

Witham Friary Parish Council Meeting

**Minutes of the remote meeting held on:
Thursday 14th January, 2021 @ 7.30pm**

Present: Hugo Brooke (Chairman) (HB), Colin Horstmann (CH),
John Knowles (JK), Marcus Powell (MP),
Fred Nicholls (FN), Will Sheppard (WS),
Michael Gay (MG), Donna Featherstone (DF)

01/01 Apologies: None

01/02 Disclosure of Interest: None

01/03 Minutes of the Last Meeting:

The minutes of the meeting on 17th December 2020 were approved as an accurate record.

01/03.1 Matters referred to the Chair

The 100 Club has offered £250 toward refurbishment of the village sign posts. The Upton Noble corner signpost is already being renovated by Conker Committee. The Chair recommended the 100 Club money be reserved for out of pocket expenses for the Conker Committee.

The Chair offered congratulations for the Winter Wonderland event to Jess and Roxie and to all who took part. £240 was raised for Help the Homeless charity.

No public present.

MG – thanked the council for responding on the landscape consultation. He stated that this is precept month and in spite of that, Mendip DC are still waiting to hear the Government settlement. There is lots of pressure on finance and later in the month he will be chairing the audit panel that reviews the money strategy for next financial year.

He also stated that a lot of Highways staff had been deployed to vaccination centres so some delays are likely. He warned everyone to take care in the current climate as we are beginning to see Covid cases in small villages where there haven't been cases before.

01/04 Covid 19

HB reminded everyone to exercise great caution and refrain from going into other people's houses as Covid cases are rising rapidly.

01/05 Planning

Application Number: 2020/2571/HSE

Proposal: Rear single storey extension and new elevational treatments including new first floor dormer windows and rooflights.

Location: Greenacres , Bindon Lane, Witham Friary, Frome.

Applicant: Charlton

Application Type: Householder application

No objections were raised so unanimous approval was given.

01/06 Finance

01/06.1 The Clerk stated that finances were looking quite healthy.

CH noted to the Clerk that the cashbook Excel file has a problem with totalling. Parish Clerk to look into this.

Clerk stated that there was a discrepancy - £400 more in the actual account than in the accounts book. Clerk to investigate.

JK congratulated the Clerk on getting more money back from the MRC.

After Note: The £400 discrepancy has been corrected since.

01/06.2 To present accounts for payment:

Jim Rosser – INV 2020/062: £90.00 was unanimously approved for payment

Clerk's timesheet- unanimously approved for payment

01.06.3 Precept 20/21

The Clerk proposed that the precept be kept at its current level due to the effect Covid is having on people's income. Unanimous approval.

01/07 Actions

- MP to chase network Rail for action on litter on Tynemead Lane and the blocking of the road drain at the entrance to their yard in the middle of the village.
- WS to contact company who provided the Recreation Ground path to see what they recommend for the damage which is occurring.
- Clerk and JK to look into guidelines for playground use.
- JK to obtain hand gel and put in place in the Play Patch.
- HB and JK to speak with Sebastian re Witham Water.
- MG to contact Bristol Water over its lack of action.

01/08 Reports

01/08.1 Highways (FN)

Preparation work has been completed in Private Drive. No other issues.

01/08.2 Communications (CH)

There has been a slight expansion of the website to incorporate Postlebury news. There is space for 12 months and CH agreed to put up and take down as necessary.

01/08.3 Recreation Ground (WS)

The Conker Committee have been very busy with diggers making the pump track. It is now complete and they are waiting until it is dry enough to put stone down. HB raised the issue of breaking up of the path around the edge of the Recreation Ground.

01/08.4 Play Patch (JK)

Further repairs should start shortly but it is weather dependent. It is inspected once a week to ensure safe.

HB raised the fact that children are using the Play Patch without their parents and that people should be reminded that children should be accompanied during Covid times. JK stated that it was at parents' discretion. HB suggested putting an age limit on it.

MG advised that parks are open and previously they were meant to make a risk assessment to have playgrounds open. Also that equipment should be cleaned in between use. JK reported that a risk assessment had been done and that it is inspected once a week. Instructions are on the entrances and that it should be emphasised that parents are responsible for children.

DF suggested that hand gel be placed next to apparatus as children are used to sanitising regularly at school. MG suggested putting it in a net and attaching to poles. JK to action.

01/08.5 Footpaths (JK)

Claire, from Somerset footpaths said she would visit the footpath next to the church but hasn't and isn't allowed to now due to Lockdown. JK asked MG to take it up. The path is impassable and Wanstrow have issues with this too. MG agreed to take up the problem but wasn't sure when Claire would be allowed to visit.

01/09 Witham Water Update

Disappointed that nothing has been heard from Tim St John at Bristol Water. MG and HB will look into this.

The Working Group has been set up and Roy Featherstone will coordinate and report to the meeting once a quarter.

WS raised that he had had an issue with a water supply pump breaking down. It was swiftly fixed but communication during the mend was poor. Better communication during and after any repairs would be much appreciated. JK to advise.

01/10 Other Business referred to the Clerk

The Clerk had received a complaint that drainage ditches outside Witham Vale farm had been blocked off so that water ran down the road instead of into the ditch. HB stated he had looked at the stone blocks concerned and said they were there purely for traffic calming at the entrance to the property. They are not blocking anything nor sending any more water down into the village.

01/11 The next WFPC meeting was confirmed as Tuesday 9th February at 7.30pm, via Zoom.