

WITHYCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Withycombe Parish Council meeting held at the Memorial Hall on Monday 9th January 2023 at 7.00pm

PRESENT

Councillors: Kerrie Thorne, Claire Huish, Stephen Crossman, Richard Barnham, Paul Wintermantle, Rob Hall

In attendance: S Rawle (Clerk), Cllr M Kravis (SW&T and SCC)
1 Member of the Public

PUBLIC FORUM

There were no questions or contributions from the public therefore the Chair opened the main Council meeting.

2166 APOLOGIES

Cllr Thomas, Cllr Lawrence (SCC), Cllr Griffiths (SW&T)

2167 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

2168 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 7th NOVEMBER 2022

Minutes of meeting held on 7th November 2022 having been previously circulated, were approved as a correct record.

2169 REPORTS FROM COUNTY & DISTRICT CLLRS

SCC – Proposed Local Community Networks to be decided at Executive on 18th January. Favoured option will be 2 LCNs covering the old West Somerset area, Greater Exmoor area and the coastal strip. Late night bus times in operation for No 28 bus with a £2 fare. The usage of district owned buildings was currently subject to review to see if they were being fully utilised. Landslips at Combe Florey, liaison continues with landowner. Work ongoing with merging Health and Wellbeing Board and Social Care.

District – Focus is on transition to unitary on 1st April.

Cllrs raised outstanding issues concerning various outstanding Highway maintenance matters and the condition of the walls in Lower Street.

2179 ACTIONS & ON-GOING MATTERS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Rodhuish Bus Shelter – Has been cleared of logs. Could do with re-roofing to make water tight and look for an alternative use. School children use Luxborough corner as their bus pick up/drop off. Cllr Hall to canvas Rodhuish residents for alternative usage.

Ash Trees, Park Cottages – Clerk to follow up with SCC.

2180 PLANNING

No applications to report.

Discussion regarding A39 sign. Clerk has reported to Traffic Management & Enforcement.

2181 FINANCES

2181.1 **Bank Reconciliation to 31st December 2022** – The Clerk presented the bank reconciliation up to 31st December 2022. Question raised over cheque number 249. Clerk recalled it had been cancelled. The bank reconciliation agreed with bank statements and was signed by the Chairman, as an accurate record. Bank balances were:-

- Account 95304622 £1,944.86
- Account 44356501 £16,646.25
- Total £18,591.11

2181.2 **Budget Monitoring to 31st December 2022** – The report previously circulated was **NOTED**.

2181.3 **Budget and Precept 2023/24**

Budget – A discussion took place regarding the budget. The Clerk explained that the report reflected the increased liability and commitment that the Parish Council had taken on with the acquisition of the carpark, amenity area and the installation of the play equipment. Cllr Crossman said that a reserve should be kept in place for the amenity, play and car park areas. It was proposed by Cllr Barnham, seconded by Cllr Hall and unanimously agreed to set the budget at £9,000.

Precept – The tax base for 2023-24 was £123.55.

Cllr Thorne expressed her concern about any increase in the precept in light of the cost of living crisis; all other Councillors felt it was appropriate given the increased liabilities to the Parish Council. Cllr Crossman said that there had been no increase by the Parish Council last year.

After a proposal from Cllr Barnham, seconded by Cllr Crossman it was unanimously agreed to request a precept of £9,000, meaning an increase of approximately 13%, equating to an increase of £7.19 per annum on the average Band D property.

2181.4 **Income received was noted:-**

Donation from Charities Aid Foundation	£150.00
Memorial Hall (payment for bench at Community Area)	£249.17

2181.5 **The following payments that had already been made were ratified:-**

1. Darrens Den (payment for play equipment/installation)	£13,184.53
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The Clerk confirmed that a retention figure of £2,000 was in place for the play area, whilst awaiting the grass mats installation.

2181.6 **Payments for approval:-**

1. MHPF (Lease Payment 2022/23)	£1.00
2. IS OK Designs (Web Hosting)	£81.60
3. P Lindstrand Ground Maintenance	£180.00
4. S Rawle (Clerk Salary Sept-Dec) includes NJC pay award	£917.88
5. HMRC tax on Clerks salary	£214.95

A £40 donation for the Memorial Hall Christmas Tree had been requested This was agreed by all.

Proposed by Cllr Barnham, seconded by Cllr Crossman and unanimously agreed that the accounts for payment be approved.

2182 PLAY AREA AND AMENITY UPDATE

Play Area – The equipment has been installed, however, the area is extremely wet which has prevented the grass mats being laid. The area will need additional topsoil and grass seed so that grass mats can be laid to enable ROSPA sign off of the site. Agreed for Cllr Thorne to liaise with contractor on the additional materials. A retention of £2,000 has been kept back until the work is completed.

Path Surfacing – The disabled ramp will need further thought for a solution going forward. Cllr Crossman will look into obtaining some finer materials for the area.

Trees – Cllr Wintermantle had the 5 packs of trees received from Woodland Trust. Originally, thought that there would be approx. 30 and there would be sufficient to plant a double hedge. Cllr Wintermantle offered the donation of a silver birch on the corner. The brambles on top of the gabions needed to be removed and there was discussion about planting in this area. Cllr Thorne brought up that Thatchers were offering fruit trees through their Community Orchard Project.

2183 FUNDING UPDATE

In store voting for Tesco Bags for Life grant closes 25th January 2023. Cllr Thorne was in contact with Magna regarding a bid to the community fund to fund sensory boards and chalk boards.

2184 CARPARK ENTRANCE – WALL REPAIR

A quote (labour only) had been received for repair of the wall and removal of debris; this did not include the capping of the wall. Materials would be £300, to be purchased by the Parish Council. It was envisaged it would be approx. 3 days work.

Clerk to contact builder regarding the additional work involved in capping.

2185 RODHUISH BUS STOP & ASH TREES

Dealt with under Matters Arising.

2186 DOG WASTE BINS

Clerk reported that she was waiting delivery of the dog waste bin. She would liaise with IdVerde regarding risk assessment once arrived.

2187 VILLAGE ENTRY SIGNS

The Clerk had circulated an email received from SCC Traffic Management with advice on installing a 'Please drive carefully in our village' sign. It would need to be funded by the parish council and would need to gain the necessary permissions from SCC on location, size and design. The matter was discussed. It was felt that a physical deterrent such as humps or rumble strips were more effective. Clerk to research rumble strips.

2188 PARISH MAGAZINE

No further update available.

2189 HIGHWAY & ROW UPDATES

Cllr Huish reported there were dips in the road at Buck Hill. She has reported this on 'Fix My Street'

2190 ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

Newsletter contribution, Play Area/Amenity Area Updates

2191 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

Monday 6th March 2023

The meeting closed at 9.00 pm.

Signed _____
CHAIRMAN

Date _____