



Minutes of Witham St Hughs Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 23rd June 2026 at 7.30pm at the village hall.

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

Present Cllr Karen Harrison – Chair, Cllr Mark Gascoigne & Cllr Kerry Bowley-Webb.

Rachel Popplewell – Parish Clerk

2 members of public

Comments were received from a representative of Hill Holt Wood regarding the planting of a new orchard & trees on the boundary of the Solar Farm project and Witham St Hughs.

A resident enquired about the ownership of the bus shelters, as they were experiencing Anti-social behaviour in the one near to their property.

1. Welcome and Apologies.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Cllr Charlie Strickland. 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 both the Defibrillator’s needed new batteries & pads at a cost of £384.80 per pack. It was **Resolved** to approve the purchase. All agreed – show of hands.

4. Notes of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 20th May 2026 to be approved as minutes.

It was **Resolved** to approve the notes as minutes, all agreed – show of hands.

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

The Clerk made comment that

- The Scout land transfer was now complete
- The Clerk asked the Councillors to consider adopting the Armed Forces Covenant, the Clerk was asked to investigate the process.
- Councillors declined the request for a food donation box to be left at the village hall, there is already a box located at the Co-op.
- The Clerk asked Councillors to consider applying for up to 5 free trees from the Woodland Trust, it was **Resolved** to apply for the trees. All agreed – show of hands. **Action Clerk.**
- A resident had contacted the Council regarding the bund along Camp Road, asking for it to be tidied up. Cllr Harrison & the Clerk visited the area with the resident, adding that the 3-year tree report was due in September, the same contractor would view the area and advise thereafter.
- The H&S advisor would review the arrangements for the bar cupboard in July to ensure it was safe.

- The VEC have been asked to turn off the equipment in the hall for 3-4 days so meter readings can be taken to determine how much electricity is being consumed, their hall hire would then be adjusted accordingly.

6. Finance.

- a. To approve the amended amount for the Planning application of £1525, amount previously agreed £1261 (Agenda item 9b February 2026 minutes)

It was **Resolved** to approve the amended amount – All agreed, show of hands.

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

It was **Resolved** to approve the accounts as payments – all agreed, show of hands.

- c. To receive the Bank Reconciliation as at 31.05.2026

The Bank Reconciliation for the 31.05.2026 was presented to council showing the accounts balanced, signed by Cllr Gascoigne.

7. To review the bank signing mandate.

After discussions to was **Resolved** to add Cllr Gascoigne onto the mandate. Council now had 3 signatories for the accounts. All agreed – show of hands.

Action Clerk.

8. To review the following policies;

- a. Disciplinary Policy

- b. Equality Policy

After discussions it was **Resolved** to approve a revised version of the Disciplinary Policy & review the Equality Policy. All agreed – show of hands.

9. Village Hall Extension update.

The Clerk confirmed that the planning application for the extension has been submitted to NKDC and is available for comment via the planning portal.

10. To Resolve to appoint a Grounds Maintenance Contractor.

After discussions it was **Resolved** to appoint J Dineen as the Grounds Maintenance Contractor. All agreed – show of hands.

11. To consider the quotes to replace the matting under the swings on Cuckoo Walk & Hedge Lane Parks.

After discussions it was **Resolved** to purchase grass mats, Geo textile membrane at a cost of £1061.60 inc VAT, plus the ground works cost of £2400 = total £3500

12. To consider the quotes for the new pieces of replacement play equipment for Hedge Lane & Co-op Park.

Deferred to the next meeting – awaiting quotes

13. To consider the following planning applications;

- a. Refurbishment & extension to the village hall, Caraway Drive, Witham St Hughs.

Ref – 26/0687/FUL – noted.

- b. Proposed outbuilding (part retrospective), 19 Tall Pines Road, Witham St Hughs.

Ref – 26/0743/HOUS

After discussions it was Resolve to submit the following Objection for the application. All agreed – show of hands.

1. Retrospective Development and Planning Harm

The development has been undertaken, at least in part, retrospectively, which limits the ability of the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to properly assess and mitigate impacts prior to construction.

While the NPPF does not prohibit retrospective applications, paragraph 55 makes clear that planning enforcement is important to maintain public confidence in the planning system. Development that proceeds without appropriate consent, particularly where harm arises, should be carefully scrutinised, and not regularised where it conflicts with planning policy.

2. Impact on Trees, Vegetation, and Biodiversity

The Council notes and supports the concerns raised by the NKDC Tree Officer.

- Existing trees and hedgerows have been cut back to facilitate the siting of the outbuilding.
- Vegetation has not been appropriately managed or removed, with cut material currently deposited on the adjacent public footpath, creating both visual harm and a potential obstruction.

This conflicts with:

- NPPF Paragraph 131 – which requires planning decisions to ensure development enhances the natural and local environment.
- NPPF Paragraph 174 (a, b, and d) – which emphasises protecting and enhancing biodiversity, recognising the intrinsic character of the countryside, and minimising impacts on ecological networks.

The removal and poor management of vegetation demonstrates a failure to appropriately consider the site's environmental context.

3. Impact on Visual Amenity and Character

The Council considers the outbuilding to be visually intrusive and harmful to the character of the area:

- The structure is described as an “eyesore”, appearing out of keeping with the established residential setting.
- Its siting and design fail to integrate sympathetically with surrounding properties and landscape features.

This conflicts with:

- NPPF Paragraph 130 (a and c) – development should function well and add to the overall quality of the area and be sympathetic to local character.
- NPPF Paragraph 134 – development that is not well-designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local character and identity.

The current form and placement of the building do not meet these design expectations.

4. Impact on Public Amenity and Highway Safety

The presence of cut vegetation on the public footpath raises concerns in relation to:

- Public access and usability of the footpath
- Potential trip hazards or obstruction

This is contrary to:

- NPPF Paragraph 100 – which seeks to protect and enhance public rights of way and access.

The development has resulted in a direct and ongoing negative impact on public amenity.

5. Overall Planning Balance

When considered cumulatively, the harm arising from:

- The retrospective nature of the development
- Loss and poor management of vegetation
- Visual intrusion and poor design
- Impact on the public footpath

clearly outweighs any limited private benefit of the outbuilding.

Conclusion

For the reasons set out above, the Council considers the proposal to be contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework, particularly in relation to design quality, environmental protection, and public amenity.

The Council therefore strongly objects to this application and requests that it be refused.

Should the Local Planning Authority be minded to approve the application, the Council requests that strict conditions are applied, including:

- Full remediation and clearance of the public footpath
- Arboriculture mitigation and replacement planting in line with Tree Officer recommendations
- Potential design amendments to reduce visual harm

14. To resolve to move into closed session to discuss the following

- a. Staffing.
No discussions/actions taken.

15. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETINGS

Parish Meeting Wednesday 15th July at 7pm.

Meeting Closed at 8.45pm.

Signed

Print

Date