

Witham on the Hill Parish Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Witham on the Hill Parish Council (Min 23-06) 4 March 2024 at 7.00 p.m. held at St Andrews Village Hall, Witham on the Hill

Present: **Councillors:** Charles Henriques (Chair), Duncan Brock, Paul Smith, and Richard Burbidge
Residents: Dave Hayden
Others: Bernard Champness – Clerk. County Cllr Charlotte Vernon

	Open Forum	
	Mr Hayden was present and handed round an estimate he had prepared for making and supplying 4 Tommy Silhouettes, 4 poppies and 2 planters which came to £258.17. He explained that David Clifford had agreed to store the Tommys. Various questions were asked, and he was advised we would be dealing with the decision later in the meeting but the proposals seemed to be acceptable.	
	The meeting was formally opened at 19.15	
74.	Apologies for absence, acceptance of Apologies	
	74.1	Cllr Sue Pennant-Jones was not present and sent apologies as she was unavoidably detained at work. District Cllr Penny Robbins also sent her apologies.
75.	Declaration of Interest – To receive Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary and Other Interests, as set out in Chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011 and the nature of those interests relating to any Agenda item	
	75.1	No one declared an interest in any matter that was on the agenda.
76.	Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 8 January 2024 (23-05)	
	76.1	Resolved: That the minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 8 January 2024 were signed by the Chair as a correct record.
77.	Matters to Report	
	77.1	Cllr Paul Smith said that he had been approached by a resident who was concerned that shrubbery overgrowth was blocking the drivers view at the crossroads when looking north towards Toft. The shrubbery was outside the fence of the landowner so it would seem it was not their responsibly and they wondered if Highways were responsible. It was suggested that the Clerk speak to Cllr Robbins to see if cutting back the shrubbery could be undertaken by the Big Clean team. If this was not possible then Highways would be approached.
78.	To receive a report from the County and District Councillors.	
	78.1	County Cllr Charlotte Vernon was present, and gave a report as follows: 1. The Devolution consultation had now concluded and would be discussed by LCC on the 13 March. The discussion could be followed online. 2. The Council Tax had been agreed and set at 4.99% increase. 2.99% was for the Council and 2% was for Adult Care. 3. The bin inspection was put on hold as many people had been complaining about their bins being inspected and then tagged if the bin was incorrectly filled.

		4. She had written for an update on the works in Bottom Street but had not received a reply. Cllr Henriques had also sent a request for update to Mike Brown the senior highways officer dealing with the matter, but he also was waiting for a response.
	78.2	District Cllr Penny Robins was not present but had indicated that there was nothing to report
79.	Clerks Report and Correspondence received.	
	79.1	The Clerk had circulated in advance notice of the various e-mails received since the last meeting. If anyone wanted to see any e-mails they should let him know and he would send it on.
	79.2	The Clerk wanted to explain the following: 1. In the correspondence was a consultation approach by LCC, asking for suggested locations for electric vehicle charging points. The Clerk wanted to know if this would be of interest. It was discussed and as it was felt that this might be of benefit the Clerk was asked to look into the matter further with LCC and circulate more information.
80.	Planning applications:	
	80.1	Planning Applications to Approve: S24/0278 - Proposed Farm-Style Building to House Farm Shop, Kitchen, Cafe, and WC at Bowthorpe Park Farm Stamford Road Witham On The Hill. Resolved: the Parish Council support this application as it provides a good local amenity for residents.
	80.1.1	Following the agenda being posted another planning application was received S24/028 - Proposal: Section 211 Notice to reduce height of Ash tree by 5m and reduce lateral branches to shape crown at Meadow Bank, Bottom Street, Witham On The Hill, Response by 13 March 2024. The Clerk explained that we could deal with the application tonight if no one thought it was contentious but if just one councillor did we would need to call a special meeting. Resolved that we deal with the application tonight as it was not considered contentious and for the Clerk to have delegated authority to respond. Had the plan been on the agenda there would be no comments.
	80.2	Planning Applications approved: - Following the agenda being posted notice was received of a planning application being approved: S23/2204 - Proposal: Section 211 notice in relation to the following: Beech (T1) - Fell. There is a large cavity at the base of the tree. Sycamore (T2) - Fell. There tree is a poor specimen and is overshadowed by a mature ash at The Old Vicarage Main Street, Witham On The Hill
	80.3	To note any Planning Applications refused or withdrawn: there were none to note
	80.4	To note any Application appealed or any decision made regarding an appeal: there were none to note
81.	To receive an update on proposed/suggested works at the Bywells and Bottom Street. there were none to note	
	81.1	There was nothing further to add to what has already been recorded under Item 78.1 para 4
82.	To receive any data from the reactive sign	
	82.1	The sign was back up and working but no new data had been downloaded at this time.

83.	To agree a time and date for the Annual Parish Meeting and the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council	
83.1		The Clerk explained that the regulations stated that in a year when there was not an election then the Annual Parish Meeting could be held at any time in May. We usually hold our meetings on the first Monday of the month but this year the first Monday 6 May was a Bank Holiday. Resolved: that we hold both meetings on the same evening on the 13 May 2024. The Annual Parish Meeting would start at 7 pm and the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council would start at 7.30 p.m.
84.	To agree the dates for the meetings from May 2024 to March 2025	
84.1		Dates needed to be agreed so that the Clerk could book the hall. If we continue to meet on the first Monday of the month this would mean the following dates 13 May 2024 15 July 2024 2 September 2024 4 November 2024 6 January 2025 3 March 2025 Resolved: that these dates are agreed. The Clerk explained that he had been in touch with David Clifford who had confirmed the hall was free on these dates.
85.	To agree a quote £160.00 for 4 treatments from Mozzymak Pest Control to deal with the mole problem on the green	
85.1		The Clerk had obtained a quote from Mozzymak to rid The Green of moles and they had quoted £160 for 4 separate visits. Resolved: That the quote be accepted and the Clerk instruct them to proceed.
86.	To discuss the offer to make Tommy Silhouettes and agree the quote	
86.1		This was discussed in the Open Forum. It was agreed that we would set aside a budget of £300.00 for materials. Dave Hayden had kindly agreed to volunteer his time to make the various items already discussed earlier in the open forum.
87.	To discuss the proposed salary, increase for the Clerk as suggested by the National Joint Council and for the increase to be backdated to 1 April 2023	
87.1		Notice had been received that The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) has been notified by the Local Government Association (LGA) that it has come to an agreement on the 2023/24 pay offer with the unions representing local government employees. The unions met on 1 November 2022 and agreed to accept the offer. The terms of that agreement include the following: With effect from 1 April 2023, an increase to £1,925 on all NJC pay points 1 and above. This equates to an increase of £1 per hour so on a pro rata basis, the Clerk is earning £11.42 per hour working 12 hours a month so his salary is £1,644.48. With the suggested pay rise this takes the hourly pay to £12.42 x 12 x 12 = £1,788.48. The annual increase is £144.00 which equates to £12 per month. Resolved: that the proposed increase be approved whereby the Clerk would receive the increase and for that to be back dated to 1 st April 2023
88.	To confirm Expenditure £0.75 – B M Champness (postage) £458.92 – B M Champness (Salary Jan, Feb, and March & backpay)	

	<p>£114.80 – H M R C (PAYE) £150.00 – D Thornburn (payroll services) [] denotes those payments paid between meetings, which have been approved by the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the Parish Council or at a previous meeting but not listed Payments made by Direct Debit - £</p>
	87.1 Resolved: that the payments be approved.
89.	Any other business – <i>Reminder – by law no decision can be made under this item only information exchanged.</i>
	88.1 There being no other business the meeting was formally closed at 19.47
90.	The date of the next meeting – to be held on 13 May 2024 which will be the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council at 7.30 p.m. which follows the Annual Parish Meeting at 10.p.m. at St Andrew's Parish Hall, Witham on the Hill