

Minutes of the **WITHYHAM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING** held at
GROOMBRIDGE VILLAGE HALL on **17th January 2022** at 6.30pm

PRESENT Cllrs Nick Anderson, Alan Gaukroger, Robert Gordon-James, Diana Kelly (Chair), Jill Pardey, Jennie Paulson-Ellis, Marcus Tarling, Paul Watkins, Linsey Winter.

In attendance: Deborah Siddle - Clerk (minutes)

Members of the public are encouraged to attend meetings and there is a 10-minute opportunity for members of the public 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 Andrew Fane – family commitment
...Cllr Keith Obbard – illness
Cllr Chris Pope – illness

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – None.

5. MINUTES

4.1. To resolve that the minutes of the Council Meeting held on Monday 8th November 2021 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

002188 RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 8th November 2021 were approved.

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

Matters resolved from previous minutes

Minute no.	Who	Item
Pg. 2292	Clerk	Written report from Blackham Village Hall management committee on next agenda
Pg. 2360	Administrator	Sites of the defibrillators on Facebook
Pg. 2382	Clerk	Drainage investigation progressed at Summersales Hill
Pg. 2382	Clerk	Walnut tree purchased and to be planted
Pg. 2383	Clerk	Planning application considered before Highways Coordinator investigated if Back Lane could be classified as a Drivers' lane
Pg. 2384	Clerk	St Thomas' School PTA notified that they may use Groombridge Recreation Ground on 2 May 2022
Pg. 2384	Clerk	SLC fitted swings at Groombridge Recreation Ground
Pg. 2384	Clerk	Groombridge Cricket Club advised that it would be more effective if they put out cones on the road when they require vehicular access.
Pg. 2384	Clerk	'Keep clear' signage on the gate at Groombridge Recreation Ground

WPC/17.1.2022 – 002416

Pg. 2385	Councillors	Celebrity opening of Groombridge Post Office took place
Pg. 2385	Councillors and Clerk	Post Office building site visit preceded January meeting
Pg. 2385	Assistant Clerk	Sent letter stating WPC's objection to Gatwick's second runway
002155	Cllr Gaukroger/ Clerk	Ashdown Forest Carparking Consultation response submitted
Pg. 2388	Clerk	ESCC notified of the intention to fund an additional four urban grass cuts

Actions outstanding from previous minutes

Minute no.	Who	Item
Pg. 2067	Clerk	Enquire whether the Crime Audit Officer can assess Withyham and Blackham
Pg. 2163	Clerk	Resident interested in looking after Park Corner Pond contacting Clerk to arrange meeting. Cllr Kelly to attend
Pg. 2228	Clerk	Work with Blackham group to consult on whether residents would support some play equipment
Pg. 2292	Clerk	Advertise for members of the public to the Air Traffic committee
Pg. 2297	Cllr Fane	Investigate whether any of the Burrswood buildings, gardens or trees require listing
Pg. 2319	Clerk	Work with TW Ramblers on the contents and siting of a new circular walk lectern
Pg. 2319	Clerk	Arrange for signs requested by Blackham litterpickers
Pg. 2384	Cllr Obbard	Enquire whether a resident would maintain the raised beds at Balls Green Community Space
Pg. 2385	Assistant Clerk	Format and design the Parish Plan document for publication on our website and on hard copy.
Pg. 2385	Cllr Kelly	Make personal contact with key stakeholders to disseminate the Parish Plan
002156	Clerk	Refurbish and site the gas lamp with a plaque for the Queen's Jubilee
Pg. 2388	Councillors	Survey the effectiveness of ESCC's grass cutting and feed back to County Cllr Georgia Taylor
Pg. 2388	Clerk	Seek quotes for an alternative payroll provider

Actions from these Minutes

The Clerk confirmed that she would provide details of grass cutting sites to Cllr Gordon-James

Minute no.	Who	Item
Pg. 2416	Clerk	provide details of grass cutting sites to Cllr Gordon-James
Pg. 2417	Clerk	Notify GMS regarding use of Recreation Ground
Pg. 2417	Clerk	Notify Groombridge Preshool regarding use of Recreation Ground

002189	Clerk/Cllr Gordon-James	Commission drawings and a schedule of works (Phoenix House)
002190	Clerk/Cllr Gordon-James	Obtain quotes (Phoenix House)
002191	Clerk	Make Precept request of £163,253
Pg. 2418	Clerk	Amend EMR allocations for 2022/23
Pg. 2420	F&A	Review Clerk/RFO's levels of delegation

5. COMMITTEE MINUTES

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

5.1 Planning Committee – 8th November 2021 - noted

5.2 Planning Committee – 22nd November 2021 - noted

5.3 Staff Committee – 8th December 2021 - noted

5.4 Planning Committee – 13th December 2021 - noted

5.5 Planning Committee – 20th December 2021 - noted

6. GROOMBRIDGE RECREATION GROUND – Requests to hold events

6.1 Groombridge Men's Sheds - May 2022 for opening event (date tbc to avoid May Fair)

Agreed, Clerk to notify in writing.

6.2 Groombridge Preschool - 12th June for 'Glastonbridge' annual fundraiser

Agreed, Clerk to notify in writing.

7. GROOMBRIDGE POST OFFICE – to agree works for residential part (Phoenix House)

A site visit had taken place prior to the meeting for Councillors, and a paper had been provided outlining possible refurbishment options proposed by the Building Group.

Council was asked to consider the proposed refurbishment options whilst considering requirements of the Post Office/shop for adequate storage and welfare facilities and the need to provide a suitable residential space to cover repayments of the Public Works Loan through residential rent.

Queries were raised about the schedule of works, likely costs, building regulations, fire requirements, security of the commercial space, how costs would be covered and contingencies.

It was clarified that the next step would be to commission a building surveyor, who had already given advice in the development of the options, to undertake drawings and a schedule of works. Quotes could then be obtained for agreement and any further issues considered and mitigated.

It was AGREED to proceed with costings for Option D (amended to include a WC within the commercial space) as this was the most practical option to balance sufficient storage and welfare facilities for the Post Office/shop with the needs of a residence. These quotes should be brought back to a Council meeting for agreement.

- 002189 RESOLVED** that a drawing for Option D (amended to include a WC within the commercial space) and a schedule of works should be commissioned.
- 002190 RESOLVED** that quotes for Option D (amended) should be obtained and provided to a Council meeting.

8. TO AGREE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE BUDGET AND PRECEPT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2022/23

Papers had been provided prior to the meeting, following Finance and Administration Committee's consideration of the matter and based on its recommendation.

- 002191 RESOLVED** to agree a budget for 2022/23 with expenditure of £299,593 and expected income of £136,340, leaving a Precept request of £163,253. This represents an increase in the precept of £7,200 or 4.6% which equates to an increase of £4.09 per band D property per year or 9p per week.

Ear-marked Reserves for 2022/23 were also considered and provisionally agreed as follows:

Budget Line	Budget Description	2021/22 Budget at Dec21	2022/23 Proposed budget	Notes
326	Balls Green Play area	5835	5000	Looking to provide further equipment
327	Gb Play area	28350.5	1440.49	& use CiL
328 NEW	Teasley Mead play equipment	0	2500	Swings requested by residents
329	Road safety projects	15000	3000	Looking to provide a further VAS site at A264
330	Work in progress	5470.58	0	No carry forward figures
332	WPV	2000	2000	Unspent WDC grant
333	Office associated repairs	5000.4	2000	Also budget 4500 £2,000
336	CiL	26910.01	26910.01	use for Groombridge playground with EMR 327 (fundraiser)
337	Parish Assets	5000	3000	Replacement bus shelter Withyham
338	Environmental Improvements	10000	5000	TBA
339	post Office convert **Rename Phoenix House works	0	52715.5	Also £15,000 in budget = £67,715.50
		103566.49	103566	

9. FINANCE

9.1 Note the report showing payments made to date against budgets
Noted.

9.2 Note the payment of December invoices/note regular payments, authorised on email

Time:10:30

Cashbook 1

User: DS

Current Bank A/c (HSBC)

Payments made between 01/12/2021 and 17/12/2021

Nominal Ledger Analysis									
Date	Payee Name	Reference	£ Total Amnt	£ Creditors	£ VAT	A/c	Centre	£ Amount	Transaction Details
06/12/2021	ME Diacono	BACS154	66.50			4230	201	66.50	Walnut tree
06/12/2021	S Chapman	BACS155	4.48			4510	101	4.48	Mtg room refreshments
15/12/2021	Ray Bailey	BACS156	30.00			4503	101	30.00	Windowcleaning
15/12/2021	Muskateer Services Ltd	BACS157	98.40		16.40	4503	101	82.00	legionella testing
15/12/2021	Royal Wells Decorating	BACS158	1,620.00			5200	500	1,620.00	decorating at Post office
15/12/2021	David Carden	BACS159	400.00			4041	101	400.00	Job evaluation
15/12/2021	Lawrence & Taylor	BACS160	180.00			5200	500	180.00	Advice alterations Phoenix Hou
15/12/2021	Mulberry and Co.	BACS161	208.08		34.68	4040	101	173.40	Interim audit
15/12/2021	Wealden District Council	BACS162	858.00		143.00	4213	201	455.00	dog bins Oct-Dec
						4211	201	260.00	Litter bins Oct-Dec
15/12/2021	Forest Row Parish Council	BACS163	144.00		24.00	4063	101	120.00	Community Warden Nov
15/12/2021	Biffa Waste Services Ltd	BACS164	130.50		21.75	4506	101	108.75	Office bins Nov
15/12/2021	SME IT Solutions	BACS165	1,718.41		286.40	4021	101	201.80	Contract
						4013	101	181.56	phone (Nov & Dec)
						4016	101	1,048.65	New & refurb PC
15/12/2021	Green Hippo	BACS166	936.00		156.00	5200	500	780.00	Signage, post office
15/12/2021	ESALC Ltd	BACS167	48.00		8.00	4007	101	40.00	Clir Training x1
15/12/2021	Wicksteed Playgrounds	BACS168	615.32		102.55	4220	201	200.00	swing parts
						4202	201	312.77	swing parts
15/12/2021	Appointment Business Machines	BACS169	32.70		5.45	4017	101	27.25	Copier
15/12/2021	Viking Direct	BACS170	17.39		2.90	4015	101	14.49	Copier paper
15/12/2021	Viking Direct	BACS170	59.96		9.99	4015	101	49.97	Stationery
15/12/2021	B Agutter	BACS171	12.60			4421	401	12.60	Mileage (Highways Coordinator
15/12/2021	N Brett	BACS172	11.93			4015	101	11.93	Stationery
15/12/2021	VARIOUS	BACS173	3,527.24			4000	101	3,527.24	Salaries Dec & Nov o/t
15/12/2021	Inland Revenue	BACS174	3,058.51			4001	101	3,058.51	Tax & NI Oct-Dec
15/12/2021	Debt Management Office	BACS175	8,389.48			5100	500	8,389.48	PWLB Half year repayment
15/12/2021	Prepaid card	CB1PPC1221	285.55			203		285.55	CB1 to PPcard Dec21
15/12/2021	NEST Pensions	DDNEST1221	264.27			4001	101	264.27	Pensions Dec
15/12/2021	Opus Energy	DDOPUS1221	37.94			4502	101	37.94	Gas (pay by DD 19/12)
15/12/2021	HSBC	HSBC1221	7.40			4600	101	7.40	Charges to 23 Nov
15/12/2021	The Premier Trust N A Houghton	SONH1221	625.00			4012	101	625.00	Rent Dec21
15/12/2021	The Premier Trust T J Newman	SOTN1221	625.00			4012	101	625.00	Rent Dec21
Subtotal Carried Forward:			24,012.66	0.00	811.12			23,201.54	

Time:12:37

Cashbook 3

User: DS

Prepaid card

Payments made between 01/12/2021 and 16/12/2021

Nominal Ledger Analysis									
Date	Payee Name	Reference	£ Total Amnt	£ Creditors	£ VAT	A/c	Centre	£ Amount	Transaction Details
15/12/2021	AmazonUK	PP43	48.26		8.04	4015	101	40.22	Signs and stationery
15/12/2021	Milk & More	PP44	4.86			4510	101	4.86	Milk
15/12/2021	Akismet	PP45	80.00			4018	101	80.00	Antispam (website)
15/12/2021	Zoom	PP46	28.78		4.80	4016	101	23.98	Zoom Nov & Dec
15/12/2021	Vistaprint	PP47	15.65			4015	101	15.65	Business cards
15/12/2021	Swale heating	PP48	108.00		18.00	4503	101	90.00	Boiler contract (office)
Total Payments:			285.55	0.00	30.84			254.71	

9.3 Agree the payment of January invoices/note regular payments

Time: 11:43

Cashbook 1

User: DS

Current Bank A/c (HSBC)

Payments made between 01/01/2022 and 17/01/2022

Nominal Ledger Analysis									
Date	Payee Name	Reference	£ Total Amnt	£ Creditors	£ VAT	A/c	Centre	£ Amount	Transaction Details
07/01/2022	Gordon-James Associates	BACS177	332.20			5101	500	332.20	PhoenixHouse costs paid 7.1.22
13/01/2022	Groombridge Village Hall	BACS178	90.00			4030	101	90.00	Hall hire dec21
13/01/2022	Society - Local Council Clerks	BACS179	108.00		18.00	4007	101	90.00	Training x3
13/01/2022	N.Wealden Community Transport	BACS180	135.00			4401	401	135.00	Wealdlink Jan-Mar22
13/01/2022	Biffa Waste Services Ltd	BACS181	80.97		13.50	4506	101	67.47	Office bins end Dec
13/01/2022	Forest Row Parish Council	BACS182	76.80		12.80	4063	101	64.00	Warden Dec21
13/01/2022	Commercial Services Trading Lt	BACS183	2,424.48		404.08	4205	201	1,236.22	Grass cutting Oct-Dec
						4261	203	54.69	Grass cutting Oct-Dec
						4240	202	583.58	Grass cutting Oct-Dec
						4260	203	145.91	Grass cutting Oct-Dec
13/01/2022	SME IT Solutions	BACS184	247.56		41.26	4021	101	206.30	IT Support
13/01/2022	Everflow Ltd	BACS185	83.16			5101	500	83.16	Water charges Phoenix House
13/01/2022	Appointment Business Machines	BACS186	55.12		9.19	4017	101	45.93	Copier charges Dec
13/01/2022	B Aggutter	BACS187	17.55			4421	401	17.55	Mileage Highways Coordinator
13/01/2022	Various (Salaries)	BACS188	4,279.07			4000	101	4,279.07	Salaries Jan22
13/01/2022	Prepaid card	CB1PPC0122	99.86			203		99.86	CB1 to PPC for Jan exp
13/01/2022	NEST pensions	DDNEST0122	275.65			4001	101	275.65	Pensions Jan22
13/01/2022	Opus Energy	DDOPUS0122	152.73			4502	101	152.73	Gas Dec21
13/01/2022	HSBC	HSBC0122	8.00			4600	101	8.00	Bank charges to 231221
13/01/2022	The Premier Trust N A Houghton	SONH0122	625.00			4012	101	625.00	Rent Jan22
13/01/2022	The Premier Trust T J Newman	SOTN0122	625.00			4012	101	625.00	Rent Jan22
Total Payments:			9,716.15	0.00	498.83			9,217.32	

Prepaid card

Payments made between 01/01/2022 and 17/01/2022

Nominal Ledger Analysis									
Date	Payee Name	Reference	£ Total Amnt	£ Creditors	£ VAT	A/c	Centre	£ Amount	Transaction Details
13/01/2022	Milk & More	PP49	5.50			4510	101	5.50	Milk
13/01/2022	Zoom	PP50	14.39			4016	101	14.39	Zoom subs
13/01/2022	Resurgence Trust	PP51	36.00			4008	101	36.00	Environment magazine
13/01/2022	Cheeky Panda	PP52	43.97		7.33	4015	101	36.64	Toilet & kitchen roll
Total Payments:			99.86	0.00	7.33			92.53	

002192 **RESOLVED** to pay the January invoices listed above, to pay by BACS/sign the cheques accordingly.

9.4 Consider quotes

None.

10. CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk reported that the Chair and staff are meeting to undertake a work-planning exercise so that work and projects that have been identified for this year will be considered within workloads.

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

A Councillor requested that the Clerk/RFO's levels of delegation should be reviewed. The Clerk confirmed that this would be on the next Finance and Administration agenda following recommendations from the Auditor for it to be reviewed.

Councillors noted that meetings are to continue face to face with no opportunity for virtual/hybrid decision meetings. This is despite Covid continuing to cause issues for physical meetings, and the success of virtual meetings.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING To note that the date of the next Council meeting will be Monday 14th February 2022 at 7.30pm. Venue to be decided in response to COVID requirements; details will be on the meeting agenda.

The meeting closed at 7.20pm