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Minutes of the **Ordinary** meeting of **Blisworth Parish Council** held in Blisworth Village Hall on Monday 7th August 2023 at 7.30 pm.

Present: Cllr Billing, Chair
 Cllr C Read MBE, Vice-Chair
 Cllr D Wilson
 Cllr C Gardner
 Cllr W Root
 Cllr B Brown
 Cllr M Field
 Cllr J Hawkins
 Cllr B Ingram
 Cllr K Cooper

Also present: Clerk: Angela Billing
 13 Members of public

		Action
1.	To receive apologies. None received.	
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 16 (b) and 26. Cllr Read declared an interest in item 16 (g).	
3.	To receive and approve for signature, the minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on 10th July 2023. Approved.	
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.	Public Session: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. District Councillor Report. Review of WNC's ward boundaries discussed as Minute Point 21. b. Members of the public. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Issues with grass cutting on Connegar Leys, Stoke Road (area by allotments) and grass covering the barrier. ii. Concerns about the dog waste bin not being emptied enough/regularly overflowing. iii. Signage for Candle Bridge (weak bridge) – needs to be moved/or sign added on Gayton Road. iv. Objections to Planning Application development on land west of Northampton Road (to be located at Young's old nursery site). Planning Application WNS_2022_1134_MAO. v. Concerns raised about road markings on junction of High Street/Courteenhall Rd/Northampton Rd and junction of High St/Stoke Rd. vi. Concerns raised regarding the proposal to ask Highways to install a chicane on Stoke Rd, near the doctor's surgery: Residents concerned that it would cause more queues of traffic and pollution especially during peak times and might make the situation worse. 	

	<p>Residents commented on the aggressive behaviour of drivers using Stoke Rd as a cut through the village. Incidents of not be allowed to turn in or out of their drives or even open their car doors.</p> <p>Residents requested we petition West Northants Council (WNC) to install speed bumps and stated that any noise from the speed bumps would not be an issue if it slowed the traffic.</p> <p>Another resident stated that there is no need for a chicane; parked cars would slow the traffic.</p> <p>vii. Resident asked Blisworth Parish Council to explain why they were installing a fence at the allotments.</p> <p>viii. Concern about the state of the some of the allotment plots and further fly tipping at the Parish Council allotments.</p>							
<p>7.</p>	<p>Response to issues raised in the public session.</p> <p>Members of the public.</p> <p>i. Blisworth Parish Council already consulting with various contractors to clear vegetation in areas in the village.</p> <p>ii. Dog waste bins are emptied once a week. Cllr Cooper to research stickers for dog-waste bins informing public that dog waste can be deposited in regular public waste bins or taken home and deposited in residents’ own bins for collection by West Northants Council.</p> <p>iii. Councillors reported that there already is signage on the Gayton Road. Clerk to check signage is still in place and to clean signage near Candle Bridge.</p> <p>iv. Blisworth Parish Council is in complete agreement with residents’ concerns regarding this proposed development. BPC has submitted two detailed objections and urged residents to submit their own objections.</p> <p>v. Clerk to send report to Fix My Street regarding faded road markings.</p> <p>vi. Some councillors outlined information received from WNC Highways highlighting their reluctance to install speed bumps. After consultation with West Northants Council and Highways (Kier) representatives, they stated that there may be the possibility of installing a chicane but Blisworth Parish Council would have to fund some of the costs of a chicane. It is hoped that a chicane will help to slow down traffic and in the long term deter heavy goods vehicles and other drivers from using Stoke Road as a cut-through and that the Parish Council is only at the very initial stages of negotiation with the WNC and Highways.</p> <p>vii. Councillors explained that the fence was to deter further fly-tipping, theft and safety. The cost of the fencing is being funded by a grant.</p> <p>viii. The Council is in consultation with contractors/grant applications to clear vacant allotments.</p>	<p>Cllr Cooper</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>						
<p>8.</p>	<p>Planning and Development.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="225 1713 1329 1998"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="225 1713 550 1787">Application & Date Comments Due</th> <th data-bbox="550 1713 759 1787">Location</th> <th data-bbox="759 1713 1329 1787">Description</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="225 1787 550 1998">2023/5187/DCOR For information only</td> <td data-bbox="550 1787 759 1998">NGRFI Land west of M1-J15</td> <td data-bbox="759 1787 1329 1998">Requirement 8 (2) (t) - Substations - Works No 2 - (Estate Road) and Further Works Component (e) 'substations' [Approval of details pursuant to Schedule 2 Requirement of The Northampton Gateway Rail Freight Interchange Order 2019]</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Application & Date Comments Due	Location	Description	2023/5187/DCOR For information only	NGRFI Land west of M1-J15	Requirement 8 (2) (t) - Substations - Works No 2 - (Estate Road) and Further Works Component (e) 'substations' [Approval of details pursuant to Schedule 2 Requirement of The Northampton Gateway Rail Freight Interchange Order 2019]	
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	<p>WNS/2021/1819/EIA Comments by 16 August 2023</p> <p>Detailed objection sent on 14/11/2022</p> <p>BPC to resubmit a further objection, reiterating our objections.</p>	<p>Land North Of The Bell Plantation Watling Street Towcester</p>	<p>Hybrid planning application comprising of Part A: Full planning permission for a new roundabout access from the A5; internal spine road, creation of development plots with associated earthworks and plateauing; delivery of plateaus and access for Towcester Town Football Club (TTFC); site-wide structural landscaping and infrastructure; and a single warehouse (Use Class B8) and ancillary office, with associated access, hardstanding, landscaping, parking and supporting infrastructure. Part B: Outline planning permission with all matters reserved for the development of TTFC and employment floorspace falling within Use Classes B2 and B8, with ancillary office space on the development plots; as established through Part A of this application.</p> <p>Amendment Details: Aimsun Traffic Modelling Report (Addendum) 14 July 2023</p>	
9.	<p>Correspondence from social media: Update from Cllr Read.</p> <p>Social media engagement continues to grow but has levelled out slight after last month's peak of activity. Our total number of followers has increased by 3 residents to 251 people (68.5% of 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 1103 people (people who have our messages on their social media feeds) and a direct engagement (clicks) of 429 people.</p> <p>Our top performing post in the period was our post concerning information on traffic flow that was shared from the VAS cameras posted 13 July. This led to 1103 people reached and 368 direct engagements, 9 comments, 7 reactions and 2 shares. Residents raised concerns about the poor road markings. You can report issues on https://www.fixmystreet.com/. However unfortunately, they are often very slow to respond to issues raised. Clerk to take photos of road markings near the school and at the junction of High Street and Stoke Road and submit online.</p>	Clerk		
10.	<p>Police & Neighbourhood Watch Scheme: Update from Cllr Read.</p> <p>Crime data: 4 Violence and Sexual Offences, 1 Anti-Social Behaviour, 1 Burglary and 1 Other Theft.</p> <p>Our Neighbourhood Community Police team visited the village and the Beat Bus was parked in a more prominent area outside the Royal Oak public house. We also produced a poster to advertise the details and this increased attendance. The main subjects raised by residents were about the traffic and the antisocial behaviour at Eastfield Playground. We have raised the traffic issues at the Road JAG meeting. Incompetent/ impatient driving is a widescale issue, with an ever-expanding country road network which is under pressure. Regarding</p>			

	<p>antisocial behaviour at Eastfield Playground, it is important that incidents are reported to the Police non-emergency helpline as this helps create a picture of issues that need to be addressed. We will advertise Crimestoppers and Fearless.org (Crimestoppers for younger children). We are working with the South Northants Police Team to try and create some posters and messages to circulate using the Blisworth Parish Council newsletter, social media and on village notice boards.</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 72 members registered on the Neighbourhood alert scheme. Regular updates about local crime and matters of priority within South Northants are on Neighbourhood Alert www.northamptonshireneighbourhoodalert.co.uk/. These are also published on the Blisworth Parish social media. Using this system complies with GDPR. There were no crime alerts for the village this month.</p> <p>There is a coffee catch up planned at the Blisworth Community Cafe (Blisworth Baptist Church) on 29 August at 10:00am where the Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) will be present. Cllr Read will be attending and all are welcome.</p>	
11.	<p>Report on data from SID/VAS devices: Update from Cllr Read.</p> <p>We continue to share all data with the Police, West Northamptonshire and on Social Media. In summary we are still seeing significantly increased volumes of traffic through the village caused by adjacent road closure activity across South Northamptonshire.</p> <p>VAS unit in Stoke Road</p> <p>In the period between 9 July and 5 August (28 days) there were 65,594 vehicle movements (2,261 per day), representing a return to levels experienced prior to the road closure. Speeds remain fairly consistent with that experienced over the last year with an average speed of 29.4 mph and 85% of vehicles were travelling below 34 mph. The top speed recorded was 74 mph. The majority of road users are obeying speed limits and inevitably traffic will slow as vehicles pass the VAS unit and enter the village.</p> <p>VAS unit in Courteenhall Road</p> <p>In the period between 9 July and 5 August (28 days) there were 121,744 vehicle movements (4,348 per day), which represents a slight decrease in vehicle movements a day, approx. 300 vehicles due to the reopening of Stoke Road. The speeds have remained consistent with an average speed of 33.2mph and 85% of vehicles were travelling below 42 mph. The top speed recorded was 95 mph. Again it is likely that traffic will slow on passing the VAS unit and entering the village.</p> <p>Generally our data proves consistently that speeding is not an excessive issue, and our problems relate to volumes of vehicle movements, aggressive and inappropriate driving and larger numbers of HGV vehicles using village roads. Indeed the parking of cars along Courteenhall Road, Stoke Road and along High Street provides natural chicanes and slows traffic. However, the situation in Towcester Road is slightly different where we have proven speeding to be an issue.</p> <p>Community Speed Watch</p> <p>There is the opportunity to establish a Community Speed Watch Group. The group's activities generate warning letters, sent to the registered keeper of any vehicles caught exceeding the speed limit, which aims to increase awareness of the dangers of speeding and encourage drivers to reduce their speed.</p>	

	<p>The drivers' details are held on record to identify any repeat offenders and anyone caught exceeding the limits more than twice can expect a visit from the police as well as targeted enforcement. Any parish council supporting a scheme must provide a letter formally offering that support and undertaking to make the community aware of the upcoming Community Speed Watch activity. To join the scheme each community will need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 co-ordinator • 1 deputy co-ordinator • 10 volunteers (fewer volunteers can be agreed) • Parish council support or pledges of support <p>The above conditions will need to be completed before a space in the programme can be allocated to our community.</p>							
12.	<p>Gateway Update. Update from Cllr Wilson. A section of the West Coast main line between Milton Keynes and Northampton is scheduled to close between Saturday 2 and Sunday 10 September (these dates may be changed due to unforeseen circumstances) to allow for the rail connection. Cllr Brown asked which section of Courteenhall Road will be closed during the proposed closure of Courteenhall Road from 10th August 2023 to 1st September 2023. Clerk to request confirmation.</p>	Clerk						
13.	<p>Resolve to review quotes for vegetation clearance and approve contractor. RESOLVED to appoint Jack CutCrew Ltd to clear sections of High Street. RESOLVED to appoint Complete Ground Management Ltd to clear sections of Chapel Lane and Stoke Road.</p>	Clerk						
14.	<p>Village Maintenance & Open Spaces:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Play area: Monthly safety inspection report: Update from Cllr Wilson. Receive Eastfield Play Area Annual Safety Report and agree next steps. RESOLVED to appoint Kettering PlaySafe for repairs to play equipment. Defibrillator: Confirmation of satisfactory checks and any issues. Update from Cllr Read. Monthly check was undertaken and no issues were identified. Allotments & Closed Cemetery. Update from Cllr Billing. Works on allotment fencing will start 21st August 2023 and works will take approx. one week. Notification sent via Blisworth Parish Council Round and About newsletter to all residents. Clerk to also send additional notification to allotment tenants, residents in adjacent housing, Blisworth Football Club Limited and Blisworth 1st Scouts Group. 	Clerk Clerk						
15.	<p>Internal Control:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Internal Control Checklist: Update from Cllr Wilson. Noted. No issues to report. Financial & Management Risk Assessment: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To receive declarations of gifts/hospitality and review record of gifts/hospitality received by Councillors or the Clerk to date. None received. 							
16.	<p>Finance & Administration</p> <p>Banking Issues:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Bank reconciliation to 20/07/2023. Bank reconciliation checked by Cllr Field. <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Closing NatWest Balance</td> <td>£32,294.41</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Closing Skipton Balance</td> <td>£52,747.73</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Closing Total Accounts</td> <td>£85,042.14</td> </tr> </table>	Closing NatWest Balance	£32,294.41	Closing Skipton Balance	£52,747.73	Closing Total Accounts	£85,042.14	
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	<p>b. To note receipts and approve payments and any others that arrive after publication of the agenda. RESOLVED to note payments and agree the payments listed in Appendix I.</p> <p>c. Outstanding Rents due: Final Rent Notifications issued via email and by post – Outstanding rents £30.00 & £6.00 – Total £36.00.</p> <p>d. Receive Budget versus Actual Report. Noted.</p> <p>e. Resolve to return £1.00 opening fee from Skipton Savings account back to the Clerk. RESOLVED to return £1.00 opening fee from Skipton Savings account back to the Clerk.</p> <p>f. To note banking charges from NatWest. Noted.</p> <p>g. Receive report from Finance Working Group and to consider proposed solutions. RESOLVED: Clerk to open a new current account with Unity Trust Bank with an initial deposit of £500. Once opened and the Clerk and Councillors are familiar with the processes for its use, a further £10,000 to be deposited and the account to be used for the Council’s general expenditure.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the following Councillors and Clerk are given specific permissions on the new account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Key Contact: Clerk II. View and submit payments only (VS): Clerk only III. View and authorise payments (VA): 4 Councillors (one per quarter) Cllr W Root, Cllr D Wilson, Cllr B Brown and Cllr B Ingram. IV. View only (V): Cllr M Field, Cllr J Hawkins, Cllr C Read, Cllr K Cooper, Cllr C Gardner and Cllr S Billing. V. No cash withdrawal allowed. <p>RESOLVED that Blisworth Parish Council adopts a two-stage payment authorisation system for the new account: Clerk to submit payments and one other councillor to authorise payments online.</p> <p>RESOLVED that as an additional safeguard, the councillor undertaking the quarterly Internal Control Check will always be different to the councillor authorising payments for the same quarter.</p>											
17.	Receive report regarding business licences in Blisworth. Deferred.											
18.	<p>Consider Canal and River Trust’s policy to remove dog waste bins from the canal tow path and agree next steps. It was agreed that the Canal and River Trust’s decision to remove the 5 dog bins along the canal tow path will cause many issues for the residents, children and dog walkers that regularly use the canal tow path.</p> <p>RESOLVED to adopt and pay for the emptying of the 5 dog waste bins on the Canal and River Trust’s land (tow path along the canal through Blisworth).</p> <p>Clerk to contact the Canal and River Trust (C&RT) and persuade the C&RT to move the dog waste bin located near the Blisworth Tunnel North Portal ///above.hairspray.consoles to the top of the hill so that the contractor can empty the dog waste bin.</p> <p>Canal and River Trust Dog Waste Bins - Grand Union Canal Blisworth:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="204 1803 1329 2038"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="204 1803 890 1848">Dog waste bins</th> <th data-bbox="890 1803 1329 1848">What 3 Words Location Address</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="204 1848 890 1892">1. Blisworth Mill (Br 51)</td> <td data-bbox="890 1848 1329 1892">///arose.dragon.bends</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="204 1892 890 1937">2. Blisworth Tunnel North Portal</td> <td data-bbox="890 1892 1329 1937">///above.hairspray.consoles</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="204 1937 890 1982">3. Candle Bridge (Br 50)</td> <td data-bbox="890 1937 1329 1982">///snowy.hounded.situated</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="204 1982 890 2038">4. Gayton Junction Bridge (Br 48)</td> <td data-bbox="890 1982 1329 2038">///take.dolls.tango</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Dog waste bins	What 3 Words Location Address	1. Blisworth Mill (Br 51)	///arose.dragon.bends	2. Blisworth Tunnel North Portal	///above.hairspray.consoles	3. Candle Bridge (Br 50)	///snowy.hounded.situated	4. Gayton Junction Bridge (Br 48)	///take.dolls.tango	Clerk
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	5. Bridge 2 (Gayton) (GU Northampton Arm	///cubed.stall.bound	
19.	<p>Receive update pertaining to request from Blisworth Football Club to lease land from the Parish Council and to consider proposed solutions. Update from Clerk.</p> <p>a) Resolve to obtain legal advice from the specialist parish council solicitor recommended by Northants CALC.</p> <p>Blisworth Parish Council Financial Regulations Para: 11.1(d) provides that “When applications are made to waive financial regulations relating to contracts to enable a price to be negotiated without competition the reason shall be embodied in a recommendation to the council.” The reasons for not seeking three quotes are: 1. That the legal advice is being obtained from a specialist parish council solicitor recommended by Northants CALC and 2. The Blisworth Football Club Limited will be responsible for the Blisworth Parish Council’s legal costs in this matter.</p> <p>RESOLVED to obtain legal advice and one quote from the specialist parish council solicitor recommended by Northants CALC.</p> <p>b) Resolve to agree, in principle, to a 30-year lease to Blisworth Football Club Limited for use of the allotment land they currently use subject to the following conditions:</p> <p>i. If required by law, the relevant Secretary of State agrees to the permanent change of use of the land;</p> <p>ii. Blisworth Football Club Limited agrees that it is fully responsible for all the legal costs, including all of Blisworth Parish Council’s legal costs with the matter. Blisworth Parish Council cannot use public money to pay for the legal costs of a limited company.</p> <p>iii. Blisworth Football Club Limited offers a suitable lease with conditions agreeable to both parties; Blisworth Parish Council (on behalf of Blisworth residents) and Blisworth Football Club Limited.</p> <p>RESOLVED to agree, in principle, to a 30-year lease to Blisworth Football Club Limited for use of the allotment land they currently use subject to the conditions 19 b) i – iii.</p> <p>c) Resolve to continue to support Blisworth Football Club Limited by not increasing the rent for 2023-2024. RESOLVED to continue to support Blisworth Football Club Limited by not increasing the rent for 2023-2024.</p>		
20.	<p>Resolve to review current committee members for the Human Resources Committee and appoint new members to the Human Resources Committee.</p> <p>RESOLVED to amend the Terms of Reference for the HR Committee: MEMBERSHIP: 4 Councillors. Cllr D Wilson as Chair, Cllr C Gardner, Cllr K Cooper and Cllr B Ingram. Cllr B Brown to step down to undertake work on the traffic. Cllr Billing thanked Cllr Brown for her work.</p>		Clerk
21.	<p>To discuss and consider changes by the recent review of WNC’s ward boundaries and consider proposed solutions. RESOLVED to register Blisworth Parish Council with the Community Governance Review.</p>		Clerk
22.	<p>Review traffic calming options and consultation with residents and agree next steps. Cllr Brown has started a survey of all the pavements in Blisworth. Cllr Brown to submit her report at the next meeting.</p>		Cllr Brown
23.	<p>Council Surgery – Resolve to agree on a representative(s) from the Council for Tuesday, 8th August 2023. RESOLVED that Cllr Wilson and Cllr Billing will attend on Tuesday, 8th August 2023.</p>		Cllr Wilson & Cllr Billing
24.	<p>Councillors’ reports and items for future agenda. Freight and Logistics and the Planning System: Call for Evidence – Cllr Billing and Cllr Root</p>		Cllr Billing & Cllr Root

25.	Exclusion of the press and public – due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the press and public are excluded from the next items on the agenda. Clerk and Chairman left the meeting.	
26.	To discuss staff contract and to consider proposed solutions. RESOLVED to agree updates to staff contract with changes taking effect from April 2023. Unanimous agreement.	
27.	Chairman and Clerk asked to return to the meeting. To agree the date of next meeting as Monday, 4th September 2023 at 7.30pm? RESOLVED to cancel the meeting on Monday, 4th September 2023. RESOLVED: Date of next meeting: Monday, 2nd October 2023 at 7:30pm.	
28.	Close. The meeting closed at 10:37 pm.	

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

Receipts				
DATE	PAYEE	DETAILS	ACCOUNT	AMOUNT
02/06/2023 & 19/07/2023	Allotment Rents	Various	Current Acct*	£12.00
30/06/2023	NatWest	Interest	Reserve Acct*	£1.93
				£13.93

* NatWest Current Account

**NatWest Business Reserve Account

PAYMENTS							
Ref:	Invoice	PAYEE	PURPOSE	CHQ/DD	Total Amount Including VAT	VAT	Amount Excluding VAT
40	521877620/0025	SSE	Electricity Supply 02.06.2023 - 03.07.2023	DD	109.48	5.21	104.27
41		NatWest	Bank charges 03.06.2023 to 30.06.2023	DD	5.95	0.00	5.95
42	1442	Seagrave Inspection Services Ltd	Annual Inspection- Eastfield Play Area	3242	228.00	38.00	190.00
43	Month 4 2023-2024	A Billing - Salary	Clerk's Salary July 2023	3243	783.50	0.00	783.50
44	120PF003233662404	HMRC - Nat. Ins.	HMRC Nat. Ins. Employer Contributions July 2023 Salary	3244	3.52	0.00	3.52
45		A Billing - Expenses	Clerk's Expenses (01.07.2023 - 31.07.2023)	3245	22.25	0.00	22.25
46	21	Alan North	Invoice 21 for R&A Alan North Aug-Sept Iss 152	3246	50.00	0.00	50.00
47	2030 3742 8664	IONOS	Website Fee - 31/07/2023 - 31/08/2023	DD	6.00	1.00	5.00
48		Waves	Water Supply - August	DD	55.00	0.00	55.00
49	28285	Merland Copy Shop Ltd	Printing of Round & About Aug- Sept Issue	3247	170.00	0.00	170.00
50	1625	CutCrew Ltd	Cut to: Area 2 x 2 & Area 1 x 2 11.07.2023 & 25.07.2023	3248	797.18	132.86	664.32
Totals					£2,230.88	£177.07	£2,053.81