

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE WITHINGTON GROUP OF PARISH COUNCILS  
HELD AT WITHINGTON VILLAGE HALL ON THURSDAY, 15<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2011**

**ITEM 1 - APOLOGIES** were accepted from: Rob Soutar, Kevin Hewison, Jackie Bremner, Steve Scotcher, Simon Dent, and Cllr David Greenow.

Those present were:

Withington	Paul Bainbridge (Chairman)	Alison Bainbridge	Wallace Brown
	Tom Nellist	Colin Stone-Fewings	Rachel Leake
	Lynne Dodds		
Westhide	Jim Callow	Ralph Barber	
Preston Wynne	Sylvia Fletcher	Shelly Ford	
Clerk to the Parish	Geoff Studerus		
Community-Led Plan	Steve Caine		
Others	CSO Martin Butcher	Members of the Public	0

**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 14 July had been previously circulated. Acceptance of these Minutes, with grammar amended, was proposed by Alison Bainbridge, seconded by Rachel Leake, and carried unanimously.

**ITEM 4 – PUBLIC QUESTIONS** There were no questions from members of the public.

**ITEM 5 – LOCAL POLICE REPORT** The Chairman welcomed CSO Martin Butcher, who then addressed the meeting on local issues since the last meeting, which included assault, theft, domestic disturbances, property damage, and vulnerable residents. He also expressed support for Withington Fields. At this point, Sylvia Fletcher suggested that there was a need for road signs to identify the Withington Fields area of Withies Road as an area in which children might be crossing the road. The Chairman suggested that a speed platform would provide a safer crossing point. **After discussion, the meeting requested the Clerk to approach Amey to see what safety measures could be provided.**

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

- a. ***Use of Community Offenders to litter pick in Withington.*** The Chair advised the meeting that the Probation Service had been contacted and a meeting (20 September) arranged to identify what could be arranged. Initial reactions to the request appeared to be favourable.
- b. ***Withies Road Name Signs.*** The Clerk advised the meeting that signs had been purchased and installation was yet to be arranged.

**ITEM 7 – COMMUNITY-LED PARISH PLAN**

- a. ***Neighbourhood Watch Scheme.*** The Chairman outlined the proposal from the Community-Led Plan Steering Group that a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme should be organised, and mentioned that this had been tried over 15 years ago. The CSO felt that the proposed Scheme was ambitious but its success would depend on the support of the residents. After discussion, Steve Caine proposed that the Steering Group should move this topic forward. The Chairman proposed that the Parish Council should give support to the Scheme, and that any Parish Councillor interested in taking part should contact David Packman. Agreed unanimously.

At this point Jim Callow mentioned and supported the advertising of the new national telephone number on which non-urgent contacts should be made.

**ITEM 8 – WITHINGTON FIELDS (WF)**

- a. ***Management Advisory Group (MAG) Report.*** In Rob Soutar's absence, Wallace Brown appraised the meeting of the results of the first meeting of the MAG. He identified five areas for discussion:

1. Need for 3 more litter bins.
2. Is there a budget for grass cutting/hedge trimming?
3. The BMX track needs seeding on the banks.
4. The football pitches need reseeding with a tougher, more suitable grass.
5. It was considered that the addition of picnic tables would be an improvement.

The Chairman made the meeting aware that, on behalf of the MAG, Rob Soutar had also submitted a written request for funding which covered most of the points raised by Wallace. Mr Soutar's proposals were:

1. Litter Bins – 3 extra bins be purchased at a cost of up to £100.00 each – a total of £300.00. The Chairman proposed that this be increased to £500.00 to include any necessary installation of posts.
2. Grass Seeding – Actual costs were not available, but it was recommended that the Parish Council approve a budget of up to £1,000.00 for grass seeding.
3. Minor Repairs or Improvements – to be able to deal with these as they arise, it was recommended that the Parish Council approve an expenditure of up to £500.00.
4. Entrance to the housing development area – during the development of the field the original gates at this entrance were moved to secure the agricultural exit from the housing area. This left the housing area exposed, and to ensure that this area is not misused, another set of gates should be purchased and erected in the original position. It was requested that the Parish Council approve a budget of up to £300.00 for this.

Together with the above proposals, the question of the cost of the use of the football pitches by the newly-formed Withington Football Club was raised, and the Chairman proposed, seconded by Alison Bainbridge, that the Withington Club should have free use of the pitches, carried unanimously. Charges for the use of the pitches by outside groups was also discussed, and the Chairman proposed that a decision on this aspect should be postponed for one year so that a more acceptable playing surface can be produced, and the management of the area was given time to take effect. He also proposed that any income from the hire of the pitches should be paid into the Parish Council Withington Fields account. Both proposals agreed unanimously.

After discussion, the Chairman confirmed that the MAG should report to the Parish Council and that they should produce rules of operational for the Group. He also confirmed that sufficient money was available to cover these requests, and proposed that a total of £2,300.00 be set aside for the MAG. This was seconded by Wallace Brown, and agreed unanimously. The Chairman also confirmed that a Withington Fields maintenance and development budget had been set in the Parish Council Annual Budget for 2011-2012, and that a similar arrangement would be set in future annual budgets.

b. **Sale of Land for Development.** The Chairman advised the meeting that, now that Outline Planning Permission had been granted, two agents (Sunderland and Thompson, and Jackson International) had been approached, both of which had taken opposite views (direct sale by tender or auction) on how best to sell the land. On comparison, the costs quoted by Jackson International proved to be the cheaper (at 1.5%), and that they were considered to be the preferred agent. After discussion, the Chairman proposed that the Parish Council give the Chairman and Vice-Chairman the authority to approach Jackson International to arrange detailed terms of sale by tender. This was seconded by Wallace Brown, and agreed unanimously.

c. **Purchase of additional items for Withington Fields.** This was covered under Item 8a.

**ITEM 9 – CORRESPONDENCE** There were no questions relating to the previously circulated list of correspondence.

#### **ITEM 10 – MATTERS FINANCIAL**

a. **Balances.** Details of current balances for the Parish Bank Accounts had been circulated and were accepted by the meeting.

b. **Payments to be agreed:**

Clerk's Salary & Expenses	(£569.67 + £32.44)	£	602.11
Herefordshire County Council (Uncontested election)		£	113.02
Zurich Insurance	(already paid)	£	83.29
Wicksteed Leisure	(already paid)	£	58,446.00
Brian Ree (Services)		£	11,022.00

Agreement of these payments was proposed by Sylvia Fletcher, seconded by Rachel Leake, and carried unanimously.

c. **Payments already agreed and paid:**

Combined Playground Services Ltd	£	390.00
Countrywide WF Grass Tidy Up	£	96.00

d. **Receipts:**

Public Works Loan Board	£	44,975.00
HMRC - VAT Refund	£	1,824.54

**ITEM 11 – PLANNING** There were no questions relating to the previously circulated list of planning applications.

- a. **Planning Policy Document (HALC).** The Chairman reminded the meeting that HALC had produced a recommended Policy Document for Parish Council outlining the process for review of Planning Applications (previously circulated). He identified that the majority of the points proposed in this document agreed with the procedure currently used, however he recommended that Item 3 needed amendment. He proposed that he and the Clerk produced the wording for the amendment with a view to presenting a complete document for adoption by the Parish Council at the next meeting – agreed unanimously.

The Chairman also informed the meeting that two Planning Consultation documents had recently been announced by HALC (The National Planning Policy Framework, and the Local Planning Regulations). He had reviewed these on behalf of the Parish Council, and recommended that no comment was required – agreed unanimously.

- b. **LDF Core Strategy.** The Chairman advised the meeting that he and the Clerk were to attend a meeting on 22 September, after which he would be in a better position to advise the Parish Council.

**ITEM 12 – CONSULTATION PAPERS**

- a. **Localism Bill – New Charter, and New Compact.** The Chairman informed the meeting that he and Alison Bainbridge had reviewed both these papers and come to the conclusion that they both needed rewriting in language that could be easily understood, before any meaningful comment could be made. He had made HALC aware of this.

- b. **Joint Housing Strategy.** This paper had been reviewed by Ralph Barber. His findings and comments had been circulated prior to the meeting, and he explained his reasoning behind his selections. After discussion the Chairman thanked him for his efforts, and his report was supported by the meeting without amendment. **The Clerk was authorised to forward the comments to the appropriate authority.**

- c. The Clerk advised the meeting that consultation was taking place on the provision of a faster Broadband service for the County. An open discussion was to be held on 19 September, at which the **Clerk would attend and report back at the next meeting.**

**ITEM 13 – TRAFFIC SPEED MONITORING** The Chairman advised the meeting that David Packman had arranged for a meeting with the Road Safety Unit on 26<sup>th</sup> September, with a view to deciding the positioning of the SID.

**ITEM 14 – NOMINATION ONTO SOUTH AREA MEETINGS AND HEREFORDSHIRE ASSOCIATION FOR LOCAL COUNCIL'S EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.** The Chairman explained that he had for some time fulfilled the role of the Parish Council's representative on the HALC Executive Committee and at South Area Meetings. To enable this to continue he had to be formally nominated by the Parish Council. Shelly Ford proposed that Paul Bainbridge's nomination be approved by the Parish Council, seconded by Lynne Dodds – carried unanimously.

**ITEM 15 – ECOHERE PROJECT** The Chairman referred to a previously circulated letter, which asked if the Parish Council were prepared to take part in the Ecohere project. The detail of this was discussed, together with comments received by email from members of the Community-Led Plan. After discussion, it was agreed that the Ecohere Project team should be invited to attend the next meeting of the Parish Council, together with members of the Community-Led Plan Steering Group, to give details of exactly what was involved. **The Clerk was asked to extend the invitation.**

**ITEM 16 – WITHINGTON SIGNS.**

- a. **Lock Road.** The Chairman asked Rachel Leake to update the meeting of the progress of her research into the actual location of Lock Road. Rachel advised that she had not been able to identify exactly where Lock Road started in Withington and, therefore, was unable to confirm the position of a name sign. After discussion, the meeting agreed that further investigation was needed into whether or not the households in the immediate area of Withington Church felt that a sign was required, and **Rachel was asked to make further enquiries to ensure that a name signs were necessary.**

- b. **Withies Close Sign – Defacement.** The Chairman advised the meeting that the "Traffic Calming" sign at the entrance to Withies Close had been defaced, and proposed that the Withies Close residents should be asked to clean the sign – agreed unanimously. **The Chairman and Clerk to progress.**

**ITEM 17 – MEETINGS TO BE ATTENDED**

- a. **Locality Working and Key Briefings for Chair and Clerk.** The Chairman advised the meeting that he and the Clerk would be attending these meetings on 20th September and 28th September respectively.

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**ITEM 18 – DATE FOR NEXT MEETING:** Thursday, 17 November 2011 (7.30 pm start)

Future dates:	12th January 2012	(7.30 pm start)
	15th March 2012	(7.30 pm start)
	17th May 2012	(7.00 pm start)
	12th July 2012	(7.30 pm start)
<b>Added Date:</b>	<b>20th September 2012</b>	<b>(7.30 pm start)</b>

There being no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.30 pm.

..... (Chairman) 17 November 2011