

WITHYCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Withycombe Parish Council meeting held at the Memorial Hall on
Wednesday 22nd May 2024 at 7.00pm

PRESENT

Councillors: Richard Barnham (Chairman), Claire Huish, Steve Crossman, Robert Hall
In attendance: S Rawle (Clerk)

PUBLIC FORUM

There were no members of the public present.

2306 ELECTION OF CHAIR

Cllr Crossman proposed Cllr Barnham. Seconded by Cllr Hall. There were no further nominations. Cllr Barnham was duly elected as Chairman.

Cllr Barnham signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office in the presence of the Clerk and Councillors.

2307 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR

Cllr Barnham proposed Cllr Crossman. Seconded by Cllr Hall. There were no further nominations. Cllr Crossman was duly elected as Vice Chair.

2308 APOLOGIES

Cllr Wintermantle, Cllr Christine Lawrence (Somerset Council)

2308 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD 4th March 2024

The minutes previously circulated, were agreed.

2309 UPDATES/ACTIONS FROM LAST MEETING

The booking for Monday evening hall hire had fallen through. Cllr Barnham asked whether Cllrs would prefer to move the meeting dates back to a Monday. It was agreed to move back to Monday evenings.

2310 REPORTS FROM SOMERSET COUNCIL

No reports received.

2311 CURRENT HIGHWAY MATTERS

Higher Rodhuish Rd – No further update had been received. Clerk asked to write to Somerset Council Cllrs to find out what was going on.

2312 PLANNING

No applications received.

2313 FINANCES

^{2313.1} **Bank Reconciliation Statement** – The Clerk presented the bank reconciliation up to 31st March 2024.

The bank reconciliation agreed with bank statements and was signed by the Chairman, as an accurate record. Bank balances were:-

• Account 95304622	£257.00
• Account 44356501	£20,033.06
Total	£20,290.06

2313.2 **Budget Monitoring** – The budget monitoring report was noted.

It was noted that the £50 income from CAF bank was still being made into the parish bank account. The Clerk had contacted the Dunster Benefice several months ago about the matter, however, the payment was still being received. Councillors asked that the income be recorded on a separate line in the income and expenditure report until the matter can be resolved. The Clerk will write to the Somerset Coastal Benefice to bring it to their attention.

2314 **TO APPROVE ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT**

2314.1 **The following payments were approved:-**

1. Sloane & Sons (Combe Lane Bench)	£249.00
2. Zurich Municipal (Insurance for 2024-25)	£627.52
3. A Giles (Internal Audit)	£120.00

Proposed by Cllr Barnham, seconded by Cllr Hall and unanimously agreed that the accounts for payment be approved.

The urgent payment in respect of grounds maintenance for the sum of £360.00 was ratified. This payment had already been approved via email.

Income received

Receipt of the parish precept of £8,500 was noted.

2315 **ASSET REGISTER 2024**

The asset register was approved.

2316 **INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT**

The internal audit report was discussed by Councillors.

The tightening up of internal controls had been raised now that the parish council had moved to on-line banking. A new procedure with additional checks would be introduced as suggested by the internal auditor. It was agreed that the Clerk would check with Nat West that the signatories on the account were up to date.

The procurement of payroll services for payment of the Clerks salary was discussed. The Clerk currently ran payroll through the HMRC software system. A quote had been received for this task to be carried out by a suitably qualified local payroll organisation. Externalisation of the service would strengthen the control and reduce the risk of any errors in the payroll occurring.

Proposed by Cllr Crossman, seconded by Cllr Barnham to accept the quote of £80 per annum from 'Stress Free Payroll' to run the payroll for the parish council. Unanimously agreed.

2317 **ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2023-24**

2317.1 Certificate of Exemption – Councillors agreed the exempt status of the Council as it has income and expenditure of less than £25,000 for 2023/24.

2317.2 Annual Governance Statement 2023-24: The Annual Governance Statement was circulated by the Clerk. After due consideration, the Annual Governance Statement was approved by Council and signed by the Chairman.

2317.3 Accounting Statements 2023-24: The Accounting Statements were circulated by the Clerk. After due consideration, the Accounting Statements were approved by Council and signed by the Chairman.

2318 PLAY AREA/COMMUNITY AREA

It had been noted that 3 cars had being parked permanently in the car park, the owners of which are unknown. One had recently disappeared. Councillors would continue to monitor the situation.

The Clerk reported the annual play inspection will be carried out on 21st June 2024.

Flooding at base of slide – Clerk asked to write to installer again.

2319 BUS SHELTERS

The bus shelter on the north side of the A39 had become overgrown and the issue reported to the Clerk by a member of the public.

Cllr Crossman had obtained a quote for a regular clean of the bus shelters. £400 for initial clean and cut back of both shelters. £300 - £350 for regular maintenance. Clerk has asked ground maintenance contractor for price to clear undergrowth inside and out.

2320 PARISH NEWSLETTER

Cllr Barnham had emailed the editor of the Somerset Coastal Benefice church newsletter to see if Withycombe news could be included. The church newsletter reported activities within the Old Cleeve area.

2321 FLOOD PLAN

No volunteers had come forward for the role of flood wardens for the parish. It would be difficult to develop an emergency/flood plan for the parish unless there was more involvement from residents. It was agreed to update the website with information with relevant contact numbers in the event of a flood/emergency.

The meeting closed at 8.50 pm.

Next meeting

Signed _____
CHAIRMAN

Date _____