

WITHYCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Withycombe Parish Council meeting held at the Memorial Hall on Monday 27th June 2022 at 7.00pm

PRESENT

Councillors: Steven Hansford (Chairman), Richard Barnham, Stephen Crossman

In attendance: S Rawle (Clerk), Cllr C Lawrence (SCC),
3 Members of the Public

PUBLIC FORUM

There were no questions from members of the public.

2089 APOLOGIES

Cllr Thomas, Cllr Thrush and Cllr Kravis (SW&T)

2090 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

2091 TO APPROVE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS

Annual Council Meeting held on 23rd May, 2022. The minutes, previously circulated, were agreed.

2092 CO-OPTION OF COUNCILLORS

Proposed by Cllr Hansford and seconded by Cllr Crossman, Kerrie Thorne was duly co-opted. Acceptance of office form was completed.

2093 REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Standing orders and financial regulations based on the NALC model templates had been circulated by the Clerk. The Clerk explained that the existing documents had not been reviewed for sometime and that this had been identified in the internal auditors annual report. The Clerk asked Cllrs to comment on financial regulation 11 and whether the values for obtaining three quotes met the needs of the parish council in current economic times and increased cost rises.

Cllr Barnham proposed that Financial Regulation 11.1 (h) the value be amended from £1000 to £2000. This was seconded by Cllr Crossman. All agreed.

With the amendment, the standing orders and financial regulations were adopted.

2094 RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT

The risk assessment and management report had previously been circulated to Cllrs. The Clerk explained that as part of the Governance and Accountability Return the parish council must consider and document the financial and other risks it faces and deal with them.

Cllr Thorne asked whether a risk assessment should be carried out for the car park, community area and play area. It was noted that there was a Western Power in the far left of the site. The Clerk will look into this.

There was a discussion regarding purchases online and payment by BACs. Cllr Barnham confirmed that when the payment is originated it is necessary to authorise the transaction by one other person. Cllr Hansford said that the control measure was already in place on the account as the mandate required two signatories.

Clerk to chase progress with request for online banking as more purchases would need to be made by the parish council going forward.

The risk assessment and management document was approved.

2095 **ASSET REGISTER**

The revised list of Parish Council assets were unanimously approved.

2096 **BANK RECONCILIATION**

2055.1 **Bank Reconciliation Statement** – The Clerk presented the bank reconciliation up to 1st June 2022. The bank reconciliation agreed with bank statements and was signed by the Chairman, as an accurate record. Bank balances were:-

• Account 95304622	£3,550.90
• Account 44356501	£35,779.52
Total	£39,330.42

2097 **BUDGET MONITORING**

The budget monitoring report was noted.

2098 **INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT**

The Internal Auditors report was discussed in detail.

Standing Orders & Financial Regulations – These have now been revised and will be on the website.

Risk Assessments – The risk assessment management document has been approved.

General Reserves – The internal auditors report highlighted that the general reserves fund exceeded the generally accepted recommendation of between 3 and 12 months net revenue expenditure and that it should consider transferring further funds to a earmarked reserve.

Councillors discussed the level of general reserves and the earmarked reserves for the play area and asset maintenance.

It was **RESOLVED** that £9,000 be transferred from general reserves to the play area earmarked reserves. Proposed Cllr Hansford. Cllr Crossman seconded. All agreed.

Precept – This would be considered in the autumn when the budget was set for next year.

2099 **ANNUAL GOVERNANCE RETURN 2021-22**

2099.1 **Certificate of Exemption 2021-22** – Approved and signed.

2099.2 **Annual Governance Statement 2021-22:** The Annual Governance Statement was considered and approved and signed by the Chairman.

2099.3 **Accounting Statements 2021-22:** The Accounting Statements were considered. Approved and signed by the Chairman.

2100 PAYMENTS FOR APPROVAL

The following accounts for payment were approved:

- | | |
|--|---------|
| 1. Mr A Giles (Internal Audit) | £105.00 |
| 2. Adverts for Clerks post in WSFP (paid by Clerk & re-imbursed) | £210.00 |

Income received:

It was noted that the following donations for Titholes Play Area had been received:-

Mrs Snook - £1000
Mr & Mrs Maynard - £250.00
Mr & Mrs Cottrell - £250.00

The Clerk was requested to write and thank those who had made donations.

2101 TITHOLES ORCHARD UPDATE

Play Area Fence Options – Cllr Hansford reported that it had been suggested that a new wooden fence or a bow top would be the best options. He advised that a recent quote for a bow top fence would be around £3,000. In principle it was thought that the best option would be a closed picket fence. The neighbour has given permission for the hedge to be tidied. There was a discussion regarding removal of the dog leg fence to take advantage of the bank.

Play Area Surface – Grass mats considered to be the most affordable. Installation would need to be looked at when and who would do this. Cllr Thorne confirmed that equipment needed to be installed prior to the surfacing being laid.

Cllr Barnham confirmed that a donation from Withycombe Memorial Hall towards costs could not be made. Trustees advised they could purchase items such as benches and these would remain the property of the Memorial Hall. If the parish council came forward with suggestions he would put this to the committee at the next meeting on 6th July. Cllr Thorne will bring some options on equipment to the next meeting.

Creation of access path to community/play area – Logs donated by Cllr Thomas have been earmarked for edging of the carpark/community area and further ones to sit on. Pathway needs tidying up levelling and a finer surface applied.

Hedge planting – It was agreed to plant a low lying hedge along the short edge to left of the disabled/pram access, to separate the car park from the community area. Whips have been ordered from Woodland Trust.

Picnic Table/bench requirements – Cllr Hansford suggested 3 benches, 2 picnic tables, 1 with disabled access. One bench will be donated and is currently being re-furbished. Nick Speakman is willing to make a picnic table. A suitable tree will need to be sourced. Cllrs to contact Nick Kelly, Cllr Crossman will enquire with Minehead Sawmills.

Purchase of dog bin – Clerk asked to get a quotation on the emptying of a dog bin by Id Verde.

Wildflower area – All agreed to cultivated wildflower bank. There was a lengthy discussion on the top terrace and whether to keep this mown or to establish a wildflower area with paths mown through the area. The bottom terrace would be kept mown.yik

Grant Updates – Cllr Thorne reported that the HPC bid was not successful. There are other grant pots to explore.

2102 SAFEGUARDING POLICY

The safeguarding policy circulated by the Clerk prior to the meeting was approved. It was noted that Cllr Hansford and Cllr Crossman had attended safeguarding training as part of the SteamCoast Trail project.

2103 WITHYCOMBE HILL

Quotes for tree protection work – 2 quotes had been received. It was **RESOLVED** to use the services of Neil Burnett. Proposed by Cllr Hansford and seconded Cllr Crossman. Cllr Crossman will remove the rubbish. Materials consisting of 14 posts and a box of 4 inch screws would be required.

Installation of new Benches – Cllr Hansford and Tracey have donated 2 new benches for Withycombe. Cllr Hansford was thanked for his generous contribution.

2104 PARISH HOUSING FORUM

Further to the email dated 23 May from Cllr Johnson-Smith of Old Cleeve Parish Council. It was agreed that the parish council would not send a representative at this time but would like to be kept informed of progress. Would re-visit once the parish council had a full filled all its Councillor vacancies.

2105 CLLR VACANCIES

Cllr Hansford updated that this would be his final meeting and he would shortly be leaving the area. He said how much he had enjoyed living in the parish and his involvement with the Titholes Project. He said that he welcome receiving updates on progress of the project and hoped to continue to visit the area when work commitments allowed. Councillors thanked Cllr Hansford for his work on the parish council and the Titholes project.

The Clerk would follow the necessary procedure to inform Somerset West & Taunton of the vacancy.

2106 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

A meeting was agreed for 25th July to progress Titholes project.

The meeting closed at 9.10 pm.

Signed _____
CHAIRMAN

Date _____