

BLISWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

Address: 48 Pond Bank, Blisworth, NN7 3EL

Email: blisworthparishcouncil@gmail.com

Website: <https://parish.blisworthvillage.org>

Minutes of the Meeting of Blisworth Parish Council held on Monday 10 January 2022, 7.30 pm.

Present:

Cllr D Wilson, Chairman
 Cllr S Bunker, Vice Chairman
 Cllr M Field
 Cllr C Gardner
 Cllr J Hawkins
 Cllr C Read MBE

Also present:

Angela Billing, Parish Clerk
 Cllr K Cooper, District Councillor
 6 Members of the public

		Action
1.	Apologies to be accepted: Apology received from Cllr Billing due to a prior arrangement. The council resolved to accept the apology.	
2.	Declarations of Interest: None received.	
3.	Approval and Signature of the minutes of the meeting of the 6 December 2021: The minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2021 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.	To note the appointment of a new Clerk: Noted the appointment of the new Clerk, Angela Billing.	
6.	To appoint the new clerk as RFO: Noted the appointment of the new Clerk, Angela Billing as the RFO.	
7.	<p>Correspondence:</p> <p>a. Email from VHPFA re decrease in mast rental (for information only). The Chairman discussed the new legislation regarding the new Telecoms Code and the decreased rent from mobile phone masts.</p> <p>b. Facebook: Cllr Read reported that there were now 89 residents following the Blisworth Council Facebook page and that there had been 140 engagements and 2 messages from the public. One resident had expressed interest in becoming a parish councillor and the second message concerned the reporting of a faulty streetlight in Station Road, Cllr Bunker reported that that the failed light identified by Cllr Read is not included in the BPC lighting inventory. The clerk to investigate whether the light has ever been adopted and investigate who is responsible for its maintenance.</p>	Clerk
8.	<p>Gateway Funding Update: The Chairman reported that the grant conditions remain the same. The preferred use for the Gateway funding was to pay for traffic calming measures in the village. The Chairman reported that Highways would not install speed bumps or rumble strips due to the negative impact of noise on nearby residents but rather would recommend the installation of repeater signs, hatched road markings, staggering the traffic via single lane priority, pinch points (where the road is narrowed at each side) or the use of chicanes. Cllr Bunker noted that it was agreed at the December meeting (Minute 17) that the Council was willing to utilise the Gateway grant funds towards structural traffic calming measures, one single way priority operation or chicane, in the village.</p> <p>Note: The funding will only cover one single way priority operation or chicane because of the cost and the amount of the grant.</p>	

DV

	<p>Highways suggested an approximate cost of between £40,000 to £50,000. There would also be an additional design fee payable to Highways.</p> <p>The council would need to provide evidence of speeding problems prior to the commencement of any works. Highways will not allow repeater signs but would allow SIDs or VAS speed indicating machines. These also help show there is a speed problem before putting a chicane in place, which, as stated, is a requirement from Highways. Highways have stated that they have no money to support these proposed traffic calming measures.</p> <p>Cllr Read reported that further grants for traffic calming measures may be available but these cannot be applied for until February 2022. The total gateway funding may total £70,000.</p> <p>Cllr Bunker reminded the council that they will need to decide how they are going to utilise the remaining £20,000. Cllr Bunker referred to Cllr Billing's suggestion to allocate some funds to improve the Blisworth Parish Council allotments (Courteenhall Road). The Chairman recommended that councillors should suggest proposals for how any extra Gateway funding should be used.</p> <p>The Chairman reported that there had been an application to increase the height of one warehouse, due to be built at the Gateway site, to a two-story building and to reduce its square footage to allow for further parking. The Chairman noted that this would make this structure more visible to Blisworth residents and that this might set a precedent for further warehouses on the site to increase to two-storey buildings.</p>	
9.	<p>The National Lottery Community Funding:</p> <p>a. Eastfield Park – consider quotes and agree supplier: Cllr Read reported that he had received quotes for the play equipment for Eastfield Park from Wicksteed Playgrounds and PlayQuest but was awaiting a further quote from Reids Playground Maintenance. Cllr Read was asked to engage with Blisworth Primary School to obtain their opinion as part of the decision-making process. Deferred.</p>	
10.	<p>Highways/traffic</p> <p>a. SID machine purchase – update re delivery date: The Chairman reported that the VAS machine will be delivered 11.01.22 and that it can be installed at any level on the pole on the Stoke Road. Highways have confirmed that the pole is adequate and that the VAS machine can be safely installed with ease. Cllr Read and Cllr Bunker stated they would install the VAS machine. Cllr Field recommended that they ensured the VAS machine was installed high enough to deter vandals. Clerk to notify the Blisworth Parish Council insurers of the new asset.</p> <p>Clerk to contact Highways to find out what data they are collecting in the High Street and if we can have access to the data.</p>	<p>Cllr Read Cllr Bunker</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
11.	<p>Agree Terms of Reference for Working Group to deal with Royal events during 2022:</p> <p>The Chairman requested that as part of the terms of reference, it should be noted that the end date for the working group should be the end of March 2023. Cllr Field, Cllr Hawkins and Cllr Gardner agreed to form a working group with Cllr Read to only support. It was resolved to set up a Working Group with the amendment to the terms of reference. Cllr Field suggested the need to put information about the Platinum Jubilee in the Blisworth Round and About. Cllr Read stated that he would submit the information to be included in the next Blisworth Round and About.</p>	<p>Cllr Field, Cllr Hawkins Cllr Gardner Cllr Read</p>
12.	<p>Agree Terms of Reference for Working Group to deal with Asset Mapping Project:</p> <p>Cllr Bunker reported on West Northants Council's request for support with Asset Mapping. The Chairman noted that the current vacancies meant that councillors on the Blisworth Parish Council could not take on all initiatives. Cllr Read asked if West Northants Council</p>	

AV

	were expecting the Blisworth Parish Council to provide data. Cllr Bunker stated that the email from NALC had suggested that they did not expect all parish councils to contribute.	
13.	Cemetery Wall Condition Survey - Update and agree action: Cllr Bunker reported that the survey had stated that the condition of the wall was not too bad but that certain work was needed. The report stated that the wall needed: re-pointing, ivy and vegetation clearing away and fixing the coping stones. Cllr Bunker suggested that the work could be split into two parts, where the clearance of the ivy and the vegetation could be dealt with by local handymen and quotes from professional builders could be sort for the work on the re-pointing and coping stones. Clerk to obtain quotes from handymen and professional builders.	Clerk
14.	Risk assessments for approval a. Closed cemetery: Risk assessment for Closed Cemetery approved. b. Allotments: Risk assessment for Allotments approved with the addition of the stipulation that allotment holders must seek permission from the council before keeping animals on the Blisworth Parish Council allotments (Courteenhall Road). Clerk to amend risk assessment wording. Cllr Billing to distribute risk assessments to all allotment holders at the time of collection of yearly rents.	Clerk Cllr Billing
15.	Action list – key updates: Cllr Bunker reported that all updates to the Action List should now be sent to the clerk. Clerk to update the Action List.	Clerk
16.	Internal control - Key updates: Cllr Bunker reported that the main issue of internal control related to the Blisworth Parish Council bank account, specifically: (i) Notifying the bank of change of address of the Clerk (ii) Concerns regarding the lack of bank account mandate holders (iii) The last bank reconciliation was completed at the end of September 2021 and a current bank reconciliation needs to be done as a matter of priority. The Clerk does not have delegated authority to request viewing bank account records and the December 2021 bank statement is missing. Cllr Hawkins and the Clerk to arrange an appointment with NatWest bank.	Clerk Cllr Hawkins
17.	Police & Neighbourhood Watch Scheme key updates from Cllr Read: Updates circulated prior to the meeting and information regarding alerts to the village are shared on the Blisworth Parish Council Facebook page. There were 3 crimes reported in the November period: 2 violence and sexual offences and 1 burglary at Blisworth Arm where there was a forced entry to a garage door. Cllr Read attended the Neighbourhood watch South Northamptonshire coordinators meeting. He reported that there are small grants available for the prevention of crime (between £200 - £300) and further signage is available. Cllr Read noted that there is a lot of signage across the village regarding Neighbourhood Watch. Cllr Read reported that there are 60 residents logged onto the Neighbourhood Watch Alerts system. Cllr Bunker asked if there were any specific areas within the parish of higher crime. It was suggested that any extra funding from the Gateway Fund could be spent on CCTV but it was decided that that would require further investigation with regard to costs and legislation, as well as clear evidence of need.	
18.	Village directory update – identify volunteers: The Chairman suspended the Standing Orders, to discuss this item with the public. It was agreed that Paulette Kennedy would ask members of the Progress Group to work on the village directory update as a valuable voluntary group contribution rather than as the Progress Group. The Chairman resumed the Standing Orders at the end of this point.	

221

19.	<p>Finance & Administration:</p> <p>a. To note receipts and approve the following payments and any others that arrive after publication of the agenda: The Clerk reported that a further bill from SSE (electricity supply) had been received and that the payment via direct debit would be a further £6.72 (of which £0.32 was VAT) making the total direct debit for December £79.05 (of which £3.76 was VAT) rather than £72.33 (£3.44) as indicated on the agenda. The Clerk highlighted the increased DD from Waves (water charge) to £289.00. It was agreed to authorise the higher amount and that the Clerk will check to ensure the amount is correct and to check to see if the water meter has been installed. Cllr Field asked what would the BPC do regarding their share of the wi-fi payment, if the pre-school was to close. The Chairman reported that he would wait for the Village Hall and Playing Fields Association to contact us. Cllr Bunker reported that the VAT refund had been received and he recommended that councillors begin to think about how they would want to use any reserves.</p>	Clerk
-----	--	-------

RECEIPTS			
Date	Payer	Detail	Amount
23/11/21	HMRC	VAT refund	£10,645.49
30/11/21	Nat West	Interest	£0.15*
			*BR Account
PAYMENTS			
CH/DD	Payee	Purpose	Amount (VAT)
Chq	Broadstone Builders	Repairs to cemetery wall	£1266.25 (£211.04)
Chq	Blackwell structural engineers	Cemetery wall survey	£600 (£100)
Chq	Shire-Lumsden Ltd.	Round & About publishing	£130.00
DD	SSE	Electricity supply	£72.33 (£3.44)
DD	Waves	Water Charge	£289.00
DD	IONOS	Website Fee	£10.80 (£1.80)

20.	<p>Planning & Development</p> <p>The Council agreed that it should respond in line with the concerns raised by Cllr Read. In particular, the impact that these developments would have on all local road networks (including increased traffic flow through the village past village amenities and the school) Clerk to send a response.</p>	Clerk
Application	Location	Description
WNS/2021/2168/MAO	Land adjoining Bell Plantation Watling Street Towcester NN12 6GX	Outline - Development of up to 31,800 sq m (GEA) of Employment Buildings (Use Classes E(g)(iii), B2 and/or B8), access, landscaping and associated development and drainage infrastructure (Outline, all matters reserved except for the principal means of access to the site from the A5).

21.	<p>Village Maintenance & Open Spaces:</p> <p>a. Cemetery – consider/agree quotations for work required to trees: Agreed to accept the quote from Mr Halliday, Complete Ground Management Ltd, on the grounds that it is the cheapest, Complete Ground Management Ltd have completed work for the council previously and their quote includes the cost of seeking the permission for works on the four protected trees. Clerk to inform Complete Ground Management Ltd tomorrow to ensure that permissions for works on the four protected trees can be sort as soon as possible.</p> <p>b. Play area:</p> <p>(i) Monthly safety inspection report – Chairman to report: The Chairman reported that all the equipment was in good repair but that there was a lot of mud on the swings. Cllr Read will post pictures of the repaired swings and add a note regarding the mud on Blisworth Facebook page. A member of the public had asked the Chairman if the chains to the swings could be shortened. It was agreed that unfortunately this would require professional installation (at further cost) and would also negatively impact on the safety of the swings for younger children. Therefore, it was agreed that this would not be advisable.</p> <p>(ii) Repairs to Blisworth Play Area (Eastfield) – update: The repair to the toddler swing has been completed. The council had initially agreed payment for the repair of only one of the toddler swings, [August 4th BPC meeting – 24a (ii)]. After inspecting both toddler swings, the contractor informed Cllr Billing that the second toddler swing was also faulty and a health and safety risk. It was noted that Cllr Billing authorised the repair of the second toddler swing, at extra cost, in accordance with the Blisworth Parish Council’s Financial Regulations (4.5) and he informed Cllr Bunker (as at that point there was no clerk).</p>	Clerk
22.	<p>Public Session:</p> <p>a. District Councillor report: Cllr Cooper discussed the increase in council tax. She reported that there is a Covid Support fund of £2500 for groups within Blisworth, Gayton and Nether Heyford, that can demonstrate they have suffered financial hardship due to covid. The minimum award is £200.00. This fund is not for the use of Blisworth Parish Council.</p> <p>b. Members of the Public: Parents of children currently at the Blisworth Pre-school came to discuss their concerns and plans regarding the permanent closure of the Blisworth Pre-school at the end of January. Parent stakeholders discussed their plans to form a new committee. They have already prepared a formal business plan. They reported they needed to raise a total of £39,000 to survive until the September term and would need to raise £20,000 by February. They emphasised the importance of the Blisworth Pre-school to the local community and stated that their long-term plans to introduce wrap-around care and summer holiday clubs would provide more income in addition to supporting the local community. They were seeking donations or grants to that end. Cllr Field suggested that they talk to Ann North about grants. Cllr Gardner recommended they try ACRE as they had up-to-date information about grants and Cllr Cooper suggested they apply to the South Northants Voluntary Bureau. They will email a copy of their business plan to the clerk for distribution to the council when it has been finalised.</p>	
23.	To agree the date of next meeting Monday 7th February 2022. Noted	
24.	Close: The meeting closed at 9:15 pm.	



Signed:
David Wilson (Chairman)

10 January 2022