

WITHYCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Draft Minutes of the Withycombe Parish Council meeting held at the Memorial Hall on Monday 5th December 2016 at 7.00pm

PRESENT

Councillors: Emma Wright (Chairman), Stephen Crossman, Richard Barnham, Amanda Gardiner, Susan Gill.

In attendance: A Giles (Clerk)

Also present: Brenda Maitland-Walker (WSC), members of the public

For future reference attendees will be referred to in these, and subsequent, minutes by their initials viz:

Emma Wright (Chairman) EW, Chris Thomas CT, Stephen Crossman SC, Richard Barnham RB, Amanda Gardiner AJG, Susan Gill SG, David Tilley DT, Brenda Maitland-Walker (West Somerset District Council) BMW, Christine Lawrence (Somerset County Council) CL, Andy Giles (Clerk) AG.

The Meeting was digitally recorded

THESE ARE DRAFT MINUTES AND HAVE YET TO BE APPROVED BY THE COUNCIL

1730 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from CL, CT, and DT.

1731 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

None.

1732 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS:

Parish Council Meeting and Public Open Session held on 5th September 2016.

The minutes of the above meeting having been circulated prior to the meeting, were agreed as accurate and signed by the Chairman.

1733 MATTERS ARISING from the minutes

1733.1 **Communication with parishioners (1715.1):** - The Clerk reported that a banner advertising the Parish Council website had now been acquired. The cost of the 8ft x 2ft banner was £55.00 +VAT.

1733.2 **Preparation of Parish Flood Plan (1719):** - The Clerk advised that this item was on the main agenda.

1733.3 **Risk Assessments (1726):** - The Clerk advised that this item was on the main agenda.

1734 PLANNING

Planning Applications Received

None

Planning Applications Approved

None

1735 FINANCES

1735.1 **Budget Monitoring Report:** The Clerk circulated a budget monitoring report for the period 1st April 2016 to 30th November 2016. The Clerk confirmed that the Council's finances were healthy with 'free funds' standing at £9,768 at 30th November 2016.

1735.2 **Bank Reconciliation Statement:** The bank reconciliation as at 30th November 2016 agreed with bank statements and was signed by the Chairman, as an accurate record.

Bank balances were:

➤ Account 95304622	£1,022.20
➤ Account 44356501	£18,724.33
Total	£19,746.53

1735.3 **The following payments were approved:**

1. A Giles (Clerk) salary / expenses (Oct 2016– Dec 2016)	£827.42
2. HMRC Tax due on above payment to Clerk	£135.62
3. Rest & Be Thankful (Active Living - Xmas Lunch)	£160.00
4. Withycombe Memorial Hall (Active Living)	£140.00
5. Withycombe Memorial Hall (Contribution - Christmas Tree)	£ 22.50

1735.4 **Clerk's Salary and Expenses:** The Clerk advised that the amount shown above for salary and expenses included £134.40 for the advertisement for the new Clerk (Free Press) and £66.00 for the banner advertising the website.

1735.5 **Christmas Tree – Withycombe Memorial Hall:** The Chairman reported that the Memorial Hall had, in the past, received assistance from the Crown Estate for the provision of a Christmas tree. She advised that this support had now been withdrawn and that the Memorial Hall Committee were seeking assistance towards the provision of a tree. It was agreed that the Parish Council would contribute 50% of the cost of the tree which amounted to £22.50.

1735.6 **Active Living Account:** The Clerk circulated a statement detailing transactions on the Active Living account. The balance being held by the Parish Council after the above payments had been debited amounted to £347.61. It was agreed that the statement be sent to Roger Hurst for his information.

1736 **BUDGET AND PRECEPT 2017 / 18**

The Clerk had circulated documents prior to the meeting which set out options for the parish precept together with a draft budget for 2017/18. Councillors discussed at length both the financial requirements of the Parish Council together with the impact that any rise in precept would have on local tax payers.

It was unanimously agreed that the precept should be set at £6,500 for 2017/18 and that the draft budget for the year be amended accordingly.

1737 **PARISH FLOOD PLAN**

Councillors discussed various ways in which the Parish could progress the issue of developing a flood plan. It was agreed to hire the Memorial Hall on a Saturday morning early in the New Year and to invite local residents along to discuss where problems occur and how these problems might be mitigated in the future.

The Clerk advised that there was sufficient money within the Parish Council's budget to allow for a modest amount of expenditure on equipment or labour, should it be deemed necessary. BMW advised that contractors working on the highway must meet the requirements of Chapter 8 of the Traffic Signs Manual (*Traffic Safety Measures & Signs for Roadworks & Temporary Situations*). She also advised that insurance cover would be necessary if the Parish Council were to organise groups of volunteers to clear drains and watercourses etc. The Clerk was instructed to contact the Parish Council's insurers to find out the cost of implementing the appropriate cover. RB advised that a flood plan would need to include the appropriate risk assessments.

1738 **HIGHWAYS**

The damaged culvert outside Court Place Farm was discussed in the Public Open Session which preceded this meeting. There were no further matters to discuss.

1739 RIGHTS OF WAY

The appointment of a volunteer to fulfil the role of Parish Paths Liaison Officer was discussed in the Public Open Session which preceded this meeting. There were no further matters to discuss.

1740 TITHOLES ORCHARD

The Clerk reported that following the meeting held in September, he had contacted Lucy Back of Savills and requested clarification of how the Parish Council's interest in the Titholes Orchard site might be affected if / when the site was sold. He advised that Lucy Back had confirmed that the Crown Estate are still intent upon the car park and play area being delivered as part of the project. However she did advise that any developer would be entitled to approach the local Planning Authority and seek changes to the current planning approval.

1741 COUNTY COUNCILLOR and DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORTS

1723.1 The Somerset County Councillor (CL) had tendered her apologies.

1723.2 The District Councillor (BMW) presented her report in the Public Open Session which preceded this meeting. There were no matters arising from the report that required further action by the Parish Council.

1742 NEW PARISH CLERK

The Clerk reported that there had been one applicant for the post of Parish Clerk following the recent advertisement in the West Somerset Free Press. It was agreed to invite the applicant to an informal meeting with Parish Councillors as soon as possible. The Clerk was instructed to make the necessary arrangements

1743 RISK ASSESMENTS

The Chairman agreed to undertake risk assessments on all assets owned by the Parish Council. The Clerk was instructed to prepare the appropriate documentation. The Clerk advised that a letter had been received from Neil Steadman regarding the trees that had been planted as part of the millennium celebrations and which were now the responsibility of the Parish Council. Mr Steadman advised that he had recently inspected the trees and that they were, in his view, in need of some attention. AJG advised that her partner was a member of the Chartered Institute of Horticulture and that he may be able to advise on any remedial action. It was agreed that AJG would arrange for the condition of the trees to be assessed and to inform Councillors via email of the outcome.

The Clerk was instructed to inform Mr Steadman of the action being taken by the Parish Council.

1744 PARISH PRIORITIES

The Clerk reported that the West Somerset Council had sought confirmation that the parish priorities (circulated prior to the meeting) remained current and up to date. It was agreed that the provision of a produce outlet should be removed from the list; all other priorities listed remained current. The Clerk was instructed to inform West Somerset Council accordingly.

1745 PARISH NEWSLETTER

The Clerk reported that the parish newsletter had been reinstated; the first edition had been circulated in early December and was available on the parish website. The Chairman advised that she had been contacted by Anne Rivett, who was involved in the production of the newsletter, with a view to the Parish Council lending its support to the publication. It was agreed the Parish Council would fund the printing costs of the first edition of the newsletter which amounted to forty pounds. Funding of future editions would be dependent upon the frequency of publication and estimated production costs.

The Clerk was instructed to contact Anne Rivett to confirm that the Parish Council would fund the printing costs of the first edition (a copy invoice to be provided for inclusion in the Parish Council's accounts). In addition, Anne Rivett to be asked to confirm details of future publication costs in order that the issue may be discussed by the Parish Council at its meeting in March 2017.

1746 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

1746.1 The Clerk reported that correspondence had been received from West Somerset Council advising that the public telephone in Withycombe was receiving very little use (three calls in the past twelve months) and that BT were considering removing it. As part of the consultation process, the Parish Council had been asked if it had any view regarding the proposed removal of the telephone box.

It was agreed that the Parish Council should consult with residents regarding the future of the phone box. The Clerk was instructed to contact the West Somerset Council and request that the Parish Council be allowed time to consult with residents regarding the future of the telephone box.

1746.2 Correspondence received from Williton Parish Council regarding the possible loss of stroke beds at Williton Hospital had been addressed in the Public Open Session that preceded this meeting.

1746.3 Correspondence received from local resident Helen Hughes regarding an incident in October, where a large vehicle caused problems whilst trying to pass through Withycombe, had been addressed in the Public Open Session that preceded this meeting.

1746.4 Correspondence received from local resident Neil Steadman regarding the condition of trees planted as part of the millennium celebrations, had been addressed during the discussion on risk assessments recorded under item 1743 above.

1746.5 The Clerk reported that correspondence had been received from West Somerset Council advising that the Local Plan to 2032 had now been adopted. The correspondence was noted.

1746.6 The Clerk reported that two organisations had contacted the Parish Council seeking financial support, CLOWNS and ATWEST. After a period of debate it was decided not to accede to these requests

1747 OTHER MATTERS

The Chairman and Councillors extended their thanks and best wishes to the Clerk, Andy Giles who was vacating the post at the end of December.

1748 ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the following items will be included on the agenda for the next meeting which will be held in March 2017.

- Parish Flood Plan
- Risk Assessments
- Newsletter

The meeting closed at 9.10 pm.

Signed _____
CHAIRMAN

Date _____