

**MINUTES  
WITHAM FRIARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD ON TUESDAY 7 FEBRUARY 2017 AT 7.30 P.M. IN THE VILLAGE HALL**

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

**ACTIONS**

**1            EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES**

1.1           Emergency exits and procedures were explained

**2            APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

2.1           No apologies were recorded

**3            PUBLIC ACCESS**

3.1           The drain on Holt Road at the top of the track to Hartsmead is blocked and higher than the road surface. As a result water is being diverted down the track to Hartsmead and causing damage to the track. It was agreed that the Clerk would report this on FixMyStreet and RF would report to SCC Highways.

**Clerk/RF**

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

4.1           There were no declarations of interest. It was noted that the meeting could be recorded if requested.

**5            MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 JANUARY 2017**

5.1           The minutes of the meeting held on 12 January were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman. The Clerk extended her thanks to GS for compiling the minutes in her absence.

**6            MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 12 JANUARY 2017**

6.1           **Barrow Farm corner (4.2)** – this has now been repaired

6.2           **Minutes 8 December (5.1)** – the correction to the minutes had been made as noted.

- 6.3 **Keep Fit Group (6.2)** – RF has been unable to meet with the lady running the keep fit group in the car park. He will try and arrange a convenient time. **RF**
- 6.4 **Carpenter** – it had been agreed to purchase a gift for Mike and his family as a gesture of thanks for his work on the benches. It was agreed that this should take the form of a donation towards an annual family pass to Longleat of £150. The Clerk will investigate further **Clerk**
- 6.5 **Ditch Clearance – Recreation Field (8.2)** – RN has not been able to arrange to meet with Richard Gould to discuss this. RN reported that he has two companies coming to quote on the new playing surface and suggested waiting until there is a better idea of what may happen. **RN**
- 6.6 **Witham Water (9.1)** – FN reported that Dave Barnet is not thinking about retiring in the short term and Abbotts have been confirmed as a back-up which means there is no real change. Councillors discussed having access to a contact number should there be a problem with the water supply and FN stated that this was 01985 844202 which is the Bradley Estates Office. It was agreed that the Clerk would put together a list of numbers giving contact details for the Council and other emergency numbers. This would then be posted around the village. **Clerk**
- 6.7 **Bus Service (12.3)** – RN has enquired whether Gare Hill could be added to the route for the bus and MCT are considering this.
- 6.8 **Vehicle Gate – Playpatch (13.1)** – it had been reported that the gate can be pushed open – RF has this in hand **RF**
- 6.9 **Broadband (10.1)** – CH had received an email regarding Fibre to Premises which he had sent to Councillors. It was agreed that this should be put on Facebook and attached to the minutes. **Clerk**
- 6.10 **Bus Service (12.3)** – Mendip Community Transport have agreed to consider adding Gare Hill to the bus route and would like and identify potential users.
- 6.10 **Boat in the Car Park (14.1)** – it was agreed that the owner needs to be contacted to ask for this to be moved. RN will give the Clerk the address details and the Clerk will draft a letter and send to Councillors for comment. The letter will be on similar lines to that sent to the owner of the camper van which was also parked on the Recreation Field car park. **Clerk**

## 7 **PLANNING**

- 7.1 There were no planning issues to discuss

**8 FINANCE**

8.1 **Financial Statement** - The financial statement at 07.02.17 was agreed and signed.

8.2 **Budget**

8.2.1 The draft budget for the 2017/18 financial year was considered. It was agreed that allocation to the village hall will be discussed at the next meeting and in the meanwhile the Clerk will compile a statement of funds allocated to the village hall for the last couple of years. It was agreed to budget £4,000 for the maintenance contract and also introduce a sum of £2,000 to clear and maintain the ditches. The rest of the budget was agreed and will be redrafted once a decision is made on the village hall.

**Clerk**

8.3 **Maintenance Contract**

8.3.1 Three quotations had been received for the grass cutting and upkeep of the Recreation Field and Playpatch – prices quoted being £2,590, £3,235 and £3,715. After discussion it was agreed to ask each company to complete a Contractor Assessment form which RF will send to the Clerk for distribution. Once these have been received a final decision can be made on the awarding of the contract.

**RF/Clerk**

8.4 **Purchase of replacement grit bins**

8.4.1 It was agreed NOT to purchase replacement grit bins for those which are in a poor state of repair (numbering four). A member of the public pointed out the advantage of having bins especially on the various bends in the village which can become treacherous during bad weather. The Council agreed and stated that although they would not replace the damaged bins they agreed that those in good condition should continue to be replenished as and when necessary.

8.5 **Precept**

8.5.1 The precept was set at £9,000, proposed by FN, seconded by RF and agreed unanimously.

8.6 **Mendip Community Transport request for grant** – it was agreed not to allocate grant money to MCT in the light of the ongoing subsidy which the Council is providing for the continuation of the bus service.

8.7 The following cheques were signed

- **Clerk's Salary for the period ending 31.12.16 and 31.01.17** (2 x £153.78) = £307.56
- **Mrs A Brooks** - £77.98 – reimbursement for gifts as

agreed by the Council

- **Mendip Community Transport** - £152.99 – contribution to bus service (December and January)
- **Mark Norris Electrical Ltd** - £720.00 – installation of night storage heaters in Village Hall
- **Jim's Country and Garden Resources** - £171.13 – reimbursement for planting and supply of horse chestnut tree.

## 9 WITHAM WATER

9.1 Already discussed under Matters Arising

## 10 BROADBAND

10.1 Already discussed under Matters Arising

## 11 VILLAGE HALL

11.1 An email had been received from Jim Rosser enclosing an invoice from Mark Norris Electrical for installation of two storage heaters in the Hall (cheque issued – see under Finance)

11.2 The email also itemised various possible projects which the Parish Council is being asked to consider as follows:

- Replacement of brown chairs
- Replacement of small tables with folding ones
- Repairing barge board at West elevation and other exterior painting
- Replacement of internal double doors with glazed ones to improve lighting in the entrance hall
- Internal decoration and repairs to main hall
- If the French window project does not go ahead then exterior pointing, provision of a rainwater channel along wall/tarmac interface and stripping inappropriate internal concrete render and replacing with suitable material would need to be done separately

11.3 If the French window project does not go ahead then agreement has been reached that the grant can be used for other significant capital improvement projects such as fitting new sliding doors, insulating the roof of the main hall and looking at heating options and raising the height between the main and secondary parts of the main hall.

11.4 Longer term plans include improving disabled access and consideration of what to do with the original cloakroom.

11.5 The Council discussed the above and agreed to ask Jim Rosser to attend the next meeting. The Clerk will write to him and state that the Council are giving his grant application serious consideration but would like to see a fully worked up proposal for a project such as the insulation of the roof of the main hall. **Clerk**

11.6 A further suggestion was made that the Council may consider helping with the funding of installation of broadband in the hall which would be beneficial to potential hirers. WS agreed to speak to Jim Rosser regarding his attendance at the next meeting and the quotes for the various maintenance items which the Village Hall Committee would like to take forward. **WS**

## **12 BUS SERVICES**

12.1 The bus service continues to be subsidised by the various Parish Councils. A report had been received from Michael Gay at Wanstrow giving an update on progress. The report proposed that the next scheme for council underwriting should last from the end of February to the end of June (18 weeks) and by then any success or otherwise of grant applications should be known. The total gross risk for this period would be £450 per council, and predicted total costs based on current trends would be £218 spread over four months. It was proposed by CH and seconded by RF and agreed unanimously to carry on supporting the bus service during the 18 weeks from end February to the end of June.

12.2 It was further noted that Michael Gay is will be writing applications to Awards for All and Somerset Community Foundation during February which he will share with the other Parish Councils involved so that they can submit their own applications.

## **13 RECREATION FIELD AND PLAYPATCH**

13.1 **Recreation Field** – nothing further to discuss

13.2 **Playpatch** – nothing to report

## **14 HIGHWAYS/ROW MAINTENANCE**

14.1 **Parking** - WS had received a letter from a resident regarding the state of the parking by Littlewoods. There is a junction there where the road goes down to the stables but there are no double yellows or preventative signs. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact Somerset Highways to ask them to review the area and perhaps consider a hatched area to allow vehicles to pull out safely. The Clerk will also respond to the letter from the parishioner. **Clerk**

14.2 **Railway deliveries** – currently contractors are delivering to the railway and causing disruption in the village and damage to verges. It was noted that there seems to be a blatant disregard for people’s property.

14.3 *(Post meeting note: the situation deteriorated following the meeting and RF contacted the Railways Authorities and took a series of photographs showing the damage to local verges and the disruption to local traffic – the outcome of this will be reported at the next meeting).*

**Agenda**

14.4 **Footpaths**

14.4.1 It was noted that a Footpath Officer needs to be appointed as there is outstanding work such a repairs to stiles. This can be discussed more fully at the next meeting.

**Agenda**

**15 CORRESPONDENCE**

15.1 The Clerk had received the following correspondence

- Parish Information Bulletin

**16 MISCELLANEOUS AND FUTURE BUSINESS**

16.1 **Newsletter** – RN reported that he had received a newsletter from Trudoxhill which was quite readable and which he thought Witham could emulate. He agreed to scan and send the newsletter to Councillors so that they could consider it. The possibility of developing a regular newsletter for the village will be discussed at the next meeting.

**RN  
Agenda**

**17 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

17 .1 The next meeting will be on Thursday 9 March 2017 at 7.30 p.m. in the Village Hall.