



**Minutes of Witham St Hughs Annual Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 21st May
at 7.00pm at the village hall.**

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

Present Cllr Danny Bell – Chair, Cllr Karen Harrison – Vice Chair, Cllr Colin Cook, Cllr Mark Gascoigne & Cllr Andy O’Brien.

Rachel Popplewell – Parish Clerk

2 members of the public

Agenda Items

1. To Elect a Chairman for Witham St Hughs Parish Council for the ensuing year 2025/2026

Cllr Bell asked for nominations for the Chair, for the year 2025/2026.

One nomination was received for Cllr Harrison.

Cllr Harrison was elected as Chairman for the ensuing year, all agreed show of hands.

2. To receive the Declaration of Acceptance of Office form from the Chairman for 2025/2026.

Cllr Harrison signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office form.

3. To Elect a Vice-Chairman of Witham St Hughs Parish Council and to receive the Declaration of Acceptance of Office form. For the ensuing year 2025/2026

The Chair asked for nominations for the appointment of Vice Chair for the year 2025/2026.

One nomination was received for Cllr Cook. Cllr Harrison proposed that Cllr Cook be elected as Vice Chair for the ensuing year, seconded by Cllr Bell. All Agreed – show of hands.

Cllr Cook signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office form.

Thanks were passed onto Cllr Bell for his Chairmanship for the previous 12 months.

4. Public Forum – To resolve to suspend standing orders for a maximum of 10 minutes to allow members of public to make comment or ask questions.

It was **Resolved** to suspend Standing Orders for 10 mins to allow comments from the public – All Agreed, show of hands.

The members of the public would like to donate 3 cast iron benches to the village; they are very heavy and would need transporting from Bracebridge heath.

Councillors offered to consider possible locations; they wouldn’t be able to transport them to the village.

Clerk to liaise with the member of public.

Standing Orders were re-instated.

5. To Receive Apologies for Absence.

Apology was received from Cllr Strickland; it was **Resolved** to approve the reason for absence and the apology. All agreed – show of hands.

6. 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.

7. Health & Safety brief.

The Clerk made comment that a railing had come loose at the bottom of Thyme Walk – Cllr Gascoigne offered to sort

A crack had appeared in the field on Warren Lane – the grass cutting contractor will fill in.

8. Notes of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 16th April 2025 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.

9. Clerks Update & Correspondence, and to Resolve to approve any subsequent actions.

The clerk made comment that she had written to the resident on Fox Hollow, no response had been received.

Strawson’s had declined the offer to put in a permanent Christmas Tree holder on the village square, but would be happy with a portable one, with them offering to pay for the electric.

A successful meeting regarding the new play park had taken place with Proludic who are working in conjunction with Strawson’s to produce plans for the new Play Park, MUGA & Skate Park.

An allotment plot holder had asked if they could have a wildlife pond on their allotment, the request was approved (max 25 square ft)

The Clerk reminded Councillors about a meeting with the FA.

Action Clerk.

An email had been received from the youth football team, asking if they would be able to site a container near to the football field to store the football goals & equipment. More information was required about the size of the container before a location could be decided. Action Clerk.

10. To Appoint members to the following committees.

- a. Personnel Committee - After discussions it was **Resolved** to appoint Cllr Cook, Cllr O’Brien, and Cllr Strickland to the Personnel Committee, with Cllr Cook as Chair of the Committee. All Agreed – show of hands.
- b. Allotment Committee – After discussions it was **Resolved** to appoint Cllr Harrison, Cllr Gascoigne to the Allotment Committee, with Cllr Harrison as Chair of the Committee. All Agreed – show of hands.
- c. Policies Committee – After discussions it was **Resolved** to appoint Cllr Cook, Cllr Harrison & Cllr O’Brien to the committee, with Cllr O’Brien as Chair of the Committee. All agreed – show of hands.

11. To discuss and agree to appoint responsibilities for Councillors.

After discussions councillors were appointed to the following projects/jobs.

Planning – Cllr Cook & Cllr Harrison

Open Spaces – Cllr Gascoigne & Cllr Harrison

Play Parks – Cllr Gascoigne
Football Association – All Councillors
Village Hall – All Councillors.

Councillors were asked to consider a working group meeting once a month to discuss projects in more detail, it was agreed to meet once a month in addition to a PC council meeting to discuss projects or issues in the village (no decisions will be made during the meeting).

12. To consider the options for the replacement piece of equipment for Cuckoo Park.

After discussions it was **Resolved** to approve the Planet Jungle climbing frame from Wicksteed at a cost of £13,900 + VAT. All agreed – show of hands. The Clerk was asked to contact Lost Village regarding a contribution for the equipment. Action Clerk.

13. To review and adopt the following policies.

After discussions it was **Resolved** to review & adopt the following policies – all agreed, show of hands.

- a. Standing Orders for the Council (revised version April 2025).
- b. Financial Regulations for the Council and to Resolve to accept variable Direct Debits & online banking. (revised version Feb 2025).
It was **Resolved** to accept variable direct debits & online Banking for Council & the use of a Credit Card, settled in full monthly by Direct Debit.
- c. Terms of Reference for the Personnel Committee.
- d. Community Engagement Policy – *Deferred to the next meeting*
- e. Equality Policy
- f. Dignity at Work Policy – *Deferred to the next meeting.*

14. To Resolve to agree Parish Council meeting dates for the year 2025/2026.

It was **Resolved** to approve the list of meeting dates and start times for the ensuing year. To be published on the website. Action Clerk.

15. To receive the Annual Internal Audit report

The Chair read out the internal audit report, no irregularities were highlighted.

“The Parish Clerk & RFO should be acknowledged on providing excellent administration support and for keeping satisfactory financial records on behalf of the Parish Council.”

Thanks were passed onto the Clerk.

Thanks were passed on to Steve Fletcher – Auditor, for conducting the audit.

16. To consider, approve & sign the Annual Governance Statements for 2024/2025

The Annual Governance Statements were considered – it was **Resolved** to answer them all positively, signed by the Chair & Clerk.

17. To approve & sign the Accounting Statements 2024/2025.

It was **Resolved** to approve the Accounting Statements as correct – All Agreed. Signed by the Chair & Clerk.

18. To note the dates of the Period for the Exercise of Public Rights.

The Clerk made comment that the following dates would be used, as suggested by PKF Littlejohn, 3rd June 2025 – 14th July 2025.

19. To review the Asset Register in line with the Parish Council insurance policy schedule.

It was then **Resolved** to approve the Asset Register as correct – All agreed, show of hands.

20. To consider the quotes for the Parish Council insurance policy.

The Clerk presented 2 quotes for consideration; a 3rd company was approached but they refused to quote. After discussions it was **Resolved** to accept the quote from Gallagher Insurance of £2471.59 on a 3-year LTA. From the 1st June 2025.

21. 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 30.04.2025

The bank reconciliation as at 30.04.2025 was presented to the council, showing a discrepancy of £93.60 due to an underpayment of hall hire fees. To be rectified by month – signed by Cllr Bell.

c. To receive a list of regular payments.

The Clerk presented the regular payments list to Council, after discussion it was **Resolved** to accept the list circulated. All agreed – show of hands.

d. to approve the quote for Warren Lane Balance Pond works.

After discussions it was **Resolved** to approve the quote of £1200 plus £25 per load to remove the waste. All agreed – show of hands.

e. To approve the quote for the miscellaneous wood work, around the village

After discussions it was **Resolved** to approve the quote of £1650 to carry out the works. All agreed – show of hands.

f. To approve the extra grass cutting costs for the Scout Land.

After discussions it was **Resolved** to approve the quote of £300 to carry out extra grass cutting. All agreed – show of hands.

*It was **Resolved** to suspend Standing Order 3x to allow the meeting to continue. **All agreed.***

22. To consider the following planning applications.

a. Erection of 1no single storey dwelling. Land at Gray Lane, Witham St Hughs. Ref 25/0163/FUL.

After discussions it was **Resolved** to submit no comment for the application. All agreed - show of hands.

23. Village Hall Extension Update.

Cllr Harrison made comment that she had received an offer of help from a resident about the planning of the Village Hall extension, as he has had experience with similar projects. He had forwarded some information to be discussed at the next working group meeting.

24. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING.

Wednesday 18th June 2025 at 7.00pm.

Signed

Dated

Print

Meeting Closed at 9.30pm