

Minutes of the **WITHYHAM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING** held on 12th
November 2018 at 7.30pm in The Old Station, Groombridge

PRESENT Cllrs Nick Anderson, Robin Ashby, Jane Clare, Andrew Fane, Diana Kelly (Chair), Keith Obbard, Jill Pardey, Marcus Tarling, Paul Watkins, Stephen Whittaker, Linsey Winter

In attendance: District Cllr William Rutherford – WDC (for item 7)
County Cllr Francis Whetstone – ESCC (for item 7)
Giny Best – Frant Parish Council

Members of the public are encouraged to come to the meetings and there is a 10 minute opportunity at the start of the meeting for them to address the Council. There were no members of the public present.

1. ENQUIRE WHETHER ANYONE PRESENT INTENDS TO FILM, PHOTOGRAPH AND/OR RECORD THE MEETING: None.

2. APOLOGIES: Cllr Jonathan Kelly – family commitment
Cllr Gwen Butcher – family commitment
District Cllr Johanna Howell

3. CO-OPTION OF COUNCILLOR FOR GROOMBRIDGE WARD

Paul Watkins introduced himself, he has a background in town planning/chartered surveying and has been on the Air Traffic Committee.

001514 RESOLVED unanimously to co-opt Paul Watkins to the Parish Council.
Cllr D Kelly welcomed Cllr Watkins to his first meeting.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – None.

5. MINUTES

5.1. To resolve that the minutes of the Council Meeting held on Monday 8th October 2018 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

001515 RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 8th October 2018 were approved.

5.2. Matters outstanding from these minutes (not listed as separate agenda items)

Matters resolved from previous minutes

Minute no.	Who	Item
Pg.1002	Clerk	Highways coordinator has obtained Groombridge drainage plans and will pursue for the rest of the parish
Pg. 1588	Cllr Winter and Clerk	Clerk reviewing Parish Plan actions as part of budget setting work
Pg. 1612	Clerks	Resident notified about ownership of the verge on the cricket ground side of Newton Willows

Pg. 1694	Clerk	Container on Groombridge Recreation Ground installed
Pg. 1708	Clerk	Sign bought for the entrance driveway to Balls Green Community Space
Pg. 1710	Cllrs Howell & Whetstone	District and County councillors asked to feedback any representation on Fracking consultation
Pg. 1711	Cllr Tarling	Clerks to report logs at Park Corner to ES Highways
Pg. 1711	Clerks	WDC inspected where tree removed at Gillridge Lane and confirmed no TPO
Pg.1711	Clerks	Cllr Rutherford reminded to investigate parking at Gillridge Lane layby
Pg. 1711	Highways Coordinator	Recommendations from observing Lye Green/Plumyfeather junction to RSC
Pg. 1711	Clerk	Notified ESCC that Withyham Parish Council intends to purchase additional cuts
Pg. 1712	Administrative Assistant	Unsung Helpers celebration on 10 th December being organised
Pg. 1713	Clerk	Disciplinary policy adopted
Pg. 1713	Clerk	Grievance policy adopted
Pg. 1713	Clerk	Lone Working policy adopted
Pg. 1713	Clerk	Councillor/Employee protocol adopted

Actions outstanding from previous minutes

The Clerks were asked to report the large logs on the verge by the highway at Park Corner

Minute no.	Who	Item
Pg. 1102	Administration Assistant	Suggest to Cllrs Obbard and Clare where environmental improvements can be made in the office
Pg. 1662	Clerk	Arrange to replace pane of glass at Balls Green telephone box
Pg. 1692	Clerk/Cllr D Kelly	Agree final details for bench with Groombridge Horticultural Society
Pg. 1693	Clerk	Further research hedge cutting at Balls Green Community Area
001497	Clerk	Submit an updated bank mandate with any new members of the Finance and Administration Committee added as signatories
Pg. 1698	Cllrs D Kelly & Whittaker	Guidance on councillor roles in projects to be produced
Pg. 1711	Clerks	Report logs at Park Corner to ES Highways
Pg. 1711	Cllr Howell	Speak with Street Cleaning about debris in channels at A264
Pg. 1712	Clerks	Next newsletter to explain that WPC is being asked to pay for more items that were previously done by ESCC
Pg. 1712	Clerks	Add frequency of rural cuts in some places to next Road Safety Committee agenda

Actions from these Minutes

Minute no.	Who	Item
Pg. 1727	Air Traffic Committee	Draft a response to the Gatwick Master Plan 2018 consultation
Pg. 1729	Clerk	Contact ESCC and SVR about Back Lane Bridge
Pg. 1729	Groombridge Councillors	Meet to agree Ward Chair
Pg. 1729	Cllr Pardey	Provide details of car at Hoadleys Lane to Clerks to check that it is taxed and insured
001520	Clerk	Offer overtime to undertake some work relating to the volunteers
Pg. 1730	Councillors	Notify the Clerk by 16 th November if they have any comments on members allowances
001521	Clerk	Adopt the Members Code of Conduct
001523	Clerk	Proceed with 6 new LED lanterns and 2 new columns
001524	Assistant Clerk	Proceed with speed surveys at the locations identified with Road Safety Committee and ESCC

5.3 To agree the removal of actions no longer required

Minute no.	Who	Item
Pg. 1491	Cllr J Kelly	Investigate costings of street renaming
Pg. 1491	Cllr J Kelly	Update the Assistant Clerk on pot holes filled on Beech Green Lane
Pg. 1495	Assistant Clerk	Circulate notes from the SALC Planning Update
Pg. 1530	Clerk	Arrange meeting of Ward Chairs with the Community Resilience lead to discuss the community action plan
Pg. 1585	Ward Chairs	Ward Chairs to contact the Clerk to arrange collection of litter picking equipment to be stored in their homes
Pg. 1616	Cllrs	Consider whether they need any personal data held electronically or paper based, and to destroy if no longer required
Pg. 1642	Chair/Vice Chair/Clerk	Identify actions no longer required
Pg. 1692	Cllr Whetstone	Speak again with ESCC officers about the road markings at Crowborough Cross
Pg. 1692	Clerk	Query with WDC why Keir are not penalised additionally for failing recycling
Pg. 1712	Councillors	Consider budget requirements for their Wards and notify the Clerk
Pg. 1715	Councillors	Contact the Administrative Assistant if a new ID card is needed

001516 RESOLVED to remove actions listed above.

6. COMMITTEE MINUTES

To receive the following minutes of committees and to approve and confirm recommendations contained therein and as far as requisite, the action taken by them.

6.1 Rights of Way – 16th July 2018

001517 RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the Rights of Way Committee of 16th July 2018.

6.2 Air Traffic Committee – 13th August 2018

The meeting was updated that Gatwick has agreed to look at installing a noise monitor on Gillridge Lane for a minimum of twelve months.

Cllr Watkins reported that he had attended a presentation by Gatwick about their Master Plan 2018 consultation which proposes enlarging their emergency runway in order to allow planes to take off from that, and their current runway to just be used for landings. The deadline for responses is 5th January 2019 and the Air Traffic Committee will respond to that along with five other consultations.

Cllr Tarling had attended a meeting of the High Weald Councils where it was felt that the Gatwick Noise Management Board is being ineffective, resulting in many attendees considering leaving. It was also asked whether Wealden District Council should attend the High Weald Councils meetings.

The Air Traffic Committee was thanked for continuing to identify the issues that are salient to the parish, and Cllr Watkins was thanked for attending the Gatwick presentation.

001518 RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the Air Traffic Committee of 13th August 2018.

6.3 Planning – 30th October 2018

001519 RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the Planning Committee of 30th October 2018.

To receive the following draft minutes of committees and to note recommendations contained therein and as far as requisite, the action taken by them.

6.4 Air Traffic Committee – 30th October 2018

Deferred.

6.5 Rights of Way – 5th November 2018

Deferred.

7. REPORTS FROM DISTRICT and COUNTY COUNCILLORS

County Cllr Whetstone had also attended the Gatwick presentation and made the point that Wealden parishes are unhappy with air noise. He also suggested that East Sussex districts are more involved as statutory consultees.

As an Ashdown Conservator as well as a County Councillor, Cllr Whetstone voiced dismay that ESCC is further cutting their funding to the Ashdown Forest. The Conservators have plans to fundraise a large endowment for the Forest and are concerned that any further County cuts would undermine these efforts. He confirmed that whilst it is open to interpretation whether ESCC is in breach of its obligations under the Act, the

Conservators are unlikely to make a legal challenge due to the costs involved.

Cllr Whetstone was asked about funding cuts and confirmed that ESCC aims to deliver its statutory services but is being squeezed financially. One issue is that as many East Sussex businesses are small, ESCC does not receive sufficient business rates. He stated that as ESCC has been planning and making cuts steadily for some time they are not in the difficult financial situation that many other councils are in.

District Cllr Rutherford confirmed that he would not be standing for re-election. Giny Best, a councillor from Frant, would be standing in May and had attended to hear more about issues affecting Withyham parish.

Cllr Rutherford explained that after the low level of waste collection service delivered by Kier in the summer, WDC is talking to them about managing their resources more effectively in future. At their meeting of 20th November, WDC will consider a new contractor and it is hoped that they will start the contract as soon as possible. The December Cabinet meeting will consider a paper on addressing the issue of plastic recycling.

Responses and representations received regarding the Local Plan are on the WDC website and will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate by the end of the year. Cllr Rutherford confirmed that WDC had sifted and would take on board all comments they feel are appropriate, and all comments received will go to the Planning Inspectorate.

Wealden's Community Grants are open to applications until 30th November. The Chairman's Community Volunteer Awards is open to nominations to 20th December.

Wealden councillors had received a presentation from the Health Authority on social prescribing; following a pilot in Herstmonceux it is hoped to roll out to other parishes.

Cllr Rutherford confirmed that he would respond to the query previously raised about parking at Gillridge Lane.

8. WARD REPORTS

Remembrance wreaths were laid by councillors representing the parish council at all four parish churches by councillors. All received very positive comments.

(a) Groombridge Ward

Council had asked the Rights of Way Committee to consider a request from Spa Valley Railway (SVR) to fund materials for a non-slip surface on Back Lane bridge.

The November RoW Committee discussed their response to Council. The Chair of Rights of Way committee reported that he had found the bridge to be slippery due to the slope and wet weather and that he felt that either ESCC should do something about it or ESCC should insist that SVR does

something about it. A report had been made by 'Ramblers' to ESCC that the bridge is felt to be dangerous. The recommendation from RoW

committee was that WPC should not contribute as the asset belongs to SVR and they are therefore liable for it. Any surfacing should be wide enough for cyclists and horses as well as pedestrians.

Whilst councillors were sympathetic that SVR has limited funds, Council agreed that the Clerk should write to ESCC to ask that they insist on SVR taking the above action and write to SVR to explain WPC's decision to not fund a non-slip surface.

It was also noted that overgrown and cut vegetation has limited the width of Back Lane and a report had been made to ESCC.

As there is a vacancy for a new Groombridge Ward Chair, the Clerk would circulate a ward chair role description to Groombridge councillors. They will have a ward meeting and agree who will become Ward Chair.

It was reported that a shipping container had been installed at Groombridge Recreation Ground to hold equipment relating to the work of WPC and its volunteers. This has now been securely locked.

Councillors noted that the footpath on Corseley Road to the school is particularly slippery from the leaves. The Parish Maintenance Person undertakes clearance every Monday and Thursday morning.

The drain at Hendl Hill has now been fixed and it is hoped that this will prevent the flooding experienced last year. A leak on The Ridge had been reported to ES Highways.

(b) St John's Ward

A car has been parked at the top of Hoadleys Lane with a 'For Sale' sign. Cllr Pardey will provide the details to the Clerks to check that it is taxed and insured.

(c) Withyham/Blackham Ward

Work has begun on the surfacing of the road in connection with the speed reduction on the A264.

Cllrs Rutherford and Whetstone left the meeting.

9. VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR - to consider a revised proposal

The voluntary role of Volunteer Coordinator had been advertised widely in the parish and received no interest. As it is important that some of this work is undertaken, the Clerk is speaking with an employee about undertaking a few hours a week overtime in order to reinvigorate and coordinate some of the Volunteers' work. This would be undertaken on a temporary basis and monitored. It was queried whether any further consultation was required with existing volunteers, but councillors felt that volunteers currently engaged in the process would support this approach.

001520 **RESOLVED** by a majority to allow the Clerk to offer overtime to a current employee to undertake some work relating to the coordination of the volunteers.

10. NEWSLETTER UPDATE

The latest newsletter has been very well received, with many positive comments from residents. The Assistant Clerk was thanked for her hard work. The distribution list needs to be reviewed to ensure an equitable spread of deliverers, and further deliverers could be contacted by the person coordinating the volunteers.

A welcome card had also been produced for people moving into the parish containing details of local services. Councillors can pick these up from the office and deliver them when they notice new residents have moved in.

11. COMMUNITY WARDEN REPORT

The report of the Community Warden's activity had been circulated prior to the meeting. Regarding his observations on school traffic at St John's, it was noted that School Lane down from the school gets very congested despite the church and forest car parks being used, and that the verge at the top of the Reading Room has become muddy from parked cars.

A Speedwatch involving the Community Warden had been organised at Newton Willows/Station Road following an accident further down the road involving a resident. This had been positively received.

The Clerk and Cllr D Kelly had attended a meeting with other parishes about Community Wardens, and Rotherfield Parish Council had voiced interest.

12. COUNCILLORS' REMUNERATION 2019/20 CONSULTATION

Wealden District Council had notified town and parish councils that the Independent Remuneration Panel would be meeting to review members allowances and would welcome feedback for consideration in their report and recommendations for 2019/20. Councillors should notify the Clerk by 16th November if they have any comments.

13. POLICIES & PROCEDURES

13.1 GDPR Guidance for Councillors

This had been circulated prior to the meeting and Councillors signed to acknowledge receipt of the information contained.

13.2 Code of Conduct

This was due for review and was agreed without amendment.

001521 **RESOLVED** to adopt the Members Code of Conduct.

14. FINANCE

14.1 To note the report showing payments made to date against budgets

Noted. Councillors were pleased to see that the parish had been in receipt of Community Infrastructure Levy monies, and recognised that the funds can be used to fund the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure; or anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area.

14.2 To authorise the payment of invoices and note regular payments

CASHBOOK 1 (GENERAL ACCOUNT)

BACS132	SSALC	Intro to project mgmt - 1/11/18 Clerks networking day - 6/11/18	80 160	4007 4009
BACS133	SME Group	IT monthly services - October	133.79	4021
BACS134	Kier	Refuse collections Sep 18 Refuse collection recycling Jun 18 Refuse recycling & general Aug 18	28.59 7.85 28.59	4506
BACS135	Wealdlink	Community transport 1/10/08- 31/12/08	126.00	4401
BACS136	Knockout Print	WPC newsletter	195.00	4019
BACS137	Forest Row PC	Community Warden October	124.00	4063
BACS138	Viking	Stationery	94.17	4015
BACS139	WDALC	Annual subscription 2018/19	31.00	4008
BACS140	Lawrence Containers	20' steel container	2400.00	4062 (EMR332)
BACS141	R K Thomas	Mileage October	30.60	4003
BACS142	St Thomas Church	Contribution to Church Magazine	100.00	4019
BACS143	St Michaels	Contribution to Church Magazine	100.00	4019
BACS144	WIT0012	Nov salary	Total £2774.66	4000
BACS145	WIT0008	Nov salary		4000
BACS146	WIT0007	Nov salary		4000
BACS147	WIT0013	Nov salary		4003
BACS148	WIT0015	Nov salary		4000
BACS149	Costain Ltd - ESCC	Grit bin refills	345.00	4429 4428

Payments made Outside the Meeting

BACS130	SSLC	11th Ed Local Council Administration	103.99	4015
BACS131	TBS Tree surgery	Clear, level base at rec ground	500	4062 (EMR332)

Cashbook 3 Prepaid Card

Payment no	Payee	Detail	Amount	Budget
PP22	Amazon	Lock - container	12.99	4062
PP23	Muller UK	Milk	14.7	4510
PP24	Paypal	Sample green vinyl	0.99	4062
PP25	Signmax	Balls Green community area sign	70.49	4268 (EMR326)
PP26	Newman Business solutions	Welcome cards	82.99	4019

Receipts

Name	Description	Amount
WDC	CIL Apr-Sep 2018	5106.06
SVR	Rent	375.00

Monthly payments by DD/Standing Order

Payment type	Payee	Detail	Amount	Budget
DDCW1118	Castle Water	Water charges	36.94	4502
DDUW1118	Utility Warehouse	Phone & broadband	63.97	4013
DDBE1018	Bristol Energy	Gas & electricity	55.9	4502
SOTN1018	T Newman	Rent	625	4012
SONH1018	N Houghton	Rent	625	4012
DDNEST1018	NEST	Pensions	221	4001
HSBC1018	HSBC	Bank charges	7.1	4600

001522 RESOLVED to pay the invoices listed above, to pay by BACS/sign the cheques accordingly.

14.3 To consider Quotes and Requests for Expenditure

Streetlights - Councillors had received a paper prior to the meeting outlining the need for two new columns following the structural testing of the parish's steel columns, in addition to the replacement of 6 lanterns with more efficient LEDs. This would take the streetlighting budget lines over budget.

001523 RESOLVED to allow the streetlighting budgets to be overspent to meet the above commitments.

It was noted that a streetlight had been damaged at the Victoria roundabout, and that these are owned by ESCC/Highways.

Speed Surveys – following the Road Safety Committee's commitment to installing a movable Speed Indicator Device, the Assistant Clerk had confirmed with the committee via email that it wished to proceed with the speed surveys at the locations identified.

001524 RESOLVED to proceed with speed surveys at the locations identified with Road Safety Committee and ESCC.

Cllr Obbard would speak with the Assistant Clerk about the criteria for speed surveys.

15. REPORTS ON MEETINGS and CONFERENCES ATTENDED BY COUNCILLORS

Cllr Obbard had attended the Wealden District Association of Local Councils meeting. He passed information to the Clerk about a debt advisory service operating in other parts of East Sussex.

Cllr Tarling had attended an ESCAAN meeting as well as the High Weald Councils meeting mentioned in 6.2. ESCAAN is considering withdrawing from the Gatwick Noise Management Board.

Cllr Whittaker had attended his first Wealdlink meeting and found the group to be very dedicated and professional. The paperwork had been circulated via the Friday briefing.

16. CLERK'S REPORT

Councillors were reminded of IT training on 27th November and 6th December 10-12 at the parish office. All councillors should attend one of these.

18. MATTERS OF URGENT IMPORTANCE FOR NOTING OR INCLUSION ON A FUTURE AGENDA

The next meeting will be followed by a celebration of our Unsung Helpers.

19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING To note that the date of the next Council meeting is Monday 10th December 2018 at 7.30 pm at The Old Station, Groombridge.

The meeting closed at 9.45 pm