

Withington Parish Council Meeting
Wednesday 3rd July 2024
at 7.30pm in the Parish Room

Minutes

17/2024 Present: Councillors: Phil Heath (Chair), Lesley Stone, Alan Williams, Cllr Lezley Picton (Tern), Denise Roscoe (Clerk) and 13 members of the public

18/2024 Welcome: The Chairman welcomed everyone

19/2024 Apologies: Cllr Martin Timmis, Cllr Neil Maxwell, Jon Scutt and Brenda Marshall

20/2024 Declaration of Interest: None

21/2024 Approval of the Minutes for 8th May & 30th May 2024

The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman

22/2024 Public Forum

The Chairman reported that he had received complaints regarding some of the hedges not being cut back that are hanging over the roads. Reference was made to The Management of Hedgerows (England) Regulation 2024 which took effect in May. **Action Clerk:** to investigate who owns the offending hedges and report to the person responsible with a view to having them cut back.

The Chairman asked the owner of the Old Vicarage how long it would be before the scaffolding would be removed. The owner explained that he had been let down by a builder and was having to arrange a replacement. It is hoped that the scaffolding would be removed as soon as possible

23/2024 Report from Cllr Lezley Picton

Cllr Picton reported there aren't many updates to give due to the purdah period of the General Election.

Shropshire Council will announce their finance update next week.

Due to Ash tree die back a number of Ash trees on Shropshire Council land will be cut down.

Cllr Lezley Picton Left the Meeting

24/2024 Updates from Previous Meetings:

- Flooding outside Hucksters Cottage: Reported to SC still waiting for update **Action Clerk:** to investigate.
- Potholes on the road past Villa Farm: Not repaired. **Action Clerk:** to investigate.
- Faded "Slow" Sign on Rodington Road: **Action Clerk:** to investigate
- Road sweeping Caernarvon Lane & Walcot Road & surrounding roads: See response from Highways Manager.
- Response from SC Highways Manager: Please see report attached.
- Bus Service on road past Villa Farm Complaints: A complaint was made to Telford & Wrekin Council regarding the damage to verges caused by the buses and the behaviour of the bus drivers. The service contractor has assured that the bus drivers have been spoke to and that they will be reviewing the timetables for the service. **Action Parishioners:** to report any incident to the Clerk as soon as possible.

25/2024 Finance Report

Approval of Accounts to date for the Parish Council and the Village Green

WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL FINANCIAL STATEMENT 3 July 2024

Parish Council		Village Green	
Brought Forward from 07/05/24	£4,684.40	Brought Forward from 07/05/24	£3,869.19
Receipts since 07/05/24	£0.00	Receipts since 12/03/24	£323.00
		Friends of the Green	£323.00
Payments Approved - 08/05/24	£12.00	Payments Approved - 08/05/24	£0.00
Hire of Hall (May 24)	£12.00		
Payments made since 07/05/24 for approval	£806.43	Payments made since 07/05/24 for approval	£82.42
Clerk Salary (June 24)	£516.84	A Lewis - Padlock	£25.00
HMRC PAYE (June 24)	£129.00	A Lewis - Petrol	£29.08
SALC Membership	£160.59	R Lucas - Petrol	£28.34
Balance Carried Forward to 02/07/24	£3,865.97	Balance Carried Forward to 02/07/24	£4,109.77
Defibrillator Funds	£222.40		
Coronation Proceeds	£291.71		
Balance Available to the Parish Council	£3,351.86		
Payments for approval - 03/07/24		Payments for approval - 03/07/24	
Hire of Hall (30 May 24)	£12.00	ALS (Weedkiller)	£300.00
Hire of Hall (July 24)	£12.00		
Information Commissioner	£35.00		
Authorisation to pay the following if within budget amount:		Authorisation to pay the following if within budget amount:	
		Lawn Mower Maintenance, Hedge Cutting	

Payments approved:

Payments made since 07/05/24

£516.84	Clerk Salary (June 24)
£129.00	HMRC PAYE (June 24)
£160.59	SALC Membership
£25.00	A Lewis - Padlock
£29.08	A Lewis - Petrol
£28.34	R Lucas - Petrol

Payments for approval 03/07/24

£12.00	Hire of Hall (30 May 24)
£12.00	Hire of Hall (July 24)
£35.00	Information Commissioner
£300.00	ALS – Weedkiller Application

26/2024 Planning

Church Farm Solar Farm 22/03486/FUL:

The signed contract with E66 (Elgin) has been received. E66 plan to start construction in quarter 1 (Jan - March) 2025 and connection should be in quarter 4 (Oct – Dec).

Telford & Wrekin Council Local Plan 5 Year Review:

The publication version of the Local Plan will be open to public consultation during the Summer – Autumn 2024 period. **Action Clerk:** to email village when the consultation period begins.

27/2024 Full-Fibre Broadband

Withington Broadband working group met recently however, circumstances have superseded the Working group remit in that as from 7th June, Building Digital UK (BDUK) 'paused' the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme for premises in south & east Shropshire (including Withington). The pause is a pre-cursor to BDUK launching a Cross-Regional procurement this summer as part of Project Gigabit, which may result in full-fibre broadband becoming available in Withington (expected timeline 2026). As it stands, the only broadband infrastructure supplier on this procurement framework (call-off event) is Openreach, we understand this call-off should be confirmed by November 2024.

The members of Withington Broadband working group therefore encourage all Parishioners to express their interest in Ultrafast Broadband with Openreach.

28/2024 Drains – Severn Trent Water Report

Parishioners Gail Robinson and Philip Smith have reviewed a report sent to the Parish Council by Severn Trent Water (STW) regarding the flooding in the village in late 2023. The report which is based around a computer model of the drains and their resilience in Withington was compiled by STW in December 2023.

Philip reported that there are quite a few errors and omissions in the report and the report authors conclude that there is low confidence that the model is predicting observed flows correctly

Gail and Philip will send a report of their findings to STW for comment as well as asking STW what they are going to do to build in resilience and sewer sustainability going forwards.

The Chairman thanked Philip and Gail for their work in analysing the report.

Whilst Shropshire Council were cleaning drains in the village recently, Gail queried the drains needing to be cleansed in Caernarvon Lane with the operative who explained that the Lane wasn't included on his map. **Action Clerk:** to investigate and report drains that need cleaning.

29/2024 Hare & Hounds

The Hare & Hounds has been sold and the new owner takes possession on 8 July. The pub will be closed for approximately two weeks whilst remedial works are carried out. The new owner plans to carry out further refurbishment during the future.

30/2024 Policing Community Charter

Withington's priorities for the quarter October 2024 to December 2024:

The present priorities are speeding, investigation of fly tipping on private land and wildlife crime
Cllrs resolved that the priorities should stay as they are.

Cllr Heath asked for fly tipping incidents to be monitored. Could Parishioners report any incidents to the Clerk as well as reporting them to Shropshire Council.

31/2024 Village Green Committee Report

Report from Village Green Chairman: Wayne Thomas

We have had two meetings since my last report.

1. The Green has been used for parking and the very successful Village fete.
2. Footpath. We have investigated the state and repair of the footpath. This is an ongoing issue to be resolved.
3. Hedge and field maintenance. We continue to cut the grass and will have weed killer applied to the field on Tuesday 2nd July. The hedge will be cut as soon as we can arrange it.
4. BBQ. This has been put to a vote and rejected.
5. Goalpost wheels. These have been repositioned to allow easier movement.
6. Gate padlock. A new one has been purchased and connected to a higher leg.
7. A pavilion / lock up has been suggested and investigated. This is a long-term matter.

Dog fouling Signs: **Action Clerk:** to contact Shropshire Council with regards to free signs.

32/2024 Date of Next Parish Council Meetings: Wednesday 4th September 2024

Report from Shropshire Council Highways Manager for the Central Area.

The Manager has reviewed the minutes of the meeting and revisited the parish recently and has commented as follows:

Rodington to Walcot Road – it is agreed that in a number of specific locations, the formalisation of a number of passing places may prevent the steady deterioration of the roadside verges. In order for this to happen the site has been added to a list of Local Engineering Concerns. These sites are reviewed annually, assessed using asset management data, engineering and local knowledge and the highest-ranking sites are then progressed into the Capital works programme.

Telford and Wrekin Local Plan 5 Year Review Consultation – this is not something that Shropshire Council's Highway Maintenance team can directly affect or contribute toward, however, we can and have passed your concerns onto the relevant teams who will be able to add their thoughts to future discussions with our neighbouring authority.

Withington Road Issues – Highway drainage, orders have been provided to our inhouse drainage teams to attend the village and undertake a comprehensive cleanse. We are currently reviewing our gully cleansing programmes with a view to targeting streets, districts or parishes that may require additional cleansing, I don't see why areas within the parish cannot be included. Sweeping is a function not directly controlled by Highway Maintenance and therefore we will need to liaise with colleagues within our Street Scene team.

Caernarvon Lane – as with the Rodington to Walcot Road, the site has been added to the list of Local Engineering Concerns. There are areas of the road that require structural patching and or a structural resurfacing which we will need to fund via the Capital works programme.

Fix My Street Communications – we are aware that following the installation of the Fix My Street App there were issues with communications and the quality of the responses provided by the system. Shropshire Council recognised this fact and have been working on improving this. Several changes have been made in recent months and hopefully you as a Parish would have seen some improvement.

Once again, the Manager apologises for the delay in responding, the winter period has provided numerous challenges to the Highway team which has slowed down the rate at which they have been able to deal with matters raised.