

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 8th January 2024 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
1 Member of public

		Action
1.	To receive apologies. Apologies received from Cllr Cooper 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 16, 17 and 18 (c and d).	
3.	To receive and approve for signature, the minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on 04/12/2023. 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. Correspondence received 08/01/2024: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email from Community Liaison Officer Regarding Footways and dropped kerbs: Site visit due to be scheduled. • NatWest: Complaint procedure initiated with regard to NatWest's incorrect closure of the current account. • Resident: Request for confirmation of Football Club's demolition process. • Weller's Group: Request for further information relating to the lease for the Football Club. • Assistant Director for Highways and Transport agreed to contact Kier (Highways) regarding pot holes in Stoke Road and has asked that residents report pot holes on Fix My Street. 	
6.	Public Session: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. District Councillor Report. No report b. Members of the public. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) A member of the public reported a high-pitched, whistling noise in the village. 	

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7.	<p>Response to issues raised in the public session. b (i) Recommended that residents report times that the whistling occurs and contact West Northants Council department for Noise Pollution.</p>													
8.	<p>Planning and Development.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="217 405 1337 1503"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="217 405 560 483">Application & Date Comments Due</th> <th data-bbox="560 405 751 483">Location</th> <th data-bbox="751 405 1337 483">Description</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="217 483 560 719"> WNC/2023/7876/FULL Extension sought for Comments by 10/01/2024 </td> <td data-bbox="560 483 751 719"> 5 Greenside, Blisworth, NN7 3BY </td> <td data-bbox="751 483 1337 719"> Single storey side extension No Comment. </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="217 719 560 954"> WNC/2023/7873/FULL Extension sought for Comments by 10/01/2024 </td> <td data-bbox="560 719 751 954"> 6 Connegar Leys, Blisworth, NN7 3DF </td> <td data-bbox="751 719 1337 954"> Two storey rear extension & porch to front. No Comment. </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="217 954 560 1503"> WNS/2023/0270/FUL Amended application Extension sought for Comments by 10/01/2024 </td> <td data-bbox="560 954 751 1503"> Ancillary Building (The Shed) Blisworth Arm Blisworth NN7 3EF </td> <td data-bbox="751 954 1337 1503"> Change of use of general purpose storage building to holiday let, first floor extension to create habitable space. Amendment Details: Revised Plans Received Case officer apologised that they had missed Blisworth Parish Council’s request for an extension. West Northants Council stated that they have considered our previous concerns and have agreed the application. Blisworth Parish Council have requested further information. </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Application & Date Comments Due	Location	Description	WNC/2023/7876/FULL Extension sought for Comments by 10/01/2024	5 Greenside, Blisworth, NN7 3BY	Single storey side extension No Comment.	WNC/2023/7873/FULL Extension sought for Comments by 10/01/2024	6 Connegar Leys, Blisworth, NN7 3DF	Two storey rear extension & porch to front. No Comment.	WNS/2023/0270/FUL Amended application Extension sought for Comments by 10/01/2024	Ancillary Building (The Shed) Blisworth Arm Blisworth NN7 3EF	Change of use of general purpose storage building to holiday let, first floor extension to create habitable space. Amendment Details: Revised Plans Received Case officer apologised that they had missed Blisworth Parish Council’s request for an extension. West Northants Council stated that they have considered our previous concerns and have agreed the application. Blisworth Parish Council have requested further information.	Clerk
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9.	<p>Correspondence from social media: Update from Cllr Read. Total number of followers on social media 285 people, an increase of one since last month (68% of our followers are listed as women and 120 are listed as resident in Blisworth, the remainder listed in Northampton/Road/Towcester/Hartwell). The highest age demographic is the 35–54 year-old age group. We have had a post reach of 2006 people (people who have our messages on their social media feeds) and a direct engagement (clicks) of 690 people. This levelling-off of activity recognises the reduced activity over the December period. The top performing post in the period was our post concerning the Northamptonshire Police Beat Bus visit. This led to 1,225 people reached (on feeds) and 174 direct engagements (clicks to look at content), 4 comments, 4 reactions and 2 shares. All posts are now shared automatically to Blisworth Notice Board and Blisworth Community Page. Since the last meeting we have posted information on</p>													

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	<p>the Police Crime alert, the Beat Bus visits and Police local priorities survey. Generally, comments and communication regarding road closures and highways issues have diminished dramatically.</p>	
<p>10.</p>	<p>Police & Neighbourhood Watch Scheme: Update from Cllr Read. October data shows Violence and Sexual Offences – 4 and Anti-Social Behaviour – 1. November data records, Violence and Sexual Offences - 4 (3 reports were in one location in Ladyfield). The aggregated last twelve months of reporting tracked 100 crimes reported in the Parish between October 2022 and October 2023. Comparison with the data covered across our police ward boundary (Deanshanger - Grange Park) shows that our parish has a similar reporting pattern to the wider police area, however we have more examples of Violence and Sexual Offences and Anti-Social Behaviour. These are mainly reported in residential locations.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood alert / Neighbourhood watch system "Northamptonshire Talking" has 78 members registered with 5 members pending. This is an increase of 5 since last month. 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. One alert focused on Blisworth have been published since the last Parish Council Meeting concerning a vehicle theft in Connegar Leys, Blisworth. The theft reported occurred between 20:30 12th December - 07:30 on the 13th December 2023 where a van was broken into and tools stolen from within. The Police are keen to hear from anyone who may have any information relating to the theft of these items or that may have been in the area around the time of the incident and heard or seen anything suspicious. Please call us on 101 quoting reference number REF 23000764518. This alert was published on the various village social media platforms. Cllr Read to include an article in the Blisworth Round and About to increase awareness of the alert platform and dates for the Police Beat Bus. Cllr Read replaced five of the older Neighbourhood Watch signs around the village with newer signs and removed damaged or old signage, completed the police survey for local priorities and again publicised this on social media. Cllr Read regularly gets communications around traffic issues and reflected traffic concerns in the response to the police survey. The Northamptonshire Police made contact regarding the cyber awareness course offered on 21/11/2023 which was not well attended and enquired whether other groups would be interested. Clerk to enquire if local groups would be interested in hosting a course.</p>	<p>Cllr Read Clerk</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p>Report on data from SID/VAS devices: Update from Cllr Read.</p> <p>VAS unit in Stoke Road: In the period between 25 November and 6 January (43 days) there were 121,817 vehicle movements (2832 per day), which is a significant reduction of 12% on last month's report and reflects the opening of the access at Courteenhall Road, however this is higher than before the road alterations where c2400 vehicle movements were experienced daily. Average speed of 29.3mph and 85% of vehicles were travelling below 34 mph. The maximum speed recorded was 89mph. General speeds remain consistent with previous months.</p> <p>VAS unit in Courteenhall Road: In the period between 25 November and 6 January (43 days) there were 53,733 vehicle movements (1249 per day), which is double the</p>	

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	<p>volume of last month and represents traffic now being able to access the A508 junction. However, this is nowhere near the volumes before the junction alterations, which exceeded c3000 per day. The speeds are consistent with last month; with a slight increase in average speeds to 32.1 mph and 85% of vehicles were travelling below 41 mph. The top speed recorded was 82mph. 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. Cllr Read met with a resident and fitted the solar units to the VAS unit in Towcester Road.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To keep VAS units in their current positions. To be reviewed at the next Council meeting.</p>	
12.	<p>Gateway Update. Update from Cllr Wilson. The next meeting with SEGRO is to be held later in January 2024. Cllr Wilson to request highway issues on local roads to added to the next Gateway agenda.</p>	
13.	<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. Nothing to report. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Review gate and agree next steps. RESOLVED: To await the next review date for further clarification. b. Defibrillator: Confirmation of satisfactory checks and any issues. Update from Cllr Read. Monthly check was undertaken and no issues were identified. Batteries will need replacing in May 2024. c. Allotments & Closed Cemetery. Update from Cllr Billing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Review costs for Closed Cemetery and agree next steps. RESOLVED: Clerk to purchase paint to renew the gates and also to continue with purchase of petrol to cover costs of strimming at the Closed Cemetery and the Parish allotments. (ii) Discuss quotes for works for ash tree at Closed Cemetery and agree next steps. RESOLVED: To adopt J Hazell Tree Specialist's report as he demonstrated the most experience and detailed C.V. Tree to be reviewed in 2 years, in-line with the report's recommendation unless there is a storm, in which case another review will be necessary. J Hazell (Tree Specialist) will contact the Clerk in the event of a storm. (iii) Discuss allotment rents for 2024-2025 and agree next steps. RESOLVED: Clerk to notify tenants of rent increase with a further review in 12 months. 	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
14.	<p>Review duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity. Note what action has already been taken to conserve and enhance biodiversity and agree next steps. Update from Cllr Billing. Blisworth Parish Council continue to develop biodiversity at the Closed Cemetery and Parish Council allotments. No Mow May to be considered at next meeting.</p> <p>RESOLVED: Cllr Read to create draft policy for discussion to be added to February agenda.</p>	<p>Cllr Read</p>
15.	<p>Internal Control:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Internal Control Checklist: Update from Cllr Ingram. Noted. No issues to report. b) Financial & Management Risk Assessment: 	

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	<p>i. To receive declarations of gifts/hospitality and review record of gifts/hospitality received by Councillors or the Clerk to date. None received.</p>									
16.	<p>Exclusion of the press and public – due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the press and public are excluded from item 17 on the agenda. The public, Chairman and Clerk left the meeting.</p>									
17.	<p>HR Committee Report - Review Clerks' National pay increase: Update from Cllr Wilson. RESOLVED: To pay in full, the recommended National pay award, through our payroll process and backdate it to April 2023. Passed unanimously. The public, Chairman and Clerk were asked to return to the meeting.</p>									
18.	<p>Finance & Administration Banking Issues:</p> <p>a. Bank reconciliation to 21.12.2023. Checked by Cllr Field.</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: 40px;"> <tr> <td>Closing NatWest Balance</td> <td>£1,396.19</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Closing Skipton Balance</td> <td>£74,446.73</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Closing Unity Trust Balance</td> <td>£9,055.99</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Closing Total Accounts</td> <td>£84,898.91</td> </tr> </table> <p>RESOLVED: Clerk to initiate switch process to move DD and Credits from NatWest current account to Unity Trust current account the week commencing 08/01/2024 to ensure that the switch is complete before the next round of direct debits. RESOLVED: To retain NatWest bank current account.</p> <p>b. Finance Working Group: Update from Cllr Root. Report circulated ahead of the meeting. Noted. RESOLVED: Finance Working Group to prepare a report for the next Council meeting to review; credit card set-up, terms and regulations with Unity Trust, amendments to Financial Regulations, allocation of reserves and allocation of any interest.</p> <p>1. Budget 2024-2025: Review and approve Budget for 2023-2024 and precept demand for 2024/2025. Update from Cllr Root. RESOLVED: To adopt a precept demand for 2024/2025 of £45,570.00. Cllr Root to draft a note for the Blisworth Parish Council Round and About newsletter outlining the reasons for the 5% increase.</p> <p>c. To note receipts and approve the following payments and any others that arrive after publication of the agenda. RESOLVED: To note receipts and agree the payments listed in Appendix I.</p>	Closing NatWest Balance	£1,396.19	Closing Skipton Balance	£74,446.73	Closing Unity Trust Balance	£9,055.99	Closing Total Accounts	£84,898.91	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk & FWG core members</p> <p>Cllr Root Clerk</p>
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19.	<p>Appoint Electrical Equipment Emergencies contact councillor. RESOLVED: To appoint Cllr Chandler as Electrical Equipment Emergencies contact councillor. Clerk to notify West Northants Council.</p>	Clerk								
20.	<p>Councillors' reports and items for future agenda. Cllr Brown – Concerns with progress with regards to highways and traffic issues. Cllr Ingram – Report about the increase in litter near the Scout Hall. Clerk to contact BVH&PFA.</p>	Cllr Brown Cllrs Gardner & Chandler to review								

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	Cllr Gardner – Issues with lack of lighting in some sections of Connegar Leys. Cllr Chandler – Engineers surveying Stoke Road seemed unaware that the cottages on Stoke Road have no foundations. Clerk to contact Technical Engineers team.	street lights Clerk
21.	Council Surgery – Resolve to agree on a representative(s) from the Council for the next Parish Council Surgery. RESOLVED: Cllr Billing, Cllr Ingram and Cllr Wilson.	Cllrs Wilson, Ingram & Billing
22.	To agree the date of next meeting 5th February 2024 at 7.30pm. Agreed.	
23.	Close. The meeting closed at 9:15 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 JANUARY 2023 MEETING

Receipts				
DATE	PAYEE	DETAILS	ACCOUNT	AMOUNT
30/11/2023	NatWest	Interest	Reserve Acct**	£2.45
05/12/2024	1&1 Internet LTD (IONOS)	Credit Note	Current Acct*	£6.00

* NatWest Current Account

**NatWest Business Reserve Account

PAYMENTS							
Ref:	Invoice	PAYEE	PURPOSE	CHQ/DD	Total Amount Including VAT	VAT	Amount Excluding VAT
102		NatWest	Bank charges 04.11.2023 to 01.12.2023	DD NW	£7.70	0.00	7.70
103	2030 3944 6559	IONOS	Website Fee - 08/12/2023 - 08/01/2024	DD UT	£6.00	1.00	5.00
104		Blisworth Heritage Society	S137 Grant for costs for BHS Archive	UTBT104	£500.00	0.00	500.00
105	Month 9 2023-2024	A Billing - Salary	Clerk's Salary December 2023	UTBT105	£919.19	0.00	919.19
106	Pension Month 9 2023-2024	Nest Pensions	Nest Pension Employer costs 01/12/2023 - 31/12/2023	DD NW	£33.62	0.00	33.62
107	120PF003233662409	HMRC - Nat. Ins.	HMRC Nat. Ins. Employer Contributions December 2023 Salary	300001	£25.14	0.00	25.14
108		Waves	Water Supply - December 2023	DD NW	£143.00	0.00	143.00
109		Waves	Water Supply - Closing Balance 2023	UTBT109	£194.74	0.00	194.74
110	IV00178153	SSE	Electricity Supply 01.11.2023 - 30.11.2023	DD NW	£104.20	5.88	98.32
111		NatWest	Bank charges	DD NW	£23.00	0.00	23.00
112		Unity Trust	Bank Charges	DD UT	£3.52	0.00	3.52
113		A Newbery	Grass Cutting Closed Cemetery 2022-2023	UTBT113	£100.00	0.00	100.00
114		A Billing - Expenses	Clerk's Expenses (01.12.2023 - 31.12.2023) Including petrol for Closed Cemetery work	UTBT114	£23.30	0.00	23.30
Totals					£2,083.41	£6.88	£2,076.53