

WITHYCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Withycombe Parish Council meeting held at the Memorial Hall on
Monday 19th May 2025 at 7.00pm

PRESENT

Councillors: Richard Barnham (Chairman), Paul Wintermantle, Claire Tydeman, Claire Huish, Paul Thomas

In attendance: S Rawle (Clerk)

2396 ELECTION OF CHAIR

Cllr Wintermantle proposed Cllr Barnham. Seconded by Cllr Thomas. There were no further nominations. Cllr Barnham was duly elected as Chairman.

Cllr Barnham signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office in the presence of the Clerk and Councillors.

2397 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR

No nominations were received. It was agreed that the election of position of vice-chair would be re-scheduled at the next meeting.

2398 APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Crossman and Hall.

2399 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & DISPENSATIONS

Cllr Barnham and Cllr Huish declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 11, payment of grant to Withycombe Memorial Hall.

2400 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD 3rd March 2025

The minutes previously circulated, were agreed as a correct record.

2401 ACTIONS FOLLOWING THE PUBLIC FORUM

The introduction of a speed limit through the village was discussed. Cllr Tydeman felt that the parish council should consider a speed limit as it was raised as a point of concern by a number of residents in the village. The area that the speed limit should cover was discussed.

It was proposed by Cllr Barnham that the parish council apply for an introduction of a 20 MPH speed limit and that it should cover the area from the village entry sign in Lower Street to the ENP sign at the bottom of Higher Rodhuish Rd. Cllr Wintermantle seconded the proposal.

The proposal was voted on. Four in favour, with one abstention. The proposal was carried.

The Clerk was also asked to look into 'please drive carefully through the village' signs.

2402 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED BY PARISH COUNCIL RE HEATING OIL TANKS AT SQUIRRELS

It was agreed to defer this item to the July meeting.

2403 HIGHWAYS MATTERS

Cllr Barnham reported that the road repair at Buckhill was almost completed. The capping of the wall and some work to the gully needed to be finished off.

Drains Higher Rodhuish Rd – Clerk to contact Highways to find out if these could be cleared. Parish Council needs to understand the work scheduling that is in place and how frequently this is carried out.

2404 PLANNING

6/26/25/002 – Croydon Hall, Rodhuish – Change of use from class C2 (residential) to Class C1 (hotel). As per additional information 10.2.09, without complying with condition 8 (covered accommodation) and 9 (use of fireworks) of approved application 6/26/08/11

Cllr Barnham raised concerns about a recent planning application made by Croydon Hall; he said that the parish council had not been notified about the planning application despite the Croydon Hall being on the parish boundary with Old Cleeve PC. The application covered the removal of 2 existing conditions. Removal of condition 8 to allow temporary siting of marquees, tents and other forms of covered accommodation and variation of condition 9 to allow for 16 traditional evening firework displays as well as whisper firework displays.

Councillors discussed the application and its impact on the surrounding area. Concerns were raised about the noise and disturbance to neighbouring properties from the siting of marquees, tents in the grounds. In relation to the variation of the condition to allow for firework displays, concerns were raised about the disturbance to stock in the surrounding pasture land, hot embers and debris falling into crop fields, noise and light pollution throughout the parish. It was questioned how the application fitted in with the National Parks dark sky status.

Councillors agreed to object to the application and the Clerk was requested to submit a response in line with the concerns raised.

2405 FINANCES

2405.1 **Income & Expenditure** – The Clerk presented the income and expenditure report up to 31st March 2025. She reported that there had been a surplus on the revenue account of £1200.00 as at year end. This would automatically transfer into general reserves.

Reserves – The Clerk reported the reserves position at year end as follows:-

General reserves – £7988.00

Titholes EMR – £8102.00

Asset Maintenance EMR - £4500.00

It was noted that the grant for the Memorial Hall for £2,500 would come out of general reserves.

2406 TO APPROVE ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

The following accounts for payment were approved:-

1. Memorial Hall (Hall Hire 2024/25)	£70.00
2. Memorial Hall (Christmas Tree 2024)	£30.00

3. Zurich (Annual PC Insurance, 3 year deal)	£523.23
4. Somerset Association of Local Councils (affiliation fees)	£133.03
5. Memorial Hall Grant	£2,500.00

The urgent payments in respect of grounds maintenance for the sum of £315.00 and payroll services, the sum of £31.02 were ratified. The payments had already been approved via email.

Income received

Receipt of the parish precept of £8,682.00 was noted.

2407 ASSET REGISTER 2025

The asset register was approved.

2408 INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2025

A recommendation had been made by the internal auditor that the parish council may wish to consider the formalisation of an agreement between the Memorial Hall and Parish Council in light of the funding assistance provided to the MH by the Parish Council. This would help financial planning for both parties. The Parish Council may also consider adding its responsibility as a custodian trustee of the Memorial Hall, and the associated financial implications, to the risk register.

The report was discussed by Councillors. It was agreed that a financial agreement would be considered before the autumn budget setting process and that the risk register be amended accordingly.

2409 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2024-25

2409.1 Certificate of Exemption – Councillors agreed the exempt status of the Council as it had income and expenditure of less than £25,000 for 2024/25.

2409.2 Annual Governance Statement 2024-25: The Annual Governance Statement was circulated by the Clerk. After due consideration, the Annual Governance Statement was approved by Council and signed by the Chairman.

2409.3 Accounting Statements 2024-25: The Accounting Statements were circulated by the Clerk. After due consideration, the Accounting Statements were approved by Council and signed by the Chairman.

2410 MEMORIAL BENCH

It was agreed to purchase a bench and plaque in memory of Chris Thomas who had served for many years on Withycombe Parish Council. Locations for the bench were discussed and it was agreed that somewhere in the Rodhuish hamlet would be appropriate.

The meeting closed at 9.45pm.

Signed _____
CHAIRMAN

Date _____