



Minutes of Witham St Hughs Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 16th October 2025 at 7pm at the village hall.

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

Present Cllr Karen Harrison – Chair, Cllr Charlie Strickland & Cllr Andy O’Brien.

Rachel Popplewell Parish Clerk.

District Councillor Mitch Elliott

5 members of the public.

Comments were received from the public regarding an over grown tree on Fox Hollow. The Chair advised that the Council would ask their arborist to survey the tree along with the tree officer at NKDC before any decision would be made.

Comments were received asking for a street light to be installed on Rosehip Walk, the Chair made comment that it wouldn’t be feasible to install a light, Council would ask the developers to cut back the trees in the area which would then allow the street lamp that is near Sorrel Road to light the area.

Cllr Elliott made comment that the boundary review was still taking place to form a new Unitary Council.

Agenda Items

1. Welcome and Apologies.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apology was received from Cllr Mark Gascoigne. It was **Resolved** to accept the reason for absence and the apology. 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

3. Health & Safety brief

The Clerk made comment that a couple of issues in the play park had been highlighted on the weekly inspections. Councillors to review when they do a walk round on the 25.10.2025.

4. Notes of the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 11th September 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.

5. Notes of the Extra-ordinary Parish Council meeting held on Monday 29th September 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.

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

The Clerk made comment that CIL monies had been received from North Kesteven District Council of £9761.85.

The Clerk asked Councillors if they would consider installing speed signs on Warren Lane, after Lost Village festival had approached the Council to fund the purchase. It was **Resolved** to consider the idea the Clerk was asked to get quotes. Action Clerk.

Village Hall extension project – survey responses were presented to council, overall, they were positive. Clerk was asked to add them to the website Action Clerk.

The Clerk made comment that the football field was now repaired, although the grass hadn't grown as well as expected. This will be looked at again in the spring. The football teams could now play on the field.

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 30.09.2025

The bank reconciliation as at the 31.08.2025 was presented to council, showing the accounts balanced. Signed by Cllr O'Brien.

c. To review the budget as at 30.09.2025.

The Clerk presented the budget to council. They should be at 50% of target at this point through the year.

Income figure was 116% of budget, inflated due to the receipt of a grant from Lost Village and CIL levys from the District Council

Spending figure 111% of budget, inflated due to the footpath repairs, funds coming from last year's CIL levys.

No amendments were required.

d. To approve the purchase of a ton bag of soil and grass seed to infill the holes caused by tree stumps being removed.

After discussions it was **Resolved** approve a budget of £150 for the soil & seed. All agreed - show of hands.

e. To approve the printing costs for the Village Hall extension survey (retrospective)

After discussions was **Resolved** to approve the costs of £748.48 for the printing – All agreed, show of hands.

8. To review the following policies

- a. Sickness & Absence Policy
- b. Public Participation at Parish Council meetings.
- c. Anti-fraud & Corruption Policy
- d. Community Engagement Policy

After discussions it was **Resolved** to adopt an amended version of the Sickness & Absence Policy and the Anti-Fraud & Corruption Policy. All agreed – show of hands.

No amendments were required for the Public Participation at Parish Council meetings.

Community Engagement policy – deferred

9. To adopt the following policy.

a. Mobile Phone Policy

After discussions it was **Resolved** to adopt the policy. The Clerk was asked to install 'Life 360' app to link with Litter Picker, for safety reasons as she is out working alone around the village. If she is agreeable as she uses her own personal phone. Action Clerk

10. To consider the following planning applications –

- a. Reserved matters submission for the strategic landscaping of Green Infrastructure Sub Phase D1.1 as required by conditions 1,4 and 6 of outline planning permission 15/1437/OUT, and indicated on the approved Green Infrastructure Phasing Delivery Plan 5801-L-18 D, dated 4 June 2020 (and iterations thereof)

Witham St Hughs Phase III East of Camp Road and North of Hannah Crescent Witham St Hugh's

After discussions it was **Resolved** to submit the following comments for the application. All agreed – show of hands.

We are writing to express strong concerns regarding the proposed location and design of the balance pond, which is shown adjacent to a proposed children’s football pitch. We have observed that the pond (already constructed) appears to be deep, with steep sides, and lacks sufficient safety measures. This presents a serious hazard, particularly to children and families using the recreational space.

Safety and Design Concerns

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides clear guidance on the importance of safe, accessible public spaces and the design of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS):

- *Paragraph 96 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should:*

“Promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other, and ensure that public spaces are safe, accessible and enable social interaction.”

- *Paragraph 182 (updated December 2024) requires that SuDS:*

“Provide multifunctional benefits wherever possible, through facilitating improvements in water quality and biodiversity, as well as benefits for amenity.”

The current design of the balance pond fails to deliver amenity benefits and instead introduces a dangerous element into a space intended for children’s recreation. The steep sides and depth of the pond are incompatible with the safe use of adjacent play areas.

- *Paragraph 131 of the NPPF emphasizes that:*

“Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments are safe, inclusive and accessible, and promote health and well-being.”

- *Paragraph 103–107 also highlight the protection of recreational spaces, particularly those used for sport and play.*

Recommendations

To align with national policy and ensure public safety, I urge the Council to:

1. *Relocate the balance pond away from the children’s football pitch.*
2. *Redesign the pond with shallower gradients, secure fencing, and natural barriers.*
3. *Include safety signage and educational features to raise awareness of water safety.*
4. *Consult with RoSPA or similar bodies on best practices for water safety near play areas.*

The current proposal does not meet the standards set out in the NPPF for safe, inclusive, and multifunctional public spaces. I respectfully request that the Council require revisions to this aspect of the plan before granting approval.

We do note that the plan allows for

Comment on the SuDS Management Plan – Planning Application 25/0478/RESM

The Parish Council notes the inclusion of SuDS features such as attenuation ponds within the proposed development layout for Phase III of Witham St Hughs. While these features are essential for managing surface water and mitigating flood risk, the Parish Council wishes to reiterate its position as per the Section 106 agreement for Phase III:

The Parish Council does not accept responsibility for the ownership, maintenance, or management of any SuDS infrastructure, including attenuation ponds.

This position reflects the Council’s capacity and remit. The long-term management of these features must be clearly assigned to a suitable body—such as a management company, the developer, or a statutory authority—with robust arrangements in place to ensure ongoing maintenance and public safety.

The Plan shows provision of Ball Stop Fencing – 5M high along one side of the attenuation Basin, with Timber Post and Rail Fencing 1.5M to the remaining sides, along with an access gate. The Parish Council will not accept responsibility for the fencing or the gate and will require assurances for the long-term upkeep will not fall under our remit.

The Council requests that:

- *The SuDS management plan explicitly identifies the responsible party for each SuDS feature.*
- *Maintenance schedules and funding mechanisms are detailed and secured through planning conditions or legal agreements.*
- *Public access and safety measures around attenuation ponds are addressed, especially where these are located near residential areas or public open spaces.*

Failure to clarify these responsibilities may result in unmanaged infrastructure, posing risks to residents and the environment

Attenuation Basin (Planning Application 25/0478/RESM)

The Parish Council has reviewed the Strategic Landscape Plan for Phase III of Witham St Hughs and notes the proposed inclusion of:

- Ball Stop Fencing (5m high) along one side of the attenuation basin.
- Timber Post and Rail Fencing (1.5m high) around the remaining perimeter.
- Access Gate for maintenance or emergency access
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In line with the Council's established position and the terms of the Section 106 agreement for Phase III, we wish to formally state:

The Parish Council will not accept responsibility for the ownership, maintenance, or future management of any fencing or gates associated with the attenuation basin or SuDS infrastructure.

We request that:

- The long-term responsibility for these features be clearly assigned to a suitable party (e.g. developer, management company, or statutory body).
- Maintenance obligations and safety inspections be secured through planning conditions or legal agreements.
- The access gate be appropriately secured to prevent unauthorised entry, with clear protocols for emergency and maintenance access.

The Council seeks written assurances that these responsibilities will not fall under its remit now or in the future.

b. Erection of a garden building (part retrospective)

8 Jackson Close, Witham St Hughs. Ref 25/1141/HOUS

After discussions it was **Resolved** to submit the following comments for the application. All agreed – show of hands.

Conflict with NPPF Paragraphs 130–134:

The proposed structure appears disproportionate to the plot size and is not sympathetic to the local character, contrary to the principles of achieving well-designed places.

Impact on Residential Amenity:

The building may cause overshadowing and loss of privacy for neighbouring properties, reducing the quality of living conditions.

Sustainability and Biodiversity:

The application does not demonstrate measures to enhance biodiversity or climate resilience, contrary to NPPF objectives for sustainable development.

Retrospective Nature of Application:

Commencing work without prior approval undermines the integrity of the planning process and should weigh against granting permission.

11. To approve the revised conditions for the Scouts Lease.

After discussions it was **Resolved** to set the following conditions for the lease – All agreed, show of hands.

- Monday – Friday 7am – 6pm the hall can be used for Youth Provision
- Monday – Friday 7am – 6pm the hall can be used for Community Groups (with prior permission from the Parish Council)
- Weekends available for letting – providing the village hall is already booked (act as an over spill facility)
- No alcohol licence can be applied for
- Hall hire charges to be equal to or higher than the Village Hall hire charges.

12. To consider & approve the quotes for the Topography surveys

After discussions it was **Resolved** to accept the quote from Axis Surveys at a cost of £1175.00 + VAT. All agreed – show of hands.

13. Christmas Tree lighting event update

The Clerk made comment that most things were in place for the event on the 30.11.2025. Refreshments ect Christmas Tree to be collected on Thursday 27th November.

14. Remembrance Day event update.

The Clerk confirmed that everything was in place for the service, a £50 donation would be sent to the RBL as payment in lieu of the wreath, which is being recycled from last year.

8.45pm

The Parish Council **Resolved** to move into closed session, to discuss the following agenda items. All agreed – show of hands.

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

15. Staffing

Further to last month’s meeting the Litter Picker has declined the offer to increase her hours, this was supported by the Council.

The Clerk made comment asking for a staff meeting between the Caretakers to discuss the new App and iron out any issues. Cllr O’Brien would arrange a date, in the next couple of weeks. **Action AOB**

16. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING.

Parish Council Meeting Wednesday 19th November 2025 at 7pm.

Signed

Date

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