

WITHYCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Withycombe Parish Council meeting held at the Memorial Hall on
Monday 13th January 2025 at 7.00pm

PRESENT

Councillors: Richard Barnham (Chairman), Steve Crossman, Robert Hall, Paul Wintermantle, Paul Thomas, Claire Tydeman

In attendance: S Rawle (Clerk)
Cllr M Kravis (Somerset Council)

PUBLIC FORUM

The Chairman opened the meeting at 7.00pm. There were no members of the public present.

The Chairman announced the recent passing of Mrs Jean Humber. Mrs Humber had been a serving Councillor on the Parish Council for a number of years and had also held the position of Chair. He said that Mrs Humber had done a lot for the community and parish council and numerous achievements within the village were as a result of her hard work.

2365 APOLOGIES

No apologies received.

2366 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & DISPENSATIONS

Cllr Barnham declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 13.

2367 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD 4th November 2024

The minutes previously circulated, were agreed as a correct record with one correction to the date of the the next Minehead and Watchet LCN meeting.

2368 UPDATES/MATTERS ARISING (not part of later agenda items)

There were no matters arising.

2369 REPORTS FROM SOMERSET COUNCIL COUNCILLORS

Cllr Kravis arrived at 7.30pm

Cllr Barnham questioned Cllr Kravis on the situation of the highway at Higher Rodhuish and asked if he could help the parish council in moving the issue forward. Since the flood event in the autumn of 2023, apart from one on-site meeting no progress had been made. The road has shown further movement in the last few weeks and the wall was in danger of collapsing into the stream. There is also a water pipe underneath the section of road that is moving. Cllr Barnham said that the parish council needed to know what was the planned timescale for the works. There would be significant disruption to school traffic and emergency services even with a planned repair. Cllr Kravis said that he would follow it up on behalf of the parish council and provide an answer by the end of the following week. Cllr Kravis left the meeting at 8.00pm.

2370 HIGHWAY UPDATES

Higher Rodhuish Road – Following the discussion with Cllr Kravis Councillors felt that if there was still no feedback from Somerset Council by the end of the following week that a letter be drafted to be sent to David Starkey CEO and Rachel Gilmour.

2371 LARGE VEHICLES/HGVs

The request for the H bar outside Lower Cottage had been requested. A question was asked regarding the legal powers and enforcement of the H bar marking. The Clerk would make enquiries. There was a discussion regarding video evidence of overheight vehicles and uploading this onto the Avon and Somerset Police website. Cllr Tydeman said that dashcam evidence was permissible.

2372 FINANCES

2372.1 Bank Reconciliation Statement – The Clerk presented the bank reconciliation up to 31st December 2024. Cllr Barnham has carried out the reconciliation of the cash book against the bank statements up to 31st October 2024.

The bank reconciliation agreed with bank balances up to 31st December 2024 and was signed by the Chairman, as an accurate record. Bank balances were:-

• Account 95304622	£6,085.90
• Account 44356501	£19,241.46
Total	£25,327.36

2372.2 Budget Monitoring – The income and expenditure against budget report was noted.

2372.3 Income Received

CAF (November) - £50.00

A Strik (Memorial Bench) - £300.00

The income received was noted.

2373 TO APPROVE ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

The following accounts for payment were approved:-

Charities Aid Foundation Refund	£1300.00
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Refund of money received from Charities Aid Foundation in error. Monthly payments had been received by the parish council for over a year. The monies had been placed into the reserve account and earmarked whilst trying to sort the error out.

Proposed by Cllr Crossman, seconded by Cllr Thomas and unanimously agreed that a refund payment be made to Charities Aid Foundation.

1. ISOK Design (website hosting)	£96.00
2. Rapid House (payroll)	£24.00
3. Clerks salary & Expenses (Oct-Dec)	£1706.86

Proposed by Cllr Wintermantle, seconded by Cllr Tydeman and unanimously agreed that other accounts for payment be approved.

The annual direct debit payment to the Information Commissioners Office for £35.00 was noted as being made.

2374 NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS PAY AWARD 2024

The pay award was noted.

2375 REVIEW OF CLERKS HOURS

A request had been received from the Clerk for a reduction in hours from 8 – 6 per week, with effect from 1st January 2025. Proposed by Cllr Wintermantle, seconded by Cllr Tydeman and agreed by all. The Clerks contract would be amended accordingly.

2376 REQUEST FOR DONATION FROM MEMORIAL HALL

The Parish Council had received a letter from the Memorial Hall requesting financial assistance. Councillors debated the request at length. It was agreed that there was not enough information to make a decision. Cllr Crossman suggested that Mrs Steadman be invited to the March meeting to provide more information.

2377 NEW LAPTOP FOR PARISH COUNCIL

It was agreed in principle to the purchase of a new laptop for parish council administration. Windows 10 would be unsupported from November 2025 and currently the Clerk was using her own laptop. Clerk would research prices for the next meeting.

2378 BUDGET AND PRECEPT 2025-26

Councillors discussed the budget and precept for 2025/26. It was proposed by Cllr Crossman, seconded by Cllr Hall to agree the precept and request a precept of £8682.00 Agreed by all. This equated to a zero per cent increase in the parish council proportion of council tax.

2379 PLAY AREA/COMMUNITY AREA

No updates at present.

2380 ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

Financial Regulation
Memorial Hall Donation

The meeting closed at 9.10pm.

Signed _____
CHAIRMAN

Date _____