

Swilland and Witnesham grouped Parish Council

Clerk: Alison Burrows

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Parish Council Meeting

**Wednesday 17th September 2025 at
Witnesham Village Hall 7:30 p.m.**

Minutes

Councillors Present – Chair Paul Sharples, Faye Ellis, Vice-chair Andy Dungey, David Roots,

Tim Burrows, Chris Collings, Kim Shaw, Susan Ross, Jo Pratt, Jerry Hindle

Members of Public – one

Others – Alison Burrows Parish Clerk

75. **Chair's welcome and Introduction** – Chair Paul Sharples welcomed all to the meeting.

76. **To receive apologies from Councillors not attending** – apologies received from SCCllr Elaine Bryce, ESCllr Dan Clery and Richard Nicol.

77. **To Receive Councillors Declarations of Interest** – none received.

78. **To approve Minutes from the Parish Council meeting 23rd July 2025** – all agreed minutes correct, signed by Chair.

79. **Questions or comments on Reports from SCCllr Elaine Bryce & ESC Cllr Dan Clery** - no comments.

80. **Proposed Council Structure for Local Government Restructure** - Chair advised that he and the clerk had attended a focus group regarding the restructure. Clerk has passed round links to SALC website with guidance and articles regarding the restructure, would encourage all councillors to join SALC.
Prior to the meeting by email Richard Nicol had supported one unitary council, this was also the view of Jerry Hindle at the meeting. Thoughts are that Local Authorities currently struggle to provide local services. Three councils would mean a duplication of services with split responsibility; one council would benefit the region. Further discussion at November Meeting.

81. **The current Financial Situation** – Clerks Report.
Unity Trust Bank account balance as at 31st August 2025 £28,146.26.
Suffolk Building Society account balance as at 1st July 2025 £88,449.24

Unity Trust bank account statement and Suffolk Building Society passbook signed by Tim Burrows confirming balances reported above.

The Parish Council Insurance Policy is due for renewal on 1st October 2025, the total premium will be £2,004.99.

Last year's premium was £947.21

Clerk has enquired as to why the large increase and advised them of revised PC income and wages figures, will confirm with Finance Committee before payment due.

82. To approve the following payments (including VAT if applicable):

Ref		amount
a	WAVE allotments water	32.05
b	WT&W Benefice printing	£2.20
c	Admin AB July	£459.60
d	Bank Charges July 2025	£6.00
e	Bank Charges August 2025	£6.00
f	Suffolk Cloud	£170.00

Approval of payments proposed by Jerry Hindle, seconded by Andy Dungey.

83. S19 Flood investigation Report Update – currently struggling to get a working relationship and point of contact within SCC to take forward action plan, its been 2yrs since Storm Babet and no improvements to date. Only small number of members on Flood Advisory Committee, further members needed.

84. Alternative Parking Location near the School – could we use some of the field as extra parking. Clerk contacted land owner, no decision from him as yet, he will get in contact again in 2026. Concerns raised that gate entrance would need to be made permanent and wider; also it's on a blind corner, a field so unsuitable for long term parking without a firm parking surface.

85. Recruitment for new Parish Councillors – suggestion that when new people move in could provide a welcome pack and introduce the parish council. Another suggestion that a summary of PC meetings and what's happening to be added to social media and signpost to website. Clerk to do and revisit at next meeting.

86. Village Hall Update – Formal thanks to Richard Nicol for his input with the management committee, submission of grant application for £15k and encouragement of new VHM committee members. PC to allocate £10k of CIL funds for car park/hall repairs or £25k if grant not approved, this will enable work to begin on the floor, investigating the damp along with power/heating issues. It was suggested that a small group of PC councillors get together and focus on Richards proposal, quotes and details of car park plans. The Planning Committee will take this forward – Clerk to add to next agenda and invite all Cllrs. Concerns raised that along with the VH would the PC

that have capacity/funds to take forward a new build at the Playing Field. Agenda item for November PC meeting – review plans for Playing Field, PreSchool and possible Sports Hall strategy.

87. Westerfield Road Closure – The road is now closed however for a shorter period. Jerry Hindle made formal thanks to those Parish Councillors who worked hard to reduce the time period of road closure. Chair to make contact with Bellway to keep pressure on regarding shorter closure period to ensure they keep to schedule.

Also discussed a Winesham path clearance working party as neither East Suffolk Services or SCC Highways are responsible for these – David Roots, Tim Burrows and Jo Pratt to take forward.

88. Stop the Quarry update – Jerry Hindle gave formal thanks to all for their objections and support, a very high level of public objections were submitted. PC gave formal thanks to Jerry Hindle for the work he put into the Parish Council's strong objection. PC also pay thanks to Winesham residents Michael Reynolds, Victoria McElhinney, Anwar Hamad, Neil Warwick, Jerry Hindle, Sue Woolridge and Malcolm Stone. Jerry Hindle advised that the public can still register an objection.

89. Rural Affordable Community-Led Housing – Planning Committee members Tim Burrows and Jerry Hindle to take forward.

90. Parish Council Matters:

- **Gov.UK email addresses** - all to use from now on. Andy and Paul available to help with set up. There are required to comply with Assertion 10 and GDPR, it is very important that the official email addresses are in use, not personal emails.
- **Parish Council Website** – Clerk and Andy Dungey to meet to discuss, clerk explained about accessibility to the website and a policy will be needed and to review our existing IT policies too.
- **Parish Noticeboards** – Clerk circulated links to websites for a replacement notice board for the end of Weyland Rd as the current one is about to fall over and the doors no longer keep the Perspex in place. Clerk to arrange removal in the meantime. As advised the agenda and minutes will only be displayed on the notice boards at Lower Recreation Ground and the Moon and Mushroom. Notices have been placed on the other notice boards with a QR code to the PC website. Further discussion at November Meeting to agree costs of new board for Weyland Rd.
- **Community Emergency Plan** – Following investigation by Susan Ross and Jo Pratt, their notes were circulated prior to the meeting suggesting a formal or informal response plan. It was agreed that Self-help on the PC website would be the most appropriate way forward – proposal by Susan Ross, seconded by Jerry Hindle and thanks for their work. Emergency WhatsApp group has worked well in Swilland, this could be arranged for Winesham however not for the PC Clerk to organise/monitor – all agreed that PC website to be used for emergency contacts.

- **Allotments Update** – Clerk reported that in middle of August tenancy termination letters were sent to the plot holders who had not cultivated their allotments as agreed at the last meeting. Two holders had requested a meeting; Clerk and Dr Nicol have arranged to meet them on 25th September.

The meeting was then stopped to allow a member of the public, who is an existing holder of an uncultivated allotment plot, to speak.

The meeting was then resumed.

- **War Memorial Update** – photos shared following work completed. Chris Collings advised that is a crack in the fresh cement – Clerk to check and advise stone mason before payment.

- 91.** Councillor issues to be brought to the attention of the Parish Council
Each Councillor is requested to use this opportunity to report minor matters of information not included elsewhere on the agenda and to raise items for future agendas. **Councillors are respectfully reminded that this is not an opportunity for debate or decision-making.**

Fay Ellis advised that the Royal British Legion Witnesham branch closed in April. She will clarify the position regarding wreaths and crosses.

Clerk to chase Play Area inspections and repairs.

Jerry Hindle advised that the PC are offering daffodils to Parish residents, this has been advertised on Facebook.

Meeting closed at 21:50