

**MINUTES  
WITHAM FRIARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD ON THURSDAY 9 JULY 2015 AT 7.30 P.M. IN THE VILLAGE HALL**

<b>Present</b>	Fred Nicholls (Chairman)	FN
	Will Sheppard	WS
	Richard Nickless	RN
	Colin Horstmann	CH
	Gregory Stevens	GS
<b>In attendance</b>	Anthea Brooks, Clerk	AB
	Two representatives from Distgen	
	Two representatives from Field	
	Seven members of the public	
<b>Apologies</b>	Roy Featherstone	RF

**ACTIONS**

**1 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES**

1.1 Emergency exits and procedures were explained

**2 PUBLIC ACCESS**

2.1 The following items were noted

- A young driver had collided with one of the wooden light posts in the car park but had left his name and number if we wanted to contact him. Very little damage caused.
- The Village Hall Committee thanked the Parish Council for the grant they had received in the last financial year and hoped that further funding would be available in the coming year. A consultation exercise will be undertaken shortly regarding the proposed work.

**3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

3.1 Apologies for absence were received from Roy Featherstone (RF)

**4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS AND REQUESTS FOR RECORDING**

4.1 There were no declarations of interest or requests for dispensation and no requests for recording.

**5 TO RECEIVE A CHEQUE FROM MR JOHN ZAMICK, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF DISTGEN LTD.**

5.1 Mr John Zamick, Managing Director of Distgen Ltd presented the council with a cheque for £3,750 being 2.5% of the gross revenue of the wind turbine to the 31 March 2015.

5.2 Mr Zamick reported that initial problems had been overcome and the payment to the village is likely to double in the next financial year. The Council were asked to make a decision at their next meeting as to whether they require payment monthly or annually. Mr Zamick thanked the village for their support.

5.3 The following points were noted in answer to questions raised

- the turbine is white because that is the colour approved by the planner
- Shares in the company are not available at this stage
- The turbine does have to be stopped when the wind reaches above 50mph but this rarely happens because the calculation is done on average speed not just a one off occasion

5.4 FN on behalf of the council thanked Mr Zamick for attending and stated that a decision would be made soon on appropriate of the funds.

5.5 The representatives from Distgen left the meeting.

## **6 TO RECEIVE AN INFORMAL PRESENTATION FROM MR HENRY GIBSON REGARDING PLANS TO IMPROVE THE BROADBAND SERVICE TO WITHAM FRIARY**

6.1 Mr Henry Gibson gave an informal presentation on plans to improve the broadband service to Witham Friary. It is intended to provide a service via wireless technologies. The main receiver would be at Tytherington and the signal would be beamed to the village to antennae and from there to individual users who would have a small receiver on the side of their house or business.

6.2 The initial project is intended to cover Tytherington, Trudoxhill, Witham Friary and Wanstrow and then Norton St Philip, Rode, Beckington and Rudge and it is hoped to move forward with this by the end of the year with a service being provided to Witham by Christmas.

6.3 It is hoped that local farmers and landowners would be willing to have antennae on their land and buildings.

6.4 The following points were noted

- Speed would be 1000 megabit from the main mast providing a basic 10 megabit service to customers
- The weather has not tangible effect
- BT are installing fibre into rural communities but are only targeting 80% of rural homes by 2018. Consider 'ThinkingWisp' in areas of Norfolk and Suffolk which is a similar scheme [www.thinkingwisp.co.uk](http://www.thinkingwisp.co.uk)

- Villages will be cluster together geographically for economies of scale
- The aim is to keep the cost of the package to £30 a month or in line with BT costs. There would be no line rental. The suggestion is that there would be a 12 month contract initially.
- In some areas fibre works but in others BT is delivering a system which is fundamentally flawed. The cost of investment to them for this type of group of villages is not worth the effort.
- It is intended that the company will be part owned by the community. There is an aspiration for community ownership and investment in the company
- The antennae do not require planning approval. If the mast is over a certain height than planning is required but the company will undertake this.
- The company will reach everyone who sign up for the service and will install the necessary antennae to beam the signal. The connection points will need to be managed and this will depend on landowners and farmers being willing for antennae to be installed on their land
- There will be set up costs approximately £100 per hour
- Masts are sited after consideration of the geography of the area
- The next step would be to survey the village and assess the level of interest and the number of likely customers. There would then be a pilot roll out and a test of the model.
- To make it viable 30% interest is required
- There are other examples in the country, for example Cheltenham
- Maintenance would have to be robust

6.5 Mr Gibson stated that there would be a more detailed presentation at the Old Church School in Frome at 6.30 p.m. on Friday 31 July to which Witham Friary Parish Councillors are invited.

6.6 FN thanked Mr Gibson and his colleague on behalf of the Council for attending. It was agreed that this item would be further discussed at the next meeting on 13 August.

## **7 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11 JUNE 2015**

7.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 11 June 2015 were agreed as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

**8 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 11 JUNE**

- 8.1 **Item 6.1 Bank Mandate** – The Clerk will obtain bank mandates for the new councillors to complete and visit the bank regarding RF’s mandate which has still not been confirmed although the forms have been returned. **Clerk**
  
- 8.2 **Item 6.4** – an advertisement for a new PPLO (Parish Path Liaison Officer) had been placed in the Postlebury magazine but unfortunately there had been no response. It was suggested that villagers could be asked to ‘adopt’ a path or paths which they walk regularly and report any problems to the Council. The Clerk gave out footpath maps and it was agreed to discuss this again at the next meeting. **Clerk**
  
- 8.3 **Item 6.5 Dog Litter** – RF had drafted an article about the dangers of dog litter to the public with the intention that this should be inserted in the Postlebury magazine. This will be discussed at the next meeting. **RF**
  
- 8.4 **Item 6.6 Car park lights** – it was noted that RF has found another electrician to carry out this work. **RF**
  
- 8.5 **Item 11.1 Bank Creep** – the work has not yet been carried out **WS**
  
- 8.6 **Item 11.5 – Longham Footpath stile** – The stile needs repair – the Clerk will report this. **Clerk**

**9 PLANNING – status of current applications**

- 9.1 **2015/1342/HSE Erection of a single storey extension to rear of property at Henleaze Farm, Holt Lane, Witham Friary for Mr Wesley Jenkins**
  - 9.1.1 The Council discussed the above planning application. CH proposed, GS seconded and it was agreed unanimously to recommend approval of the application.
  
- 9.2 **2015/1237/HSE First floor extension at Rough Stubbs, 10 Holt Lane, Witham Friary for Mr Andrew Garmin**
  - 9.2.1 The Council discussed the above planning application. WS proposed, CH seconded and it was agreed unanimously to recommend approval of the application.

**9.3 2014/2354/FUL Change of use from a mixed C3 dwelling/equestrian use to use as a holiday home with guest facilities, introduction of a new residential staff cottage and neighbouring management office, refurbish one existing equestrian barn with communal leisure space for visitors and guests and remove two existing equestrian barns at Gibbons Farm, Witham Friary for Ms Lara Tabatznik**

9.3.1 This application has been approved with conditions. The Clerk will scan the letter and send out to Councillors by email. **Clerk**

**9.4 Application 2014/2576/FUL Installation of 208 Solar PV panels (ground mounted) at Gibbons Farm, Holt Lane, Witham Friary for Mr Seth Tabatznik**

9.4.1 This application is still pending consideration

## **10 FINANCE**

10.1 The following cheques were signed

- **Clerk's Salary for the period ending 30.06.15 - £147.52**

10.2 Financial statement to 09.07.15 - was agreed and signed

**10.3 Application for grant for the upkeep of Witham Friary Churchyard**

10.3.1 An application had been received from Postlebury PCC for a grant towards the upkeep of Witham Friary Churchyard. It was proposed by RN, seconded by WS and agreed unanimously to grant £400 for this purpose. A cheque will be signed at the next meeting

## **11 Witham Water**

11.1 Work is currently ongoing to bury the overground pipe.

## **12 RECREATION FIELD AND PLAYPATCH**

**12.1 Playpatch**

12.1.1 Helena Read attended the meeting and gave an update on the current status of the Play Patch grant and the items of equipment to be purchased including new swings and a seesaw. The chosen provider is Outdoor Play South West. The grant from MDC has been confirmed as £22,000 however this will not go as far as it was hoped as the total amount of the quotation is £35,489.63 including VAT. **Clerk**

- 12.1.2 A meeting had been held that day with representatives from MDC. MDC had suggested applying for another grant from Awards for All for the shortfall and Helena and Deborah Liggatt are putting together the application to apply for another £16k.
- 12.1.3 It is noted that this will be a community project with the village coming together to do a lot of the labouring work.
- 12.1.4 Some of the new equipment will be suitable for children with disabilities but application for a specific grant for this would have more implications and involve much more detailed work to entrances, etc.
- 12.1.5 It was proposed by RN, seconded by WS and agreed unanimously to take this project forward with the suggested equipment as detailed by Helena. The next step will be to put in a planning application
- 12.1.6 The Clerk to check the insurance to make sure that the villagers are insured to work on a community project. **Clerk**
- 12.1.7 It was agreed that VAT could be claimed back monthly rather than annually. The contractor has asked for terms of 50% with order which was felt unreasonable. It was agreed to ask for 25% on order, 25% on delivery and 50% on completion.
- 12.1.8 It was noted that RF has discussed inspections with the contractor and he is happy to work with RF on this.
- 12.1.9 It was agreed that if there is still a shortfall after the grant application then sponsorship from local businesses will be sought
- 12.2 **Recreation Field**
- 12.2.1 It was noted that the railings surrounding the car park were in a poor condition. It was agreed that the Clerk would ask the contractor to remove the damaged pieces and also obtain a quotation for replacement in a more long lasting material. **Clerk**
- 12.2.2 Use of recreation field by outsiders – it had been agreed to discuss this with the local PCSO and the Clerk is to make contact to ask him to attend a meeting. It was also agreed to get a quotation for a sign which would state that the Recreation Field is for the use of residents of Witham Friary only and outside use is only by prior arrangement with the Parish Council. A contact name and email address would need to be added. This would be by order of Witham Friary Parish Council. **Clerk**

**13 HIGHWAYS/ROW MAINTENANCE**

13.1 It was reported that the verges have been cut

**14 CORRESPONDENCE**

14.1 The Clerk had received the following correspondence/information

- Parish Bulletin (already distributed)
- Adopt a Path – an initiative from Somerset County Council. The Clerk will send the information to the distribution list and a notice will be put up in the pub.
- The Clerk had received an email from David Sheridan, Chairman of Mells Village Shop Ltd informing us that the Post Office Community Fund had rejected the application for support in purchasing a PO van for the outreach services. However outreach services will continue with the use of owners cars.

**15 MISCELLANEOUS AND FUTURE BUSINESS**

- 15.1
- **Broadband presentation** – 31 July in Frome at 6.30 p.m. at the Old Church School.
  - Allocation of wind turbine money
  - Donation to village hall

**16 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

16.1 The next meeting will take place on Thursday 13 August 2015 at 7.30 p.m. in the Village Hall.