

BLISWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

Address: 12 Berry Lane, Wootton, NN4 6JX
Email: blisworthparishCouncil@gmail.com
Website: <https://parish.blisworthvillage.org>

(DRAFT)

Minutes of the Meeting of Blisworth Parish Council held on Wednesday 4 August 2021 7.30 pm.

Present: Cllr S Bunker, Vice Chairman
Cllr M Field
Cllr A Goss
Cllr J Hawkins
Cllr C Read, MBE
Cllr T Wells
Cllr D Wilson, Chairman

Also present Gillian Greaves, Parish Clerk
3 Members of the public

1. To receive apologies. Apologies received from Cllr Billing due to personal reasons and from Cllr Gardener as a prior arrangement. District Councillor Karen Cooper sent her apologies due to a meeting at West Northamptonshire Council. The Council **Resolved** to accept the apologies.
2. To receive declarations of interest under the Council 's Code of Conduct related to business on the agenda. None given.
3. To receive and approve for signature the minutes of the meetings held on 5 July 2021. The minutes were approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.
4. To note any matters arising from the minutes not included on the agenda for report only. None.
5. Clerk's report circulated separately. Noted.
6. Correspondence.
 - a. Emails. Liz Lithgow, David Faulkner - Removal of hedgerow, Northampton Road. Cllr Bunker reported that he had contacted Peter Moor, Case Officer at West Northamptonshire Council regarding the removal of the hedgerow on Northampton Road as it was related to Planning Application Number 20/00076/WASFUL. Cllr Bunker reported that the application had not been approved due to objections raised by Highways. Photos of the area have been taken and will be forwarded to the Case Officer. The Clerk will inform the residents on this action.
 - b. Email from a resident concerning alleged planning breaches in Courteenhall Road. The Clerk had responded to the email referring the resident to West Northamptonshire Council, enforcement team for investigation. Cllr Field reported that she had been contacted by residents regarding potential planning breaches and, following a site visit, agreed that there were some matters of concern that should be reported to the Planning authority. Cllr Field also raised the issue of trees subject to Tree Protection Orders being removed without consent.
7. Public Session:
 - a. District Councillor Reports. District Cllr Cooper sent apologies due to a meeting at West Northamptonshire Council. The Chairman informed the Council that District Councillor Cooper had provided an article for the latest edition of Round & About.
 - b. Members of the public. A member of the public reported an area of overgrown nettles and a large elder encroaching on the path adjacent to the church. It is unclear if this is

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Highway's responsibility to maintain, or the parish Councils or the church. A member of the public reported that maintenance work carried out on potholes in Stoke Road was of a poor standard also a sign and noticeboard at RD2 was covered with overgrown vegetation. The handyman scheme was raised, and it was suggested that the Council could extend their public liability insurance to cover contractors carrying out handyman jobs.

8. Response to issues raised in the public session. The Chairman thanked the members of the public and advised them that the local government process requires public money and/or volunteers to undertake the management of public areas. The Council is reviewing its grass mowing contract specification to include all areas that are the Council's responsibility, but other areas should be reported via "FixmyStreet" where the Highways team will determine whose responsibility it is and either refer on or deal with the issue. The Clerk advised that failing repairs of potholes should be reported via "FixmyStreet" stating that repairs are of a poor standard and will be escalated to a specialist team who deal with failing potholes. Cllr Bunker stated that the Parish Council had been advised that having one handyman on call could imply that there is an undocumented contract between the two parties, and that having a list of handymen to call upon would be preferable. To date there are two contractors identified for this purpose, but the Council is still required to obtain 3 quotations for most works. The Council is willing to extend the handyman scheme to other interested contractors.
9. Receive reports from Councillors present at the meeting and not covered under the agenda. Cllr Hawkins reported that the school allotment was a great success although not presently in use yet due to summer holidays. Cllr Hawkins reported that Cllr Billing had managed to acquire a shed for the school to use on their plot and she had been asked by the school to pass their thanks on. The school will be growing sunflowers in September and it is hoped to include allotment activities to support some areas of the school Curriculum. The school have provided the Council with a copy of their allotment risk assessment. The Chairman reported that he had been trying to assist with the project to fund and find a location for a memorial bench. Although the Chairman has approached West Northamptonshire Council, he has not been able to find any information on the requirements on installing a bench in a public area. The bench sited in the triangular grassed area in front of the school requires replacement and this was thought to be a good location. The Clerk agreed to contact the Highways department to find out what information was available. Cllr Field shared information that she had received from residents on the national campaign to all Councils and waterway trusts asking them to adopt Plantlife's guidelines for managing road verges to benefit wildflowers and other nature. Cllr Field asked the Council to consider this initiative when drawing up the specification for the grass mowing contract. The Clerk agreed to write and thank the residents for bringing this matter to the Council's attention.
10. Rail freight terminals – update from the Chairman. The Chairman reported that he had attended the last meeting of SERGO which was an update on the progress of works relating to archaeology, drainage, and junction 15 roundabout. The Council had received a planning application relating to Archaeology and Built Heritage which was for information only. The minutes of the latest meeting would be circulated once available.
11. Police & Neighbourhood Watch Scheme update Cllr Read – report circulated separately prior to the meeting which included information that 5 crimes had been reported during June. The local team has no direct contact details.
12. Agree approach to deciding how grant funds relating to Northampton Gateway might be utilised. Northampton Gateway has given funds to West Northamptonshire Council to grant funding to the five parishes impacted by the development - Roade, Blisworth, Milton Malsor, Gayton and Grange Park. Each parish council will be imminently awarded a lumpsum in equal parts and a second lump

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sum upon the occupancy of the first warehouse. Ideas are required for how this funding should be used. A meeting between representatives of the five parish councils and Helen Howard, Highways dept., is due to be held on 14 September at 11.30 am. Cllr Bunker agreed to coordinate a list of ideas – ideas to be submitted by the end of August.

13. Village Safety Signs:

- a. Update from Cllr Goss. Cllr Goss reported that she had arranged for all signs to be placed on suitable locations in Stoke Road, High Street, Courteenhall Road. Residents had volunteered to take part in any Council speed watch initiative that may be decided on. The Football Club have taken some signs to utilise. Cllr Field recommended that the signs are regularly rotated, and Cllr Goss agreed.
- b. Resolve to purchase further Road Safety Signage from West Northamptonshire Council approved supplier, Nordic for £175 plus VAT to supplement initial provision obtained by Councillor Goss. Cllr Read had obtained three quotations for additional signs, 30 MPH and HGV to target the smaller roads, Church Lane, Chapel Lane. The Council **Resolved** to purchase the additional signs from Nordic for £175.00 excluding VAT.

14. Resolve to approve contractor and budget for a condition survey of the closed cemetery wall. The Clerk reported that three quotes had been sort from suitably qualified contractors for the condition survey although only two quotes had been received. The Clerk advised that in the circumstances the Council had fulfilled its requirement to seek three quotations and therefore could appoint one of the two received. Cllr Read formally recorded his concerns about the safety of the cemetery wall and the need to progress the survey as a matter of urgency. The Council **Resolved** to appoint Blackwell Consultants Ltd., to undertake the site visit, survey, and report at a cost of £500 plus VAT.

15. Grass mowing - agree grass mowing specification, contract terms and conditions. The Chairman reported that good progress has been made in preparing the contract terms and conditions and the specification. A draft contract, terms and conditions has been prepared and there is more work to be done on the specification to provide more detail on the grassed verges and those areas which might be allocated as wildflower meadows. The contract, terms and conditions and specification will be considered further at the September meeting, and it is planned to let the contract at the end of October with a 31 January start date.

16. Village Hall Wi-fi payments – consider future arrangements. The Council discussed the future arrangements for paying for the use of the Wi-Fi at the village hall and it was agreed that the Wi-Fi charge of £8.00 per month would be invoiced as part of the village hall room hire charges. The Council have a projector and equipment and will be able to utilise the Wi-Fi for this purpose.

17. Finance & Administration

- a. Banking Mandate update. The Clerk confirmed that a letter had been sent to NatWest informing on the Clerk’s change of address. The Chairman confirmed that he had arranged for Cllrs Field and Gardener to be added as signatures on the Council’s bank accounts but to date no confirmation has been received by the Council.
- b. Bank reconciliation as of 30 June 2021 – circulated separately prior to meeting. Cllr Bunker confirmed that the bank reconciliation was correct, and it was signed by the Chairman. Cllr Bunker requested the Clerk to complete the VAT return as soon as practically possible.
- c. To note receipts and approve the following payments and any others that arrive after publication of the agenda: **Resolved:** to note the receipts and approve the cheques and direct debits listed for payment.

		RECIEPTS	
Date	Payee	Detail	Amount

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1-15/06/21	Various	Allotment rents	£95.00
07/06/21	Blisworth Snr FC	Rent	£150.00
17/06/21	Bank credit		£360.00
30/06.21	NatWest Bank	June Interest	£0.19*
			*BR Account
PAYMENTS			
CH/DD	Payee	Purpose	Amount (VAT)
003026	G Greaves	Clerks July Salary	£622.77
003027	G Greaves	Clerks July PAYE	£155.80
003028	Blisworth Village Hall Committee	WiFi payment October 20 – July 21	£80.00
003029	West Northamptonshire Council	Elections 2021 charges for returning officer and admin - 424000421733	£90.00
003030	Northants CALC	Planning Nuts & Bolts invoice 1349 Code of Conduct Invoice 1412	£76.00
003031	Geosphere Ltd.,	Parish Online annual subscription invoice 34UG007-0002	£129.60 (£21.60)
003032	N & P Gardening Services	Grass Mowing invoice 3835	£1,374.00 (£229.00)
003033	E-ON	Electricity Supply Statement July 2021	£100.56 (£10.40)
003034	Safelincs Ltd.,	Standard Defibrillator Service	£114.00 (£19.00)
003035	Zeta Specialist Lighting	Station Arm Works - Invoice 26417	£750.00 (£125.00)
DD	IONOS	Website Fee	£10.80 (£1.80)
DD	Waves	Water utilities	£88.00

18. Internal Control – Cllr Bunker to report. Cllr Bunker reported that good progress had been made in several areas that had been of concern - the risk assessment for the school allotment project had been received, Cllr Wells was progressing the work to produce the allotment risk assessment, cemetery wall condition survey was underway, additional signatories had been added to the bank account, although this has not been tested as yet and the Clerk had confirmed that invoices were held both by paper format and electronically. Cllr Bunker also stated that there was a need to ensure that backup copies of other key documents are retained, and the Clerk agreed to advise on the preferred method of doing this. Cllr Bunker also said that to ensure business continuity in the absence of the Clerk, that a copy of access details, key dates, contacts, and processes should be sent to the Chairman. Cllr Bunker agreed to provide further details if required.

19. Planning & Development:

a. To consider the following planning applications:

	INFORMATION ONLY	
WNS/2021/0990/DCOR	NGRFI Land west of M1-J15	Requirement 14 Archaeology and Built Heritage (criteria (1) and (2)) [Approval of details pursuant to Schedule 2 Requirement of The Northampton Gateway Rail Freight Interchange Order 2019 The Council noted the application.

20. Defibrillator

a. To consider a request for an additional defibrillator to be sited at the Mill. The Council discussed the recent request to the Parish Council to consider funding a defibrillator for

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The Mill. The Council agreed that they would be happy to consider an application for funding under the section 137 grant process at the end of the financial year. Any application would need to include plans for maintenance, access arrangements and key contacts.

- b. Update on defibrillator (primary school) maintenance - Cllr Read reported that arrangements have been made for the safety service by Safelincs Ltd., to take place on Friday 13 August at 8.30 am. The Council noted that the inspection may raise the need for replacement equipment which will need to be funded by the Council.
21. Water Sub Meter – approve contractor and budget for a water sub meter at the football club – Cllr Field reported that she had requested several quotations but so far, the Clerk has only received one quotation. Cllr Field to chase up the other suppliers.
22. Electricity Supply – resolve to approve a new electricity supplier and contract – Cllr Bunker reported that three electricity suppliers had been contacted to provide quotations for electricity supply for the Council’s streetlights however to date only one quotation had been received from E-ON the Council’s current provider. The Clerk will follow up the other two providers.
23. Bring & Bag – Consider a request for the parish Council or any other village organisation to take on the Bring & Bag initiative before it is closed by the current organisers from October 2021. The Chairman reported that the Bring & Bag scheme would no longer be operational after October unless someone stepped forward to take it over. An article had been placed in the last edition of Round & About seeking volunteers to take on the initiative. If anyone is interested in taking on the role they should contact Bring & Bag.
24. Village Maintenance & Open Spaces:
 - a. Play area.
 - i. Monthly safety inspection report – the Chairman reported that the grass was growing and that bushes growing in the boundary area were becoming overgrown. The Chairman observed that it would be good to upgrade the play area and add new items.
 - ii. Repairs to Eastfield Play Area – Resolve to agree repairs to play area, nominate a contractor and agree budget. Four quotations had been circulated to the Council prior to the meeting. Cllr Read had undertaken a review of the quotes and noted that whilst there was parity between them if the signage and gate works were removed and the turfing and cradle swing left in the quote from Kompan at £716.00 plus VAT was the best value. The Chairman proposed, seconded by Cllr Wells and the Council **Resolved** to appoint Kompan to undertake the works in the play area at a cost of £716.00 plus VAT.
25. To agree the date of next meeting Monday 6 September 2021 at 7.30 pm. Noted – Cllrs Wells, Goss and Hawkins gave their apologies.
26. Close. The meeting closed at 9.45 pm.

Signed:

Chairman

Dated