish Councillors are in post on 6th May 27 and thereafter until vacancies are filled by co opted residents

First Meeting of the new Parish to be held by 20th May to:

- Elect a chair and vice chair
- Approve key governance documentation such as
  - Standing Orders
  - Financial Regulations
  - Code of Conduct
- Appoint the Proper Officer / Clerk to the Council
- Agree Future meeting schedule

Then the hard work starts…

- the newly elected Councillors will need to engage with the local communities about what the Parish Council should be delivering in the future while managing expectations
- It will need to start thinking about precept levels for year 2 onwards – needs to be agreed before end 2027

From here on, all narrative added by PRG / TEW

Next steps from MVDC:

1) Answering the questions raised – see below for PRG/TEW versions. Nothing yet published by MVDC as at 9th October 2026
2) Organising and hosting a ‘prospective candidates evening’
3) Interested parties urged to look at ‘Surrey Association of Local Councils’ material & website

Questions raised in the meeting: Answers still outstanding:

1. How was the £20k arrived at for Westcott? Can we have a breakdown?
2. Does it include the cost of an election?
3. What if an election is not needed? What happens to the cost?
4. When will the precept by house by address by known?
5. How will the recruitment of the Parish Clerk be progressed and by when and will the three prospective parishes be involved?
6. How will any work undertaken by a Parish Clerk before 1st April 2027 be paid for?
7. When – and how - can we begin to search for a suitable permanent clerk?
8. What material is available to identify / summarise the responsibilities that a Parish Councillor will take on if elected?
9. Exactly what insurance provisions are in place to indemnify a Parish Councillor?
10. How soon after election will the new Parish Council assume responsibility for being:

a) a statutory consultee on planning applications and

b) being the recipient of CIL monies attributed to the area and

c) will local CIL not spent prior to 1st April 2027 be allocated to the new council?

9. Can setting up a website and establishing Email addresses take place before 1st April 2027?

END