

BLISWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the **Ordinary** meeting of **Blisworth Parish Council** held in Blisworth Village Hall on **Monday 4th December 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 B Ingram
 Cllr N Chandler

Also present: Clerk: Angela Billing
 6 Members of public

		Action
1.	To receive apologies. Apologies received from Cllr Hawkins and District Councillor/Councillor Cooper. 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 17 (e). None received.	
3.	To receive and approve for signature, the minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on 06/11/2023. Approved.	
4.	To note any matters arising from the minutes not included on the agenda for report only. None received.	
5.	Clerk's report circulated separately. Noted. Network Rail: Offer of surplus, unseasoned chopped logs.	
6.	Public Session: a. District Councillor Report. Circulated separately. Noted. b. Members of the public. (i) A member of the public asked if the potholes in Courteenhall Road could be fixed whilst the road is closed. (ii) A member of the public asked, in light of the speeding issues and traffic accidents on Stoke Road, if West Northants Council could install moveable/temporary speed bumps. (iii) A member of the public asked about plans for a 20-mph zone through the village. (iv) A member of the public requested that the road markings on the junctions of Stoke Road and High Street need repainting as the road markings cannot be seen.	
7.	Response to issues raised in the public session. B Members of the public (i) Clerk to add potholes on Courteenhall Road to Fix My Street. (ii) All Councillors aligned with views of the public with regard to the volume, speed and weight of the traffic through the village as well as the aggressive driving	Clerk

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	<p>behaviour. Blisworth Parish Council continues to lobby West Northants Council, Kier (Highways) and other representatives on behalf of the residents and asks the residents to log all traffic incidents with the Police so that they can build a clearer picture of the traffic issues.</p> <p>Points (ii) - (iv) Further response deferred and answered as part of minute point 13.</p>	
8.	<p>Planning and Development: None received for this month. Three applications received after publication of the agenda. Extensions sought from Planning Department.</p>	
9.	<p>Correspondence from social media: Update from Cllr Read.</p> <p>Social media engagement continues to grow and we have seen greater engagement over the latest period mainly focused on highways and traffic issues. Total number of followers has increased by 12 residents to 284 people (68% of our followers are listed as women and 120 are listed as resident in Blisworth, Northampton/Roade/Towcester/Hartwell). Post reach of 3660 people (people who have our messages on their social media feeds) and a direct engagement (clicks) of 2,619 people. Top performing post in the period was our post concerning information on road closures from WINVIC including closures to the A509/Knock Lane on 24 November. This led to 1,202 people reached (on feeds) and 244 direct engagements (clicks to look at content), 9 comments, 5 reactions and 3 shares. All posts are now shared automatically to Blisworth Notice Board and Blisworth Community Page. Since the last meeting we have posted 8 separate updates on road closures and highways works which dominate our communication feed, which generally result in negative comments. Other posts have been on Youth Parish Council, Online Fraud, Christmas Bin Collections and Remembrance Sunday.</p>	
10.	<p>Police & Neighbourhood Watch Scheme: Update from Cllr Read.</p> <p>The crime data for October period has not been released at the time of writing this report. The Neighbourhood alert system "Northamptonshire Talking" has 74 members registered with 4 members pending. Regular updates about local crime and matters of priority within South Northants are issued through this portal https://northamptonshiretalking.co.uk/. These alerts are also published on the Parish social media. Using this system complies with GDPR. No alerts focused on Blisworth have been published since the last Parish Council Meeting. With the help of the Blisworth Baptist Church, a presentation from the Northamptonshire Police fraud team on Tuesday 21 November was held. BPC have applied for a community action grant. The Neighbourhood Policing Team contacts for our area are: PCSO Matt Taylor, PCSO Jen Harrison and PC Kate Rideout.</p> <p>BPC are supporting this team by continuing to advertise the beat bus visits, publish Northamptonshire Talking posts and advice relevant to the village and regularly communicating local issues to the team. In the new year we will support the weekend drop-in sessions planned and we are engaging strongly with the local policing team around our ongoing highways issues/challenges. These include traffic volumes, speeding, aggressive driving behaviour and misuse of the Stoke Road (3t limit) by oversized vehicles.</p> <p>The team generic email, SouthNorthantsTowcester@northants.pnn.police.uk, is the best method of email as this is checked daily by the team on duty, and will be responded to in a timely manner.</p>	

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	<p>Please see below information that may be of use when reporting an incident/ crime (including antisocial behaviour and suspicious activity): To report a non-emergency issue please telephone 101 (and select option to report incident / crime) - Use 101 if the incident is happening at the time of the call. Alternatively use the online reporting form which can be found on the Northants Police Website www.northants.police.uk. The online form will allow you to input all details and issue you a reference number. Your enquiry will then be directed to the appropriate department. If it is an immediate/emergency, the form will not allow you to proceed and will flag a message to dial 999.</p> <p>You can also follow the police team on social media to keep updated on more live time information on their daily activities in South Northants: Twitter: @SthNorthantsNPT Facebook: Daventry and South Northamptonshire Neighbourhood Policing Team</p> <p>The South Northants Neighbourhood Watch team (NHW) have raised the lack of engagement from village PLRs and NHW coordinators. I have not had time to engage strongly with the South Northants NHW team due to working commitments however I have copied them into these updates so she can see our scheme is active.</p>	
11.	<p>Report on data from SID/VAS devices: Update from Cllr Read. We continue to share this data with the Police and West Northamptonshire as appropriate. Due to the batteries in the VAS units running out earlier in the month and being replaced Saturday 25 November, so I only have a short data period.</p> <p>VAS unit in Stoke Road: In the period between 4 November and 7 November (3 days) there were 9,670 vehicle movements (3223 per day), which is consistent with last month's report and shows most vehicles are using this route in preference to closures of Courteenhall Road. The average speed of 29.3mph and 85% of vehicles were travelling below 34 mph. The maximum speed recorded was 50mph.</p> <p>VAS unit in Courteenhall Road: In the period between 4 November and 9 November (5 days) there were 3,113 vehicle movements (622 per day), which is consistent with the last report and represents traffic accessing homes and businesses due to the closure of the A508 junction. The speeds are consistent with last month with an average speed of 29.1 mph and 85% of vehicles were travelling below 40 mph. The top speed recorded was 72mph. There is a high volume of slow movements due to the position of the VAS near to the junction as vehicles turn into Buttmead which brings the average down.</p> <p>The solar unit for the VAS in Towcester Road has been delivered and will be fitted by Cllr Read with the help of a resident. Generally, the speed and volume results are consistent with previous reports.</p>	
12.	<p>Gateway Update: Update from Cllr Wilson. The next meeting with SEGRO is not until January 2024. Cllr Wilson noted letter from SEGRO in response to request from Andrea Leadsom MP.</p>	
13.	<p>Review traffic calming options. Update from Cllr Brown and Cllr Ingram.</p>	

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Cllr Brown, with Cllr Ingram, reported on the meeting with West Northants representative, the Service Manager, (Kier Highways, West Northants Council).

Issues/Agreements as below:

The Service Manager (Kier Highways, WNC) to be first point of contact on all traffic and related issues.

Repairs to Knock Lane, while welcomed by those who use the route, will not address the larger issue of traffic now being actively directed down an unsuitable road and through Blisworth. Agreement to:

- Immediately erect temporary signs at the Knock Lane Roundabout making it clear that there is no route to Blisworth for traffic over 3T and no option to turn round.
- Speak to the Signage team to change the permanent signs to “Local Access Only, No HGVs” and “No through road via Blisworth.”
- Once the permanent signs are in place, install a camera so that enforcement can take place via the employing companies and/or developers of sites.

Application for 20mph through the village has been approved by the panel and the Service Manager (Kier Highways, WNC) will update BPC on next steps.

He supported the proposal that Towcester Road should have a 40mph speed limit, on safety grounds and advised that BPC should put in an application for this to the panel.

The Service Manager (Kier Highways, WNC) will pick up with the relevant bodies the need to include a permanent change to the road layout on Northampton Road as a criterion for approval of the development proposal (Land west of Northampton Road). This would physically prevent HGVs from turning right into the village with cameras to ensure compliance. The Service Manager (Kier Highways, WNC) also proposed that a sign should be installed on the A43 stating that “No Direct Access to *named* Site.”

The Service Manager (Kier Highways, WNC) will speak to the Community Liaison Officer (West Northants Highways) about passive road calming options within the village, particularly but not exclusively on High Street, Church Lane and Stoke Road. Blisworth Parish Council will research options and we look forward to a further conversation in advance of budgeting decisions in April 2024.

The Service Manager (Kier Highways, WNC) supported our proposal for a new footpath along a section of Stoke Road between the Stoke Road Allotments and the Canal Tunnel Carpark, to be installed during the road closure next spring. We all agreed that the road width will limit the options available to us, and we agreed to communicate this to residents.

We reviewed pavements in Church Lane, the High Street and Stoke Road as examples of where the current condition and/or slope of the pavement make them unsafe to use, particularly for those with limited mobility or pushchairs. Blisworth Parish Council will log all the grade 3 locations on Fix my Street in advance of next year’s repair/improvement planning. We will draw particular attention to those locations where there is a safety issue.

We noted that the Community Liaison Officer is our point of contact for dropped kerbs, but that the Service Manager (Kier Highways, WNC) will speak to her in the first

Cllr Brown
to pursue.

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	<p>check, the system will not allow Cllr Root to submit and to also authorise the same payments.</p> <p>(ii) RESOLVED to amend security options so that all physical actions, e.g. letters and cheques will require two signatories to authorise</p> <p>(iii) RESOLVED to cancel uncashed cheques £100.00 and £35.00 for CPRE and submit payments through Unity Trust account.</p> <p>(iv) RESOLVED Clerk to initiate transfer of funds from the NatWest Accounts and complete the transfer of direct debits and funds to Unity Trust Bank.</p> <p>c. To receive Draft Budget for 2024-2025. Discuss report from Financial Working Group and agree next steps. Update from Cllr Root.</p> <p>(i) RESOLVED to increase the 2024-2025 budget by 5% to build funds for traffic calming projects in line with residents’ requests and for Finance Working Group to draw up a 2024-2025 budget for approval at the January 2024 meeting.</p> <p>(ii) RESOLVED to review the S.137 budget in the light of increased demand for grants this year.</p> <p>(iii) RESOLVED to agree the National Government pay awards for clerks. HR Committee to bring a resolution to the next full Council meeting in January 2024 regarding pay increase and back pay. Noted that this could be met within the 2023-2024 budget line.</p> <p>(iv) RESOLVED to transfer the Street lighting budget to specific reserves.</p> <p>(v) RESOLVED that income from the interest from reserves is accrued back into reserves to help preserve spending power.</p> <p>Agreed to review the Allotment Tenant fees for 2024-2025 in line with other local allotment fees for January agenda.</p> <p>d. Unity Trust linked MultiPay card. Discuss options and agree next steps. Agreed to review options for a MultiPay card with Unity Trust at the Finance Working Group meeting ready for January agenda.</p> <p>e. To note receipts and approve the following payments and any others that arrive after publication of the agenda. RESOLVED to note payments and agree the payments listed in Appendix I.</p>	
18.	Councillors’ reports and items for future agenda. None noted.	
19.	Council Surgery – Resolve to agree on a representative(s) from the Council for Tuesday, 12th December 2023. Resolved that Cllr Wilson and Cllr Chandler will attend on Tuesday, 12th December 2023.	
20.	To agree the date of next meeting Monday, 8th January 2024 at 7.30pm. Agreed	
21.	Close. The meeting closed at 8.58 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 DECEMBER 2023 Meeting

Receipts				
DATE	PAYEE	DETAILS	ACCOUNT	AMOUNT
31/10/2023	NatWest	Interest	Reserve Acct**	£2.61
03/11/2023	WNC	Mowing Grant WNC	Current Acct*	£771.88
13/11/2023	Allotment Rent	Tenant's Allotment Fees	Current Acct*	£6.00

* NatWest Current Account

£780.49

**NatWest Business Reserve Account

PAYMENTS							
Ref:	Invoice	PAYEE	PURPOSE	CHQ/DD	Total Amount Including VAT	VAT	Amount Excluding VAT
86	2030 3896 4653	IONOS	Website Fee - 08/11/2023 - 08/12/2023	DD	£6.00	1.00	5.00
87	1722	CutCrew Ltd	AREA 3: CUT & MAINTAIN CLOSED CEMETERY	3272	£199.20	33.20	166.00
88		Waves	Water Supply - November 2023	DD	£143.00	0.00	143.00
89		NatWest	Bank charges 30.09.2023 to 03.11.2023	DD	£9.45	0.00	9.45
90		Mowerman Grounds Maintenance	Rock Salt (8 bags)	3274	£80.08	13.36	66.72
91	10016906	Kingfisher Direct Limited	2 Cu Ft Grit Bin - 50 Litre / 50 kg Capacity - Yellow	3275	£66.06	11.01	55.05
92	35	Ian Halliday	Chipping of woody arisings at Closed Cemetery	3276	£130.00	0.00	130.00
93		Reimburse A Billing for payment to HM Registry	Title Plan and Title Register	UTBT93	£6.00	0.00	6.00
94	22	Alan North	Invoice 22 for R&A Alan North Dec-Jan Iss 154	3277	£50.00	0.00	50.00
95	Month 8 2023-2024	A Billing - Salary	Clerk's Salary November 2023	3278	£919.19	0.00	919.19
96	120PF003233662408	HMRC - Nat. Ins.	HMRC Nat. Ins. Employer Contributions November 2023 Salary	3279	£25.14	0.00	25.14
97	Pension Month 8 2023-2024	Nest Pensions	Nest Pension Employer costs 01/10/2023 - 30/11/2023	DD	£33.62	0.00	33.62
98	IV00085085	SSE	Electricity Supply 03.10.2023 - 31.10.2023	DD	£100.72	5.69	95.03
99	3175-23	Dunkley's Gas & Plumbing	Install sub-meter Allotments and repair manhole cover	3280	£750.00	0.00	750.00

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100	28570	Merland Copy Shop Ltd	Printing of Round & About Dec-Jan Issue	3281	£170.00	0.00	170.00
101		A Billing - Expenses	Clerk's Expenses (01.11.2023 - 30.11.2023) Including petrol for Closed Cemetery work	UTBT101	£34.49	0.00	34.49
Totals					£2,722.95	£64.26	£2,658.69