

Swilland and Witnesham grouped Parish Council

Clerk: Alison Burrows

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Parish Council Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 20th May 2026 at

Witnesham Village Hall, 7:30 p.m.

Minutes

Present: Richard Nicol, Susan Ross, Paul Sharples (Chair), Andy Dungey (Vice Chair), Jerry Hindle, Kim Shaw, Chris Collings, Tim Burrows
5 members of public
ESCLlr Dan Clery
Clerk: Alison Burrows

143. Chair to formally open meeting, Clerk to receive nominations for a new Chair and announce result following vote

Paul Sharples proposed as Chair by Richard Nicol, seconded by Jerry Hindle, Andy Dungey proposed as Vice Chair by Jerry Hindle, seconded by Susan Ross.

144. To receive apologies from Councillors not attending

David Roots and Jo Pratt - absent with consent, Faye Ellis absent without consent, SCCllr Elaine Bryce advised she was unable to attend.

145. To Receive Councillors Declarations of Interest - none

146. To approve Minutes from the Parish Council meeting 18th March 2026

Minutes circulated prior to meeting, approved by all and signed by Chair.

147. Questions or comments on Reports from ESC Cllr Dan Clery and ESC Cllr Colin Hedgley

Question to Dan Clery re new bins and lid replacement Dan reported that the responsible Cabinet member advised - its ongoing, possible some may not be changed over in time for 1st June.

148. To appoint committee members and councillor roles: Finance, Planning, Footpaths, Tree Warden, Play Area and Rec Ground safety checks, VHMC, Allotments, SAVID/CSW, Highways, Playing Field Management Committee and Flood Advisory Committee

Document circulated prior to meeting detailing current roles – no changes other than to see if David Roots will assist Clerk with Allotments.

Two members of public interested in joining the Parish Council, one may be interested in joining Finance Committee and one to represent PC on VHMC.

149. Annual policy reviews

Review the Council's Standing Orders
Review Financial Regulations

Following review of documents available on PC website, there are no changes to be made, Richard Nicol proposed both documents are adopted, seconded by Jerry Hindle. Clerk to publish on PC website with updated review/adoption dates.

150. To agree meeting dates 2026-27:

- Wednesday 15th July 2026
- Wednesday 16th September 2026
- Wednesday 18th November 2026
- Wednesday 20st January 2027
- Wednesday 17th March 2027
- Wednesday 21nd April 2027 Annual Parish Meeting
- Wednesday 19th May 2027 Annual General Meeting

All councillors agreed meeting dates – Clerk to make bookings for Village Hall.

151. The current Financial Situation – Clerks report

Unity Trust account balance as at 30th April 2026 £31,460.96, this includes the first half yearly precept remittance of £9,749.57.

Suffolk Building Society account balance as at 23rd March 2026 £67,381.88.

Balances witnessed and statements signed by Susan Ross.

Following payment of invoice for Maljon for work carried out at the village hall, a withdrawal from Suffolk Building Society (CIL funds) needs to be made to reimburse the Unity Trust Account in the sum of £1,892.00 (invoice amount less the VAT).

Suffolk Building Society Signatories to sign relevant paperwork - Clerk to action.

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

Payment Reference	Payment to	Amount in pounds £
a	Village Hall hire	30.00
b	Bank Charges Feb 2026	7.00
c	HMRC Q4	457.05
d	Clerk A Burrows March	491.18
e	Bank Charges March 2026	7.00
f	SALC Annual Subscription	463.26
g	Maljon Timber Preservation Ltd VH	2270.40
h	Clerk A Burrows April	491.38

i	Wave AWA	21.71
j	Bank charges April 2026	7.00
k	Heelis & Lodge Internal Audit fee	285.00
l	Village Hall Hire March/April	105.00
m	No Butts Bin Co Ltd – Allotment benches	1031.40
n	REJB repairs to play area	1170.84
o	P Sharples APM refreshments reimbursement	25.80

Approval of payments proposed by Jerry Hindle, seconded by Susan Ross.

153. To Review Internal Auditors Report for 2025/2026 and internal controls.

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

Clerk circulated report prior to meeting and currently addressing the recommendations, above documents to be added to website by Clerk. Audit identified new policies required, to be reviewed and adopted at the July meeting:

- a - Internal Control Statement and Report
- b - Data Protection Policy

154. Flood Advisory Committee update

Susan Ross reported that following the S19 report issued last March, the PC Community Response Plan page has been set up on the website with a link to latest report.

Currently on track with actions which were to be completed in last 12 months, Significant defects in Weyland Rd, Mow Hill and Upper Street drainage.

Ongoing is a pre-commencement plan before a development commences.

Jerry Hindle advised that the Planning Committee have submitted a holding objection on behalf of PC to ESC, regarding the swales in Wittens Way.

155. Playing Field Future Plans update

Tim Burrows reported that the architects have offered a price of £500 to start the process and contact contractors. The draft Play Area designs have been circulated.

Clerk advised lease and freehold documents are currently with solicitors.

It was suggested that a new publicity campaign is launched to seek community support and input.

Chair to contact Head of School Governors and WASPS to arrange for a meeting with PC. Many schools do not have any parking; it is advantageous that Witlesham has a car park provided for parents.

Clerk advised that play area nr school is currently closed due to health and safety issues – the play tower isn't fit for use and not easy to just make this one item out of play as previously when the baby swing had been covered in hazard tape, the tape was constantly removed. Clerk to arrange for quotes for repairs.

Request from School to cut back over grown vegetation in corner of field due to safe guarding issues. Following discussion Clerk to advise the school to report to the police and young people's services.

156. Witnesham Village Hall update

Richard Nicol reported that fund raising through coffee mornings fortnightly is helping the financial position of the hall.

He is researching grant applications for a more cost-effective heating system for the hall.

More support would be welcomed along with new members for the VHMC.

The VH is still without a caretaker, anyone interested to contact the VHMC.

Richard circulated heating options and proposed that the PC set aside £10K for new heating infrastructure – wont all be needed if grants successful, seconded by Jerry Hindle.

Thanks to Richard Nicol for assisting VHMC with improvements, grant applications and fund raising.

157. Consider Donation to Swilland Church Community Hub

Details circulated prior to meeting by email, Clerk confirmed that CIL can be used to via a donation or pay a bill providing the project is open to the whole community.

The project team raised £155k, huge effort by the community to raise these funds.

Jerry Hindle made point of applying for grants, unfortunately a Thriving Places grant is not appropriate as the project is nearing completion.

This request is in accordance with PC agreement to split CIL funds between projects through both parishes.

Provision that assurance from Swilland PCC that the work will provide a public facility for the community and examples of this use. Not happy with proposal for free use of hub for residents, all should pay.

Following the modifications, facilities are now appropriate for disabled, toilets now installed and they can now advertise events for the community.

Proposed by Richard Nicol, seconded by Susan Ross to pay Building Contractors invoice made out to PC, total £14,322.46 including VAT of £2387.08 (Parish Council will claim back the VAT) Net £11,935.38 from CIL.

Vote taken:

In favour – 6 councillors

Against - one councillor

Abstention – one councillor

158. Cycle Stands and ESC grant

No further action for this project.

159. River Fynn Water Sampling Volunteers and Consider Donation

Member of public reported that the water sampling is a subset of Deben Climate Centre with volunteers who test water from River Fynn.

They are requesting consideration of a donation of £100 to fund items used for the testing. Tests are taken down at the bridge in Witnesham, Church Lane and Wash Lane.

All in favour of donation – Clerk to request bank account details to facilitate donation.

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

Each Councillor is requested to use this opportunity to report minor matters of information not included elsewhere on the agenda and to raise items for future agendas. **Councillors are respectfully reminded that this is not an opportunity for debate or decision-making.**

Jerry Hindle advised that the STQ re-consultation will be open on Friday 22nd May for a month, Planning comm meeting before 20th June to respond on behalf of PC. Advice will be issued to general public by STQ.

Swilland village sign is not readable – Clerk to report.

Northern bypass is on agenda for first SCC meeting.

Richard Nicol suggested PC tries to get community support for a neighbourhood plan. Clerk to see if any funding will be available. Add to November agenda.

Request to introduce members of public attending meeting – opening item.

Paul Sharples asked if meeting times should change from 7.30 to 7pm? Add to July Agenda.

Meeting closed at 21.40