

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 10th July 2023 at 7.30 pm.**

Present: Cllr Billing, Chair
 Cllr D Wilson
 Cllr C Gardner
 Cllr W Root
 Cllr M Field
 District Cllr K Cooper

Also present: Clerk: Angela Billing
 2 Members of public

		Action
1.	To receive apologies. Apologies received from Cllr Read, Cllr Brown and Cllr Hawkins. 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. 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. Cllr Billing declared an interest in item 19 (b).	
3.	To receive and approve for signature, the minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on 5th June 2023. 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.	
4.	To note any matters arising from the minutes not included on the agenda for report only. None noted.	
5.	Clerk's report circulated separately. Noted.	
6.	Resolve to co-opt Bernard Ingram as a Parish Councillor. Agreed - Unanimously carried.	
7.	Resolve to co-opt Karen Cooper as a Parish Councillor. Agreed - Unanimously carried.	
8.	Public Session: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. District Councillor Report. Circulated ahead of the meeting. Noted. Cllr Cooper provided an update to her report. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Speed limit outside the Primary School: Cllr Cooper has contacted Highways on behalf of Blisworth Parish Council regarding the protocol to apply for a reduced speed limit. Highways stated there is no funding for traffic calming and that all applications must go through a review panel. (ii) A508 planned closure: Diversion signs will direct traffic to the A5 and A43. (iii) Schools in Northampton can apply for free trees: Cllr Cooper has passed this information onto Blisworth Primary School. (iv) West Northants Council (WNC) are asking people to have their say in a consultation which will help shape the future of bin collections and other waste services across the area. b. Members of the public. 	

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	<p>A member of public raised concerns regarding the possible proposal to ask Highways to install a chicane on Stoke Road and also highlighted the traffic issues near the Blisworth shop in terms of the speed and volume of traffic. The member of public also informed the Council of the dumping of rubbish on the Courteenhall Road Allotments.</p>													
9.	<p>Response to issues raised in the public session.</p> <p>a (i) Agreed that the Clerk would liaise with District Cllr Cooper and other parish councils to further investigate the protocol to apply for a reduced speed area near the school.</p> <p>a (ii) Cllrs raised concerns that members of the public will still continue to use the village roads as a cut-through.</p> <p>a (iv) Residents can provide their views regarding WNC’s future bin collections on https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/bins-recycling-and-waste/resources-and-waste-strategy-consultation</p> <p>b Cllrs explained that residents that had attended the Annual Parish Meeting had voted favourably for a chicane on Stoke Road. The Council had been informed by Highways that speed humps or rumble strips would not be authorised as they cause noise issues for adjacent home owners.</p> <p>The only position for a chicane, which may be authorised by Highways, would be near the doctor’s surgery. The proposed benefits of the chicane are that it would slow down traffic on Stoke Road, effectively working as a ‘large parked car’ forcing drivers to slow down. It will also deter large heavy vehicles from using Stoke Road as a short-cut through the village to access major routes. Councillors requested that residents of Stoke Road should attend the council meetings to give their views. Clerk to add request to Round and About.</p>	<p>Clerk & Cllr Cooper</p> <p>Clerk</p>												
10.	<p>Planning and Development.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Application & Date Comments Due</th> <th>Location</th> <th>Description</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2023/5497/FULL Comments by: 05/07/2023 Extension to 14/07/2023 Confirmed</td> <td>The Bays 11 Gayton Road Blisworth West Northampton shire NN7 3BN</td> <td>Proposal Variation of Condition 2 (plans) First floor side extension - for a larger extension. No Comments</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2023/5678/FULL Comments by: 17/07/2023</td> <td>19 Courteenhall Road Blisworth West Northampton shire NN7 3DD</td> <td>Demolition of existing outbuilding and new detached garden building No comments</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Application & Date Comments Due	Location	Description	2023/5497/FULL Comments by: 05/07/2023 Extension to 14/07/2023 Confirmed	The Bays 11 Gayton Road Blisworth West Northampton shire NN7 3BN	Proposal Variation of Condition 2 (plans) First floor side extension - for a larger extension. No Comments	2023/5678/FULL Comments by: 17/07/2023	19 Courteenhall Road Blisworth West Northampton shire NN7 3DD	Demolition of existing outbuilding and new detached garden building No comments				
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11.	<p>Correspondence from social media: Update from Cllr Read. Noted. Social media engagement continues to grow but has levelled out slight after last month’s peak of activity. Total number of followers has increased by 5 residents to 248 people (68.6% of</p>													

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	<p>our followers are listed as women and 102 are listed as resident in Blisworth, the remainder listed in Northampton/Road/Towcester). We have had a post reach of 4487 people and a direct engagement of 640 people. The top performing post in the period was our post concerning the further update on local road closures by Winvic and SEGRO as part of the Northampton Gateway development posted 28 June. This led to 4324 people reached and 705 direct engagements, 3 comments, 12 reactions and 11 shares.</p>	
12.	<p>Police & Neighbourhood Watch Scheme: Update from Cllr Read. Noted. Crime data for May, 9 crimes were reported. 5 - Violence and Sexual Offences, 2 - Antisocial behaviour, 2 - Vehicle Crime. Note that 3 crimes have been reported at the boatyard over April and May. Antisocial Behaviour, Violence and Criminal Damage.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood alert system has been renamed "Northamptonshire Talking". We have seen 1 additional member join on the neighbourhood alert system increasing membership to 71 members registered on the Neighbourhood alert scheme and no alerts have been issued for our village. Regular updates about local crime and matters of priority within South Northants on Neighbourhood Alert www.northamptonshireneighbourhoodalert.co.uk/. These are also published on the Parish social media. Using this system complies with GDPR. There were no crime alerts for the village this month.</p> <p>Cllr Read has have had a series of conversation with the local police PSCO around village issues. In summary:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Resourcing - The Police Service is under pressure with resources over the summer period, due to officer leave periods, sickness and the increase in the number of antisocial behaviour cases to deal with due to the good weather. Examples are complaints around youth behaviour in public spaces and increased numbers of neighbourhood disputes. 2. Beat Bus - The Beat Bus visits were discussed with the view to agree a better location than the Eastfield Road car park behind the village hall. Two locations were discussed. The Royal Oak Car Park, where we will need permission from the pub landlord as the car park is owned by Enterprise Inns. Another suitable location, outside of term time, could be the car park at Blisworth Primary School on Elm Tree corner. We discussed getting better notice of the proposed visit dates and the Parish Council supporting the identification and advertising of a suitable location. It was agreed when the next Neighbourhood Alert is issued that the PSCO would link me to the 28-day forecast so we can better support planned visits. There is a high demand for these visits across Northamptonshire and whilst they are attended, officers have to be diverted from other activities. The next beat bus visit to the village is 19 July at 3pm and we have approached the school, however that is unsuitable for hosting the visit. Hopefully when the Royal Oak reopens this will solve the issue. 3. Communication: Cllr Read to draft a proposed article as PLR/NW coordinator for the Round and About and to request posters to distribute on the parish notice boards in order to help the Police with local communications. The primary communication tool is Northamptonshire Alert / Northamptonshire Talking System; however information is shared on Facebook, Twitter etc. 	

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	<p>4. Inappropriate Parking: Parking issues at Pond Bank and the School were discussed, where parked vehicles have caused traffic sightline and pavement obstruction issues. The Police highlighted that they have no powers to support parking issues unless the highway is completely blocked to traffic. All powers being passed to NCC/WNC in 2007. If WNC are to enforce parking issues there needs to be yellow lines and statutory signage, which is not present at these locations. Also parking enforcement officers are rarely seen outside of the major towns as they are used mainly to support parking charge activities. It was highlighted that this is a common issue in many villages and that residents and the Council should write to WNC about this issue. The Police suggested a polite notice on cars that regularly park inappropriately to increase driver awareness; however care should be taken around the wording of any notice.</p> <p>5. Traffic Issues - We discussed the issues we are experiencing with increased traffic flows due to local highways works and this has been reported by the Police to the Road JAG (Joint Action Group) attended by Fire Service, Police, Local Authority and Highways Agency. We have to wait to see what action can be taken, locally we need to continue to lobby WNC and the Police can only act where a road traffic offence has occurred and traffic volumes are not able to be addressed as an offence. The Northamptonshire Police enforcement team do regularly visit the village for speed enforcement (last visit 28 June in Courteenhall Road) and the village can establish a community speed watch group if needed, however these will not address the issues with traffic volumes.</p>	
13.	<p>Report on data from SID/VAS devices: Update from Cllr Read. Noted.</p> <p>We continue to share data with Northamptonshire police who have said that they will raise concerns with the West Northamptonshire Highways team through the JAG (Joint Action Group). We have requested a more visible Police presence at peak traffic hours and the Police provided an enforcement visit in Courteenhall Road on 28 June. Due to the uncoordinated and sporadic road closures queuing traffic is now being regularly experienced up Towcester Road onto the A43 and on the A43 lay-by to turn right into Blisworth back onto the dual carriageway. Also down Northampton Road beyond the railway bridge at peak hours. I raised our concerns that the issue of increased traffic volume is causing significant traffic risks with Northamptonshire Police.</p> <p>VAS unit in Stoke Road In the period between 21 May and 16 June (27 days) there were 10,662 vehicle movements (394 per day), representing a significant drop from the average of approx. 2,500, reducing by 1,200 a day. This has obviously been caused by the road closure over the period. The interesting point is local traffic accessing the road is travelling at reduced speeds with an average speed of 24.6 mph and 85% of vehicles were travelling below 33 mph. The top speed recorded was 58 mph. This establishes I believe that much of the traffic speeding through Stoke Road is vehicles cutting through the village to avoid major trunk roads. Stoke Road has now reopened so I suspect volumes will increase up to the average 2500 vehicles a day and speeds will return to previously reported.</p> <p>VAS unit in Courteenhall Road In the period between 30 Apr and 31 June (34 days) there were 157,464 vehicle movements (4,631 per day), which represents an increase of around an additional 1,000 vehicle movements a day due to the Stoke Road closure. Interestingly however around</p>	

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	<p>300 vehicles are not using the route as a diversion. The speeds have remained consistent with an average speed of 33.7mph and 85% of vehicles were travelling below 42 mph. The top speed recorded was 92 mph.</p> <p>Batteries in both VAS units have been replaced, which are now operational as normal.</p>											
14.	<p>Gateway Update. Update from Cllr Wilson.</p> <p>A508: Full weekend road closures on A508 21:00 21/07/2023 to 06:00 24/07/2023 from M1 junction to Roade village.</p> <p>Knock Lane: Road closure to the end of July but there is access for residents.</p> <p>Rookery Lane: Road closure 10/07/2023 to 11/09/2023.</p> <p>Roadworks around junction 15a will continue until end of December to enlarge and widen the roundabout.</p> <p>Despite repeated requests, they have not improved signage on the A43 to deter traffic from using Towcester Road through Blisworth.</p>											
15.	<p>Village Maintenance & Open Spaces:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Play area: Monthly safety inspection report: Update from Cllr Wilson. Monthly check was undertaken and no issues were identified. b. Defibrillator: Confirmation of satisfactory checks and any issues. Update from Cllr Read. Monthly check was undertaken and no issues were identified. Cllr Read updated the quarterly central record, 30th June 2023 on "The Circuit" to inform the emergency services. c. Allotments & Closed Cemetery. Rubbish has been dumped at the allotments and the Closed Cemetery. Cllr Billing will remove rubbish. 	Cllr Billing										
16.	<p>Resolve to agree Eastfield Play Area annual Inspection.</p> <p>Resolved to appoint Inspection Services at Seagrave to carry out Annual Play Area Inspection (£190.00 + VAT).</p>	Clerk										
17.	<p>Resolve to join the CPRE for 2023-2024.</p> <p>Resolved to approve payment to join CPRE, Northamptonshire. Annual cost of £36.00.</p>	Clerk										
18.	<p>Internal Control:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Financial & Management Risk Assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. To receive declarations of gifts/hospitality and review record of gifts/hospitality received by Councillors or the Clerk to date. None received. 											
19.	<p>Finance & Administration</p> <p>Banking Issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Bank reconciliation to 20.06.2023. Bank reconciliation checked by Cllr Field. <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Closing NatWest</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Balance</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;">£34,475.18</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Closing Skipton</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Balance</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;">£52,747.73</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Closing Total Accounts</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px;">£87,222.91</td> </tr> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. To note receipts and approve the following payments and any others that arrive after publication of the agenda. <p>RESOLVED to note payments and agree the payments listed in Appendix I.</p>	Closing NatWest		Balance	£34,475.18	Closing Skipton		Balance	£52,747.73	Closing Total Accounts	£87,222.91	
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	c. To receive the Finance Working Group report. Noted. The Working Group reviewed the option for e-banking and a credit card. The Working Group and Clerk to bring detailed options for Council to consider at August meeting. The Working Group reviewed the current level of spending against the 2023-2024 budget. Adverse variances so far are modest. HR Committee to submit their review of staff contract at August meeting. Clerk to submit Budget versus Actual for full Council consideration at August meeting.	Finance Working Group and Clerk HR Committee
20.	Resolve to approve amended reserves allocations. RESOLVED to approve amended reserves allocations. Appendix II. Clerk to upload to website.	Clerk
21.	Councillors' reports and items for future agenda. Issue of removal of dog waste bins by Canal and River Trust - Cllr Root.	
22.	Council Surgery – Resolve to agree on a representative(s) from the Council for 11th July 2023. RESOLVED: Cllr Wilson and Cllr Billing to attend.	Cllr Wilson Cllr Billing
23.	To agree the date of next meeting 7th August 2023 at 7.30 pm. Agreed.	
24.	Close. The meeting closed at 8.44 pm.	

Signed:

Chairman..... Date:

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

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Appendix I BLISWORTH PARISH COUNCIL PAYMENT LIST & RECEIPTS JULY 2023 Meeting

Receipts				
DATE	PAYEE	DETAILS	ACCOUNT	AMOUNT
01/06/2023	NatWest	Transfer Funds to NatWest Current Account	Reserve Acct**	£6.00
* NatWest Current Account				£6.00

**NatWest Business Reserve Account

PAYMENTS							
Ref:	Invoice	PAYEE	PURPOSE	CHQ/DD	Total Amount Including VAT	VAT	Amount Excluding VAT
30	521877620/0024	SSE	Electricity Supply 03.05.2023 - 01.06.2023	DD	103.44	4.92	98.52
31		CPRE Northamptonshire	CPRE Annual Membership	DD	36.00	0.00	36.00
32		Blisworth Baptist Church	S137 Grant for costs for the Leisure Hall	3236	450.00	0.00	450.00
33	7404	Barbara Osborne	Barbara Osborne Business Services Payroll Services Apr 2023 - Jun 2023	3237	69.00	0.00	69.00
34	Month 3 2023-2024	A Billing - Salary	Clerk's Salary June 2023	3238	783.50	0.00	783.50
35	120PF003233662403	HMRC - Nat. Ins.	HMRC Nat. Ins. Employer Contributions June 2023 Salary	3239	3.52	0.00	3.52
36	2030 3695 5117	IONOS	Website Fee - 30/06/2023 - 31/07/2023	DD	6.00	1.00	5.00
37		Waves	Water Supply - July	DD	55.00	0.00	55.00
38	1552	CutCrew Ltd	Cut to: Area 2 x 2 & Area 1 x 2 06.06.2023 & 30.06.2023	3240	797.18	132.86	664.32
39		A Billing - Expenses	Clerk's Expenses (01.06.2023 - 30.06.2023)	3241	£24.50	0.00	24.50
Totals					£2,328.14	£138.78	£2,189.36

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Appendix II - Reserves Allocation 10/07/2023

Ring-fenced Reserves	
Lottery Grant - Allotments Fencing	£8,603.00
General Reserve	£12,000.00
Ear-marked Reserves	
Reserve for cemetery work	£2,500.00
Reserve for Street Lighting replacement	£6,000.00
Total of current reserves allocated	£8,500.00
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	£12,896.88
General allowance for other improvements across the village	£1,000.00
Total of new reserve allocations	£40,396.88
Grand Total	£69,499.88

The proposed allocations are estimates and subject to further detailed work and consultations with the residents. It is possible that consultations may result in 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.
 Agreed: 10/07/2023 Meeting; Minute Point:20.