



Minutes of Witham St Hughs Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 15th January 2025 at 7pm at the village hall.

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

Present Cllr Danny Bell – Chair, Cllr Colin Cook, Cllr Mark Gascoigne, Cllr Charlie Strickland & Cllr Karen Harrison (Vice Chair).

Rachel Popplewell – Clerk

1 member of the public

Agenda Items

1. Welcome and Apologies.

Cllr Bell welcomed everyone to the meeting.

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.

Nothing received.

3. Health & Safety brief

The Clerk made comment that the drop-down bollards located the footpaths around the village, needed to be more visible, either by having them painted or using tape in vibrant colour. After discussions it was **Resolved** to purchase tape to be put around the bollards. Action Clerk.

4. Notes of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 18th December 2024 to be approved as minutes.
It was **Resolved** to approve the notes as minutes – all agreed by a show of hands, signed by the Chair.

5. Clerks Update & Correspondence - to Resolve to approve any subsequent actions.

The Clerk confirmed that the containers belonging to the Village Events Committee (VEC) are to be cleared out w/end of 18/19 Jan 2025, in preparation for them to be moved soon after.

A resident has asked about putting a fence up on New Swan Close/Cuckoo Walk but is unclear of the boundary line, Councillors offered to meet with the resident on site to discuss.

The VEC asked if our contractor would remove the Christmas tree, he has confirmed that he can.

The Youth club have now cleared out the cupboard at the village hall, so making it usable for everyone.

Councillors met a resident that has pollard a Parish Council tree and planted hedge plants in areas classed as public open space, it was agreed with the resident that he will not plant any more hedges and refrain from doing any tree work.

The Clerk asked that investigations into the condition of Sorrel Road balance be carried out, as it appears to be overgrown.

The Clerk made comment that she was struggling to contact the electrician who has been paid to replace the outside lights at the hall, the job hasn't been completed. Cllr Bell offered to contact Action DB

The clerk asked Councillors to meet with the American football team to discuss field hire and a resident regarding a fence that has been damaged by a Parish Council tree. Action All Councillors.

Planning application Ref – 24/1106/RESM, has been received just, councillors are asked to review the application and submit comments via email to the Clerk by Monday 20th January 2025. (as per delegated authority in standing orders).

19.20pm it was Resolved to suspend standing orders to allow Councillor Marianne Overton to make comments to the council.

Cllr Overton made comment that she was waiting on a reply from Richard Fenwick regarding the passing points on Hedge Lane junction.

Elections for the Mayoral & County Councillors are to be held in May 2025.

19.40pm Standing Orders were re-instated.

6. 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 31.12.2024

The bank reconciliation as at the 31.12.2024 was presented to council, showing the accounts balanced – signed Cllr Harrison.

Cllr Gascoigne made comment that under the FSCS rules the £85,000 limit has been exceeded in a couple of the Parish Council bank accounts. The Clerk added that balances would be reviewed, and transfers made once the footpaths and ditch had been completed and paid for.

c. To review the budget as at 31.12.2024.

The Budget was presented to council they should be at 75% of target at this point during the year - Income received being at 100% of target, additional CIL levy's have been received of £67,746.12. Spending being at 86% of target – no amendments were required.

d. To consider the quotes to clean the wet pour surfaces at the play park.

Deferred to the next meeting.

7. To approve the budget and to Resolve to set the Precept the next Financial Year.

After discussions it was **Resolved** approve an income budget of £19617.03 and a spending budget of £166,450.00 for 2025/2026. All agreed – show of hands.

A vote of 3:2 in favour of adding £1000 to the allotments was passed.

A vote of 3:2 against budgeting for the balance ponds was passed.

It was **Resolved** to set a precept for 2025/2026 of £146,832.97 which denotes an increase of 11.57%, £12.33pa on a band D property. All agreed – Show of hands.

8. To discuss the focus points for the next 6 months, and to write a Business Development Plan.

After discussions it was proposed that the following points be considered for a Business Development Plan.

- Cost/Maintenance of the balance ponds
- Funding for the Changing Rooms, MUGA, Village Hall extension
- Phase 2 maintenance
- New bins
- Lost Village contribution to the play parks
- New location of the Christmas tree.
- New location for the VEC container.
- Village maintenance schedule.

9. To review the extension of the open spaces' contracts.

The Clerk made comment that Grass Cutting & Tree and Hedge cutting contracts were up for renewal, the Parish Council must give 12 months' notice before terminating the contract. There is a caveat in the

contract that it can be extended for a further 24 months if the council are happy with the existing contractors.

After discussions it was **Resolved** to extend both contracts for a further 24 months w.e.f March 2026. The Hedge Cutting contractor must advise the Clerk of his schedule of works on a weekly basis. All agreed – show of hands.

It was **Resolved** to suspend Standing Order 5x, to allow the meeting to continue, all agreed – show of hands.

10. To consider re-positioning the bench & dog waste bin on the path behind Warren Lane Park.

After discussions it was **Resolved** to re-position the dog waste bin & purchase 2 bags of cement but, leave the bench in its current position. All agreed – show of hands. Cllr Gascoigne offered to move the bin.

Action Cllr Gascoigne.

11. To approve the membership & the annual fee for the LALC's training scheme.

After discussions it was **Resolved** to approve the membership and fee of £175 + VAT. All agreed – show of hands.

12. To review the following policies.

- a. Training & Development
- b. Donations & Grants.

It was **Resolved** to review the policies no amendments were required. All agreed – show of hands.

13. To Resolve to move into Closed Session.

It was **Resolved** to move into closed session, all agreed - show of hands.

Items of a confidential nature to be debated in the absence of the press & public under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

14. To discuss the cleaning of the changing rooms.

The Clerk made comment that, there appears to be confusion over the standard of cleaning required from the football teams, with comments being received from the caretakers. The Clerk asked Councillors to do a spot check of the changing rooms, after each football team has been at the hall, and establish a standard acceptable for the changing rooms to be left in.

15. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING.

Parish Council Meeting Wednesday 19th February 2025 at 7pm

Meeting closed 9.30pm

Signed

Date

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