

# Whittington Parish Council

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## Minutes of the meeting of Whittington Parish Council held on 8 March 2016 at 19.30 at Whittington Village Hall

**Democratic Period** - Roger Philips, Chairman of the Village Hall Management Committee read out a report which updated the Council on the current and future position of the village hall, the full report is annexed to these minutes. He reported that the village hall needed to complete stage 1 of the maintenance programme prepared by Sheppard Building & Project Consultancy (a copy of which was given the Council for information), he added that the 1st Stage of the maintenance programme needed to be completed immediately to comply with health & safety regulations, he asked the Council to consider a grant of £13,000 which would be needed to implement the repairs, he added that all the invoices for the repairs would be made available to the Council. Mr Whiltshire added that the Management Committee had taken time to explore alternative projects for the village hall. Following discussion Mr Phillips requested confirmation from the Council that the s106 funding would go to the village hall project, with the assurance from the Council this would give the committee leverage to raise additional funds from alternative funding streams. The Chairman thanked Mr Phillips for his report.

### Those Present:

**Chairman:** Cllr S Macleod  
**Councillors:** Cllr M Baker, Cllr Clark, Cllr A Guy, Cllr F Richards  
**Guest:** Roger Phillips and Les Wiltshire, Village Hall Management Committee

- 1) **Attendance and Apologies** - Apologies for absence were submitted by Cllr Pearce, Cllr R Adams and Mrs C Chambers (Parish Clerk)
- 2) **Declarations of Interest and Ethical Matters.**
  - a To receive declarations of Personal (non prejudicial) Interests in items on this Agenda and their nature. None.
  - b To receive declarations of Prejudicial Interests in items on this Agenda and their nature.
  - c Ethical Matters. None.
- 3) **Minutes of Previous Meetings of the Council.**
  - a The minutes of the meeting held on 12 January 2016 had been circulated to all Members with the agenda it was **RESOLVED** that the minutes be adopted as a true record.
- 4) **Finance.**
  - a **Receipts:** The Clerk had circulated with the agenda a report which listed the receipts for January & February 2016, it was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED** that all receipts listed be approved.

**Payments:** The Clerk had circulated with the agenda a report which listed the payments for January & February 2016, it was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED** that all payments which totalled £831.92 be approved.

b. **Bank Reconciliation:** The Clerk had circulated with the agenda the bank reconciliation up 29 February 2016. The 3 accounts showed the overall balance as at 29 February 2016 was £31,314.55. **NOTED.** Cllr Fraser added that he had independently checked the bank statements with the reports presented to the Council, he confirmed that up to the end of 2015 that the bank statements were reconciled with the reports presented.

c. **Proposals for expenditure.** In the Clerks absence, the Chairman presented the original receipts of expenses that the Clerk had incurred, it was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the Council refund £71.09 to the Clerk.

**5) New Planning Application / Consultation - None.**

**6) Police Report** - The Vice Chairman read out an emailed report from PCSO Steven Tinkler which stated that two crimes had been reported in Whittington, two sheds had been broken into on 18/02/16.

**7) Highways & Byways.**

The Chairman reported on the meeting which was held in December with Keiran Hemstock of WCC and Cllr Rob Adams, she reiterated the outcome of WPC's complaint about the barriers on the 'Blind Collage/Swinesherd' roundabout which the Council considered the barriers did not protect pedestrians. Highways had confirmed that no further restraints to the barriers would be forthcoming, the Chairman added that they had talked about speed and volume of traffic, and awaited confirmation when speed lines/wires to measure the traffic/speed would be placed.

Cllr Guy noted that they had narrowed the exit from Walkers Lane onto Whittington Road by widening the traffic island he added that it may help if repeated on the junction of Walkers Lane and Swinesherd Way which may restrict the volume and type of traffic entering the village. He also reported the large pot hole on the corner of Walkers Lane from Swinesherd and a large pot hole by the cattle grid.

The Chairman read out a letter from Balfour Beatty on behalf of Highways England which informed Members that works were to start on the motorway 8th March on between J5-J7 and a diversion route on the A38 and A4440 would be implemented and that traffic would be diverted via the A4440 between Junctions 6 & 7 and via the A38 between Junctions 5 & 6. the closures would be from 21.00 hours to 06.00 for 8 nights. The report was noted.

Cllr Baker reported on the amount of litter in the village, Members discussed a litter pick to be arranged in the near future, Cllr Guy suggested that the Council employ a litter picker, Cllr baker would make enquires.

**8) Training, meetings and seminars To receive reports of relevant training, meetings and seminars attended or offered to the Council and to consider attendance by Members and or the Clerk.** The Verbal report by the Clerk on the Parish Conference held on 24th February at WCC. This agenda item was deferred.

**9) District and County Councillors' Report. None.**

## 10) Reports by Councillors, and Items for Future Agendas.

Cllr Baker announced that he would not stand again as Councillor at the end of May. The Chairman and Members thanked Cllr Baker for all his support and hard work that he had done on behalf of the parish, they added that he was a valuable Member of the Council.

a **WPC staffing Committee.** Staff review would be held 9th March 7.00pm

b **Envirosort Site, Norton (CMRF) Liaison: None.**

c **West Wychavon PACT: None.**

d **Worcestershire CALC: None.**

e **Whittington School:** Cllr Clark reported that he had contacted the Head of Whittington School who would arrange to take him on a tour of the school. He read out an extract from the PTA news letter which reported that school parking which obstructed emergency vehicles under the new Local Government Regulation - Public Space Protection Orders which came into effect in October 2015 would be fined £100.00 on the spot, the news letter also reminded parents that the Swan Pub car park could be used by parents to drop their children at the school, the report reminded parents that they should park sensibly and considerate and keep the village access roads clear.

f **Whittington Village Hall:** The Chairman read out a report from WPC Solicitor Nicholas Hancox. The report is annexed to these minutes. Following discussion it was **RESOLVED** to seek advice from WDC with regards to s106 funding for the village hall. WPC would also arrange a meeting to discuss the future of the village hall. The Council also requested copies of the minutes of the Village Hall Management Committee meetings, and requested that representation to Wychavon DC should be made jointly with the VHMC.

**Neighbourhood Watch:** Cllr Guy reported that he had received an email from PCSO Julie Pardoe which informed Cllr Guy that she had received an enquiry from a parishioner from Walkers Lane who had expressed an interest in starting a Neighbourhood Watch.

**Whittington Church:** The Chairman read out a report from David Chestney which updated the Council on the Elizabethan Room project he reported that the fundraising was making good progress and recently raised a further £400 from a flower demonstration which was held last Thursday, the report in general highlighted that they were moving towards the initial target of £100,000 which would provide a base for grant applications, the report added that they were to apply for a grant to the National Churches Trust by the end of March and were in the process of producing a programme which would take them through to completion and identify targets and uses of the building.

11) **Correspondence & Council Consultation.** None.

12) **IT - Facebook & Communication.** None.

## 13) Enhancement

### a. **Whittington Parish Tree Warden Opportunity**

The Clerk circulated with the agenda information about The Tree Warden scheme which was established 25 years ago to help engage more people with Trees. Whittington parish were looking to fill this voluntary role. The duties of the Tree warden would be the first point of contact or friendly face in the community for queries about trees, possibly doing a survey of stock take of the trees in the parish or organising practical activities like tree planting, pruning etc. The report added that training would be given, there would be a free half day introductory session run by the County Council's Countryside service. More information on the scheme could be viewed at [www.treecouncil.org.uk/take-Part/Treewardens](http://www.treecouncil.org.uk/take-Part/Treewardens). The Council noted the report and asked that anyone interest should contact the Clerk.

**b. Potential Whittington Project -The Woodland Trust**

The Clerk circulated with the agenda an email from Deborah Dale of WCC which informed Members that County Councillor Anthony Blagg, Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Environment had forwarded information on free trees for communities with Parish & Town Councils. The Woodland Trust were saying thank you to those who made sacrifices in the First World War by planting millions of native trees across the UK, creating beautiful spaces for the next generation. Members acknowledged that WPC tree warden could instigate once the position was filled.

**14) Community Events - Grant Application - Her Majesty the Queen 90th Birthday Celebrations.**

The Chairman read out a report from Mr David Chestney on behalf of Whittington Church which explained that they were planning a day of celebration to celebrate the Queens 90th birthday and to welcome the new Whittington Church Vicar Andrew Stand.

The report added that they would like to make this a real day of celebration and invite all the local community to the church for a family service and then invite everyone to a special lunch at the Village Hall. The report added that apart from food and drink they would like to make the village hall as attractive as possible with flowers, tablecloths and other decorations and party extras like hats, streamers and other things to help the general air of celebration and requested a grant of £150 from the Council. Following Discussion Members **RESOLVED** to support the community event organised by Whittington Church with a grant of £150.00.

**15) Date of Next Meeting.**

The Parish Meeting would be held on 12 April 2016 at this meeting organisations active within the Parish would be invited to make a report, these would include the Parish Council, the School, the Church, the Village Charities, the Village Hall Management Committee, the Police & our County and District Councillor.

The date of the next Meeting of the Council will be the Annual Meeting to be held on Tuesday 10 May 2016 at Whittington Village Hall.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.25pm.

Councillor S Macleod  
Chairman

## WHITTINGTON VILLAGE HALL REPORT

March 2016

At our most recent committee meeting on January 28<sup>th</sup> the members agreed that negotiations with Jim Pugh of the After School Club seemed unlikely to present a successful solution to our pressing need to replace the Hall. There were concerns regarding the fabric of the building, complicated ownership issues and lack of support from the Church and Parish Council. The committee were disappointed that there would now be no opportunity to develop a facility adjacent to the Church and users of the Hall will have to continue to brave the hazards of Church Lane.

This leads us full circle to reconsider the refurbishment/replacement of the Hall on the present site. A feasibility study by Architects Lett and Sweetland in 2008 recommended the replacement of the Hall. They concluded this option would generate maximum value on the existing site, continuity of occupation and community coherence during building contract.

The Committee agreed with their recommendations but other opportunities then became worthy of investigation but for a variety of reasons none have proved viable. To help us move forward we have commissioned a Condition & Planned Maintenance Report from Sheppard Building & Project Consultancy. A sub-committee consisting of Messrs Brooker,Phillips, Wood & Wiltshire, have met to consider the implications, both financial and legal. Should the Hall undertake refurbishment all the costs contained in the Planned Maintenance Schedule(Years 1-5) would be incurred, this amounts to £49000. This sum would have to be added to the proposed refurbishment proposals prepared by Gwillam Jones, Chartered Quantity Surveyors of £305,500. There would also have to be loss of income factored in together with a possible permanent move away by current users. In summary, refurbishment cost is likely to exceed £350000.

This encourages the Committee to support the New Build Project as projected costs are extremely similar but will provide a Hall better suited to the growing community needs for the foreseeable future, but without disturbing current use. The existing Planning permission will need to be revisited as future demands will require additional capacity. The Sub Committee will undertake to provide a cost projection of new plan and construction costings.

However, funding is the major issue, whilst the firm commitment to a specific project will allow us to seek grants from appropriate Charities, our building fund stands at £102000 well short of our needs. The Parish Council has, we believe, £18000 earmarked for a new project together with access to section 106 funds amounting to £58500 currently being held by Wvchavon District Council. If the Sub Committee are to undertake a thorough investigation

into the new build costs, they must have assurances by the Parish Council, as trustees of the Foundation, that these funds and any future section 106 funds allocated for community use, will be made available to the Village Hall Management Committee, as general managers of the Trust premises, when needed. Applications for funding to charitable foundations/Lottery funding need to provide a clear picture of the applicants financial status and a failure to provide an accurate level of present and future funding could result in our requests being refused.

Our building fund plus section 106 monies will still be short of our anticipated spend. There may be opportunities for New Homes Bonus but the current consultation process will not allow any clear decision to be reached until much later this year. Vic Allison of Wychavon District Council has indicated they may be able to help with a loan and there is an opportunity for the Parish Council to approach the Public Loans Board to seek funding. A small increase in the precept could also be considered. We are sure Whittington residents would support our need.

Of immediate need, however, is the undertaking of year 1 of the planned maintenance programme. This needs to happen with immediate effect regardless of our future commitments as failure to implicate could result in us breaking the law. These costs amount to £13000+VAT but some of the measures may be undertaken by volunteers so this may be reduced, We request the Parish Council, as trustees of the Foundation to undertake funding this expense as we are not in a position to erode our Building Fund nor have a sufficient amount from our income.

We thank Councillor Adams for underwriting the cost of the Report and his continuing support for Whittington Village Hall Management Committee

**In Summary.**

The Whittington Hall Management Committee has decided to replace the existing Hall on the present site, subject to funding and planning issues.

They also recommend that Year 1 of the Planned Maintenance Schedule is implicated with the financial support of the Parish Council.

The Parish Council provides assurances that Section 106 funding of £58500 will be allocated towards the project.