

Swilland and Witnesham grouped Parish Council

Clerk: Alison Burrows

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Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 21st May 2025 at Witnesham Village Hall 7:30 p.m.

Minutes

Present: Paul Sharples (Chair), Richard Nicol, Jerry Hindle, Chris Collings, Andy Dungey, Kim Shaw, Susan Ross and 2 members of the public.

36. To elect a Chair – Paul Sharples was proposed to continue as Chair by Jerry Hindle and seconded by Richard Nichol. Resolved.
Chair opened the meeting and welcomed 2 members of the public.

37. To receive Councillors Declarations of Interest.

Councillor	Minute no.	Nature of interest
Susan Ross	51	Flooding
Jerry Hindle	51	Flooding
Richard Nicol	47	Expense reimbursement
Paul Sharples	47	Expense reimbursement

38. To receive apologies from Councillors not attending - apologies received from councillors Faye Ellis, David Roots, Tim Burrows and Tracey Hardy, Clerk Alison Burrows. ESCllr Dan Clery and SCCllr Elaine Bryce did not attend.

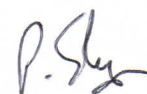
Susan Ross took minutes of the meeting on behalf of the Clerk.

Chair advised that formal resignation had been received from Tracey Hardy.

39. To elect a Vice-Chair – Andy Dungey was proposed as Vice-Chair by Richard Nicol and seconded by Jerry Hindle. Resolved.

40. To approve Minutes from the meeting held on 19th March 2025 – all agreed and signed by the Chair. Resolved.

41. Questions or comments on Reports from SCCllr Elaine Bryce & ESC CClr Dan Clery – reports had not been received in advance of the meeting; subsequently Dan Clery's report was received 20th May and circulated.



42. To appoint committee members and councillor roles:

Susan Ross led the PC through the Committees and current responsibilities which were agreed with the following additions:

- Paul Sharples to join the Planning Committee
- Richard Nicol to join the Village Hall Management Committee
- Community Partnerships to be assigned on an ad hoc basis

43. To amend Planning Committee role to include all Parish Council Land Matters – proposed by Jerry Hindle

A proposal by Jerry Hindle to extend the remit of the Planning Committee to include all property matters e.g. wayleaves, land registry activities was agreed and seconded by Andy Dungey. Resolved.

Jerry Hindle to update the Terms of Reference and Clerk to circulate to the Parish Council.

44. Annual policy reviews

- I. Review the Council's Standing Orders
- II. Review Financial Regulations

In the absence of the Clerk, these items were not reviewed, but it was confirmed that the Parish Council will continue to follow standard practices. The review was deferred until the next Parish Council meeting.

45. To agree meeting dates 2025-26:

- Wednesday 16th July 2025
- Wednesday 17th September 2025
- Wednesday 19th November 2025
- Wednesday 21st January 2026
- Wednesday 18th March 2026
- Wednesday 22nd April 2026 Annual Parish Meeting
- Wednesday 20th May 2026 Annual General Meeting

The above dates were agreed with January 2026 meeting date of 21st confirmed.

46. The current financial situation - Clerk's report

- a – to approve the Annual Governance Statement 2024-2025
- b – to approve the Annual Accounts statement 2024-2025

These items were deferred until the next Parish Council meeting as the auditor's report had not been received.

47. To approve the following payments (including VAT if applicable):

Ref		amount
a	Suffolk.Cloud	£330.00
b	Witnesham Village Hall hire	£90.00



c	HMRC Employer contributions Q4	£114.80
d	Admin A Burrows	£459.80
e	Bank charges March 25	£6.00
f	SALC payroll fee to 31/03/2025	£54.00
g	SALC membership Subscription	£439.56
h	APM refreshments (R Nicol)	£21.45
i	APM refreshments (P Sharples) Wine	£25.05
j	Newsquest Media Group public notice	£507.84
k	Tree Frog	£1440.00
l	Admin AB Apr 25	£459.80
m	HMRC Month 1 employers contributions	£138.44
n	WAVE water bill Feb to April 2025	£18.20
o	Bank Charges April 2025	£6.00

Clerk to confirm whether the public notice costs (for UK Power Network changes) can be reclaimed.

Approval proposed by Susan Ross, seconded by Andy Dungey, who signed bank statement to evidence balance, unchanged from last month, as the bank book is with the auditors.

48. To approve and adopt a modified 2025-2026 budget.

Richard Nicol proposed approval of the 2025-6 budget which was unchanged from the version previously discussed. This was seconded by Jerry Hindle. Resolved.

49. Witnesham Flowers – proposal by Jerry Hindle on behalf of Mike Masters and other residents.

Jerry Hindle updated that the specific idea of plants opposite the Barley Mow has been dropped for this year but led a discussion on the general appearance of the villages and the need for paths to be cleared, overhanging branches to be cut back etc. Clerk to pursue with SCC Highways what help is available and add to the next meeting's agenda.

The Health and Safety issue arising from reduced visibility at the end of Church Lane, Witnesham, was raised. This is caused by overgrown hedges at the two end properties. Clerk to progress with contacting the property owners as it is their responsibility to maintain their hedges. Clerk to raise with SCC Highways if no progress is made with the property owners.

Clerk to chase UK Power Networks for start date of works at Lower recreation ground as this will include removal of some overgrown shrubbery.

50. CIL Funding - proposal by Andy Dungey

Andy Dungey summarised the key points of the paper circulated ahead of the meeting, including the community survey results, a summary of which will be posted on the Parish Council's website.

It was noted that there had been no objections raised in the survey, just one comment regarding congestion and parking in the vicinity.



It was agreed that the strawman proposal for a building on the Playing Field should move to a feasibility stage with further exploration, outline costs etc. so that the availability of grants can be investigated. Concerns were raised regarding the potential dedicated use of parts of the building by the Pre-school as this would limit flexibility in the use of the building.

It was agreed that other options should continue to be explored in parallel, as the building and maintenance costs of a new building may be prohibitive.

The PC reiterated support for the Pre-school and Susan Ross, on behalf of the Playing Field Management Committee, will seek to ascertain the latest position regarding SCC discussions, options being explored in respect of repair or replacement premises and whether any specific support from the PC with SCC would be helpful.

51. Flooding Advisory Committee (FAC) update

Jerry Hindle referenced the FAC's response to SCC's Section 19 report that had been circulated and expressed disappointment at the quick and brief response indicating that SCC are not prepared to meet nor nominate an Officer to work with the PC.

PC agreed that the FAC should revert to SCC's Ellie Coleby (nee Beecroft), copying SCCllr Elaine Bryce and Amanda Mays stressing the urgency of some of the actions and reiterating the PC's request for their active support.

It was noted that a strategic solution is urgently required to reduce the amount of surface water flowing from Mow Hill to Giles Way through narrow pipework. Jerry Hindle confirmed that initial discussions had been held with the landowner of the catchment area below the 'dam' in the Gull and a quote is being sought.

A PC action was noted to establish a 'Community Emergency Plan' and Susan Ross will follow up and report at the next meeting.

52. Parish Council Matters:

- **Gov.UK email addresses**

All councillors who have not yet switched to their new email account were asked to do so by the next meeting. Andy Dungey and Paul Sharples offered assistance, if required.


- **War memorial**

Clerk to chase as repair is overdue.

- **Bus Shelters**

Richard Nicol commended his SCC contact for regular communication, organisation and early delivery of the 3 bus shelters.

- **New website**



Jerry Hindle asked whether the Witlesham public rights of way map could be added to the website. Andy Dungey advised that minimal changes will be made to the current website until the new one is created and content refreshed.

- **Playing Field Lease / Freehold**

An update to be provided by Tim Burrows at the next meeting.

53. Councillor issues to be brought to the attention of the Parish Council

- Jerry Hindle updated that, following a successful referendum, the Westerfield Neighbourhood Plan had been ratified by East Suffolk Council. This is a positive step in opposing the proposed quarry development in Westerfield. Indications are that a planning application will be submitted in 6-8 weeks, after which a public meeting will be called and the PC will construct a response. Public funding will be requested from the 'Stop the Quarry' campaign to fight the proposal.
- Richard Nicol noted that another cable run is being excavated near the Fynn Valley golf course for East Anglia 3 wind farm.
- Susan Ross queried the status of the insurance claim for the Village Hall floor. Chris Collings to seek information from Tracey Hardy and revert.

Meeting closed at 9.10pm

