

MINUTES OF WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL
MEETING Held on Wednesday 31st November 2022 at the Village Hall
Withington, at 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Cllr Glenys Webb, Cllr David Miles Cllr Catherine Boyce, Cllr Nicky Lowe, 2 members of the public, and the Clerk/RFO.

1. **APOLOGIES:** Cllr Bruno Brenninkmeijer, Cllr Alex Barrell, Cllr David Craig, and District Councillor Robin Hughes and County Cllr, Paul Hodgkinson
2. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA. Cllr Glenys Webb – village hall request for additional funds. Item 6 on the agenda.**
3. **MINUTES of the Meetings** held on the 5th October 2022 were circulated prior to the meeting to Councillor's; These were signed by the Chairman.

Progress report and matters arising on the meeting held: 5th October 2022

4. Matters Arising

Willowside Farm stables – The Clerk has written to Jane Bruce who stated that there are no foundations, and it is a movable structure. The Council discussed this and decided the council are not happy with this response. It was agreed that there are stables down there and they have not been moved for 28 days. The Clerk is to raise the following issues with Mr and Mrs Bruce again. To find out if the stables have been in place for more than 28 days - What are the plans concerning these stables. - For Mr and Mrs Bruce to clarify what the digging is for. **Response received** *Willowside Farm has a history of horses and stabling going back century's. The stables are on skids and movable, but they can hardly be seen as we went to the expense of clearing top soil to reduce height to allay neighbourly concerns.*

The 2000 Trees festival - The Clerk has written to the Licencing team at CDC for information on the current licence details as yet there has been no response. This will included questions raised on the numbers of 15,000 at the 2022 event. The Parish council were not aware that increased numbers had been passed by CDC. The Clerk will ask for a copy of the licence from last year so that the PC can start a discussion for 2023. The Parish Council will ask - the dates these numbers were agreed and information about the additional dates included so that they can respond to queries from members of the public.

Dogs update - Info Dog Control in the Village – Cllr Miles and Lowe both agreed that they probably know whose dogs they are and will have a word with them to let them know that villagers are very worried about them running lose in the village.

Defibrillator for Foxcote

Cllr Boyce updated that Foxcote have been successful in getting a grant of £600 which they will have to match the funds with, to buy a Defibrillator. They are looking to fund raise for this. It will be sited outside Foxcote House by the notice board, which will also need to be renewed as it is in a poor state of repair. Cllr Boyce updated that she has had a number of pledges for money. She asked that if the Parish Council felt able to contribute to the fund raising by adding some funds that would be much appreciated. It was agreed that this will be looked at when the Budget is set next year. CB updated that they would like the funds to cover the replacement of pads which will be around £100 per annum.

Foxcote Lane- Drainage from main road and damage to lane surface – there was no update on this as Cllr Hodkinson was going to raise this again with highways. Cllr Boyce said it is getting worst with the weather we are having.

Website update (in particular e-mail upgrade) – Moving the Councils e-mails to outlook has taken place. The clerk updated that to do this we had to enter into a contract and will incur an additional cost of around £11.00 per month for Microsoft exchange, payable to Wickmedia Ltd.

5. Planning application and updates

Updates:

22/03283/FUL Kinston House Withington Proposed replacement of - This has been **Permitted.**

22/03197/FUL Withington Court – Erection of a single storey rear extension revised from 20/02971/LBC. Permission has already been granted for an extension, but they want to revise the size for a bigger extension. – **Awaiting decision**

22/03045/FUL Hill View - New plans have been submitted. The Carport has been abandoned but the grass and landscaping will be removed and replaced with a new driveway which could cause potential run off from rain and a risk of flooding to the house directly in front but down the hill from the sloped driveway. It was agreed that privacy and light is not addressed with the new application and it is still very close to the neighbouring houses. Voted 3 against and 1 abstain. The Clerk will go back and raised these concerns. Currently the planning is - **Awaiting decision.**

22/02957/FUL Foxcote Manor - Replacement of existing main gates – Permitted.

New Planning applications

Willowside – variation to planning – was discussed as walls are to be rebuild with proper foundations as currently not safe. The elevations may also be affected. Only comments is to plot 1 and the addition to roof lights on the western elevation which are too near the road and not in keeping with other applications in the village.

Withington House 22/03887/FUL

Application was to move entrance, conservation officers' comments were discussed. No objections to change of use. But the conservation officer has several concerns which include the large amount of glazing and windows.

Parish Council has no objection to change of use.

Compromise may be needed around the glazing and agree with the conservation officer on the ridge line and the use of the size of the domestic doors.

Voted present application unanimous against design.

Amberley house Hedgerow Assessment 22/04057/Hedge

Thames Water application for works on replacement pipes. State of hedge row that may be effected. – Cllr Brenninkmeijer had sent in some comments which were read out.

Hedgerow – Approved although I would suggest that directional digging should be used at any opportunity so as to not disturb a hedge.

Voted all in favour

6. Increase to Donation to the village hall (letter)

Cllr Webb left the room for this item to be discussed. A Letter has been received by the Parish Council from the Trustees of the Withington Village Hall. Setting out that for the last 15 years the PC has supported the Village Hall with donations of £750 per annum which covers a smaller proportion of our costs each year as the years have gone on. COVID has not helped the situation leading to a reduced utilisation of the hall and reduced income (e.g. the Withington Players Drama Group has folded). This, in turn, has led to a loss in revenue. Due to the church being in dire need of funds to repair its failing roof, the Village Hall Committee has shared its fundraising activities to help the church in the last couple of years. Annual costs are escalating due to electricity without additional support there may come a point when they will be forced to close.

The PC have been asked to consider increasing the level of support it provides for the 2023/24 year onwards.

Questions Raised – A what happened to the excess money raised for the Platinum jubilee money as it has been suggested the benefactors were going to give the excess to the village hall –(when Cllr Webb returned she was asked this – she responded that the village hall have received £1199.52. This was instead of holding the annual fete and was part of the proceeds on the day due to the raffle and other activities that took place. They have received no money from the sponsors.

B) COVID has now finished have bookings to the village hall now increased. It was updated that they have lost their main groups through disbanding (Drama) and the only income that they have is from our donation and the School who use it.

C) What efforts have been made to raise money through lottery grants or raising money. It was update that they normally have a fete but that did not happen last year. There is also going to be open gardens in 2023 and so the fete will not go ahead either. Cllr Boyce said it is up to the whole community to look for small grants that can be used but they may not realise the state they are in. Cllr Webb said that they now urgently need the roof to be repaired the worst case scenario is that it will cost £12,000.

It was agreed that a decision on this needs to be made when all the Parish Council are in attendance and so this item will be deferred until the next meeting for a decision.
(suggestions that this is increased to (1,000)

7. Foxcote Junction

This was raised due to the increase in traffic speed along that stretch of road. Cllr Boyce has raised this with CCllr Hodgkinson and it is regularly discussed at his No Crash Meetings, the red hatching at the top of the lane came from one of those meetings. The issue is making a case for the speed to be reduced. The problem they come up against is that there are only a proportion breaking the speed limit but there have been a number of crashes along that stretch and pulling out from Upper Dowdeswell, Foxcote and Withington is causing a lot of problems and is one of the single things that would impact on the safety of the area. Cllr Boyce will pass on the concerns of the Parish Council and it will be put on the agenda for the next meeting.

8. Finance

Cheques were raised for the following:

Wickmedia Domain – Invoice £35.28.

Clerks Salary – August – September 22 - £234.60

HMRC - £58.65

Cllr Glenys Webb signed the finance reconciliation sheet.

HMRC update – Simon Green has been able to change the contact details on the account. He can now speak to them and has electronic access so he can now access the account.

He has looked back currently to 2016 to see what has gone wrong but it is very messy and he cannot reconcile it. He will continue to look into what has gone wrong.

The Clerk updated the Parish Council that she has received an e-mail from GAPTC who have been notified by NALC that it has come to agreement on the 2022 pay offer which is back dated from April 2022. The clerk is currently paid on SCP 11 but at the 2020 pay rate and asked that her salary is updated to reflect the 2022 scale from this meeting. The difference is currently £1.00 per hour. The Parish Council would like to discuss this at a fuller meeting and this will be put on the agenda for January 2023, during budget setting.

9. Website update (in particular e-mail upgrade)

No update as Cllr Brenninkmeijer – did not attend the meeting.

10. Update County Councillor P Hodgkinson (report read out by Cllr Webb)

A417 Missing Link

At long last the Government has given the final approval for works to start on the notorious Missing Link on the A417 near Birdlip.

National Highways (who look after our motorways and major dual carriageways) have announced that preparatory works will start in early 2023 and full construction from next September.

This is of course sweet news for all of us who have long campaigned for a solution at this location to the triple issues of gridlock, air pollution and accidents on the single carriageway piece of road around the Air Balloon. Having travelled that stretch of highway regularly I can attest to the fact that the congestion is just as bad as ever, if not worse recently.

The plan is to keep the existing road operating for traffic whilst the new dual carriageway is built around it. We are likely to be driving the new road in early 2026 according to National Highways.

Covid and Flu

I've lost count of the number of people who have been unwell with various bugs and viruses this autumn.

Some of those are of course covid and flu. Information just out shows that there's been a big take up of booster jabs amongst the over 65s but much less so in the 50-65 age bracket.

Given the intense strain which the NHS finds itself under, it's really important for all over 50's to get both booster jabs this autumn not only to protect themselves but others as well.

Both jabs can be booked either via the NHS website, your doctor's surgery or a pharmacy.

Fosse Cross

The County Council has just announced that you can now book 'on the day' to take rubbish to the Fosse Cross recycling centre (instead of having to book a day or more in advance). I know a lot of people like to do their bit for the environment, so this at least gives a bit more flexibility.

I have asked questions about why the booking system is still in place given that covid restrictions have gone but have been told that 'it is working well' so there doesn't appear to be any prospect of it disappearing.

You can book online at: <https://www.gloucestershirerecycles.com/household-recycling-centres-hrcs/car-and-van-bookings-for-hrc-visits/>

May I take this opportunity to wish you and yours a great Christmas. As always, if there's something I can help you with please get in touch.

11. Correspondence

Precept Letter has arrived.

The Clerk as received an e-mail for the iPad SPQ Defibrillator supplied by WEL Medical if we have purchased one we need a software update. Cllr Webb will check but does not think that is the make and model that we have purchased. (we use community Heartbeat)

E-mail received from Mr and Mrs Smith – 17 Compton Rise Large Tree – over hanging front garden cut back the tree – Bromford issue Cllr Mills will pass this information onto them.

E-mail from Jane Gibney who is from CDC Community support and programmes update. She looks forward to meeting us and learn more about local issues.

E-mail received from Gary McCreath CDC Address Management - We are working through some street names in our Local Land and Property Gazetteer which may have been incorrectly recorded. As part of our investigations, we are looking for any evidence that these street names have been used in the past. Would you please let us know if the following street name has any local meaning and if so is this evidenced in any way, for example in parish records? Dark Lane Withington.

This was discussed, Cllr Webb thought it had been mentioned in the village history book with Halewell. Cllr Lowe was also going to ask someone writing a book on the village, but he has not come back to her.

E-mail received from Malcolm Goddard - I am aware that in the early 1900's, the mill at Withington was equipped with an electricity generator driven by the waterwheel and I would guess with a diesel back up engine. I know that cables were laid from the mill to nearby houses. I would like to find out more about who owned the undertaking, who did it supply and any technical details of the generator such as the voltage it supplied.

If you can help me in any way, or maybe suggest another source of possible information, I would be most grateful. This was discussed and a few names were mentioned. Cllr Lowe will ask Lucy Farmington on the What's app group and if she knows anything she will be asked to get in touch with him.

Information on the election next year (may need a contingency for the payment of this if it is contested, we have to cover the cost of the election costs.

Some information from CDC on fly tipping, The budget consultation survey, recycling. Improvements to the car park Rissington Road Bourton on the Water. Ben Miller for opening an exhibition at the Corinium Museum.

12. Any Other Business

Mr Rooker asked when the new website will be available for people to view and that it would be nice for up to date information be added onto it.

The PCC have asked if they can put two small cherry trees on the village green. As we do not own the site but maintain it. So, they have asked if the Parish Council are ok with that. All agreed at the meeting that they are happy for them to be planted.

13. Date of the next meetings:

The next meeting was due to be held on the 11th January but the clerk is having an eye operation on the 7th and asked if this could be postponed until later in the month. New date will be the 25th January 2023.