

## BLISWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

Address: 48 Pond Bank, Blisworth, Northamptonshire, NN7 3EL

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Minutes of the **Ordinary** meeting of **Blisworth Parish Council** held in Blisworth Village Hall on **Monday 5th June 2023** at **7.30 pm**.

**Present:** Cllr Billing, Chair  
 Cllr D Wilson  
 Cllr C Gardner  
 Cllr W Root  
 Cllr B Brown  
 Cllr M Field  
 Cllr J Hawkins  
 District Cllr K Cooper

**Also present:** Clerk: Angela Billing  
 4 Members of public

		Action
1.	To receive apologies. Apologies received from Cllr Read. <b>The Council resolved to accept the apologies.</b>	
2.	To receive declarations of interest under the Council's Code of Conduct related to business on the agenda. Councillors are reminded that if they have either a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or other interest in any of the agenda items then they should declare the interest and withdraw from the debate or meeting as appropriate. <b>Cllr Billing declared an interest in item 21 (f).</b> <b>Cllr Root declared and interest in item 18.</b>	
3.	To receive and approve for signature, the minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on 2nd May 2023. <b>Approved.</b>	
4.	To note any matters arising from the minutes not included on the agenda for report only. <b>None noted.</b>	
5.	Clerk's report circulated separately. <b>Noted.</b>	
6.	Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) - To complete the year end procedure: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Resolve to approve the adoption of the year end accounts (2022 – 2023). <b>RESOLVED: to approve the adoption of the year end accounts (2022 – 2023).</b></li> <li>b. Receive the report from the Internal Auditor and note any action. <b>Members received the report and confirmed that Clerk to post detail of allocation of reserves on the website.</b></li> <li>c. Resolve to consider and approve the completion of <b>Section 1</b> the Annual Governance Statements of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (2022 – 2023). <b>RESOLVED: to approve Section 1 the Annual Governance Statements of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (2022 – 2023).</b></li> <li>d. Resolve to agree Accounting Statements of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return <b>Section 2</b> (2022 – 2023). <b>RESOLVED: to agree Accounting Statements of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Section 2 (2022 – 2023).</b></li> <li>e. To note the dates for the Period of the Exercise of Public Rights.</li> <li>f. <b>RESOLVED: to approve the dates for the Period of the Exercise of Public Rights to commence on Monday 3rd July 2023 and to finish on 11th August 2023 inclusive.</b></li> </ol>	
7.	Public Session: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. District Councillor Report.</li> </ol>	

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	<p>Annual Parish Meeting: Cllr Cooper congratulated and thank everyone for the excellent engagement with the community.          Noted request for reduction of the speed limit to 20mph near Blisworth Primary School by school traffic-patrol attendant.          Noted Chapel Lane repositioning of 30mph restrictions signage on approach to Chapel Lane.          Welcoming Space provision: Pastor Lee, Blisworth Baptist Chapel, has registered with West Northants Council to continue on from the Warm Space provision.          Gayton Solar Farm Development: Cllr Cooper attended the 4-day Appeal Inquiry and Gayton are awaiting the decision.          Highways: Cllr Cooper discussed the numerous difficulties with roads, traffic and speeding.</p> <p>b. Members of the public.          Members of the public raised concerns regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The issues with the traffic lights on the A508, with long wait times and traffic lights not working, the danger associated with the long queues on the outside lane of the A43 when turning right across the carriageway into Blisworth and the increasing difficulty of joining the A43 from Towcester Road, Blisworth due to the increased volume of traffic.</li> <li>• Members of the public also noted that there seemed to be limited co-ordination between the different bodies organising the road closures/works.</li> <li>• The proposed new development west of Northampton Road (near to JBJ Enterprise Park) and the increase in traffic through Blisworth, with traffic on the Northampton Road approach to Blisworth tailing back to Milton Malsor.</li> <li>• Difficulties crossing High Street with the increased volume and speed of the traffic.</li> <li>• Lack of co-ordination and communication to inform residents of road closures/works.</li> </ul>													
8.	<p>Response to issues raised in the public session.</p> <p>a. Councillors confirmed that the introduction of 20mph speed restrictions were one of the proposals put forward at the Annual Parish Meeting to mitigate the impact of the traffic issues in Blisworth. Councillors to liaise with Cllr Cooper to action this further.          Noted issues within Highways/WNC regarding low staffing and open vacancies. In particular with Highways staff sending notice for not attending meetings at short notice.</p> <p>b. Councillors discussed outcome to the recent meeting with Stoke Bruerne and raised issues of poor communication. Winvic agreed to put telephone numbers on traffic lights signage at the various sites, so that drivers can report issues with the traffic lights. Winvic also agreed to position clearer signage on the A43, warning drivers to slow down due to the long queues of traffic waiting to turn right into Blisworth.</p>													
9.	<p>Planning and Development.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">Application &amp; Date Comments Due</th> <th style="text-align: left;">Location</th> <th style="text-align: left;">Description</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;">WNS/2022/1134/MAO  30/06/2023</td> <td style="vertical-align: top;">Land to the west Northampton Road Blisworth Northants Towcester NN7 3DW</td> <td style="vertical-align: top;">Proposed Redevelopment of Site to Provide Commercial Units (up to 182,000 sq. Ft of floorspace) for Use Class E(g), B2 and B8 Purposes and associated works. Outline Application with all Matters Reserved aside from Access.</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3" style="text-align: center;"><b>RESOLVED: to submit further objection.</b> Cllr Root to draft objection.</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;">2023/5283/TCA  15/06/2023</td> <td style="vertical-align: top;">Tree work at canal-side opposite 85</td> <td style="vertical-align: top;">Notification of tree work at canal-side opposite 85 Clematis Cottage, Stoke Road, Blisworth, NN7 3BZ</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Application & Date Comments Due	Location	Description	WNS/2022/1134/MAO  30/06/2023	Land to the west Northampton Road Blisworth Northants Towcester NN7 3DW	Proposed Redevelopment of Site to Provide Commercial Units (up to 182,000 sq. Ft of floorspace) for Use Class E(g), B2 and B8 Purposes and associated works. Outline Application with all Matters Reserved aside from Access.	<b>RESOLVED: to submit further objection.</b> Cllr Root to draft objection.			2023/5283/TCA  15/06/2023	Tree work at canal-side opposite 85	Notification of tree work at canal-side opposite 85 Clematis Cottage, Stoke Road, Blisworth, NN7 3BZ	Cllr Root
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		<p>Clematis Cottage, Stoke Road, Blisworth, NN7 3BZ</p>	<p>Application type: intended tree work includes: site clearance to allow necessary work.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p><b>RESOLVED: to submit No Comments other than to request that the planning department inform residents.</b></p>				
<p>10.</p>	<p>Correspondence from social media: Update from Cllr Read. Report circulated ahead of the meeting. Noted. Complaint received regarding grass cutting and responses received regarding votes for Blisworth Parish Council's future priorities. There has been a significant increase in social media activity during the month. Our total number of followers has increased by 8 residents to 243 people (68.9% of our followers are listed as women and 105 are listed as resident in Blisworth, the remainder listed in Northampton/Road/Towcester). We have had a post reach of 2967 people (people who have our messages on their social media feeds) and a direct engagement (clicks) of 2417 people. Our top performing post in the period was our post concerning the Development in Northampton Road and proposal to object posted 20 May. This led to 2392 people reached and 1340 direct engagements, 27 comments and 23 reactions.</p>			
<p>11.</p>	<p>Police &amp; Neighbourhood Watch Scheme: Update from Cllr Read. Report circulated ahead of the meeting. Noted. Crime data for April: 6 crimes were reported in the Blisworth Parish. Antisocial Behaviour – 1, Violence and Sexual Offences – 1, Public Order – 1, Vehicle Crime - 1 Other Theft – 2. We have 62 residents logged on with the Neighborhood Watch Alerts system. Residents can register with the system on this link, <a href="http://www.northamptonshireneighbourhoodalert.co.uk/">www.northamptonshireneighbourhoodalert.co.uk/</a> to receive up-to-date police and neighbourhood watch information. Relevant alerts to the village community are shared via the Parish Council Facebook page. There was one alert for the village relating to an incident in Home Close, Blisworth between 06/05/2022 00:00 and 09/05/2022 12:30, unknown person(s) with unknown means have smashed the windscreen of vehicle and left in unknown direction. Any residents with information should contact the Police on 101 quoting incident number: 22000267357.</p> <p>We have been in contact with the Police regarding oversized vehicles using the Candle Bridge, the Police advised there may be reasons why an oversized vehicle would be permitted to use the bridge such as delivering animal feed etc to local farms. These could be a genuine reason for access, which is a permitted exemption.</p> <p>PSCO Jen Harrison will be attending our July Council Surgery session at Blisworth Baptist Church.</p>			
<p>12.</p>	<p>Report on data from SID/VAS devices: Update from Cllr Read. Report circulated ahead of the meeting. Noted. The traffic data from the Towcester Road device shows the significant increases in traffic flows through the village from c5,000 vehicles day to c9,000 vehicles daily. This data has been shared with Northamptonshire Police who have said that they will raise concerns with the West Northamptonshire Highways team. We have requested a more visible police presence at peak traffic hours.</p> <p>Queuing traffic is now being regularly experienced up Towcester Road onto the A43 and down Northampton Road beyond the railway bridge at peak hours. There has been a collision on the Station Road / Northampton Road junction. This increased traffic volume is causing significant traffic risks and concerns. A resident's video of the situation has been shared on social media where it can be seen that crossing the road at the High Street is hazardous. Residents have also reported vehicle damage in the High Street.</p>			

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	The data for this month from Stoke Road or Courteenhall Road devices had not been downloaded at the time of the meeting. It is estimated that traffic flows down Stoke Road have been minimal and a notional increase of around 20% of vehicles increasing traffic flow in Courteenhall Road will be seen.	
13.	Gateway Update. Update from Cllr Wilson. Next meeting in July. Deferred.	
14.	<p>Village Maintenance &amp; Open Spaces:</p> <p>a. Play area: Monthly safety inspection report: Update from Cllr Wilson. Report circulated ahead of the meeting. Noted. No visual defects noticed. Clerk to contact contractor regarding emptying the bin. Clerk awaiting responses for quotes for annual inspection. One bench has now lost a plastic bolt cap on the seat. Bolt head is recessed and flat and as such, the plastic cap is mainly cosmetic.</p> <p>b. Defibrillator: Confirmation of satisfactory checks and any issues. Update from Cllr Read. Monthly check was undertaken and no issues were identified.</p> <p>c. Allotments &amp; Closed Cemetery. Update from Cllr Billing. Cllr Billing contacted Broadstone Developments to discuss proposals to amend the line of fencing and setting back of both gates to allow vehicles room to turn off the lane while opening/locking gates. Amendments agreed with Broadstones Developments. Works to the weeds in the Closed Cemetery deferred due to nesting season.</p>	Clerk
15.	<p>Resolve to agree request for an S137 grant from Blisworth Baptist Church for £450.00 towards costs for the Leisure Hall.</p> <p><b>Resolved to agree request for an S137 grant from Blisworth Baptist Church for £450.00 towards costs for the Leisure Hall.</b></p>	
16.	<p>Resolve to appoint/reappoint the representatives for the Village Hall and Playing Field Association.</p> <p><b>Resolved to appoint Cllr Gardner, Cllr Hawkins and Cllr Field as the Blisworth Parish Council representatives for the Village Hall and Playing Field Association.</b></p> <p>Clerk to confirm requirements for VHPFA representatives.</p>	<p>Cllr Gardner Cllr Hawkins Cllr Field</p> <p>Clerk</p>
17.	<p>Receive report pertaining to request from Blisworth Football Club to lease land from the Parish Council. Representatives from Blisworth Football Club have approached Blisworth Parish Council again to ask for a 30-year lease. Blisworth Football Club had hoped that a 30-year lease would not be required as part of their funding application. Unfortunately, the funding application towards the cost of the clubhouse rebuild requires Blisworth Football Club to have leases for both pitches despite the fact that the new proposed clubhouse will not be on allotment land. As one of the pitches is on allotment land, the Parish Council will have to apply to the Secretary of State to request permission to provide a 30-year lease. Blisworth Parish Council cannot use public money to cover Blisworth Football Club's legal fees. Blisworth Football Club have stated that, as with the lease agreed with the Village Hall and Playing Field Association, they will pay for all legal costs.</p> <p>Clerk to obtain legal representation to identify all legal costs involved.</p>	Clerk
18.	<p>Discuss registration of the Royal Oak as a Community Asset and other entertainment/food venues in the village and agree next steps. Cllr Root left the meeting for Minute Item 18. Deferred.</p> <p>Clerk to establish progress regarding Royal Oak as a Community Asset.</p> <p>Clerk to review licences for food, drink and entertainment within Blisworth held at West Northants Council.</p>	Clerk
19.	<p>Review meeting with Stoke Bruerne Parish Council and agree next steps. This was a public meeting hosted by Stoke Bruerne Parish Council and attended by Dame Andrea Leadsom, Blisworth Parish Councillors and the public. Meeting also attended by WINVIC representatives. Representatives from Highways were originally attending but were then not able to send a</p>	

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	<p>representative. The main concern was the traffic, road closures and lack of communication and co-ordination specifically, closing multiple roads at the same time causing further traffic issues. Blisworth Parish Councils raised the proposal to install a chicane in Stoke Road to reduce speeding issues and deter the use of Stoke Road as a rat-run to the A43/Northampton Road. Dame Andrea Leadsom agreed to support Blisworth Parish Council with the installation of a chicane.</p> <p>Winvic stated that they would review their weight-restriction signage on the Roade by-pass to give drivers advanced warning of the weight-restriction on Stoke Road.</p> <p>Winvic agreed to include telephone numbers and dates of duration of roadworks/closures on signage and provide clearer signage on the A43 to warn drivers of the queues waiting to turn right into Blisworth on the outside lane of the A43.</p> <p>Winvic also raised the issue of future works on the A508. It was suggested that the works on Stoke Road need to be completed ahead of any further closures on the A508 with the view that when the A508 is not accessible, traffic can be directed via Stoke Road. Blisworth Parish Councillors enquired what Winvic's planned mitigation was to ensure that traffic does not use the Stoke Road. Winvic agreed that they needed to consider this issue and would need to implement a plan. Winvic noted that they have regular meetings with village representations however the agenda for these meetings are often set by SEGRO/Winvic and there is little opportunity to discuss local villages' concerns regarding traffic/roadworks.</p> <p><b>Resolved: Clerk to contact Stoke Bruerne to suggest a follow-up meeting with Dame Andrea Leadsom hosted by Blisworth Parish Council to monitor/confirm what progress had been made.</b></p>							
20.	<p>Internal Control:</p> <p>a) Financial &amp; Management Risk Assessment:</p> <p>i. To receive declarations of gifts/hospitality and review record of gifts/hospitality received by Councillors or the Clerk to date. <b>None received.</b></p>							
21.	<p>Finance &amp; Administration</p> <p>Banking Issues:</p> <p>a. Bank reconciliation to 05.06.2023.</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr> <td>Closing NatWest Balance</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£34,572.62</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Closing Skipton Balance</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£52,747.73</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Closing Total Accounts</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£87,320.35</td> </tr> </table> <p>b. Annual Insurance Cover – <b>RESOLVED: to agree premium of £1018.22.</b></p> <p>c. Discuss options for donations for purchase of seeds/plants to establish more diversified planting at the Closed Cemetery and agree next steps. <b>RESOLVED: Clerk to liaise with Blisworth Community Projects Group to purchase seeds/plants for the Closed Cemetery.</b></p> <p>d. Discuss options for internet banking and use of a credit card/debit card and agree next steps. Report circulated ahead of the meeting. Noted that the Clerk has been obliged to use her personal credit card to make some payments on behalf of the Council where the company involved will not accept payment by cheque. Councillors concluded that a two-step process for authorising e-banking payments would provide sufficient safeguards (i.e. the Clerk plus one councillor), rather than the three-step process currently employed for cheque issue. <b>RESOLVED: to pursue options for e-banking with NatWest and to set up a credit card with NatWest. Finance Working Group to give further detailed consideration of options regarding adopting an e-banking service and use of a linked credit card, with a proposal paper to be prepared for July Council Meeting for formal decision.</b></p> <p>e. To note the earmarked reserves. Noted. <b>Appendix II</b></p> <p>f. To note receipts and approve the payments made to 5th June 2023. <b>RESOLVED to agree the payments listed in Appendix I.</b></p>	Closing NatWest Balance	£34,572.62	Closing Skipton Balance	£52,747.73	Closing Total Accounts	£87,320.35	
Closing NatWest Balance	£34,572.62							
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Closing Total Accounts	£87,320.35							
22.	<p>Review outcomes from engagement with residents on future expenditure priorities.</p>							

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Results of engagement with residents on future expenditure priorities (including votes collected at the Annual Parish Meeting, online votes via Blisworth Parish Council Facebook page and voting boxes at the Blisworth shop, St John’s Church and the Baptist Church and comments):		
	Price Indication	Number of votes
A traffic calming chicane on Stoke Road (within village limits) similar to the chicane in Shutlanger village.	££££	128
Further Signage: 20 mph limit near the school, improve weight-limit signage for Stoke Road	££	123
Improve pavements including installing dropped kerbs	£££	113
A footpath from the Tunnel Carpark into the village	£££££	104
A traffic operated crossing across High Street, near Blisworth School (where the current bus lane is).	££££	57
Community engagement initiatives – for example a Happy to Chat Bench in the village to improve village interaction.	£	25
Electric E charge on the streets to encourage electric car take up	Free	13
<p>Blisworth Parish Council will require to seek further consultation and agreement from West Northants Council and Highways prior to actioning these initiatives.</p> <p>Councillors to:</p> <p>Prepare a survey of footpaths and kerbs</p> <p>Liaise with other village parish councils regarding signage</p> <p>Liaise with Highways to consider combining work on the chicane and footpath from the tunnel</p>		
23.	Council Surgery – Resolve to agree on a representative(s) from the Council for Tuesday 13 <sup>th</sup> June 2023. <b>RESOLVED: Cllr Billing to attend.</b>	
24.	<p>Councillors’ reports and items for future agenda.</p> <p>Request for an update regarding the insurance position.</p> <p>Canal and River Trust’s decision regarding the health and safety implications of removing dog waste bins along the canal towpath in Blisworth.</p>	
25.	<p>To agree the date of next meeting as Monday, 3rd July 2023 at 7.30pm.</p> <p><b>Resolved: Date of next meeting as Monday, 10th July at 7:30pm.</b></p>	
26.	Close. The meeting closed at 9:53 pm.	

Error noted on the 05/06/2023 minutes, Minute Item 21 (f) Appendix I Receipts and Payments: Date for Allotment Rents receipts should read 21/04/23 - 01/06/23. Noted on Minutes for Meeting on 10 July 2023.

Signed:  
 Chairman..... Date:

Please see the clerk for a copy of the signed minutes.

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**Appendix I - Receipts and the Payments**

**Receipts**

DATE	PAYEE	DETAILS	ACCOUNT	AMOUNT
21/17/23 -17/05/23	Various	Allotment Rents	Current Acct*	£255.00
28/04/2023	WNC	Precept WNC 1st Instalment	Current Acct*	£21,700.00
28/04/2023	NatWest	Interest	Reserve Acct**	£36.16
19/05/2023	HMRC	HMRC VAT Refund	Current Acct*	£4,244.23
01/06/2023	Tenant	Parish Field Rent	Current Acct*	£300.00
01/06/2023	BPC	Donations towards biodiversity	Current Acct*	£14.54

\* NatWest Current Account

**£26,549.93**

\*\*NatWest Business Reserve Account

**PAYMENTS**

Ref:	Invoice	PAYEE	PURPOSE	CHQ/DD	Total Amount Including VAT	VAT	Amount Excluding VAT
19	521877620/0023	SSE	Electricity Supply 04.04.2023 - 02.05.2023	DD	100.10	4.76	95.34
20	26.04.2023	Flowercraft Nursery	Spr/Sum Plants & compost for village planters	3227	74.00	0.00	74.00
21	2489656	Viking Payments	Printer Toner x 2 Paper x 2	3228	97.15	16.19	80.96
22	Month 2 2023-2024	A Billing - Salary	Clerk's Salary May 2023	3229	783.50	0.00	783.50
23	120PF003233662402	HMRC - Nat. Ins.	HMRC Nat. Ins. Employer Contributions April 2023 Salary	3230	3.52	0.00	3.52
24		A Billing - Expenses	Clerk's Expenses (02.05.2023 - 31.05.2023)	3231	56.73	0.00	56.73
25		Waves	Water Supply - June	DD	55.00	0.00	55.00
26	2030 3650 4219	IONOS	Website Fee - 31/05/2023 - 30/06/2023	DD	6.00	1.00	5.00
27	1518 & 1548	CutCrew Ltd	Cut to Area 2 & Area 1: Inv 1518 05.05.2023 & 19.05.2023 £797.18 Inv 1548 01.06.2023 £398.59	3232	1,195.77	199.29	996.48
28	LCO02176-31/05/2023	BHIB Ltd	Annual Insurance cover 01 June 2023 - 31 May 2024	3233	1,018.22	0.00	1,018.22
29	28182	Merland Copy Shop Ltd	Printing of Round & About Jun-July Issue	3234	170.00	0.00	170.00
<b>Totals</b>					<b>£3,559.99</b>	<b>£221.24</b>	<b>£3,338.75</b>

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### Appendix II – Reserves allocations

General Reserve	£12,000.00
Reserve for cemetery work	£2,500.00
Reserve for Street Lighting replacement	£6,000.00
<b>Total of current reserves allocated</b>	<b>£20,500.00</b>

Support School Crossing Warden in 2023/4	£1,500
Further Street Lighting improvements	£10,000
Footpath and foot way upgrades	£10,000
Allotment improvements/clearance	£4,000
Friendship Bench	£1,000
Traffic Calming	£21,499.88
General allowance for other improvements across the village	£1000.00
<b>Total of new reserve allocations</b>	<b>48,999.88</b>

The proposed allocations are estimates and subject to further detailed work and consultations with the residents (including consultation at the Annual Parish Meeting). It is possible that consultations may result the need for different allocations and perhaps different project headings. The proposed allocations are also subject to further consultation with KIER (Highways), West Northants Council and the Canal and River Trust, in particular with regard to costings and approval.

The Council notes that commitment of any of these funds will be subject to review and Council approval following consultation with residents and other associations/stake holders.