

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF
WITHAM FRIARY PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON THURSDAY 9 NOVEMBER 2017 AT 7.30 P.M. IN THE VILLAGE HALL**

Present	Roy Featherstone (Chairman)	RF
	Colin Horstmann	CH
	Greg Stevens	GS
	Fred Nicholls	FN

In attendance	Anthea Brooks, Clerk	AB
	4 members of the public	
	R Skidmore, District Councillor (part meeting)	RS

ACTIONS

1 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES

1.1 Emergency exits and procedures were explained

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2.1 Apologies were received from Will Sheppard (WS).

3 PUBLIC ACCESS

3.1 RS gave an update on MDC as follows

- Business rates 2020 over to District Council but have a cap, the priority is to keep and encourage businesses.
- Dorset is becoming a unitary authority but Somerset have declined.
- MDC are in partnership with four other District Councils. Contracts are handled via Capita and they are very efficient.
- South Somerset have a very small liberal majority and have refused to come in with Mendip which would have been ideal for these two neighbours to have joined together.
- Local Plan Part II will go to full Council in December to issue for final consultation
- Finance – Mendip have a substantial operating capability and are about to close two commercial property deals to bring in income which should help with filling in any shortfall between now and 2020.

3.2 **Broadband** – a member of the public gave an update on his current situation where BT have recently cancelled because Open Reach have not finished their part of the work although it has been put in hand today but is not working properly. CH stated that he would get in touch with his contact at Open Reach and try to expedite this and make sure she is aware of the situation.

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 OCTOBER 2017

- 5.1 On item 3.1.5 the name should be Gavin Patterson and not as stated. With this correction the minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2017 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman

6 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 OCTOBER 2017

- 6.1 **Resignation of Councillor** - It was noted that one Councillor had already resigned with another likely to leave in the near future (GS). A member of the public who was in attendance, John Knowles, put his name forward. It was proposed by FN, seconded by CH and agreed unanimously to co-opt Mr Knowles onto the Council.
- 6.2 **Emergency Number list (including Witham Water)/Emergency Plan** – RF reported that he is still working on this document and will send out an amended draft when it is available. **RF**
- 6.3 **Recreation Field – All Weather Service (11.1)** – RF will discuss this with RN to see what progress has been made. **RF**
- 6.4 **Contact with PCSO** - It was noted that a new PCSO has now taken over the area in which Witham Friary is located. Her name is Olga Hapova and the Clerk has contacted her with a view to arranging a meeting **Clerk**
- 6.5 **Playpatch – Slide – (19.2)** it was agreed that WS would sell the old slide which he still has in storage. **WS**
- 6.6 **Policy Review** - the Clerk reported that the Financial Regulations, Standing Orders and Code of Conduct will need to be approved at a future meeting. **Clerk**
- 6.7 **Walk Around the Village** – RF suggested a walk to identify areas which need attention. RF will try and arrange a date for this. **RF**
- 6.8 **Churchyard Grass Cutting (3.9)** – it was agreed to discuss this again at a future meeting following the walk around the village.
- 6.9 **Conker Committee (3.7)** – thanks were extended to the Conker Committee for organising the conker championships which took

place on 15 October and also for the Bonfire Night event.

6.10 **NS&I Deposit Account (8.2)** – The Clerk had completed the necessary form and send it to NS&I to open a deposit account.

6.11 **Bank Account** – the Clerk stated that two councillors would have to provide their identification to Nat West again in order that the mandate can be brought up to date. These are CH and RF. John Knowles (JK) would also have to visit Nat West to have his identification verified. The Clerk provided Councillors with the necessary forms. Once this process has been done an overall mandate can be signed off at the next meeting.

6.12 **Purchase of new defibrillator** – The Clerk reported that she has completed an application form for funding for a replacement defibrillator. The Clerk still needs to write to Witham Vale Farmers who purchased the original defibrillator before a replacement is bought and WS was going to let her have an address.

Clerk

6.13 **Use of Playing Field/Car Park** – The Clerk reported that she now had contact with someone from Frome FC but once again they were proving to be non-responsive. The Clerk stated that she would speak to SALC to confirm the legal position of the Council.

Clerk

6.14 **Ditch Clearance (3.5.3)** – the Clerk reported that she had received quotes from Grass Valet for clearing the ditches as follows

Small ditch next to Hutton's - £200 plus VAT

Larger ditch for which equipment has to be hired - £400 plus VAT

It was proposed by FN, seconded by RF and agreed unanimously to ask Grass Valet to go ahead with this clearance. The Clerk will contact them to ask them to go ahead.

Clerk

7 **PLANNING**

7.1 There were no new applications to discuss

8 **FINANCE**

8.1 **Financial Statement** - The financial statement at 09.11.17 was agreed and signed.

8.2 **Grant for refurbishment of church organ** - RF reported that he had spoken to George Pritchard who advised that work is underway to find a suitable organisation who may be willing to fund whole or part of the refurbishment of the organ. It was agreed that once there is evidence that a grant is forthcoming

the Parish Council will discuss further offering a suitable grant towards the work.

- 8.3 **Grass Cutting Contract – additional cuts** – as discussed at the meeting in October, the Cricket Club have requested additional cuts during the playing season so that cutting is weekly rather than fortnightly. The extra cost would be £100 plus VAT per month and would last for a period of four months, so the total would be £400 plus VAT. The Cricket Club have offered to contribute to the additional cost which may be reduced if the gang mowers are fit for purpose and can be used. After discussion it was agreed to go ahead with the weekly cuts for a four month period and the Clerk will inform the contractor of the decision.

Clerk

8.4 **Cheques for signature**

- Grass Valet – third charge for annual contract - £1294.00
- Glasdon – new dog bin and rubbish bin for play patch - £447.94
- MCT Bus Subsidy (Oct) £51.04
- MCT Bus Subsidy (Nov) £56.92
- Grant Thornton – audit fee £240.00
- Mrs A Brooks – Clerk's Salary – October 2017 - £160.29

9 **WITHAM WATER**

- 9.1 RF reported that approximately three weeks ago there had been a major leak around Moorleaze. Dave Barnett was away at the time and a contractor was brought in who found the problem and fixed it. On Monday the same contractors will be starting work in the village just outside the pub where they will installing a new main. Dave Barnett spoke to RF about the work and said that the contractors (Abbotts') would in future do work if he is not around and after he retires. He also asked whether it would be in order to Abbotts to ask parishioners to who park their cars on the road to move them to the Recreation Field whilst the work is going on. RF agreed to put something on Facebook to this effect.
- 9.2 It was noted that there used to be a very detailed plan of the water pipes. FN suggested that Dave should be asked to obtain a copy of this plan and he would be happy to have the plan and be a point of contact should the contractors require access.

10 **BROADBAND**

- 10.1 CH reported that he now receives reports from his contact (Sharon Gibson) at Open Reach on a regular basis. She has expedited a number of delays recently and there is some progress. Any problems being reported to CH have been looked at although the overall situation still remains chaotic and

only one more person has been connected since the last meeting. It was noted that the BT Call Centre at Dundee have been very helpful.

11 VILLAGE HALL

11.1 Work has started on the sliding doors.

12 BUS SERVICES

12.1 The Clerk is looking into obtaining funding towards the cost of subsidising the bus service from the Somerset Community Fund. Trudoxhill have already been successful in obtaining funding. RF will speak to RN about the possibility of the bus route running through Gare Hill.

Clerk

13 RECREATION FIELD AND PLAYPATCH

13.1 Playpatch

13.1.1 Work to be done includes refurbishment of the chain link fencing and posts, the swings need rubbing down, rust removing and repainting, bolts and shackles and two seats need replacing. There are coping stones which are coming off the wall which need refixing. RF reported that he had received a quotation of £1267 for this work. CH stated that he knew someone who could possibly do this at a cheaper price and RF will send CH and the Clerk a copy of the quote. It was also agreed to look at the work which needs to be done during the walk around the village.

RF

14 HIGHWAYS/Row MAINTENANCE

14.2 **Woodcutting at West End** – GS reported that this area has been cleared, all the mud has gone and the green lane reinstated.

15 CORRESPONDENCE

15.1 The Clerk had received the following items of correspondence

- Email from MDC regarding Briefing sessions with senior planners to take place as follows:
 - 10 January at 6.30 p.m. at MDC
 - 6 February 6.30 p.m. in the Assembly Rooms, Frome
 - 15 March 6.30 p.m. in the Town Hall, GlastonburyIf you want to attend please let the Clerk know and she will pass the information to MDC.
- Highways, SCC – salt bags available at Frome and Glastonbury depots on Saturday 25 November for collection. Also information on any grit bins which need

- refilling to be sent to Highways by 24 November
- Your Guide to Winter Service in Somerset 2017/18 –
- Request from Somerset Waste Partnership on any recycling of Christmas Trees in the village
- Email from Chris Loughlin the new Project and Improvement Officer (Engagement) at MDC who will be managing and coordinate the Parish Forum and Parish Bulletin.

16 MISCELLANEOUS AND FUTURE BUSINESS

- 16.1 **Village signs** – refurbishment to be discussed at a future meeting.

Agenda

- 16.1 **Ramblers use of car park** – RF stated that in February 2018 the Ramblers want to walk some of the local footpaths and have asked if they can park their cars in the Recreation Field car park – this was agreed and RF will email and stated that this is in order

19 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

- 19.1 The next meeting will take place on Thursday 14 December at 7.30 p.m.