

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE WITHINGTON GROUP OF PARISH COUNCILS  
HELD AT WITHINGTON VILLAGE HALL ON THURSDAY, 8<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2012**

**ITEM 1 - APOLOGIES** were accepted from: Rachael Leake, Jim Callow, Sylvia Fletcher, PC Neil James and Steve Caine.

Those present were:

Withington	Paul Bainbridge (Chairman)	Rob Soutar	Alison Bainbridge
	Kevin Hewison	Wallace Brown	Tom Nellist
	Colin Stone-Fewings		
Westhide	Steve Scotcher	Ralph Barber	
Preston Wynne	Simon Dent	Shelly Ford	
Clerk to the Parish	Geoff Studerus		
Community-Led Plan			
Others	Cllr Dave Greenow	Members of the Public	4

**ITEM 2 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** No Councillors declared any interests or gifts linked to their Parish Council work.

**ITEM 3 - MINUTES OF THE LAST GROUP PARISH MEETING** Minutes of the Group Parish meeting held on 12 January 2012 had been previously circulated. Acceptance of these minutes was proposed by Kevin Hewison, seconded by Wallace Brown and unanimously agreed.

**ITEM 4 - PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

- a. ***Litter outside Withington Stores.*** David Packman outlined the problem with litter accumulating around the area surrounding Withington Stores. He stated that the owner of the Store had not responded to requests from residents to tidy up the Store surrounds. The Chairman advised that he had spoken to the Store staff who had indicated that the owner was aware of the problem and that they did their best to tidy the outside area, but that it was specifically difficult to collect rubbish that had become entangled in the thorn bushes. After discussion the Chairman proposed that **the Clerk on behalf of the Parish Council should contact the owner with a request to attend the next meeting to discuss the problem (Kevin Hewison to provide contact details).**
- b. ***Parking outside the Post Office.*** The Chairman advised the meeting that the Diane Holloway, the Postmistress, had asked the Parish Council for advice on a problem that was developing with motorists who were parking outside the Post Office but who were not using the Post Office facilities. She indicated that residents living close by the area were being inconvenienced by inconsiderate parking, and that it appears that the main cause could be that the Post Office lay-by space was being used incorrectly, leaving no room for genuine Post Office customers. After discussion, the Parish Council recommended that **the Clerk write to the Post Office to advise that the Council cannot help with the majority of the itemised problems, however if the Post Office wished to install notices along the lay-by stating "use by Post Office customers only" to see if this alleviated the problem. (Input by Clerk: A further set of notices stating "No Parking – 24 hours access required" at Points 1 and 2 on the submitted drawing might go some way to avoid blocking of neighbours access.)**

**ITEM 5 - LOCAL POLICE REPORT** No representative from the Police was available to report on local matters. However the Chairman made the meeting aware that a new Community Support Officer was now in post, CSO Dean Wall, and his contact details were given to the meeting.

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

- a. ***Provision of Bus Stop Shelter.*** The Chairman advised the meeting that the provision of a bus stop shelter at the Withies Close bus stop had been researched and that the most cost effective method was to collaborate with the County Council – this would result in the Parish Council being required to pay up to a maximum of £1250.00 towards the provision and installation of a shelter. The only other requirement was for the Parish Council to undertake to clean the shelter – the County Council would undertake the maintenance. To this end the Chairman, Clerk and Rob Soutar met with County representatives on-site and arranged for a suitable shelter to be provided and installed. The County had since acknowledged the request, but had indicated that there was a long waiting period and it could be some time before a shelter could be provided. The Chairman then proposed that the Parish Council set aside £1,250.00 to fund this project (despite indications that this may be eventually funded by donation). This was seconded by Rob Soutar and agreed unanimously.

**ITEM 7 – REPLACEMENT PARISH CLERK** The Chairman advised the meeting that interviews would take place on Tuesday, 13<sup>th</sup> March 2012. Further he recommended that an Extra-Ordinary Meeting be held on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2012 at 7 pm in Withington Village Hall with a view to the individual considered suitable being approved by the Council, with a contract commencement date of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012. Agreed unanimously.

**ITEM 8 - PARISH COUNCILLOR VACANCY** The Chairman reminded the meeting that the formal advertising process had now been completed and the vacancy could now be filled by co-option. He asked Parish Councillors to contact anyone living in Withington that they felt may be interested in serving the community in and encourage them to apply. At the previous meeting Steve Caine was asked if he wished to take up the position, and he has now declined this offer.

**ITEM 9 - COMMUNITY-LED PARISH PLAN** The Chairman of the CLP Group was not present to comment.

a. ***Neighbourhood Plan Meeting.*** The Chairman advised that he and Ralph Barber had attended a Neighbourhood Plan Meeting on 8 February 2012 and provided Councillors with a summary. The outcome of the meeting was that Parish Councils were apparently expected to take on the determination of Planning from the County Council. In regard to the progress of the Local Development Framework, a High Court ruling is currently being examined by the County Council to ascertain whether it affects the way forward. Similarly, principles for Neighbourhood Plans had yet to be announced and that it was therefore not possible to determine a way forward for that item.

**ITEM 10 - WITHINGTON FIELDS (WF)**

a. ***Management Committee Report.***

(1) ***Annual Playground Inspection.*** Rob Soutar advised the meeting that he was considering two options for Annual Inspections, Digley Associates and Herefordshire Council. He felt that the Digley Associates provided a more suitable product and intended to put that into effect. However, the Herefordshire Council offer should not be rejected until after the other contract had been secured.

(2) ***Project 100.*** Rob Soutar also advised the meeting that Amey had initiated Project 100 which offered free trees and planting to Parish Councils (5 to each applicant). 5 oaks had been ordered, which were to be delivered on the afternoon of 15<sup>th</sup> March, and he asked for a volunteer to supervise the planting in a ring around the central oak – Colin Stone Fewings agreed to attend.

(3) ***Finance set aside for Minor Repairs/Improvements.*** The Clerk advised that the sum of £500 that had previously been set aside for this purpose had been depleted and, after discussion, Kevin Hewison proposed that the Management Committee be authorised to spend up to £500 between meetings on items related to Withington Fields. This was seconded by Wallace Brown and agreed unanimously.

***Field in Trust (FIT).*** The Chairman advised that the status of “Field in Trust” was progressing. The Deed of Dedication was expected shortly and it was hoped that the FIT would be finalised in time to be dedicated during the Queen’s Jubilee festivities. The FIT “Toolkit” had been received and, when the event was identifiable, a “Goody Box” was also available.

b. ***Sale of Land for Development.*** Colin Stone-Fewings declared an interest in this subject and left the room. The Chairman informed the meeting that the legal process was moving slowly but that it was hoped that this would be finalised soon so that the development of the field could continue. He confirmed that the profit expected to be realised from this was in keeping with the original amount. Colin Stone-Fewings returned to the meeting.

**ITEM 11 - CORRESPONDENCE** (as per Information sheet attached). The Chairman and Clerk explained the detail of several items of correspondence. There were no comments.

**ITEM 12 - MATTERS FINANCIAL**

a. ***Balances*** (as per Information sheet attached). There were no comments on the balances provided.

b. ***Payments to be agreed:***

Clerk’s Salary & Expenses	(£569.67 + £31.58)	£	601.25
HALC (Neighbourhood Planning training (2 places)		£	10.00
Withington Village Hall Room Hire	(already paid)	£	181.50
WiserHosting Website Space	(already paid)	£	66.00

Kevin Hewison proposed, seconded by Colin Stone-Fewings, that these payments be agreed – carried unanimously.

## c. Payments made and already agreed:

Replacement Flags	£	19.95
Herefordshire Council (SID Deployment)	£	417.47
Public Works Load Board (6-monthly Loan Interest)	£	364.50
Information Commissioner's Office (Data Control) (Annual payment)	£	35.00

## d. Receipts:

Parish Clerk (purchase of Laptop)	£	30.00
HMRC (VAT Refund)	£	143.62

e. **Review of Financial Standing Orders.** The Chairman reminded the meeting that figures quoted in the Financial Standing Orders (regarding limits for which tenders/quotations should be obtained) were incompatible. Having contacted HALC for advice, he indicated that the more realistic situation would be to change the figures to:

Page 14 Para 30b	States	“value in excess of <del>£5,000</del> <b>£50,000</b> ”
Page 22 Para 11.1(b) & (f)	Shows:	“contracts exceeding <del>£25,000</del> <b>£50,000</b> ” and “contracts above <del>£25,000</del> <b>£50,000</b> ”
Page 23 Para 11.1(g)	Shows:	“contract less than <del>£3,000</del> <b>£50,000</b> ” “where the value is below <b>£5000</b> and above £1000 the RFO shall strive to obtain 3 <b>quotations</b> ”

The Chairman proposed these changes, seconded by Rob Soutar – carried unanimously. Rob Soutar also proposed, seconded by Tom Nellist, that references to “estimates” should be changed to “quotations” – agreed unanimously. **The Clerk was asked to produce appropriate replacement pages for Standing Orders at the next meeting.**

f. **Request for Financial Aid.**

- (1) **Withington PCC.** The Chairman informed the meeting that the usual request for aid towards the upkeep of Withington Churchyard had been received. The total spend was £906.40 This was a considerable increase on previous requests and, after discussion, Rob Soutar proposed (seconded by the Chairman) that this item be deferred until detail of the history of previous grants could be provided - carried unanimously. **The Clerk was asked to provide the historical detail.**
- (2) **Fownhope & District Medical Trust Fund.** The Chairman advised that a request had been received asking for financial aid towards the replacement of the Trust's delivery vehicle. After discussion, Rob Soutar proposed – seconded by Ralph Barber – that there was comparatively little use of the trust by the Withington Group Parishes and, therefore, no grant should be awarded. Carried unanimously. **The Clerk was asked to reply to this effect.**
- (3) **Queen's Jubilee Mug.** The Chairman informed the meeting that a request had been received from the Queen's Jubilee Celebration Organisation Group for aid towards the provision of Jubilee Mugs to Withington children. A sum of £194.40 plus £20 delivery had been requested. Various other means of fund raising during the Celebration Weekend were identified, together with organisations from which grants may be obtained. The point was also made that if the Parish Council was to give financial help with this project, then the children of all three of the Group Parishes should be included. Following discussion, the Chairman proposed, seconded by Rob Soutar that up to £300.00 be allocated for the provision of Jubilee Mugs – carried unanimously.
- (4) **First Aid Service.** The Chairman explained that a request had been received for aid to purchase medical equipment for a volunteer group (First Responders) which supported the Ambulance Service. After discussion, during which Rob Soutar supported the request, it was decided to invite the applicant, Mr Allan Holloway, to attend the next meeting to brief the PC on the detail of the service provided. **Clerk to write accordingly.**

**ITEM 13 - PLANNING** There were no comments on the items listed on the previously circulated Information Sheet. The Chairman outlined the comments made on the applications for development of The Mintons (S113039/F S113041/C), and the track at Westhild (DMS/113542/F - to be tabled at Planning Committee on 4 April 2012).

**ITEM 14 - COMMUNITY TECHNOLOGY GRANT** Kevin Hewison advised the meeting that the request for the grant to provide the technology was being processed.

**ITEM 15 – PROVISION OF BROADBAND** Simon Dent advised the meeting that, since the initial survey, very little progress appeared to have been made. Kevin Hewison, on behalf of Withington PCC, advised that an approach had been made to AllPay with regard to the use of Withington Church Tower as a relay point. This approach, despite being constantly hastened by the PCC, had yet to move forward.

**ITEM 16 - WINTER WEATHER** Simon Dent advised that the bags of salt/grit mix had been put in place at the nominated holding points throughout the Parishes in time for the last cold weather period.

**ITEM 17 - WITHINGTON SIGNS**

- a. **Lock Road.** As Rachel Leake was not present, this item was deferred until the next meeting.
- b. **Withies Close.** The Clerk advised the meeting that the replacement sign had been hastened with Amey, with no reply being yet received.

**ITEM 18 – WEST LYDIATT TELEPHONE LINE** The Chairman advised that the Clerk had met with an BT Open Reach engineer on-site at Withington Fields on 7 March 2012, permission to enter the field had been given, and it was hoped that within a relatively short time the above-ground cable will be buried bringing the problem to a conclusion.

**ITEM 19 - YOUTH CLUB** The Chairman advised that Steve Caine had reported that the Youth Club was still viable and it was hoped that it would continue throughout the next financial year.

**ITEM 20 – CHILDREN’S CENTRES MEETINGS** The Chairman reminded the meeting that Herefordshire Children’s Centres were being reviewed and public meetings were being held throughout the County – the nearest for Withington being at the Widemarsh Children’s Centre on 19 March 2012, and that anyone wishing to attend should advise the Clerk by 12 March.

**ITEM 21 - DATE FOR NEXT MEETING**

**ANNUAL MEETING - Thursday, 17th May 2012 (7.00 pm start)**

Future dates:	5th July 2012	(7.30 pm start)
	20th September 2012	(7.00 pm start)
	15th November 2012	(7.30 pm start)
	17 <sup>th</sup> January 2013	(7.30 pm start)
<b>Added Date:</b>	<b>21<sup>st</sup> March 2013</b>	<b>(7.30 pm start)</b>

There being nothing further to discuss, the meeting was closed at 9.20 pm.

..... (Chairman) 17 May 2012