

## GREAT WITLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 20 May at 8.00pm pursuant to notice

**Chair:** Cllr R Perkins (upon election and acceptance of position as at agenda point 2)

**Present:** Cllrs: Claire Dermietzel; Nigel Drew; Geoff Goodman; David Pangbourne; Oliver Marshall; and Sam Sebesta  
District Cllr Paul Cumming; and Cllr. Ken Pollock

**Apologies:** None

**Minutes:** Laura Drew (Clerk)

**In Attendance:** 40 members of the public

**1. Councillors' acceptance of office**

Councillors **accepted** office by signing formal declaration of acceptance documentation; witnessed and countersigned.

**2. Chairman election & acceptance of office**

Cllr Goodman proposed Cllr Perkins as chairman. Nomination upheld and seconded by Cllr Dermietzel. Cllr. Perkins then assumed chairmanship of the meeting.

**3. Apologies**

None received, however the absence of elected members Mr D Skinner; and Mrs C Miller – elected candidates was noted.

**4. Declaration of interest**

Councillors reminded to complete their statutory declaration of interest documentation, to be submitted within 28 days from the date of the election (8 May 2015). Failure to register or declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest may be a criminal offence.

**5. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on 18 March 2015**

Minutes of the meeting on Wednesday 18 March 2015 were reviewed. A minor amendment was **agreed** – the Footpaths Officer as interested party in applying for Tree Warden status not the lengthsman.

*RP*

**6. Election of offices and allocation of duties.**

The following allocation of duties were agreed:

- Cllr. Goodman to continue to maintain & mow Bowen's field.
- Cllr. Pangbourne to continue chairing the Quarter Green Committee
- Cllr. Sebesta to assume responsibility for the Village Hall Committee
- Cllr. Perkins to continue managing the Lengthsman and Footpath Officer.
- Cllr. Marshall to scope out means of improved communications of Parish Council matters to parishioners, recognising the importance to address as a matter of priority.
- Cllr. Dermietzel to continue to manage the Witley Court pass control & allocation.

It was **agreed** that all planning matters should be issued from Clerk to councillors, who would then jointly agree comments and any further action in respect to individual planning matters.

**7. Parish Council vacancies**

Potential casual vacancies were discussed. Former chairman and Cllr Derek Skinner had resigned via email and Claire Miller was understood to no longer wish to accept office due to issues surrounding the recent election. However both still had the opportunity to accept office until midnight of 20 May 2015.

As such the arising casual vacancies would not be confirmed until Thurs 21 May 2015. After which time, Cllr Perkins understood formal notices could be posted. Intention to post as soon as possible e.g. tomorrow Thurs 21 May 2015. Co-option to fill the posts may be a possibility, outcome dependent.

*RP*

Concern expressed about co-opting as means of filling any arising vacancies given the sensitivities and issues surrounding the recent election on 8 May 2015.

**ORM**

## **8. Planning**

It was **agreed** that planning application ref: 13/00553/FUL be discussed under agenda point 12.

**RP**

## **9. Progress reports & local updates**

A meeting had taken place to discuss the Section 106 monies and requirements. Cllr Pangbourne outlined plans for the 106 funds, to be drawn down, including rebuilding of the multi-sport surface; and an exercise trail.

Former chairman Derek Skinner local update (attached).

**RP**

*Cllr Perkins agreed to suspend the formal meeting so that newly elected Parish Council members could formally introduce themselves to parishioners in attendance. The meeting subsequently resumed as at agenda point 10.*

## **10. Finance**

- a. Clerk – Laura Drew confirmed the Annual Parish accounts had not yet been reconciled for Council approval.
- b. It was agreed that Mrs. Diane Malley M.A.A.T. be appointed to conduct the formal internal audit of the accounts, once ready.
- c. Payments made since last meeting on 18 March 2015 were ratified, as below:

Great Witley & Hillhampton Parish Council

### Financial Notes 20 May 2015

#### 1. Payments Made Since Last Meeting

10/04/2015	Chris Jones – Lengthsman Mar 2015	£306.00
10/04/2015	Rich Print – spring newsletter printing	£85.00
10/04/2015	Worcestershire CALC networking (02.07.14)	£20.00
10/04/2015	Great Witley Filling Station (mower fuel)	£15.00
10/04/2015	MHDC Post Office rural rates	£73.95
10/04/2015	L Drew – Clerk’s salary Mar 2015	£185.81
<i>Sub- total:</i>		£685.76

#### 2. Accounts for payment (20/05/2015)

06/05/2015	Chris Jones – Lengthsman Apr 2015	£138.00
13/05/2015	Worcestershire CALC networking (annual subs.)	£335.18
13/05/2015	D Skinner Chairman’s expenses	£200.00
13/05/2015	Zurich Municipal (insurance)	£272.23
13/05/2015	L Drew – Clerk’s salary Apr 2015	£185.81
13/05/2015	Clerk’s expenses (stationery AGM)	£57.36
13/05/2015	Clerk’s expenses (refreshments APM drinks)	£68.88
20/05/2015	CALC audit training	£35.00
20/05/2015	CALC training	£10.00

*Total:* £1302.46

#### 3. Balances at bank

Barclays (formerly Standard Life) Bank £9498.72

Current a/c as at 3 April 2015	£3988.58
Deposit a/c	<u>£ 4.32</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£13491.62</b>
<i>(Adjusted for payments as above)</i>	<b>£11503.40</b>

L Drew  
Responsible Financial Officer

- d. Barclays deposit account still in name of previous Clerk Mr John Plumridge, registered to his address; and Cllr Goodman. This presents difficulties with ease of access to the funds and balance information. The account is accruing modest interest rates of approx. £123 annually. It was agreed that other accounts should be explored with improved interest rate potential and, that the account holder and address details needed to be amended, to enable improved access.
- e. The Parish Council insurance was imminently due for renewal, with a quote received from current provider Zurich for £272.23. It was agreed that further options be explored for comparison purposes to check that a competitive quote. However, also discussed that Zurich may be preferred provider to local and governmental bodies, so needed to double check position.

**LD**

#### **11. Risk assessment**

The need to review and adopt risk assessment; financial regulations & Standing Order documentation was agreed as priorities and, for discussion at next Parish Council meeting.

**LD**

#### **12. Correspondence**

Clerk to circulate the planning reference details for application no: 13/00553/FUL so members can review and submit comments.

Email correspondence of 20 May 2015, from Mr Stehen Westacott (present). The letter contained 19 points on which he and other parishioners requested urgent response to events surrounding the recent election process, specifically the fact there had been no election for the Hillhampton ward and, that Hillhampton parishioners had not been able to vote in the election for Parish Council members.

Cllr Perkins stated that due to the ongoing formal police investigation, members were not in a position to respond or pre-empt the results of the enquiry as to potential wrong doing; accountability and/or next steps resulting.

Parishioners were able to contact the Malvern Hills District Council (MHDC) Monitoring Officer and/or submit formal complaints about individual Parish Council members.

**ORM**

Cllr Marshall outlined DRAFT proposals for improved communications, as per his letters to councillors of 13 May 2015. This included consideration of new and revised content of an improved website; formal & more widely circulated communications; and option for a Face book or Twitter page to better connect with young parishioners. It was **agreed** this would be discussed at next Parish Council meeting.

**ORM**

#### **13. Additional minor matters** not included on current agenda but for review and/or discussion.

- a. The footpath between the garage and Hundred House was degrading and required attention.
- b. Delineation of Structons Heath footpath. Footpath's officer to be contacted to review and take corrective action.

- c. Formalised training by the Council of Local Association training to be considered as a priority for all elected members.
- d. Considerable mess generated around the recycling bins on Great Witley Village Hall car park. It was agreed that prime responsibility was with the recycling container owners, who would be contacted in first instance in efforts to resolve issues.
- e. The fencing between The Glebe and Fountain Court was rotting. Enquiry into responsibility for maintaining and repair to resolve.

**RP**

**14. Date of Next Meeting**

The chairman confirmed his intention to call for an extraordinary meeting, with date confirmed as Tues 9 June 2015. This was necessary due to high volume of work and matters requiring Parish Council member attention and agreement.

Future meetings were provisionally scheduled for:  
22 July/ 16 Sept/ 21 Oct/ 16 Dec 2015.

With no further business. The meeting was closed at 9.40pm.

Signed as a true record

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**Chairman**

Date:.....

**Dates of Next Statutory Meeting  
9 July 2015**

**All meetings begin with public question time from 8.00pm to 8.15pm  
Formal business opens at 8.15pm  
Committee Room or main hall, Great Witley Village Hall**

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**Notes of Public Question Time**

Forty members of the public were in attendance and raised the following concerns during Public Question Time:

1. Scandalous behaviour surrounding recent election of 8 May 2015. Call for newly elected members to consider their responsible positions and to act accordingly in representing the Parish.
2. Request for councillors to urgently respond to 19 point letter concerning surrounding election event (referred to under correspondence, agenda point 12, submitted by Mr S Westacott).
3. Lack of clarity as to whether former chairman has unknowingly not followed due or democratic and transparent process. Formal police investigation initiated and underway.
4. Historic reasoning as to why ward names may have been omitted from nomination forms. The same occurred during election, which may have set precedent.
5. An extremely contentious issue, particularly as Hillhampton parishioners have not been able to vote at recent elections.
6. Not right that parishioners have not been able to vote.
7. 3 day clear rule has not been observed in posting the meeting agenda and impact for meeting validity.
8. Delineation of footpaths in and around the Structons Heath road area, Hillhampton.
9. Permission sought to remove fallen trees and remove fruit tree ties, which were too tight.