

# WILLITON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2014 at 7.00 pm  
At Council Chambers of District Council, Williton

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## Attendees:

<b>Chairman</b>	McDonald
<b>SCC Councillors</b>	None
<b>WSC Councillors</b>	May, Taylor
<b>Parish Councillors</b>	Vaughan, Koch
<b>Clerk</b>	Mrs J Johnson-Smith
<b>Public</b>	20 members
<b>Press</b>	
<b>Others</b>	

## Apologies:

<b>Councillors</b>	James, Bruford, Denton, Bennett, Woods, Peeks
<b>Public</b>	John Parsons and Rona Troman

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**14/01 Apologies as noted above.**

**14/02 Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting held on 22nd April 2013**

It was **resolved** to approve the minutes

**14/03 Matters Arising**

There were none.

**14/04 Chairman's Report**

The Chairman gave details of one new member, Cllr Denton, during the previous year and advised the resignations of Cllrs Wood, Beaver and Troman. The Parish Office continued to thrive with regular bookings from the community and artists exhibiting their work. The Groundsman, Paul Foster, had sadly died during the year and a memorial seat was being arranged in the play area. His duties were now being covered by contractors.

Business discussed during the last year included the following:

- EDF - Proposed roundabout at Washford Cross was still being discussed
- Devolution of Services – Parish Council continued to cover the costs of the grass cutting and weed spraying of SCC land
- Bridge Green (The Copse) and Doniford Car Park – the Council continued to maintain these areas
- Bellamy's Corner - bulbs had been planted and were doing well
- Verge at Casino Lane – this had now been planted with wildflowers
- Community Speed Watch – regular patrols were taking place throughout the village
- Wyndham Charity – this charity makes small donations to those in need and the Chairman sat on the Committee
- Youth – the Council continued to support the youth club which was run by Minehead Eye and numbers of attendees were increasing
- Pavilion Project – full details later in the meeting
- Website – the new website had now been completed

Some of the projects being undertaken last year were as follows

- Flood Plan – now completed and wardens appointed. Work to the plan would be ongoing.
- Toilets – the changes agreed with the District Council had taken place. Comment was made that since the facilities had been reduced, there were sometimes queues of people waiting and it was suggested asking the District Council to put a notice to direct people to their facilities in the Council building.
- Defibrillator – this had been bought and installed in the Spar.
- Dog Litter Bin – this was shortly to be installed at Watchet Hill
- Community Clean Up of Union Lane – this had taken place in July with help from Councillors and residents
- Parish Plan – meetings had been arranged but due to lack of interest and support this had been put on hold

Projects presently being undertaken were as follows:

- Community Hall
- Pavilion
- Flood Plan – to continue to monitor and improve
- Doniford Village signs – soon to be installed
- New footpaths – from St Peter's School to Doniford and Townsend to Catwell
- Memorial Event to mark the start of World War I – due to take place on 3<sup>rd</sup> August

The Parish Council also represented other outside bodies and attended regular meetings. These included

- Williton Regeneration Forum
- Voluntary Sector Forum
- Magna House
- West Somerset Council
- IPCC
- Watchet/Williton/Quantocks Area Panel
- Council Open meetings

The Chairman summed up his report by advising the meeting of the office opening hours and the availability of staff to help with any queries or issues the parishioners may have.

#### **14/05 Financial Report**

The Chairman of the Finance and Administration Committee, Cllr Vaughan, gave the meeting a detailed breakdown of the accounts for the previous year and the budget for the forthcoming year. The year end at 31/3/14 total spend was £95,335, £6764 under budget. The budget for 2014-2015 had been set at £104,921 with a precept of £90,000, no increase on the previous year. The main differences was a drop in the staff and operations budget due to the loss of one member of staff but this had increased the grounds maintenance budget. There was an impact on the tax base due to the new system where the government grant of £12,899.89 had been taken out of the precept.

#### **14/06 Changes to structure of District Council**

Cllr Tim Taylor attended the meeting in order to update the parishioners on the recent changes within the District Council. He gave the background to the present position whereby the Council had accrued large debts which were now being settled by the selling of assets. The government has since changed the way it financed small Councils which had resulted in the Council becoming financially unviable. Ways to address the problem were looked at and an agreement was finally reached with Taunton Deane Borough Council where a joint partnership had been set up with one Chief Executive. Several duties were now shared between officers making great savings, but each Council remained with its own membership and decision making with separate budgets set. Savings of £30,000 per year had been made for WSC through this partnership and it was hoped that there would be no decline to the level of services.

**14/07 Pavilion Project Update**

Cllr Vaughan updated the meeting on the progress of the project giving details of the proposed improvements and the design of the building which would provide changing rooms and a public space with full accessibility. He outlined the brief given to the architect and why the design and location had to be amended due to the limitations of flood plain 3 which had determined the new location. He advised details of information taken from the questionnaires regarding the potential user groups. The planning pack had been submitted to the District Council on 24<sup>th</sup> April for planning approval. If planning permission was granted the project could proceed to its next stage which would include funding applications. Negotiations were taking place with the doctors regarding the widening of the entrance at Robert Street, but he added this was not essential for the project to proceed. Questions raised included those concerning the utilities, the footpath, drainage, maintenance costs and he was asked to look at ground source heating as a possibility.

**14/08 Auction of Goods**

The Chairman advised the meeting that an auction was due to be held on the Memorial Ground on 10<sup>th</sup> May to sell some of the tools and machinery that were no longer required now that the grounds maintenance had been contracted out. Details of the items for sale were available from the Parish Office

**14/09 Venues for Council Meetings**

The Chairman advised that a public meeting had been held during the year at Danesborough View which gave members of the public a chance to discuss issues in a less formal venue and it was proposed holding future meetings in the coming year in this way.

**14/10 Parish Defibrillator and training details**

The Chairman advised that training had been given in the use of the defibrillator the previous Saturday which was very helpful and future sessions could be arranged if parishioners came forward.

**14/11 Any Other Parish Issues**

Questions were raised regarding the future of the Community Hall and it was advised that this would depend on the outcome of the Pavilion Project but the fundraising team would continue to raise funds for the project.

Meeting closed at 9.10pm