

BLISWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the **Ordinary** meeting of **Blisworth Parish Council** held in Blisworth Village Hall on **Monday 5th February 2024 at 7.30 pm.**

Present: Cllr Billing, Chair
 Cllr D Wilson
 Cllr W Root
 Cllr B Brown
 Cllr M Field
 Cllr J Hawkins
 Cllr K Cooper
 Cllr B Ingram
 Cllr N Chandler

Also present: Clerk: Angela Billing
 4 Members of public

		Action
1.	To receive apologies. Apologies received from Cllr Gardner and Cllr Read. Blisworth Parish Council resolved to accept the apologies.	
2.	To receive declarations of interest under Blisworth Parish 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 (f) and (i).	
3.	To receive and approve for signature, the minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on 08/01/2024. 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. Blisworth Litter Group have invited Cllr Cooper to attend their next meeting on the 9 February 2024. They are looking to engage with both Milton Malsor and Gayton Parishes to work collaboratively together. b. Members of the public. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. A representative of the Village Hall and Playing Field Association noted that they are signing up for an energy efficiency survey following advice from the Blisworth Parish Council Facebook page and resubmitting their application to Gigaclear for free internet access. Rates for Village Hall hire for ad hoc parties, outside the village, now £50.00. ii. A member of the public raised the issue of the increasing litter on the playing field and by the scouts' hall. Scouts have already undertaken clearance of litter near their scouts' hall, even though the litter is not as a result of the scouts' activities and the Football Club have purchased further bins to address the issue. iii. A member of the public discussed the traffic meeting held at Stoke Bruerne Village Hall on the 2nd June 2023. 	

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7.	<p>Response to issues raised in the public session.</p> <p>b (ii) Agreed that Clerk would ask the Football Club to remind other users of the Playing Field to be mindful of their litter and use the bins provided or take their rubbish home.</p>	Clerk						
8.	<p>Planning and Development.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="197 367 1339 1581"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="197 367 520 450">Application & Date Comments Due</th> <th data-bbox="520 367 730 450">Location</th> <th data-bbox="730 367 1339 450">Description</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="197 450 520 1581"> <p>WNS/2021/1819/EIA</p> <p>Comments by: 04/02/2024</p> <p>Extension confirmed for 09/02/2024.</p> </td> <td data-bbox="520 450 730 1581"> <p>Land North of The Bell Plantation Watling Street Towcester</p> </td> <td data-bbox="730 450 1339 1581"> <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>Comment sent from Cllr Read: This development clearly, along with Northampton Gateway/SEGRO development, puts further pressure on local traffic routes and rural roads that act as diversionary routes where trunk roads are congested or unavailable due to improvement works or accidents.</p> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The Chair noted that Oakwood Farm House Towcester Road Blisworth application Ref: WNS/2022/0820/FUL has been approved by West Northants Council (WNC). There has been no feedback from WNC with regard to the concerns that Blisworth Parish Council and residents raised. Cllr Cooper to ask for feedback.</p>	Application & Date Comments Due	Location	Description	<p>WNS/2021/1819/EIA</p> <p>Comments by: 04/02/2024</p> <p>Extension confirmed for 09/02/2024.</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>Comment sent from Cllr Read: This development clearly, along with Northampton Gateway/SEGRO development, puts further pressure on local traffic routes and rural roads that act as diversionary routes where trunk roads are congested or unavailable due to improvement works or accidents.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Cllr Cooper</p>
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9.	<p>Correspondence from social media: Update from Cllr Read. Noted. A resident shared that they had logged a blocked drain (Ref 5433114) and a pothole (Ref5433131) on FixmyStreet. Total number of followers on social media: 288 people, an increase of three since last month (67.6% of our followers are listed as women and 124 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. Post reach of 1514 people (people who have our messages on their</p>							

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	social media feeds) and a direct engagement (clicks) of 140 people. This is a drop off of activity probably due to less information sharing around highways, road closures and planning issues. The top performing post in the period was our post concerning the proposed road closure in Stoke Road. This led to 1,416 people reached (on feeds) and 115 direct engagements (clicks to look at content), no comments, 13 reactions and 2 shares. All posts are now shared automatically to Blisworth Notice Board and Blisworth Community Page. Since the last meeting BPC has posted information on the WNC energy efficiency grants and WNC consultation on council tax increases as well as the Stoke Road closure.	
10.	Police & Neighbourhood Watch Scheme: Update from Cllr Read. Noted. Vehicle Crime – 2, Violence and Sexual Offences – 1, Anti-Social Behaviour – 1, Burglary – 1. The Neighbourhood alert / Neighbourhood watch system "Northamptonshire Talking" has 81 members registered with 4 members pending. This is an increase of 3 since last month. Regular updates about local crime and matters of priority within South Northants are issued at https://northamptonshiretalking.co.uk/ . These alerts are also published on the Parish social media. Using this system complies with GDPR. No alerts have been issued relevant to the village in the period. The next beat bus visit is due 27 March 2024. We are awaiting feedback from the January visit.	
11.	Report on data from SID/VAS devices: Update from Cllr Read. Deferred to next meeting.	
12.	Gateway Update. Update from Cllr Wilson. Noted. Cllr Wilson reported that the SEGRO Logistics Park Northampton Community Liaison Group (CLG) agreed that discussion about local traffic data from Blisworth Parish Council should form a regular part of future CLG meetings.	Cllr Wilson
13.	<p>Duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity.</p> <p>a) Review draft policy for Duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity and agree next steps. Update from Cllr Read. Policy circulated ahead of the meeting. Blisworth Parish Council thanked Cllr Read for the detailed policy. RESOLVED to agree the policy for Duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity. Cllr Ingram raised the issue of checking all Blisworth Parish Council land and properties to ensure compliance. Clerk to add to March agenda.</p> <p>b) Consider options for No Mow May and agree next steps. Blisworth Parish Council already have a no mow policy for the Closed Cemetery (except for paths). Blisworth Parish Council has a public responsibility to conserve public money. Adopting a No Mow May policy for other grassed areas in the village would increase costs for residents. Therefore, Blisworth Parish Council will promote No Mow May via Blisworth Parish Council's newsletter asking residents to adopt No Mow May in their own gardens.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
14.	<p>Village Maintenance & Open Spaces:</p> <p>a. Play area: Monthly safety inspection report: Update from Cllr Wilson. Monthly check was undertaken. Gate closing well and some minor depreciation to some playground equipment noted. The grass in the play area may need cutting twice at the beginning of the next mowing season due to the warm weather through winter.</p> <p>b. Defibrillator: Confirmation of satisfactory checks and any issues. Update from Cllr Read. Monthly check was undertaken. Nothing to report.</p> <p>c. Allotments & Closed Cemetery. Update from Cllr Billing. The Community Payback Services team have cleared more plots on the Blisworth Parish</p>	

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	Council allotments. This has revealed significant rubbish hidden under the brambles requiring a skip for clearance.	Cllr Billing
15.	Discuss Gigaclear funding and agree next steps. Chair suspended Standing Orders to discuss with the members of the public. Resumed Standing Orders. RESOLVED: to submit an application to Gigaclear for set-up and initial running costs for a Youth Parish Council to involve and engage with youth in the village. Clerk to submit figures to Gigaclear, supplied by the Blisworth Baptist Church, to fund a Youth Parish Council.	Clerk
16.	Water Bill: Resolution to use latest water meter reading obtained by the Clerk to enable collection of Blisworth Football Club's and Blisworth Scouts' share of the water bill, due before the end of this financial year, 2023-2024. Agreed.	Clerk
17.	BPC Freedom of Information Policy - Review updates and agree next steps. RESOLVED to agree amendments.	Clerk
18.	Internal Control: a) Financial & Management Risk Assessment: 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> <p>a. Bank reconciliation to 19/01/2024. Update from Clerk. Deferred. Complaint procedure initiated with regard to NatWest's incorrect closure of the current account now complete and NatWest agreed to pay compensation of £250.00. However, the latest statement for NatWest current account recorded further charges for the incorrect closure of the current account and further transfer of funds that had not been authorised. Additionally, the latest statement did not record the agreed compensation of £250.00. Clerk has initiated a new complaint and requested amended statements to be issued. NatWest current account remains open.</p> <p>Note: VAT Refund £3155.81 received and deposited at Unity Trust current account. Note: SSE have not submitted DD requests for January or February 2024. Clerk to pursue. Note: Unpresented NatWest cheque No.003203 for A Newbery Closed Cemetery Mowing. Payment Ref: 136: 2022-2023, Meeting Date 06/03/2023. Contractor notified BPC of lost cheque. Cheque stopped at NatWest bank. Replacement payment issued as bank transfer at Unity Trust (Ref UTBT113). Minutes 4.12.23 Minute Point:17 b (iii). Replacement payment now completed and confirmed via Unity Trust statement.</p> <p>Closing NatWest Balance Awaiting corrected statements. Deferred to March meeting. Closing Skipton Balance £74,446.73 Closing Unity Trust Balance £10,403.81</p> <p>b. Review switch process and position regarding bank accounts and agree next steps. Update from Clerk. The switch process with Unity Trust bank is complete. Some direct debits have not been actioned. Clerk to pursue.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>

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	<p>c. Resolution to agree variable direct debits with Unity Trust. RESOLVED to agree variable debits with Unity Trust for SSE, I+I IONOS, ICO, Nest Pensions (Reference name on Unity account is National Employment). RESOLVED to set up HMRC Employer’s National Insurance Contributions as a direct debit with Unity Trust.</p> <p>d. Review Financial Regulations amendments and agree next steps. RESOLVED to agree amendments.</p> <p>e. Receive report from Finance Working Group and consider proposed solutions. Update from Cllr Root. Report circulated ahead of the meeting. Blisworth Parish Council agreed with the interim proposals for the reserves. Finance Working Group (FWG) instructed to review the position on reserves after the closing of the 2023-2024 accounts. The Chair thanked the FWG for their meticulous work.</p> <p>f. Review Council credit card set-up, terms and regulations with Unity Trust/Lloyds Bank and agree next steps. RESOLVED to obtain a credit card for the Clerk’s use in line with the parameters outlined below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary Programme Administrator: Clerk • Secondary Programme Administrator: Chair of the Finance working Group • Paper Statements to both Clerk and Chair of the Finance working Group. • One card only issued to the Clerk. • No cash withdrawals. • On-line card management. • The card bill to be cleared each month from the Unity Trust account. • Business Name “Blisworth PC”. Clerk to check with Unity Trust if the name of the card should be the administrator’s name or the business name. • Monthly credit limit £500.00. • Single transaction limit £500.00. <p>It was noted that the set-up fee is £50.00 and the ongoing cost is £3.00 p.c.m.</p> <p>g. Receive Budget versus Actual Report and agree next steps. Noted. Predicted underspend for end of 2023-2024.</p> <p>h. Review Parish Field rent and agree next steps. RESOLVED to increase rent by 5% and to notify tenant that they are responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the land and boundary hedges.</p> <p>i. 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>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>FWG</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
20.	<p>Street Light Review: Update from Cllr Chandler. Report circulated ahead of the meeting. Noted. Chair and Finance Councillor (Cllr Root) thanked Cllr Chandler for reviewing the street lights, as this is a major asset for the village. RESOLVED: Cllr Chandler to research and draft a schedule of repairs and review access to electricity. Noted that options for additional lights which require installation of electricity cables, increases costs significantly. Cllr Field asked if there were options for solar-powered lighting. Cllr Chandler to investigate solar powered options for street lighting. Cllr Chandler and Cllr Gardner to review lighting in the village.</p>	<p>Cllr Chandler</p> <p>Cllr Gardner</p>
21.	<p>Traffic and Highways: Resolution to agree Terms of Reference for Traffic Working Group and agree next steps. RESOLVED to agree Terms of Reference for Traffic Working Group. Blisworth Parish Council does not have the power to make decisions regarding our local Highways, but it will continue to strongly lobby representatives at</p>	

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	<p>West Northants Council and Kier Highways who do have the power, to enact improvements and make progress. Agreed Traffic Working Group will seek to drive action in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revision and enforcement of speed limits in Blisworth • Repairs and improvements to footways • Traffic signage in and around Blisworth, including the new Roade bypass • Road repairs and traffic levels on Stoke Road • Additional traffic calming measures <p>Priorities may be amended or added to by the Parish Council during the course of the year. Cllrs to meet with Kier Highways to discuss improvement options for footways, including dropped kerbs, additional traffic calming measures, speed limits, traffic volume and signage and to clarify costings involved.</p>	TWG members
22.	Discuss contribution towards costs of school crossing-patrol officer and agree next steps. RESOLVED to contribute £1,210.00 towards costs of school crossing-patrol officer under Section 30 Power to contribute financially to traffic calming schemes.	Clerk
23.	<p>Training:</p> <p>a) Discuss Training Arrangements for the clerk's CiLCA training and agree next steps. RESOLVED to defer CiLCA training to 2025-2026 financial year. RESOLVED that CiLCA training costs to be noted in ear-marked reserves.</p> <p>b) Resolution to agree purchase of Local Council Administration, Edition:13th ISBN:9781474323307. RESOLVED to purchase Local Council Administration, Edition:13.</p> <p>c) To consider attendees to Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas training (Course cost £42.00 plus VAT) and agree next steps. RESOLVED that Cllr Chandler and Cllr Hawkins to attend.</p>	Clerk Clerk, Cllr Chandler and Cllr Hawkins
24.	Discuss options for positioning and costs of a Friendship bench and agree next steps. RESOLVED to allocate bench on High Street as a Friendship bench. Clerk and Cllr Brown to research costs for a plaque and installation costs.	Clerk Cllr Brown
25.	Discuss options for repairs or renewal of Notice boards and agree next steps. Cllr Field to review options to repair some notice boards.	Cllr Field
26.	Discuss options for skip hire and agree next steps. RESOLVED to hire 6 Yard skip for one day (£204.00 plus VAT) to clear rubbish at the Blisworth Parish Allotments. Cllr Billing to strip out petrol tanks from abandoned lawnmowers.	Cllr Billing Clerk
27.	Discuss options for padlocks (x 2) for allotment gates and agree next steps. RESOLVED to purchase two combination locks for the two allotment gates. Cllr Root to research options used by Canal and River Trust.	Cllr Root Clerk
28.	Discuss options for painting village entrance boards and agree next steps. Cllr Brown and Cllr Cooper to liaise with Highways.	Cllr Brown and Cllr Cooper
29.	Discuss option for one more additional solar panel for VAS/SID device and agree next steps. Deferred.	
30.	<p>Councillors' reports and items for future agenda.</p> <p>Cllr Field raised the issue of damaged paint on Westbrook step risers. Cllr Billing to repaint (weather dependent).</p> <p>Cllr Ingram raised the issue of the planning application on Courteenhall Road which has been referred to appeal. Cllr Cooper to investigate date for appeal to ensure Blisworth Parish Council councillors attend on behalf of residents.</p>	Cllr Billing Cllr Cooper Cllr Ingram

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	<p>Cllr Ingram to liaise with BCPG to draw up a welcome letter from the Parish Council for the 'welcome pack'.</p> <p>Cllr Hawkins noted that a resident has raised concerns regarding the overgrown vegetation on Towcester Road. Cllr Brown noted that this has already been referred to Fix My Street but it has been logged as 'not a safety issue'. Cllr Hawkins will ask residents to submit their own additional concerns on Fix My Street to support Blisworth Parish Council's efforts.</p> <p>Cllr Root attended S106/CIL training – WNC is to set up a contact to support sharing of information between parish councils and the planning department.</p>	Cllr Hawkins
31.	<p>Council Surgery</p> <p>a) Report from Council Surgery: Update from Cllr Billing School crossing working lights: WNC consider the flashing lights to be obsolete and not necessary and will be repairing or replacing them. Resident's input on the 3T sign on the side of the High Street nearest the Old Bus Shelter. When drivers are approaching the High Street/Stoke Road junction from the Mill direction, the 3T warning sign blocks out the directional pointing sign for Northampton and Stoke Bruerne that is located just behind the 3T warning sign. Additionally, the Stoke Bruerne direction sign now points down the High Street to Northampton, as it has been knocked out of alignment, possibly by large HGV traffic/coaches turning from Stoke Road towards the School. Signage to say the CCTV is in operation is positioned too close to the school crossing patrol officer and has too many words on the sign. The junctions are dangerous and drivers need to concentrate on driving safely not reading detailed signs. TWG with Cllr Cooper to pursue both issues.</p> <p>b) Resolve to agree on a representative(s) from Blisworth Parish Council for the next Council Surgery. RESOLVED that Cllr Billing and Cllr Ingram will attend.</p>	<p>TWG Cllr Cooper</p> <p>Cllrs Billing & Ingram</p>
32.	To agree the date of next meeting Monday, 4th March 2024 at 7.30pm. Agreed.	
33.	Close. The meeting closed at 9:38 pm.	

Errors on the 05/02/2024 minutes: Minute Item 8 Planning and Development, Planning Application Ref: WNS/2021/1819/EIA: 'Comment sent from Cllr Read: This development clearly, along with Northampton Gateway/SEGRO development, puts further pressure on local traffic routes and rural roads that act as diversionary routes where trunk roads are congested or unavailable due to improvement works or accidents.' This statement was not stated in the meeting. Therefore, it should not have been included in the minutes. It was included in the draft minutes in error and should be removed.

Minute Item 22; 'under Section 30 Power to contribute financially to traffic calming schemes' This statement was not stated in the meeting. Therefore, it should not have been included in the minutes. It was included in the draft minutes in error and should be removed. Errors recorded on Minutes for Meeting on 04 March 2024.

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 FEBRUARY 2024 MEETING

Receipts				
DATE	PAYEE	DETAILS	ACCOUNT	AMOUNT
22/12/2023	NatWest	Interest	Reserve Acct**	£0.98
29/01/2024	HMRC	HMRC VTR XAV126000101876	Unity Trust	£3,155.81

* NatWest Current Account

£3,156.79

**NatWest Business Reserve Account

PAYMENTS							
Ref:	Invoice	PAYEE	PURPOSE	CHQ/DD	Total Amount Including VAT	VAT	Amount Excluding VAT
115	3677933	Viking Payments	Toner x 2 Paper x 2 Laminating x1	UTBT115	92.27	15.38	76.89
116	28657	Merland Copy Shop Ltd	Printing of Round & About Feb-Mar Issue	UTBT116	170.00	0.00	170.00
117	9140	Complete Ground Maintenance	Vegetation clearance Stoke Road	UTBT117	336.00	56.00	280.00
118	2030 3993 2718	IONOS	Website Fee - 08/01/2024- 08/02/2024	DD UT	6.00	1.00	5.00
119	Month 10 2023- 2024	A Billing - Salary	Clerk's Salary January 2024 £1000.20 Plus Backpay award £540.00	UTBT119	1,439.97	0.00	1,439.97
120	Pension Month 10 2023-2024	Nest Pensions	Nest Pension Employer costs 01/01/2024 - 31/01/2024	DD UT	81.62	0.00	81.62
121	120PF003233662410	HMRC - Nat. Ins.	HMRC Nat. Ins. Employer + Employee Contributions January 2024 Salary	300002	157.16	0.00	157.16
122	23	Alan North	Invoice 23 for R&A Alan North Feb-Mar 2024 Iss 155	UTBT122	50.00	0.00	50.00
123		Reimburse A Billing for payment to B&Q	Reimburse A Billing for Hammerite Black Smooth Paint Closed Cemetery Gates	UTBT123	22.00	0.00	22.00
124		Reimburse A Billing for Petrol for CPS.	Reimburse A Billing 5.83L Petrol for CPS Strimmers	UTBT124	7.98	0.00	7.98
125		A Billing - Expenses	Clerk's Expenses (01.01.2024 - 31.01.2024)	UTBT125	32.00	0.00	32.00
126	ICO_00015386206	Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)	Data Protection Officer Fee ICO Certificate - Subscription to 18.02.2025	DD UT	35.00	0.00	35.00
Totals					£2,430.00	£72.38	£2,357.62