

WITHYCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Withycombe Parish Council meeting held at the Memorial Hall on Monday 23rd May 2016 at 7.00pm

PRESENT

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

In attendance: A Giles (Clerk)

Also present: Brenda Maitland-Walker (WSC), Christine Lawrence (SCC),

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, Brenda Maitland-Walker (West Somerset District Council) BMW, Christine Lawrence (Somerset County Council) CL, Andy Giles (Clerk) AG.

The Meeting was digitally recorded

1696 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Clerk advised that CL would be attending the meeting but had been delayed due to other commitments. BMW, having delivered her report in the Public Open Session which preceded this meeting, had now left due to other commitments.

1697 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN

1697.1 EW was proposed by SC seconded by RB and elected as Chairman by unanimous decision.

1697.2 RB was proposed by EW seconded by AJG and elected as Vice Chairman by unanimous decision.

1698 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

None.

1699 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS:

Parish Council Meeting and Public Open Session held on 7th March 2016.

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

1700 MATTERS ARISING from the minutes

1700.1 **Planning Application – 1 Park Cottages (1683.1):** - At the meeting held in December 2015 it was agreed that CT would contact Mr P Lean, Planning Enforcement Officer for West Somerset Council, with a view to clarifying the outstanding planning issues that had been identified with this site. CT reported that he had contacted Mr Lean, who had agreed to look into the matter and confirm that the new building on the site did meet all planning requirements. Mr Lean had not yet responded to the enquiry and the Clerk was instructed to contact him again to see if any progress had been made with this issue, if necessary, Mr Lean be asked to contact CT with any queries.

1700.2 **Westside Widows (1685.5):** - The Clerk advised that he had contacted Westside Windows and terminated the contract with them for cleaning the bus shelters. It was agreed that volunteers from within the Parish would now carry out this work.

1700.3 **Website Grant (1672.1):** - The Clerk confirmed that the grant application, submitted to the Somerset Association of Local Councils, for funding towards the costs of setting up a Parish Council website, had now been paid. The grant received totalled £852.84.

1700.4 **Issues with large vehicles passing through Withycombe (1687.1):** - The Clerk reported that he had contacted the owner of Mill House to see if she would be in agreement to the Parish Council contacting the Crown Estate regarding the possibility of lowering the kerb outside the property. This would enable vehicles to be parked a little further off of the highway and alleviate some of the problems. The Clerk reported that he had received a response advising that the property was owned by the occupier and not the Crown Estate. It was agreed that this matter could not be pursued further. The Clerk also advised that the Somerset County Council Highway Authority had agreed to install 'OVERHANGING BUILDING' plates to the height restriction signs at the entrance to the village; this work had yet to be completed.

The Clerk was instructed to inform the local resident who had initially raised the matter advising her of the actions taken by the Parish Council.

1700.5 **Parish Flood Plan (1687.6):** - The Chairman advised that she had investigated the issues involved in preparing and implementing a flood plan for the Parish. The Clerk advised that BMW had significant experience in setting up a flood plan and had offered to advise the Parish Council on the matter. It was agreed that BMW and, if possible, Teresa Bridgman founder of the West Somerset Flood Group, be invited to attend the Parish Council meeting in September to discuss the way forward.

1700.6 **Communication with Parishioners (1692):** - RB suggested that the Parish Council produce a banner in order to advertise the Parish website to try and encourage local people to use it. It was also suggested that the website could be advertised in the church magazine. The Clerk advised that the cost of producing a banner, could be met from the grant funding for the website referred to above (Minute 1700.3). It was agreed that the Chairman be granted delegated authority to arrange for the acquisition of an appropriate banner. The Clerk was instructed to make the necessary enquiries and liaise with the Chairman regarding details of the banner.

AJG agreed to make arrangements for details of the parish website to be included in the parish magazine, the Clerk was instructed to forward information regarding the website to AJG.

1701 **PARISH COUNCIL – VACANT SEAT**

The Clerk reported that the vacant seat on the Parish Council had been advertised on the parish noticeboards and website. He advised that in response to these advertisements, Mr David Tilley of Peridot, Withycombe had volunteered to stand as a Parish Councillor. It was unanimously agreed that Mr Tilley be co-opted on to the Parish Council with immediate effect.

1702 **PLANNING**

Planning Applications Received

1702.1 **Application 6/41/16/102LB** – Oak, Oak Lane, Withycombe.

Consent to re-open a blocked up doorway – Listed Building Consent.

Councillors inspected plans and associated documents pertaining to this application. No adverse comments were expressed.

Planning Applications Approved

1702.2 **Application 6/41/16/101** – 1 Elm Cottages, West Street, Withycombe.

Proposed two storey side extension with balcony.

The Clerk reported that consent had been granted to the above application, subject to compliance with certain specified planning conditions.

1703 FINANCES

1703.1 **Budget Monitoring Report:** The Clerk circulated a budget monitoring report for the period 1st April 2016 to 30th April 2016. The Clerk confirmed that the Council's finances were healthy with 'free funds' standing at £8,701 at 30th April 2016.

1703.2 **Bank Reconciliation Statement:** The bank reconciliation as at 30th April 2016, agreed with bank statements and was signed by the Chairman, as an accurate record.

Bank balances were:

➤ Account 95304622	£1,444.95
➤ Account 44356501	£17,495.00
Total	£18,939.95

1703.3 **The following payments were approved:**

1. A Giles (Clerk) salary / expenses (April 2016– June 2016)	£623.42
2. HMRC Tax due on above payment to Clerk	£156.66
3. Somerset Association of Local Councils (Subscription)	£120.00
4. Came and Company (Annual Insurance Premium)	£292.21
5. B Howe (Internal Auditor)	£84.30
6. R M Hurst (Active Living)	£100.00
7. R M Hurst (Active Living)	£16.39

1703.4 **Clerk's Salary and Expenses:** The Clerk advised that the amount shown above for salary and expenses included an extra ten hours pay for additional work involved in setting up the website. This was approved.

1703.5 **Came and Company – Insurance Premium:** The Clerk advised that competitive quotations had been received from the following companies:

1. Aviva - £339.12
2. Hiscox - £322.97
3. Ecclesiastical £307.59
4. Zurich - £ 302.61

Quotations 1. 2. and 3. above were received through Insurance Brokers, Came and Company, who advised that the premium of £307.59 quoted by Ecclesiastical, could be reduced to £292.21 if the Parish Council took advantage of a three year long term agreement. This was approved.

1703.6 **Active Living Account:** The Clerk circulated a statement detailing transactions on the Active Living account. The balance being held by the Parish Council at 30th April 2016 amounted to £907.61. It was agreed that the statement be sent to Roger Hurst for his information.

1704 FINAL ACCOUNTS / ANNUAL RETURN 2015/16

1704.1 **Annual Governance Statement 2015/16:** The Annual Governance Statement which forms part of the Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2016, was circulated by the Clerk. After due consideration, the Annual Governance Statement was approved by Council and signed by the Chairman.

1704.2 **Accounting Statements 2015/16:** The Accounting Statements which forms part of the Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2016, was circulated by the Clerk. After due consideration, the Accounting Statements were approved by Council and signed by the Chairman.

1704.3 **Internal Auditors Report 2015/16:** The report prepared by the Council's Internal Auditor, Mr B Howe, had been circulated prior to the meeting. The report was considered by the Council and appropriate action was agreed where necessary.

1705 **HIGHWAYS**

1705.1 **Environmental Maintenance Information 2016:** The Clerk reported that information had been received from Somerset County Council regarding highway maintenance work, including the proposed timetable for grass cutting and weed spraying. The information was noted.

1705.2 **Outstanding Maintenance Issues:** CL agreed to investigate the delay to the repair of the hole in the road outside Court Place Farm and the damaged wall that runs alongside the stream in Withycombe; both had been awaiting repair for a number of months. There was uncertainty as to the ownership of the 'Withycombe' sign at the bottom of the hill as you enter Withycombe from Rodhuish. SC agreed to investigate the damage to the sign and, if possible, arrange for its repair.

1705.3 **Bus Shelters:** SC advised that the bus shelters are in need of painting and general maintenance and that remedial work carried out now may avoid greater expense in the future. SC agreed to inspect the shelters and, if possible, arrange for any necessary work to be carried out.

1706 **RIGHTS OF WAY**

Public Paths Liaison Officer (PPLO): The Clerk advised that at the Annual Parish Assembly, the Withycombe PPLO, Mrs Kerrie Thorne had tendered her resignation from the position. It was agreed that the vacancy should be advertised on the Parish website, the Clerk was also instructed to contact Somerset County Council Rights of Way Team and find out what it would mean for the Parish if it did not have anyone in the position of PPLO.

1707 **TITHOLES ORCHARD**

1707.1 **Planning Permission:** The Clerk reported that correspondence had been received from Hamish Laird (Planning Officer – West Somerset Council) advising that the development did meet the requirements of current planning approval. There had been concern that the delay in developing the site, may have meant that planning approval could expire. Hamish confirmed that work had started within the approved timescale; this meant that the planning approval for the site will not now expire.

1707.2 Councillors raised concerns about the ongoing delays to the development and the likelihood that work would not recommence on the site until the end of the summer. The Clerk was instructed to contact Pearce Practice who are managing the project and request that access to the footpath adjacent to the site, be temporarily reinstated for the summer.

1708 **COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT**

1708.1 **Highway Repairs:** CL advised that she continued to press for the outstanding highway repairs in the Parish to be carried out as soon as possible. She advised that there was a significant backlog of work to be undertaken and that a number of projects throughout the County had taken longer to complete than was originally anticipated. CL also agreed to investigate the situation with the damaged sign referred to above (Minute 1705.2). CT expressed concern that if the repair to the culvert and the hole in the road outside Court Place Farm were to take place during harvest time, this would cause significant problems for the village. CL agreed to convey these concerns to the Highways Team.

1708.2 **Withycombe Wheels:** CL advised that a new agreement was about to be signed with Withycombe Wheels; this would ensure its continued operation for the foreseeable future. Withycombe Wheels is supported by funding made available under the Somerset County Council Concessionary Fares Scheme and provides a valuable service to a number of parishioners..

1708.3 **Somerset County Council Chairman:** CL advised that she would be continuing in her role as Chairman of the County Council.

1709 COUNTY COUNCILLOR and DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORTS

1709.1 There were no matters arising from the Somerset County Councillors report that required further action by the Parish Council.

1709.2 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.

1710 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

1710.1 The Clerk reported that correspondence had been received from Somerset County Council and circulated prior to the meeting, advising that a consultation exercise was taking place regarding its Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) – Minerals and Waste. The correspondence was noted.

1710.2 The Clerk reported that correspondence had been received from Exmoor National Park Authority and circulated prior to the meeting, advising that the Draft Local Plan for the National Park had been submitted to the Secretary of State. The correspondence was noted.

1710.3 The Clerk reported that correspondence had been received regarding the Centenary Fields Programme. The correspondence had been circulated prior to the meeting. The aim of the programme is to secure recreational spaces in perpetuity, in honour of the memory of those who lost their lives in conflict. The Clerk was instructed to make the necessary enquiries to see if it would be possible to include the proposed Titholes play area within the Centenary Fields programme.

1711 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 September.

- Parish Flood Plan
- Standing Orders and Financial Regulations
- Risk Assessments
- Dates of Future Meetings.

The meeting closed at 8.20 pm.

Signed _____
CHAIRMAN

Date _____