

Minutes from the WEST WITTON PARISH COUNCIL GENERAL MEETING

Held on Monday 8th September 2025 at 7pm

Present Cllr Dave Brown (Chair), Cllr Christine Donovan-Brown,
Cllr Neil Dutton.

In attendance

Alyson Jones (Clerk)

Members of public: 2

1 Apologies for absence

To receive apologies and reasons for absence.

RESOLVED: None

2 Declarations of Interest

To receive any declarations of interest under the following categories:
Pecuniary interest, Outside Bodies interest and family, friend or close
associate interest.

RESOLVED: None

3 Public Participation

Residents may raise any matter relating to the Parish.

RESOLVED: None

4 Minutes of the Last Meeting

To confirm the Minutes of the last meeting held on 16 May 2025 as a true
and correct record and to sign them as such.

RESOLVED: The Council approved the minutes of the last meeting held on
16 May 2025 as a true and proper record and were signed by the Chairman

5 Co-option of new Councillor

5.1 To consider applications for the position of Parish Councillor and to resolve
to co-opt the most suitable candidate

RESOLVED: West Witton resident, Ronald Barker, has applied for the position of
Parish Councillor. The Council approved of the co-opting of Ronald Barker as
Parish Councillor, proposed by Cllr Dave Brown, seconded by Cllr Neil Dutton.
Declaration of office and other necessary paperwork was completed by Ronald
Barker. **ACTION:** Clerk to provide new Cllr with necessary documents including
Standing Orders, etc

6 Garden Rents

6.1 To receive an update on Garden Rents for 2025 and decide on any actions
necessary

RESOLVED: There were no further updates on the Garden Rents for this year.
No actions necessary

7 Cemetery

7.1 To receive an update on any cemetery matters, including the planting of new cherry trees, and decide on any actions necessary

Cllr Donovan-Brown provided an update on the cemetery. This included an update on the new cherry trees planted to replace old dead ones, the new ones are doing well. The wood from the old trees had gone to the wood turners and local residents. Cllr Donovan-Brown raised the issue of the slippery path in the cemetery due to moss. This must be accessible for disabled access so cannot be replaced with gravel. Also the water butt needs to be placed on a slab base.

RESOLVED: Cllr Donovan-Brown to talk to DCN Fencing (who currently do the mowing for West Witton Parish Council) to see what they can do regarding the path and to request them to provide costs to make the path more accessible. Also costs for slab base for water butt to be sourced and presented at the next Parish Council meeting. **ACTION:** Cllr Donovan-Brown

8 Mill Dam

8.1 To receive an update on Mill Dam and decide on any actions necessary

Cllr Donovan-Brown provided an update on Mill Dam. Volunteers are clearing it. Cllr Donovan-Brown has approached Trish Corley from North Yorkshire Flood Risk Management re funding for replacing the grill at Mill Dam.

RESOLVED: Cllr Donovan-Brown to report back at the next Parish Council meeting re outcome of North Yorkshire Flood Risk Management and funding/costs to replace the grill. **ACTION:** Cllr Donovan-Brown

9 Grass Cutting

9.1 To receive an update on grass cutting for 2025/26 and decide on any actions necessary

Cllr Brown provided an update on grass cutting by DCN Fencing for West Witton Parish Council and reported that the Parish Council is very pleased with DCN Fencing's work. The cemetery is going to continue to be cut into Sept. A query was raised when Highways will cut Mesnes Lane in front of Heather Court as this grass has got very long. Cllr Brown also reported that the corner frequently cut by cars at Green Hill would need the edging stones replaced.

RESOLVED: Cllr Brown to report back at the next Parish Council meeting re when Highways will cut Mesnes Lane and when the edging stones will be replaced at Green Hill. **ACTION:** Cllr Brown

10 Bus shelter and seat work

10.1 To receive an update on work on the bus shelter and Caroline seat

Cllr Brown provided an update on work on the Mill Dam bus shelter which has been completed and the bus shelter has now been repaired. Cllr Brown reported that the work on the bus shelter in Swinithwaite still needed to be done. Cllr Brown also reported that the Caroline bench donated by Caroline Thorntonbury needs to be cleaned and repaired.

RESOLVED: Cllr Brown to report back at the next Parish Council meeting re when progress on the Swinithwaite bus shelter work and also the cost to clean and repair the Caroline bench and who will pay for this work. **ACTION:** Cllr Brown

11 Highways update

11.1 To consider any highway matters

New Cllr Barker raised the issue of traffic mounting the pavement in West Witton which is forcing the curb stones to come away from the path.

RESOLVED: New Cllr Barker will provide photo evidence of this issue and it will be presented to Highways. **ACTION:** Cllr Barker and Cllr Donovan Brown

11.2 To receive an update on the rebuilding of edges of Green Hill and replacement of edging stones

RESOLVED: This item was covered in **9 Grass Cutting 9.1** above.

12 Planning Applications and Decisions

12.1 To consider any recent/current Planning Applications

RESOLVED: The following Planning Application had been considered by the Parish Council with no objections raised:

7 July - R/91/185A- Section 73 application to vary conditions 2 (approved plans – design changes and addition of solar panels to the south facing roof)) & 14 (window design – change to Heritage 9 uPVC frames) of R/91/185 & R/91/185/MNR1 (Full planning permission for the conversion of a courtyard of traditional agricultural barns into two residential dwellings (local occupancy and holiday let), together with the removal of adjoining modern portal frame cow sheds and redundant slurry pit to allow for the erection of two car ports) at The Middle Farm Development, Swinithwaite, Leyburn, North Yorkshire, DL8 4UH - R/91/185A

13 Financial Matters

13.1 To approve Receipts and Payments (see Appendix 1 below).

	SEPT 2025			
PAID				
DETAILS	TO	AMOUNT	DATE PAID	P NUMBER
Painting Mill Dam benches	Ian	£60.00	27/05/2025	P5
Cemetery grass cutting May	DCN Fencing & Landscaping	£180.00	09/06/2025	P6
Zurich Insurance 2025-2026	Parish Clerk: Alyson Jones	196.00	01/07/2025	P7
Cemetery grass cutting June	DCN Fencing & Landscaping	£180.00	01/07/2025	P8
Cutting down dead cherry tree cemetery	Dave Allen	£720.00	01/07/2025	P9
New cherry trees cemetery	Winstanleys	£248.62	08/07/2025	P10
New cherry tree tree guards/stakes		£48.00	10/07/2025	P11
Parish Clerk Salary	Parish Clerk: Alyson Jones	£1,500	31/07/25	P12

Cemetery grass cutting July	DCN Fencing & Landscaping	£250.00	31/07/2025	P13
Cemetery grass cutting Aug	DCN Fencing & Landscaping	£180.00	02/09/2025	P14
RECEIVED AFTER AGENDA SENT	TO BE PAID			
RECEIVED				
DETAILS	FROM	AMOUNT	DATE RECEIVED	R NUMBER
Donation for new lawn mower	Smorthwaite Trust	£500	02/05/25	R2
Outstray shooting rights	Scrafton Estates	£500	06/05/25	R3
Penhill Cottage Garden Rent	E Bowers	£45	12/05/25	R6
Glenside Garden rent	A K Hall	£55	23/05/25	R7
Outstray grazing rights	R Sunter	£50	23/05/25	R8
The Nook Garden Rent	Winstanley	£75	30/05/25	R9
Chantry sign (2024-2025)	Park Leisure	£1,500	06/06/25	R10
Chantry sign (2025-2026)	Park Leisure	£1,500	27/06/25	R11

RESOLVED: Cllrs approved Receipts and Payments presented in Appendix 1 above.

13.2 To receive the latest bank balances and sign statements

RESOLVED: Cllrs approved the latest bank balances and signed statements.

13.3 To receive an update on signatures for the Parish Council account

Cllr Donovan-Brown provided an update on signatures for the Parish Council account and confirmed that Cllr Dutton can now sign cheques for the Parish Council along with Cllrs Brown and Donovan-Brown

RESOLVED: Cllr Dutton is now an authorized signatory for cheques for West Witton Parish Council. No further action required.

13.4 To receive an update on the closure of Smorthwaite Trust Fund

Cllr Donovan-Brown provided an update on Smorthwaite Trust Fund and confirmed that there is £600.01 remaining in the account which could be used by West Witton Parish Council for emergency costs such as replacing the grill at Mill Gill if no funding is received from North Yorkshire Flood Risk Management, for example.

RESOLVED: Cllrs agreed that the remaining funds from the closure of Smorthwaite Trust Fund will be kept in emergency reserve for West Witton Parish Council. No further action at this time.

NEW ITEM 13.5: Increase in Parish Clerk salary

A proposal to raise the Parish Clerk's salary from £11 per hr to £12.50 per hour was proposed by Cllr Brown and was seconded by Cllr Dutton. This would

increase the Clerk's annual salary from £2,640 to £3,000 and would be back dated to 1 August 2025.

RESOLVED: Cllrs agreed to raise the Clerk's salary from £11 per hr to £12.50 per hour and that this would be back dated to 1 August 2025.

14 Precept 2025/26

14.1 To discuss and approve Precept 2025/26

RESOLVED: Cllrs agreed to increase the precept by £250 from £4,750 to £5,000. This will help to cover additional costs anticipated for 2026 including tree work in West Witton and the need for new cemetery gates. **ACTION:** Clerk to action new precept figure.

15 Update on Community Grants

15.1 To receive an update on Community Grants received and decide on any actions necessary

RESOLVED: Cllr Dutton reported that the West Witton Radio community grant has been approved and is currently awaiting funds. No further actions necessary.

16 Agenda items for future meetings

16.1 To notify the Clerk of matters for inclusion on the Agenda for the next meeting.

RESOLVED: The following items were requested to be included to be discussed at a future Parish Council meeting:

- * Cemetery gates – quotes of costs and approval of costs **ACTION:** Cllr Donovan-Brown looking into this
- * Historic signs – there was a suggestion to look at creating historic signs that would explain the history of some of the places of interest in West Witton, such as Nanny Well, the Milk Stand, the history of some of the trees in the cemetery which came from Germany. TBD
- * need for signs re dog mess – suggestion to get a dog warden to visit. Mess on Mesnes Lane was raised as a key concern
- * proposal to move poo bin away from the seat near the bus shelter and to add signs to bins saying 'dog poo welcome' so people know they can use them to dispose of dog mess
- * West Witton phone box – as BT have decided not to remove the old phone box in West Witton the question was raised will they maintain it/upgrade it?
ACTION: Clerk to approach BT
- * overgrown trees on the Milk Stand - suggestion to remove the middle Christmas tree at the Milk Stand as too many trees in a small space and move it to Mill Dam. This would mean John Baxter would not need to donate a Christmas tree this year. **ACTION:** Cllr Brown to look into this
- * Pavillion repairs - repairs to the Pavillion are needed **ACTION:** Cllr Brown to look into this
- * Village plan – suggestion that Cllrs to look at the village plan for the next 5 years
- * Yorewaste collection from cemetery – query re if Yorewaste are collecting and also a query re the cost – **ACTION:** Cllr Donovan-Brown to look into this

17 Date and time of next Parish Council Meeting

To confirm the date and venue of the next meeting of the Council and the Annual Parish Meeting

RESOLVED: Next meeting to be held **Mon 23 March 2026.**

