

Swilland and Witnesham Grouped Parish Council

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Clerk: Mr. Steven Barron

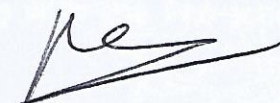
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Parish Council Meeting

Weds 18th January 2023, at Witnesham Village Hall 7:30pm

MINUTES

1. Chair wished to acknowledge the recent sad passing of Mr Nick Stanley. This was for his contribution to this council, both as a Council member and as a Clerk. He was also a good community man and had served as a school governor and helped in organising the Village Show.
Chair welcomed all to the meeting.
Present: Dr Nicol (Chair), Mr Barlow, Mrs Shaw, Mr Roots, Mrs Ellis, Mr Sharples, Mr Collings, Mr Burrows, Mr Hindle and Mr Templeman.
In attendance: SCC Cllr Elaine Bryce (**EB**).
2. **Apologies:** Dr Williams, Mr Dungey and Mrs Offord. ESC DCllr Tony Fryatt (**TF**).
3. **The Code of Conduct Declarations of Interest** – none
4. **To approve Minutes from the meeting held on 16th November 2022** – These were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.
5. **Matters arising from previous minutes and action points.**
 - a) **Dropped Kerbs, Pavements** – In light of the lack of current budget for this, chair asked EB if it could be possible to get this requirement into next year's budget.
6. **Questions or comments on Reports from SCClr Elaine Bryce (EB) & ESC CClr Tony Fryatt (TF)**
ESC DCllr **TF** was not present. His report had been circulated prior to the meeting.
Chair gave **EB** a verbal update on recent developments in regard to the lease renewal at the Playing Field which expires on 2nd December 2024. It was viewed that there was a threat to the asset in the current proposals from SCC. **EB** was asked to seek to set up an early meeting with Brian Prettyman to clarify apparent misunderstandings and progress this issue. Chair asked EB if there were any resources available to assist the local Pre-School which had recently hit hard times. EB took this away and chair would contact EB with more detail. Disappointment was expressed that the pavement cutbacks by SCC in Witnesham adjacent to the B1077 had not happened this year and EB was asked if this could be done next year.
7. **To approve as proposed by the Finance Committee, a donation of £100.00p to Witnesham Baptist Church for the hosting of meetings throughout this year. Council agreed a donation of £100.00p.**



8. **The current financial situation** – A report was circulated by the Clerk prior to the meeting. Clerk explained that current expected out turn predicted an underspend of around £2k. Also £4.75k of grant and spend on the Gibraltar Crossroads project was unlikely this financial year. There were no questions. Current holdings as of 10th January totalled £26,506.65p.

9. **To approve the following payments** (inclusive of VAT where appropriate)

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|----|--|----------|
| a) | Administration December | £320.70 |
| b) | HMRC PAYE Q3 | £276.80 |
| c) | Replacement street bench | £702.00 |
| d) | Bank service charge Q3 | £18.00 |
| e) | Mob phone top up | £20.00 |
| f) | Printer paper | £5.50 |
| g) | Clerk's mileage Q3 | £51.21 |
| h) | Annual grass cutting | £2467.50 |
| i) | Hall Hire Nov | £25.00 |
| j) | SCC QLS agreed fee | £50.00 |
| k) | Donation to Baptist Church for ad hoc hall use | £100.00 |
| l) | Postage | £5.50 |
| m) | Admin November | £490.41 |

Council agreed to approve all the above payments.

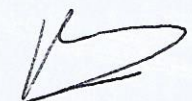
10. **To approve adjustments to current Parish Council Budget for 2022 – 2023.** Clerk reported that these adjustments were needed due to £1299.99p of grants from ESC and the spending thereof, required to be shown in the PC budget. **Council agreed the new adjusted budget for this year of £29,249.23 income and draw on reserves and £29,079.99 expenditure.**

11. **To agree and approve the Parish Council Draft Budget for 2023 – 2024.** The draft budget for next financial year, produced by the Finance Committee, had been circulated prior to the meeting and details of the rationale are in the minutes of the Finance Committee of 28th November 2022. The precept was considered in light of increase costs and it was proposed to increase this by 5%. There had been no increase to tax payers since 2016-17 tax year. This current increase works out as a Band D household of £1.72p increase for next year from £34.41p to £36.13p. On expenditure, many items have been set to increase to align with inflation effects on council spending next year. **Council agreed the budget for 2023-24 of £20,712.35p income (including grants and draw on reserves) and expenditure of £20,570.00p.**

12. **To set the Precept for 2023 – 2024.** Council approved a precept amount for 2023-24 of £15,444.35p.

13. **Playing Field Lease Renewal** – Chair asked the meeting for agreement to set up a small advisory committee to look into the details of the lease renewal and any options for negotiation with SCC. **It was agreed that Dr Nicol, Mr Burrows, Mr Hindle and Mr Barlow would be the nominated committee members, which was resolved.** It was suggested that the PC should seek legal advice at the appropriate time if required. **Clerk would investigate which legal aid services were available within SALC and check any previous council use of solicitors.** It was stressed that engagement with the community was vital in any long-term strategy for the site.

15/3/23



14. **To review and approve the Financial and Data Protection Risk Assessment 2022-23.** A copy of the draft had been circulated prior to the meeting. Clerk gave an overview and itemised a change in the data protection section by adopting the use of an email list sending provider which was free of charge. **Council approved the Financial and Data Protection Risk Assessment 2022-23.**
15. **To consider the ESC Asset of Community Value process and the Community Right to Bid.** Chair asked Mr Burrows to lead on this item. Mr Burrows raised concerns over the future of the Barley Mow in Witnesham and perhaps the ACV process might be appropriate. It was agreed that Mr Burrows and Mr Barlow would liaise about approaching the management company of the pub to ask about the pub's projected future. It was also agreed that support and advice might be useful from ESC on this scenario. **Clerk would seek out any ESC contacts and report back.**
16. **Matters to be brought to the attention of the Parish Council –**
Mrs Shaw reported that there had been several water leaks in the Village Hall due to frozen pipes in the loft with a new loft insulation installation as a result post pipe repair.
Chair asked Mrs Ellis about the situation regarding the failed School Crossing Patrol application on which there was no update. **Clerk was asked to pursue the previously suggested use of a portable SID on the approaches to the junction with Mr Dungey.**
Mr Collings raised concerns about what the PC should do about the lack of response and acknowledgements from ESC Planning team. ESC councillors had suggested registering a formal complaint and possibly raise with MP Dr Dan Poulter. Planning Committee would progress this.
Mr Templeman and Mr Collings informed the meeting that the Platinum Jubilee tree planting had gone quite well with 50 or so tree plants left over which could go between the boundary of the Playing Field and the Play Area by the School.
Mr Hindle advised that the bridge on Witnesham FP39 was now scheduled for repair work in May 2023. On the Mow Hill planning application, which was approved by ESC Planning Committee and opposed by the PC, there had been some action on the concerns raised about landscaping, but all other concerns raised by the PC had been ignored. Mr Hindle has subsequently opened a dialogue with the developers on some of these items. Chair formally thanked Mr Hindle for his intensive efforts for the PC on this.
Mr Barlow reported that the repaired road surface in Swilland, as a result of previous Badger diggings damage, seemed to have improved. Mr Sharples would continue to monitor this.
Mr Burrows raised concerns about dog fouling in the Recreation Ground area where dogs are banned and this needed to be monitored.
Mr Templeman reported that the **bottom railing post at the site appeared loose, Clerk would investigate this.**
Chair reported that there had been an approach from a resident asking if the PC were able and willing to sell a strip of land close to the road boundary at the Rec. Ground. As a pre-requisite before bringing this to full council to consider, the land documents needed to be located by the Clerk and details of boundary and any constraints on the land which were in place. The Witnesham Pre-school had contacted the PC as it had financial issues. Chair and Dr Williams were setting up a discussion meeting with the Pre-school

committee to get exact details. The "Meet Your MP" online event with Dr Dan Poulter had been postponed for a second time, but it was agreed to re-arrange this for Thursday 2nd March. Chair also reported that a small community group had been set up from Swilland to plan any possible events for the coronation of King Charles III. Chair reported that more input from Witnesham parish had been requested, Mr Roots agreed to participate as a Witnesham resident and PC member. Dr Williams was in discussion with the group and the School and would return with a firm proposal for the PC to consider.

Meeting closed at 9:20pm

WZ.

15/3/2023.