

WILLITON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 8th April 2024 at 7.00 pm
In the Parish Office, 2 Killick Way, Williton

Attendees:

Councillors	Payne (Chairman), Angell, de Burgh-Thomas, Denton, Hooper, Howes, Nye (arrived at 7.03pm during item 23/333) and Whetlor
Somerset Council	Woods
Avon and Somerset Constabulary	None
Press	None
Clerk	Mrs Michelle Francis
Public	None
Other	None

Apologies:

Councillors	Aldridge and Peeks (Personal reasons) White (Work commitments)
Somerset Councillor	Davies
Other	None

23/330 The Chairman advised that the meeting would be recorded

23/331 Conduct of Meeting

The Chairman reminded members to comply with standing orders and code of conduct during the meeting, in particular item 3(h) - speaking only once on an agenda item

23/332 Apologies as noted above and reasons for absence approved.
Proposed Cllr Whetlor, seconded Cllr Hooper – unanimously **resolved**

23/333 Declarations of Interest

There were none

23/334 Co-option of Councillors

No applications had been received

23/335 Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting held on 4th March 2024

It was **resolved** to approve the minutes of the meeting.
Proposed Cllr Hooper, seconded Cllr Nye.

23/336 Approval of the Minutes of the Extra Ordinary Meeting held on 25th March 2024

It was **resolved** to approve the minutes of the meeting.
Proposed Cllr Hooper, seconded by Cllr Nye.

23/337 Matters from the Minutes – for the purpose of report only

There were none

23/338 Potential Closure of Williton Household Recycling Centre and Sale of Somerset Council Assets

23/338.1 The Clerk had written to Cllr Revans requesting confirmation of updates that had been seen in the press regarding the Williton Library and Williton Children's Centre moving into West Somerset House. In addition, the report of disposal of these buildings and land between, querying due to the lease the Parish Council has on the public conveniences and report a decision on the recycling centre had been deferred until November. The response received had been circulated to members.

Concerns raised by members included:

- the car park should remain as this is important to the village.
- a reception desk in West Somerset house should remain as demographic of area was of an older population, many of whom unable to access online.
- lack of courtesy shown to the Parish Council by obtaining information via press and not being consulted with.
- Concern regarding education shortfall and effect on capitalism without being able to call on reserves.
- Continued concern and requirement for the recycling centre to remain open
- To ask if decisions were financially prudent

Resolution: To request further consultation

Proposed by Cllr Denton, seconded by Cllr Hooper, unanimously **resolved**.

23/339 Report from Avon and Somerset Constabulary

Confirmation had been received that in principle, Beat Surgeries were taking place at the Talking Café, every 4 weeks - noted. Cllr Denton queried why no representative attended Parish Council meetings.

Resolution: To write to the Chief Inspector to request a police presence at Parish Council meetings Proposed by Cllr Denton, seconded by Cllr Whetlor, unanimously **resolved**.

23/340 Report from Somerset Councillors

Written reports had been received from Cllrs Davies and Woods and forwarded to members - noted

Cllr Woods advised she had attended the Executive Meeting of Somerset Council where West Somerset House had been discussed. Local Councillors noticed the layout had been changed since being shown original plans and stated it was crucial to have a reception desk. Somerset Council promised they would have another consultation with Councillors. Concern was raised regarding selling properties that Somerset Council do not own, due to outstanding borrowed money and selling for less than they were worth.

Cllr Whetlor asked that all councils in West Somerset were informed of plans for West Somerset House, as this would affect all. More explanations and figures were needed regarding 'Fire Sales'. All were encouraged to speak at meeting to show that Parish and Town Councils matter. Would like to see costs v income on all properties.

Cllr Hooper also raised concern regarding selling property, on which money was still owed and did not agree with the statement that customer services could be delivered at West Somerset House "could be a digitally assisted approach, now that technology had advanced so significantly".

Cllr Denton asked if the businesses within Beckett House covered the cost of the building and if so, should be left as an asset. Concerned about businesses being lost if the building closed

Cllr Howes stated it was discriminative against the elderly population to have no personal presence in West Somerset House

Cllr Woods would request a meeting with officers to obtain answers on all of the above points.

23/341 Clerk's/Chairman's Notices

23/341.1 Cllr Denton volunteered to write the article for the next edition of Williton Window

The Chairman advised notification had been received confirming Williton Post Office met the definition of an Asset of Community Value as set out in the Localism Act 2011 and that the asset would be listed on the Council's Register of Assets of Community Value as an accepted nomination - noted

An appeal had been lodged regarding the Solar Farm planning application 3/39/21/028 which had been refused by Somerset Council planning. It was **resolved** to hold a public meeting and for new comments to be submitted.

23/342 Correspondence

23/342.1 It was **resolved** to note the contents of the correspondence log.

23/342.2 The correspondence received from a parishioner was discussed in detail. The main outcome was that, as it was received, the income from WWMRG Charity towards staffing costs, invoiced quarterly, would be shown in reserves as guaranteed income, for allocation against 2025-2026 budget and precept considerations.

Resolution: A letter would be drafted to cover the above information and forwarded to all members for agreement, prior to responding to the parishioner, advising them of the Council's decision.

Proposed by Cllr Denton, seconded by Cllr Hooper, unanimously **resolved**.

23/343 Report from the Environment and Planning Committee held on 11th March 2024

It was **resolved** to note the report

23/343.1 (Item 23/178.1B) Tenders had been sought for replacement climbing frame/play equipment

23/344 Report from the Finance and Administration Committee held on 18th March 2024

It was **resolved** to note the report

23/344.1 It was **resolved** to note the provisions as of 29th February 2024

23/345 Report from the Events Sub Committee held on 13th March 2024

It was **resolved** to note the report.

23/346 To receive accounts for payment not covered by Finance and Admin Committee

It was unanimously **Resolved** to pay the following invoices, including Somerset Council rates in one payment. Proposed Cllr Denton, seconded Cllr Howes

Date	Details	Cheque No.	Invoice No.	Total Bank £	Cash £	VAT £
08/04/2024	Coomber Security Systems Ltd 4540 Maintenance	4409	231507	36.00		6.00
08/04/2024	Function 28 Ltd 4605 Website	4410	15078	12.00		2.00
08/04/2024	Countrywide Ground Maintenance 4560 SC Ground Maintenance	4411	564068	197.70		32.95
08/04/2024	Countrywide Ground Maintenance 4555 WPC Ground Maintenance	4412	563783	1,242.37		207.06
08/04/2024	Somerset Council Non-Domestic Rates	4413		1,796.40		0.00

23/347 **Health and Safety**

Nothing to report

23/348 **Community Speed Watch**

Speed Watches were being undertaken. It was noted the speeding had decreased, believed to be due to the SID device. Volunteers had created a WhatsApp group to enable more regular watches to be undertaken.

23/349 **Local Community Network**

The Chairman gave a verbal report of the meeting held on 22nd March 2024, where the idea of a Highway Steward was agreed as unviable due to the financial implications on smaller parishes. Greater consultation with Highways was requested and it had been agreed that Highways needed more involvement with planning applications and to make representations at planning meetings, which they agreed to undertake. Reports from the meeting would be requested.

23/350 **Speed Indicator Devices**

23/350.1 Cllr White had drafted a letter for the Clerk to send to Highways.

23/350.2 No SID report had been received, but the effect on reduced speeding in the village was welcome.

23/351 **Community Review Project**

Cllr Denton reported a second meeting had taken place and were hoping to engage volunteers for a steering group to be created.

23/352 **Flood / Village Response Group**

23/352.1 It was **resolved** to note the minutes of the meeting held on 14th March 2024, which had been circulated.

23/352.2 It was noted a Public Meeting had been arranged for 7pm on the 17th of April 2024, in the Quantock Room, Williton Pavilion and Dulverton Flood Group had agreed to attend.

23/353 **Youth Council**

Cllr Angell informed members he had been experiencing problems trying to engage with the schools and suggested the schools were advised that funding was available for a community project, using the funding currently set aside in provisions. Cllrs Angell and Denton would liaise for a way to bring the Youth Council and Community Review Project together.

23/354 **Williton Chemist**

23/354.1 No response had been received to date.

23/355 **Caravan in Killick Way Car Park**

A reply had been received from Somerset Council advising they were in the process of taking legal action to have the caravan removed, however, the process had been paused to allow their homeless/rough sleeping teams to engage with the occupants about welfare issues, but they were seeking an urgent solution.

Resolution: It was **resolved** to write to the homeless team to request a timeline and update Proposed by Cllr Hooper, seconded by Cllr Nye, unanimously **resolved**.

23/356 Amenity Area

23/356.1 The notes and recommendations from the meeting held on 21st March 2024 were noted.

23/356.2 The ideas which had been received from parishioners, were considered. The working group were asked to agree in principle to the recommendations. It was noted funding may be available through the Community Review Project. Cllr Denton would include in the Williton Window report.

Resolution: To agree to the recommendations in principle and for the working group to obtain costs and possible funding.

Proposed by Cllr Howes, seconded by Cllr Angell, unanimously **resolved**.

The Chairman advised the back fence had been repaired.

23/357 Annual Parish Assembly - Tuesday 23rd April 2024

No definite answer had been received from Somerset Council; therefore, it was **resolved** to invite West Somerset Community Land Trust and a representative from the Community Review Project to invite them to make a presentation outlining their projects.

23/358 Matters for the next Parish Council meeting to be held on Tuesday 7th May 2024

Meeting closed at 8.56 pm

Signed as a true and correct record Cllr Payne Dated 7th May 2024