

Witham on the Hill Parish Council
Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Witham on the Hill Parish Council
(Min 17-01) 31st May 2017 at 8.30 p.m. in St Andrew's Parish Hall

Present: **Councillors:** Charles Henriques, Andrew Greenwood and Janet Kirkwood,
 Residents: Gloria Greenwood
 Others: Bernard Champness – Clerk, District Cllr Martin Wilkins and County Cllr Bob Adams
 Not Present: Cllr Sue Pennant Jones,

Open Forum

Although there was a resident in attendance there were no questions and the meeting was formally opened at 20.20

1. To elect a Chairperson and to receive the Chairperson's Declaration of Acceptance of Office and if not then received to decide when it shall be received

1.1 Cllr Henriques was the only nomination and he was duly elected as Chair for the forthcoming year.

2. Declaration of Acceptance of Office for Chairperson

2.1 Cllr Henriques duly signed the Acceptance of Office and this was witnessed by the Clerk. .

3. To elect a Vice Chairperson

3.1 Cllr Greenwood was the only nomination and he was duly elected to act as Vice Chair for the forthcoming year.

4. Cheque signatories and banking arrangements

4.1 **Resolved:** that all Councillors be cheque signatories. Any two could sign a cheque. The Clerk would ensure Cllr Greenwood was added as a signatory

5. To adopt and/or amend the Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Risk Assessment

5.1 **Resolved** that as the Standing Orders and Financial regulations had not been amended there was no need for further amendments and that they should be adopted. The same applied to the Risk Assessment.

6. Apologies for absence, acceptance of Apologies

6.1 There were no apologies. Cllr Debbie MacMillan has resigned from the Council and SKDC has been notified. Notices advertising the vacancy have been put on the parish noticeboard and on the website.

7. 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

7.1 No one declared an interest in any matter that was on the agenda.

8. Minutes of the last meeting held on the 20th March 2017

8.1 Resolved: That the minutes of the 20th March 2017 were signed by the Chair as a correct record.

9. Matters to Report

9.1 The Clerk asked District Cllr Wilkins about planning matters. The PC meet every 2 months and more often than not plans arrive during that period which means the PC do not have sufficient time to discuss some applications at a meeting. Cllr Wilkins said that Planning Officers can grant an extension of time to respond and only occasionally this is refused. Alternatively the PC could call a special meeting or if the matter was not contentious, it could give the Clerk delegated authority to respond. Cllr Wilkins confirmed that the Parish Council, as consultees, usually have 21 days to make representations about a planning application and this formed part of the 8 weeks within which the District Council needs to deal with the application. He suggested if we had any problems he could be contacted for advice.

9.2 The roof over the Stocks at the Bywells is in need of repairs. The question of responsibility for this was raised and the Clerk was asked to investigate. It was also pointed out the structure may be listed in which case the appropriate consent would be required in any event prior to works being undertaken.

9.3 The grass verges at the bottom of the hill at the crossroads with the B6121 are now so high that drivers views of oncoming traffic are dangerously obscured. The crossroads are frequently the scene of accidents and this makes the junction even more hazardous. The County Councillor was informed that representations have been made to the Highways Department on a number of previous occasions, requesting that additional measures be introduced to reduce the speed of traffic approaching the junction, but that no further action had been taken to date. He was asked if he could investigate this matter for us and he said that he would look into it.

9.4 Cars often travel much too fast along Bottom Street and the question of new signage close to the junction with Main St was raised. The Clerk suggested that an approach could be made to the Road Safety Partnership in Lincoln for advice and Cllr Kirkwood agreed to discuss the matter with them.

9.5 The old Pétanque area and the adjacent wild flower patch needed to be cleared of weeds. It was suggested that planting some fruit trees there, may be a better alternative. It was agreed that this would be put on the agenda for July but Cllr Kirkwood would investigate further.

9.6 The Clerk was asked to ensure that the minutes of PC meetings appeared in the Three Towers parish magazine.

9.7 Dog fouling remains an issue along the bridle path leading off Bottom St towards Edenham and on a number of occasions recently, dog walkers cars have been parked so as to cause a potential obstruction in Bottom St. Concern was expressed that this could make difficulties for farm machinery/emergency vehicle access and that those responsible appeared to be mainly parents from Witham Hall School. Therefore it was agreed the Clerk should write to the school Bursar, asking that parents be informed.

10. To receive a report from the County and District Councillors.

10.1 County Councillor Bob Adams was welcomed by the Chair as this was his first visit to a Witham on the Hill PC meeting. He said that he had nothing significant to report having only been recently elected as the County Councillor for the ward. He was finding his way around and was trying to get to know all the villages he now represents. He apologised that he might not be able to attend all our meetings but he would do his best and send a report if he was unable to

attend.

- 10.2** District Councillor Martin Wilkins said there had been a few changes at the District Council, which now has a new Leader and a new structure but that services would still continue. The Chief Executive was leaving after over 10 years' service and they were looking for someone to fill that role temporarily for 12 months until a permanent appointment could be confirmed. He had noticed on the agenda there was an item about the play equipment on the Green and suggested we contact LCVS who can award grants from £200 to £5,000 for community events and from £500 - £10,000 for community projects. He thought the latter could be of some help to the Parish Council. Funding is considered biannually the next opportunity being later this month which meant we would probably not have enough time to put a bid together, but his suggestion was welcomed and would be looked into.

SKDC were aware of people complaining about the standard of cleanliness generally in their town or village and as a result are promoting the 'Big Clean' initiative. Areas would be identified and teams would go to clean up. If we had an area which we felt needed particular attention we should let them know and they would consider the request.

He also pointed out there was a grant which we could apply for from SKDC for a village cleaner. This might be something we would like to consider.

11. Clerks Report and Correspondence received.

11.1 The following letters/e-mails had been received:

1. Spalding Gentlemen's Society have invited Germaine Greer to come and speak on 9th June at the South Holland Centre. They are hoping to raise some funds to help with their conservation work.
2. There will a guided history walk in Sleaford on Sunday 11th June.
3. Can you help us find Private Pumping station in your area?
4. There was a TALK - Monday, 22nd May, 7.30pm, Dennis Windsor, "The Day the Bomb Fell on Bourne "
5. The June edition of The Three Towers is available to read/download from the Toft cum Lound and Manthorpe parish website
6. There is a Conference at Bishop Grosseteste University on June 17th 'Together – Building Stronger Communities in Lincolnshire' and will explore the opportunities and the difficulties inherent in this development.
7. A bulletin from Grant Thornton External Auditor.
8. To mark 50 years since the town became the first conservation area in the country, we're bringing our courses to Stamford Arts Centre.
9. A series of public consultation events on South Kesteven's new Local Plan have been postponed following the announcement of a snap general election in June and will now be held later in the summer, as soon as possible after the general election.
10. The latest edition of Parish Update
11. The Highways Maintenance scheme [scheduled programme](#) of works for financial year 2017/18 is available at [Highways Works Programmes](#)
12. Lincolnshire County Council is preparing the Lincolnshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan that will form the key to the delivery of sustainable minerals and waste development in the County to the year 2031
13. An update on the grass cutting from Highways
14. Dates for your Diary from Witham Historical Society
15. 24 e-mails from HMRC regarding help and webinars.

12. Planning applications:

12.1 Notification has been received that the following planning applications have been approved:

S17/0610 - single storey glazed orangery extension to side at The Six Bells , Main Street,
S17/0611 - single storey glazed orangery extension to side at The Six Bells , Main Street (Listed Building Consent)
S17/0548 – remove basal growth to 2 x Lime, crown reduce Maple by 2.5m at Witham Hall Preparatory School, Main Road.
S17/0430 – removal of 1 x hawthorn and 1 x self-set yew tree at Longacre, Main Street.
S16/2708 – demolition of an existing dwelling house and garage and the erection of a replacement two storey detached dwelling and detached garage at New Home Farm, Main Street.

13. Audit 2016/17

13.1 To note Internal Auditors Report – there was no report to consider from the Internal Auditor.

13.2 To approve the Annual Governance Statement 2016/17 – Resolved: that the Annual Governance Statement 2016/17 be approved after answering the required questions.

13.3 To accept the Accounting Statements 2016/17 as a true record. Resolved: That the Accounting statements be accepted as a correct record.

13.4 To sign the Annual Return and submit for Audit. Resolved: that the Annual return be signed by the Chair and submitted for Audit.

14. To discuss whether we wish to take up the offer from Community Lincs Insurance Services to enter a 3 year undertaking with the annual premium being £182.77 or a 5 year undertaking with the annual premium being £173.15

14.1 After considering the above proposals it was **resolved** that we sign up to the 5 year contract, as this represented the best saving on the current premium.

15. To discuss the position regarding the play equipment on The Green

15.1 The Clerk reported that he had spoken to Mike Smith at SKDC who apologised for the lack of progress but he was aware that something needed to be done. He recognised the village was in need of a playground with equipment, in good order. He would look into the matter to see what funds might be available and pointed out the cost of the repairs required might be in the region of £3,500.00. He said that he would get back to the Clerk within a few days with a definite proposal.

16. To discuss how best to use the offer of funds from Witham Hall.

16.2 This item was linked in with the item above. As it is understood that Witham Hall School parents association may be prepared to help with either the cost of repairs or providing new play equipment, the Clerk suggested that a meeting with Mike Smith (SKDC) could be the best way forward. The suggestion was welcomed and the Clerk was asked to make the arrangements for a meeting at The Green, on Monday 12th June, at 10.30 a.m. Cllrs Henriques and Greenwood would be present. Cllr Kirkwood would not be able to attend.

17. To discuss matters raised at the Annual Parish Meeting.

17.2 There were no matters to discuss as all matters had been dealt with during the Annual Parish Meeting.

18. To confirm Expenditure

£192.39 – Community Lincs Insurance services (Insurance premium)

£29.92 – B M Champness (Salary for April, May 2017)

£108.10 – Mr G S Parkes (Internal Audit fee)

£103.00 – Niki Evans (planting at the Bywells Stocks)

[] 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 - £

18 1 Resolved: that the above payment be made.

The Clerk explained that the amount for his salary should be £129.92 and not £29.92 per the Agenda. He had also been in touch with the company that ran the payroll and asked if they could run off the payroll for June as this would include the figure that we had to pay HMRC as PAYE. This payment should be made by the 19th July and our next meeting was on the 17th. They had run off payroll for June and this would mean we could pay the amount to HMRC and to the Clerk.

The Clerk had visited Lloyds Bank to request a new cheque book as a matter of urgency on the 19th May, as we had run out. Whilst this had been ordered he was told it could take up to 11 working days before it arrived. He was asked that if the new cheque book did not arrive by Friday he should go back to the bank and ask for a number of counter cheques. These cheques needed to be delivered to the Chair on Friday for signature before the end of the weekend. The Clerk explained that as the premium for the insurance was due by the 1st June he would pay this from his own funds on the basis that he would be refunded. This was agreed.

The cheque for £103 was not to go to Charles Henriques but to Nikki Evans.

19. Any other business – *Reminder – by law no decision can be made under this item only information exchanged.*

19.1 The Clerk apologised for the error over the arrangements for the meeting and thanked Councillors for their cooperation in ensuring it still took place before the end of the month.

19.2 There being no other business the meeting was formally closed at 21.30

20. The date of the next meeting – to be held on **Monday 17th July 2017** at 7.00 p.m. at St Andrew's Parish Hall, Witham on the Hill.