

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE WITHINGTON GROUP OF PARISH COUNCILS  
HELD AT WITHINGTON VILLAGE HALL ON THURSDAY, 11<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2010**

**ITEM 1 - APOLOGIES** were accepted from: Rachel Leake, Wallace Brown, Steve Scotcher, Jenny Maund, and Dave Greenow.

Those present were:

Withington	Paul Bainbridge (Chairman)	Rob Soutar (Vice Chairman)	Alison Bainbridge
	Tom Nellist	Jackie Bremner	Ann Packman
	Kevin Hewison		
Westhide	Jim Callow	Garth Downes	
Preston Wynne	Sylvia Fletcher	Simon Dent	
District Councillor			
Clerk to the Parish	Geoff Studerus		
Members of the Public	2		

**ITEM 2 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Rob Soutar declared an interest in that he had purchased wood that had been cleared from the Withington Fields Coppice - £75 had been paid to the Clerk. No other Councillors declared any interests and had not received any gifts linked to their Parish Council work.

**ITEM 3 - MINUTES OF THE LAST GROUP PARISH MEETING**

Minutes of the last Group Parish meeting had been circulated prior to the meeting. Acceptance of these Minutes was proposed by Jackie Bremner, seconded by Alison Bainbridge, and carried unanimously.

**ITEM 4 - LOCAL POLICE MATTERS.**

In the absence of local Police representatives, there was nothing to report.

**ITEM 5 - BRIEFING ON RURAL WATCH.**

The Chairman then introduced PC Charles Naylor, the Divisional Crime Risk Manager from West Mercia Police, to brief the meeting on Rural Watch.

PC Naylor explained his role in the County, and explained the problems with crime in rural areas being under-reported. There was a need for the public to be more responsive and to give rural crime a high profile. Rural Watch has been developed to provide a system by which crime could be easily reported and information spread quickly throughout the County. The system uses dedicated telephone numbers and email to enable information on criminal activity to be collated and enable updates about crime, incidents and events to be passed to those members of the public who register as members of Rural Watch. This enables communities to work together to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and to improve the local neighbourhood. A "Rural Watch" information pack was given to the Clerk.

After a period of discussion and questions, the Chairman thanked PC Naylor for attending.

**ITEM 5A - BRIEFING ON THINGEHILL POLYTUNNELS.**

The Chairman then introduced Peter Gwynne from AMS Limited, Thingehill, Withington, to brief the meeting on proposals for polytunnels at Thingehill.

Peter Gwynne informed the meeting that AMS Ltd were grateful for feedback concerning their previous polytunnels project. He welcomed the suggestion that an "Open" day or evening should be held so that members of the public could tour the operation – this was left as an open invitation, date to be decided. He also explained that AMS were considering another planning application for polytunnels, this time at Thingehill, and the purpose of this brief was to enable the Parish Council to be aware of the proposals and to have an opportunity to comment on the plans before formal application was made to Herefordshire Council. Following his detailed explanation of the proposed site and questions from the meeting, it was agreed that the PC Planning Committee should meet and make comment on behalf of the Parish Council to Mr Gwynne as soon as possible.

Mr Gwynne thanked Parish Councillors for considering the plans, and left the meeting.

**ITEM 6 - MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST MEETING**

a. **Parish Plan.** In the absence of the Steering Group Chairman (Mr Steve Cain), the Meeting Chairman confirmed that the Parish Plan was progressing well and that there was nothing further to report.

b. **Withington Fields.** Rob Soutar updated the meeting on the project's progress. The groundworks had been completed, with the exception of a path to be laid along the edge of the field between it and the Village Hall through to the Coppice. Gates had been fitted (courtesy of the owners of the adjoining field), fences had been erected by Brian Ree (groundworks contractor), Easy Lawn had grass-seeded the entire field, and it had been topped with weed killer by Mr R J Hall. Hedging materials had been ordered (a planting work day was planned for 4 December), and a lock and chain for the road gate purchased. Further funding from Playbuilder was still an outstanding issue.

The Parish Council's planning application for permission to erect housing had attracted 7 objections. Concern had been shown that further construction would take place, and the Chairman explained that this was not possible. After discussion **it was agreed that the Planning Committee should submit further supporting comments to the Herefordshire Planning Committee.**

c. **Dog Waste Bins.** After discussion the location points of an initial 6 litter bins was established, and the **purchase of bins by the Clerk** to the specification identified at the previous meeting (total cost of £360.00) was proposed by Ann Packman, seconded by Rob Soutar and carried unanimously.

d. **Emergency Co-ordinator – reallocation of role.** The Chairman reminded the meeting that Jackie Bremner had given advance warning that she would like to hand over the role of Emergency Co-ordinator. There were no volunteers to take over this role. Rob Soutar mentioned that he had met a newly-arrived parishioner who might be persuaded to take this on and, on receiving further details from Rob, **Jackie Bremner undertook to make contact with that individual.** The Chairman reminded the meeting that the individual taking on the role must be a Parish Councillor (to meet insurance requirements), and that there was currently a vacancy.

e. **Withies Road Drains.** Welsh Water had been contacted by the Clerk and had explained that, whilst they are unable to regularly maintain the sewerage system due to the sheer size of such an undertaking, they do respond to every request for assistance. In this instance, they had visited Withies Road, but found nothing wrong. However, they encourage members of the public to contact them as soon as any problems become apparent. **Contact details to be published in the Withington News by the Clerk.**

f. **East View Hedge.** The Chairman reported that, thanks to the perseverance of Ann Packman, Amey had taken action and the hedge had been cut back.

**ITEM 7 – CORRESPONDENCE** The Chairman explained a number of items that had been received. Subsequent to which there were no questions relating to the previously circulated list of correspondence.

**ITEM 8 - MATTERS FINANCIAL**

a. **Balances.** There were no questions relating to the previously circulated information.

b. **Annual review of Clerk's Salary.** The Clerk left the meeting whilst his salary was reviewed. After discussion it was proposed by Rob Soutar, seconded by Kevin Hewison and agreed unanimously, that the Clerk's salary is to be raised to the hourly rate of Spine Point 16 (£8.545) on the National Pay Scale (LC1) and applied to 10 hours per week.

c. **Budget for Financial Year 2011/2012.** At the same time as Item 8b was discussed, the budget for Year 2011/2012 was also discussed, resulting in a proposal from Rob Soutar, seconded by Kevin Hewison, and agreed unanimously, that the Precept for the coming year should remain at £15,000.00.

d. **Payments to be agreed.**

(1)	Salary & Expenses	(£478.13 + £69.77)	£ 547.90
(2)	Lengthsman payment		£ 54.17
(3)	R J Hall (work on Withington Fields)		£ 235.00
(4)	R Soutar (Chain and Padlock for Withington Fields)		£ 28.98

Approval proposed by Kevin Hewison, seconded by Alison Bainbridge and agreed unanimously.

Rob Soutar raised the question of whether 3 quotations should be necessary to purchase services and explained that, at times, it was not practical to do so. The Clerk confirmed that, in accordance with the Parish Council Standing Instructions, if an item costs less than £1,000 there is no need to obtain a number of quotations.

**ITEM 9 – PLANNING** There were no questions relating to the previously circulated list of planning applications.

**ITEM 10 – OTHER BUSINESS**

a. **PACT report.** Ann Packman reported to the meeting that, disappointingly, the only outstanding item at the last PACT meeting could not be addressed as Amey had not attended. The need for PACT meetings was being reviewed.

b. **Anti-social behaviour.** This was an item requested by Wallace Brown. In his absence it was held over to the next meeting.

c. **Cross Keys Flood Action Group.** Jackie Bremner informed the meeting that a Flood Fair was being held on by Amey on 16<sup>th</sup> November by Amey, and the Clerk confirmed that he had received a formal invitation to the Parish Council. She also stated that the Drainage Board were showing positive signs.

d. **Pixley Parish Speed Limit Request.** A previously circulated request from Pixley Parish Council for support for their campaign for the introduction of a 50 mph speed limit throughout Herefordshire was discussed. The consensus was that the campaign should not be supported, and the Clerk was asked to inform Pixley Parish Council of the decision.

e. **Withington Road Signs.** The Clerk updated the meeting on the progress with renewal/upgrading of the road signs in and around Withington (previously raised some 2 years ago). Amey had confirmed that they expected to:

- (1) Be able to replace the Withington signs on the A4103.
- (2) Replace the finger post signs throughout Withington Village, and add additional signs for the Village Hall and School.
- (3) Finish the Westhide "SLOW" sign requested in 2008.
- (4) Refurbish the junction markings of Duke Street with Withies Road, and consider supplying a "Give Way" sign for traffic approaching this junction from Duke Street.

The Chairman suggested that there should be Section 106 monies available to provide new signage. The Clerk was asked to pass this comment on to Amey.

f. **Winter Gritting.** Simon Dent updated the meeting with regard to the provision of extra salt/grit bins that had been requested in May 2010. Amey have indicated that Withington had been allocated 2 extra bins that were requested for Old Grove Pitch but that, due to the large number of requests, they would have to prioritise allocations at other locations.

**ITEM 11 - DATE FOR NEXT MEETING** – Thursday, 13 January 2011 (7.30 pm start)

Dates for future meetings:	17 March 2011 (7.30 pm start)
	19 May 2011 (Annual Meeting - 7 pm start)
	14 July 2011 (7.30 pm start)
	15 September 2011 (7.30 pm start)
Added date:	17 November 2011 (7.30 pm start)

There being no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9:30 pm.

..... (Chairman) 13 January 2011