

## **Swilland and Witnesham grouped Parish Council**

Clerk: Alison Burrows

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### **Parish Council Meeting**

**Wednesday 22nd July 2026 at**

**Witnesham Village Hall, 7:30 p.m.**

### **Minutes**

**Councillors Present** – Richard Nicol, Paul Sharples, David Roots, Jerry Hindle, Juliet Lillicrop, Susan Ross, Kim Shaw, Andy Dungey, Faye Ellis, Chris Collings  
SCCllr Elaine Bryce,  
Clerk – Alison Burrows  
Members of public - two

**161. Chair to formally open meeting and introduce any members of the public.** Chair opened meeting and welcomed members of public.

**162. To receive apologies from Councillors not attending** – Apologies with consent received from ESCllr Dan Clery, Tim Burrows

**163. To Receive Councillors Declarations of Interest** - none

**164. To Co-Opt new Councillors and appoint as committee members if required** –

Juliet Lillicrop provided a brief introduction about herself and why she would like to join the Parish Council – co-option proposed by Jerry Hindle, seconded by Richard Nicol.

Chair advised that Cllr Jo Pratt has stepped down from the Parish Council.

**165. To approve Minutes from the Parish Council AGM 20<sup>th</sup> May 2026** – all agreed true record of meeting, minutes signed by Chair.

**166. Questions or comments on Reports from SCCllr Elaine Bryce & ESC Cllr Dan Clery, ESC Cllr Colin Hedgley**

SCCllr Elaine Bryce advised that she is pleased to sit on the Education and Children's Services Committee.

She reported concerns re the new SCC administration, cut backs on health visitors, concerns around about scrutiny, transparency and the legal challenge for reorganisation of local government, unnecessary spending of public money. Her support remains in place for the Stop the Quarry campaign.

Thanks to Elaine from the Parish Council for all her work for the campaign to date and her continued support.

Elaine advised that Locality Grants are available, get bids in quickly as funds are limited.

Cllr Colin Hedgely has taken forward complaints regarding the lack of bin collections. Other neighbouring councils have had no problems with bin collections; ESC seem to be the only council with missed collections.

*Requests to Elaine:*

*That there be better communication and flexibility from County Council*

*Highways when roads are to be closed*

*And*

*Westerfield Railway – will there be a car park for commuters?*

## **167. The current Financial Situation – Clerks report**

Unity Trust Bank balance as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2026 £28,172.04.

Suffolk Building Society balance as at 28<sup>th</sup> May 2026 £75,199.51

Balances witnessed and statements signed by Faye Ellis.

Next Finance Committee meeting 13<sup>th</sup> August 2026.

Susan Ross compiling new accounts/budget spreadsheet.

## **168. To approve the following payments (including VAT if applicable):**

| <b>Payment Reference</b> | <b>Payment to</b>                              | <b>Amount in pounds £ incl VAT</b> |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| a                        | Henley Building Services                       | £13,964.40                         |
| b                        | A Burrows printer ink                          | £29.48                             |
| c                        | A Burrows Microsoft 365 annual fee             | £19.99                             |
| d                        | Bank Charges May 2026                          | £7.00                              |
| e                        | Deben Climate Centre Donation                  | £100.00                            |
| f                        | Bank Charges June 2026                         | £7.00                              |
| g                        | R Nicol APM refreshments reimbursement         | £15.50                             |
| h                        | Clerk A Burrows May 2026                       | £491.18                            |
| i                        | HMRC Q1 2026                                   | £456.85                            |
| j                        | Clerk A Burrows June 2026                      | £491.18                            |
| k                        | Playquip Repairs to Zip Line Recreation ground | £600.00                            |

Payment's approval - Proposed by Richard Nicol, seconded by Andy Dungey.

**169.To Review internal Control Statement and report** – postponed to September meeting, after the Finance Committee have met in August.

Data Protection Policy to be reviewed and adopted at September Meeting

## **170. To consider a change to Parish Council meetings start time - an earlier start at 7pm?**

Following discussion, a Vote to start at 7pm was taken–

Yes - 3

No – 6

Abstained - 1

Clerk to enquire with ESCllr Dan Clery and SCCllr Elaine Bryce to see if an earlier time would suit them.

### **171.Flood Advisory Committee update**

Susan Ross had chased SCC Flood investigation team to see if there was an update following a previous meeting, the SCC team have met with Witnesham land owners regarding natural solutions to the flooding. They are still in discussions with Swilland land owners. It is disappointing that little action seems to be taken to reduce future flood risk.

### **172. Playing Field Future Plans update, following Planning Committee meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2026.**

The Planning & Property committee meeting in June had considered the new lease and freehold proposal with Suffolk County Council for the playing field, and recommended that the Parish Council go ahead with the new 25 year lease and the transfer of a portion of the land as freehold to the Parish Council – plans shown to full council of the lease area and proposed freehold land being transferred to the Parish Council.

Clerk reported that the Parish Council will pay SCC Legal Costs of £750 plus solicitors Birketts costs approx. £1700 plus other expenses. At present Birketts quote looks to be the cheapest.

A Vote to proceed was taken – All in agreement

### **173.Witnesham Village Hall update**

To date £2,500 raised over last months from coffee mornings, afternoon tea and family day at Burnbank. Could we encourage other businesses to come along to the coffee mornings? At the last coffee morning Skoobs attended with preloved children's toys, games and books for sale.

Several grant applications have been submitted for funds towards the new heating system and more quotes coming in.

No caretaker at present – changes to be made to ease this.

New bookings, art class and possible puppy classes will start soon.

To make pricing easier – Hall Hire rates are now 12 an hour, min hire 2 hrs, Fri and Sat £20, all day £150

At present there are three trustees, however the Village Hall is actually owned by the community with the Parish Council as custodial trustee.

Looking at responsibilities of a trustee, it may be hard to get new ones.

Consideration is asked that PC to become sole trustee rather than individuals.

Richard Nicol proposes that the Finance comm look at the responsibilities at the next meeting in August. This would help structure the financial position of the VHMC.

The VHMC would remain in place to run the Hall.

Jerry Hindle agreed in principle and proposed that the idea of the PC becoming sole trustee be explored. Clerk and Richard Nicol to take forward.

This may need a public meeting to consult with our residents and encourage organisations who regularly use the hall to join the VHMC..

To discuss again at September PC meeting

Andy Dungey Seconded.

All other councillors in agreement.

Clerk to see if Community Action Suffolk can send a representative to come and give a talk/presentation re the changeover of trustees.

Clerk to contact Bucklesham PC re the process to change over.

174.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.**

For September agenda – contact WASPS and School to see if they want to work in partnership with PC regarding future of playing field, possible new building.  
Need to build relationships.

Thanks to Tim for repairs to play equipment.

Wittens Way – PC have queried with ESC regarding signs as they say 'do not enter' the 'public open space' and gap to be opened up where hoggin path currently leads to a fence.

**Meeting closed 9.05pm**