

WILLITON PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on 10th May 2022 at 7.00 pm
In the Brendon Room, Williton Pavilion

Attendees:

Chairman	Payne
SCC Councillors	Woods
SWT Councillors	None
Parish Councillors	Hooper and Peeks
Clerk	Mrs M Francis
Public	12 members
Press	None
Others	None

Apologies:

Councillors	Howes, Naylor and White
Public	None

01 Apologies as noted above.

02 Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting held on 28th April 2021

It was **resolved** to approve the minutes.

03 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

04 Chairman's Report

The Chairman welcomed all for attending.

Insufficient candidates stood for election at the 2022 Local Elections, therefore, the following were elected unopposed. Cllrs Peter Payne, Diane Hooper, Ian Aldridge, Dawn-Lesley Howes, Elizabeth Peeks, Michael White, Barbara Nye and Guy Denton. Cllrs Cook and Johnson did not stand for re-election. There were currently three vacancies on the Parish Council.

Countrywide Grounds Maintenance was contracted for the maintenance of Memorial Ground, Bellamy's Corner and The Copse. The SCC verges were also maintained by Countrywide Ground Maintenance, as was the spraying contract. We are grateful that members of the community give their time in maintaining areas such as Bellamy's Corner, Union Lane and the War Memorial Garden.

The Parish Office had re-opened after Covid-19 forced its closure. Meetings continue to take place on a regular basis, normally on a Monday evening, in person from May 2021 after being held via zoom during the Pandemic.

Our Clerk, Michelle Francis, successfully achieved the Certificate in Local Council Administration. Julie Coe was appointed as Assistant to the Clerk in September 2021. A new post had been created to assist with the administration of the WWMRG and primarily with the Pavilion, Nadine Ridge was appointed in November 2021. Unfortunately, the Talking Newspaper ceased and the lease in the back office was terminated. With the additional member of staff, the opportunity was taken to repurpose that room as the Parish Clerk's Office.

Agendas and notices continue to be displayed in the Parish Office window and on the website.

Business discussed during the last year included the following:

- Bridge Green (The Copse) the Council continued to maintain this area.
- Bellamy's Corner – the Council continued to maintain this area. The area was enjoyed by the community.
- Grass Verges – The Parish maintains several verges throughout the village and are trying to arrange meetings to address problems around the North Croft / Whitecroft area created by contractors.
- Community Speed Watch – unfortunately, due to a lack of volunteers these had been unable to take place, however, working with Avon and Somerset Police, and seeking volunteers, it was hoped this would be started again before too long.
- In addition, the Parish had agreed to purchase a SID (Speed Indicator Device) to tell drivers the speed they are doing and are currently arranging their locations in conjunction with Somerset County Council
- Wyndham Charity – The Chairman has a position on the board of this charity, which makes small donations to those in need in the village.
- Youth – the Council continued to support the Williton Youth Club run by Minehead Eye and there is a regular programme published detailing the activities that are taking place. They have started to meet again on a Thursday night.
- Quantock Foodbank – The Council has a representative on the board of Trustees of the Quantock Foodbank which provides relief for those suffering from food poverty in the area.
- Citizens Advice West Somerset – the Council has a representative on the CAWS advisory group.
- Councillor Surgeries – these have started to be held quarterly – surgeries for members of the public to speak to Councillors about issues they want to bring to their attention.
- Website – this continued to be updated it could be accessed to obtain up to date information on what had been happening in the meetings

Projects –

- Defibrillator – A defibrillator, donated in memory of Bethany Paige Adams, has been installed on the Parish Office building.

The Emergency Town Centre Recovery Fund

- Public Toilets – with the help of this grant, they were re-opened in March 2022.
- A Directory of local businesses had been created and was listed on the Parish Council website.

European Regional Development Fund / Welcome Back Fund

- Finger signposts – these have been purchased, we are now working with contractors to get them installed.
- Hanging Baskets and Planters have been installed around the village centre.
- A new business forum (Williton and District Business Association) has been created

Somerset Association of Local Councils Grant

- Working with Foxes Academy in Minehead we have established a lunch club for those affected by isolation caused by Covid-19.

Climate Emergency Fund

- Created wildflower meadows around the village.

Forthcoming Events

- Duck Race and Car Boot Sale – last Sunday monthly until September (WWMRG)
- Williton Fete – Saturday 3rd September (WWMRG)
- Christmas Festival – December (Parish Council)

The Events committee are hoping to hold an event each month, and many are still in the early planning stages, details will be published in plenty of time for you to be able to organise your diary.

If you can volunteer, please contact the Parish Office

Outside Meetings

The Council members also attend, where possible, other outside meetings which directly or indirectly affect the community. These included:

- West Somerset Voluntary Sector Forum – dealing with welfare issues.
- Magna Housing
- West Somerset Council meetings
- Watchet/Williton/Quantocks Area Panel
- EDF Transport Forum
- Parish Council Open meetings
- West Somerset Flood Group/District Flood Board
- Quantock Foodbank

Availability

- The Parish Office is open daily from 10am – 12 noon
- Staff can be contacted by email, clerk@willitonnpc.org.uk; admin@willitonnpc.org.uk
- Or by phone, 01984 633979
- Please let us know of any issues or concerns
- We are here to help and listen

Way Forward

These are just a few of the ongoing projects that the Parish Council will be dealing with over the next 12 months:

- Maintaining the work that has been carried out
- Continue to support Talking Café and Williton Youth Club
- Agree a service level agreement with CAWS (Citizens Advice West Somerset)
- Flood Group – re-establish the Flood Group
- Working with local schools to form a Youth Council and Village History Project.

Other Information

- It is with regret that vandalism still occurs occasionally, mainly on the Memorial Ground, but fortunately on a minor level. We do work closely with the police to minimise the impact it causes in the village, however, this has a financial implication for every tax-payer in Williton.

Williton War Memorial Recreation Ground

- A Covid-19 lockdown in early 2021 meant no bookings for the Pavilion could be taken at the start of the year, however, bookings have improved during the latter course of the year and are nearly back to pre-pandemic levels.
- The grounds have been maintained to a high standard
- Storm damage to trees on the main field has been made safe
- Damage and wear and tear to playground equipment has been repaired or is in the process of being repaired.
- A Wildflower Meadow has been created on the South side of the field

Projects

- A defibrillator will be installed on the Pavilion.
- The existing Beacon is showing signs of decay and will be replaced in time for HM the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations
- The future of the Barn is currently being debated
- Whilst researching the Amenity Area to establish boundaries between neighbouring properties anomalies concerning the ownership of the land around the Williton War Memorial Recreation Ground came to light.
- Legal advice is currently being sought to rectify these anomalies.
- Section 106 Funding was obtained and the area of ground to the east of the Memorial Garden (now known as the Amenity Area) has been cleared and new gates erected into the main field and playground area.
- This area will be mown once the grass has consolidated and opened to the public as a dog free area.
- Initially benches and children's goalmouths will be installed whilst consultation takes place to decide its future use.

Questions / Points Raised by Parishioners:

- Union Lane had seen an improvement, as being cleared regularly by volunteers, but concern regarding flooding suggested to have been caused by new housing estate. The ditch also needed clearing – EPC to liaise with Wyndham Estate.
- Amenity Area – pleased to note this will be a dog-free area.
- MUGA – suggested re-survey the village to see if still wanted.
- Could the Police be worked with regarding the large, fast tractors going through the village?
- The Village Agent could contact St Decuman's Church Association for assistance.
- Thanks was given for all the work undertaken and surprise at how much had been achieved.
- Thanks was given to the team for taking over the Williton Window and very grateful that it was continuing.
- The Chairman thanked the staff for their hard work.

05 Financial Report

A slideshow was shown by power point slide show, which gave the meeting a detailed breakdown of the accounts for the previous year and the budget for the forthcoming year. The budget for 2022-2023 had been set at £136,131.10 with a precept of £96,600.00.

WWMRG Charity had set a budget of £31,070.00.

06 Any Other Parish Issues

The following points were raised:

- ❖ Concern regarding lack of advertising for events, such as Film Night – there is a need to encourage confidence in attending events after Covid.
- ❖ It was asked if there were any Ukrainians in the village – advised there were some in the area, the Talking Café were assisting.

The Chairman thanked all for attending.

The meeting closed at 8.45 pm

Signed as a true and correct record ... Cllr Payne Dated 19th April 2023