



**Minutes of Witham St Hughs Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 15th November 2023
at 7.00pm at the village hall.**

<https://witham-st-hughs.parish.lincolnshire.gov.uk/>

Present Cllr Karen Harrison - Chairman, Cllr Derek Fletcher & Cllr Charlie Strickland.

Rachel Popplewell - Clerk

3 members of the public

Apologies were received from Cllr P Overton, Cllr M Elliott & Cllr M Overton

The Clerk read out a report from Cllr P Overton.

A question was received in public comment regarding lorries that are parked near the waste ground at the village hall overnight. The area that is being used is a public highway with no yellow lines marked on the road.

A lamppost on the footpath near the village hall has been knocked over this has been reported to LCC – highways.

Agenda Items

1. Welcome and Apologies.

The Chair welcome everyone to the meeting.

Apologies received from Cllr Bell.

It was **Resolved** to accept the Apologies & reason for absence from Cllr Bell – All agreed – show of hands.

2. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LOCALISM ACT 2011 AND OUTLINED IN THE COUNCILS CODE OF CONDUCT – being any pecuniary interest in agenda items not previously recorded on Members' Register of Interest and any written requests for dispensations.

None received.

3. Health & Safety brief.

The Clerk made comment that the Health & Safety inspection for the village hall had been carried out, with the hall rated as 'low risk'.

The flooring that was breaking up at the park had been inspected by M & B Surfaces who originally installed it. No remedial action can be taken to repair it until humidity is at an optimum, it will be reinspected in the new year.

The Bonfire event was cancelled by the Village Events Committee, following an email that was sent by the Parish Councils Independent Health & Safety advisor – copy below.

I am the independent Health and Safety consultant for Witham Parish Council. I have been in regular contact with the council over the last few days beginning last week regarding the proposed bonfire and fireworks display this weekend. Whilst I appreciate the want for this event to go forward (Witham Parish Council also ideally wants it to go ahead in an ideal world) there has to be understanding with respect to ground conditions and forecast weather leading up to the event. The field itself has standing water in a lot of places and for all intents and purposes is 'full' and saturated and has no capacity for any further water, with the

forecast for the coming days into the weekend and particularly Thursday evening, I advised that the health and safety risk is too high in respect of vehicles getting trapped, stagnant water, slip and strips alongside accident risk with future damage to the event area.

I understand the want of you to continue to hold the event, if that is to happen then the following will need to be in place before it, these aren't optional, they are a requirement of Witham council to use their facilities. Witham parish council will be discharging all responsibility to yourselves for this event as we have advised that the **facilities are not fit for use** and therefore the risk is entirely yours should anything happen, as such the following needs to be in place: -

- Public liability insurance (**You will not be on Witham Parish councils**) - as you are using WPC facilities, we will need to see a copy of this.
- Independent risk assessment carried out with control measures put in place detailed - This isn't to be a carbon copy of an internet one, this needs to be a formal risk assessment which is **entirely site specific**.
- Agreement and acceptance of turning the site back into the state it currently is in. **If any damage is done to the field then the cost to put it right is done by you the user.**
- Matting to be used for vehicle usage.
- The hole to be dug to enable pumping is ok, this needs to be within the risk assessment and again, needs to be put back to its original state post-event.
- **No liability or responsibility to Witham Parish Council for any accidents, injuries, or damage caused to any member of the public or their property due to us informing you of our wish to cancel the event.**
- Acknowledgment in writing to all items above 1-6.

A request for the passive speed signs had been received to be put up along the new section of Warren Lane & Camp Road. The clerk was asked to investigate the cost of 6 x 30MPH and 2 x 40mph signs.

Action Clerk.

4. Notes of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 18th October 2023 to be approved as minutes.
It was **Resolved** to approve the notes as minutes – all agreed by a show of hands, signed by the Chairman.
5. Notes of the Extra-Ordinary Parish Council meeting held in closed session on Monday 30th October 2023 to be approved as minutes.
It was **Resolved** to approve the notes as minutes – all agreed by a show of hands, signed by the Chairman.
6. Clerks Update & Correspondence, and to Resolve to approve any subsequent actions.
The Clerk made comment that the Remembrance Day Service was well attended, Thanks were passed onto all involved with the service and those who did readings, along with the Women's Institute for their help with the refreshments. Donations received on the day = £34.00
The marks on the floor potentially by a confetti cannon, cannot be removed. Numerous attempts by the hall user along with the caretaker to get the parks out, had been unsuccessful albeit the marks are now less visible. Cllr Strickland proposed that the £50 hall deposit be refunded back to the hall user, seconded by Cllr Fletcher – All agreed, show of hands. Action Clerk.
The Clerk requested that the Personnel Committee set date for staff appraisals and salary reviews before the December meeting.
The far field behind the hall, is in the process of being transferred to Lincolnshire County Council (LCC). The outline plan of the field as per the S106 agreement had been forwarded to the LCC, by North Kesteven District Council in September, no further action or update has been received by either party. The clerk was asked to arrange a Teams meeting with all parties involved. Action Clerk.
The Clerk had received correspondence from a resident regarding the speeding along the new section of Warren Lane. See Health& Safety brief agenda part 3.

The Clerk was asked to contact Strawson's regarding staff parking near the Thomas Bow Containers, as they are parked on the grass verge. **Action Clerk.**

The Clerk made comment that the backup products and antivirus for the Parish Council IT infrastructure would be changing to now include AI (artificial intelligence) the new pricing to be £782pa.

Nigel Smith Plumbing confirmed that the hot water tank did not need to be repaired, contrary to the comments from the engineer when visiting the site, the system needed to be flushed through at the next service.

7. Finance

- a. To Authorise the signing of orders for payment, list previously circulated.

It was **Resolved** to approve the list of payments – All Agreed, show of hands.

- b. To receive the Bank Reconciliation as at 31.10.2023

The bank reconciliation as at 31.10.2023 was presented to council, showing the accounts balanced – signed by Cllr Strickland.

Highlighted reserve figures were discussed.

8. To review and approve any changes to the following policies.

- a. Pay Policy
- b. Anti-fraud & Corruption Policy
- c. Review Terms & Reference for the Allotment Committee.

It was **Resolved** to accept a revised Pay Policy & Terms of Reference for the Allotment Committee, no changes to the Anti-fraud Policy – All agreed, show of hands. **Action Clerk.**

9. Play Parks Update, to resolve to approve revised designs and costings.

- a. Deferred – new quotes & designs not received in time for the meeting.

10. To approve comments to submit for the Lincolnshire Police Priority Setting meeting.

After discussions it was **Resolved** to send the following priorities, All agreed – show of hands.

- Speed Enforcement
- Re-instate the PCSO's.

The Clerk was asked to investigate the cost to purchase a new Speed Indicator Device (SID). **Action Clerk**

11. Village Hall Extension Update, to review plans & costings.

Deferred – Feasibility study only received 14.11.2023.

12. Outcome of resident complaint meeting, as per the October minutes.

Cllrs Bell & Harrison, the members of the Complaint Committee, met with the resident.

After discussions the complaint was not upheld, and the reasons why were conveyed.

A conversation took place regarding the boundary fence between the field and Squirrel Chase carpark, with the Councillors confirming that no further changes to the fence would be carried out.

13. Date & Time of the next meeting.

Parish Council Meeting Wednesday 20th December 2023 at 7.00pm

Meeting closed 8.15pm