

# WITHYCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Withycombe Parish Council meeting held at the Memorial Hall on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2023 at 7.00pm**

## **PRESENT**

Councillors: Kerrie Thorne (Chairman), Claire Huish, Paul Wintermantle, Richard Barnham, Steve Crossman

In attendance: S Rawle (Clerk), 1 member of the public

## **PUBLIC FORUM**

There were no questions or issues raised by members of the public. The Chair closed the public forum and declared the meeting open.

### **2237 APOLOGIES**

Cllrs Robert Hall, Chris Thomas, Richard Barnham & Christine Lawrence (SC)

### **2238 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST ON ANY AGENDA ITEM**

Cllr Huish declared a personal interest in Item 5.

### **2239 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 3<sup>rd</sup> JULY 2023**

It was agreed to approve the minutes.

### **2240 REPORTS FROM SOMERSET COUNCIL COUNCILLORS**

Cllr Kravis reported that Somerset Council will need to draw on reserves to meet the budget for 2023-24. Pilot project for the recycling of soft plastics has started in Frome. The Councils Gambling Policy is out for consultation. Cllr Kravis said that in relation to the Housing issue he had enquired about the representation on the Home Finder Management Board. He said that the recent issue within the parish where a local resident had missed out on housing in preference to someone outside the parish was happening all over the County. Cllr Kravis report had been circulated.

### **2241 HOUSING – LOCAL CONNECTION CLAUSE**

Cllr Thorne reported that letters had been sent to the CEO of Magna HA, Chris Brown, Somerset Council Director of Housing, Rupert Warren Home Finder Policy Officer and Lead Councillors. The Home Finder policy review took place but the parish councils request for a local connection to be added was rejected. Magna HA was also written to directly to consider a local policy and this was declined. The parish council and Jean Humber have also sent letters to the Chair of Scrutiny at Somerset Council. The letter from Jean had been read out at the August meeting of the Committee. The Parish Council had been advised that the Scrutiny Committee had little influence to change the policy and advised to raise the issue at the LCN meeting. Cllr Thorne felt it would be a challenge to push the to the top of the agenda at the LCN as often Highways matters took precedent. Cllr Thorne had sent a further letter to Magna when 6 Meadow Cottages came available. At the time of this meeting it was still unallocated and waiting for the landlord to decide. Cllr Kravis suggested writing to the Chair and Vice Chair of the LCN. He said that a housing policy akin to the ENP policy which required a strong local connection was needed throughout the rest of West Somerset. It was agreed that the Parish Council would press for the issue to be raised at the next LCN meeting.

**2242 ACTIONS/UPDATES FROM LAST MEETING**

Additional Signage Blindwell Lane – The Clerk has requested that additional signage be put in place to direct artic lorries straight on to Felons Oak. A response had not been received from SC. Clerk to chase.

**2243 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE MINEHEAD & WATCHET LCN MEETING HELD ON 13<sup>th</sup> JULY AT CROWCOMBE**

Cllr Hall had attended the meeting. Minutes had been circulated by the Clerk. The next meeting was scheduled for 19<sup>th</sup> October.

**2244 FINANCES**

2244.1 **Bank Reconciliation Statement** – The Clerk presented the bank reconciliation up to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023.. The bank reconciliation agreed with bank statements and was signed by the Chairman, as an accurate record. Bank balances were:-

- Account 95304622                      £1,426.97
- Account 44356501                      £23,804.18
- Total                                      £25,231.15

2244.2 **Budget Monitoring** – Cllr Crossman suggested that the Parish Council could look at placing a reserve amount in a higher interest rate account. Santander were currently offering a high interest account. The Clerk will seek advice from the internal auditor on the matter. The budget monitoring report was noted.

**2245 TO APPROVE ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT**

2245.1 **The following payments were approved:-**

- |   |          |
|---|----------|
| 1. SRawle (Clerks net salary) July- Sept 2023 | £1069.32 |
| 2. SRawle (Expenses July-Sept)                | £109.97  |
| 3. HMRC tax on Clerks salary                  | £267.33  |

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

2245.2 **To ratify the following urgent payments already made:-**

- |                                      |         |
|--------------------------------------|---------|
| 1. P Lindstrand (ground maintenance) | £225.00 |
| 2. Active Signs (play ground signs)  | £38.28  |
| 3. MHPF (annual rent)                | £1.00   |

The urgent payments were agreed.

**Income received:**

It was noted that the following income had been received:-  
CAF Donation - £100.00

**2248 PLAY AREA/COMMUNITY AREA UPDATE**

Another attempt will be made to establish the wildflower area this autumn. Cllr Huish offered to look at additional childrens benches for the play area.  
Play risk assessment – The Clerk will circulate the draft version to Councillors. There is a need to keep a formal record regular inspections of the play area.

Play inspection training – Agreed that Clerk and Cllr Wintermantel will attend the SALC training.

**2249 PARKING OPPOSITE MEMORIAL HALL**

The Clerk had previously circulated a drawing of the lease area that the PC were responsible for. She confirmed pull in outside the cottages did not form part of the PCs responsibility.

**2250 RODHUISH PARKING**

Deferred until next meeting

**2251 TREES ON WITHYCOMBE HILL**

Not progressed. Clerk was still trying to make contact with a contractor to carry out work.

The meeting closed at 8.50 pm.

Next meeting 6<sup>th</sup> November

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
CHAIRMAN

Date \_\_\_\_\_