

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Bitteswell with Bittesby Parish Council
Held at Bitteswell Village Hall on Wednesday 22 May 2024 at 7.10pm**

Present: Councillor John Allsopp (Chairman)
Councillor Nigel Chapman
Councillor Pippa Clarkson
Clerk Cathy Walsh
3 member(s) of the public

24.1. To elect a Chairman of the Council

Councillor Allsopp was unanimously elected as Chairman for 2024-2025.

24.2. To elect a Vice-Chairman of the Council

Councillor Clarkson was unanimously elected as Vice-Chairman for 2024-2025.

24.3. To receive the Chairman's and Vice-Chairman's declaration of acceptance of office

Councillor Allsopp signed a declaration of acceptance of office of Chair form.

Councillor Clarkson signed a declaration of acceptance of office of Vice-Chair form.

24.4. To receive apologies for absence

None.

24.5. To receive disclosures of interests from members and requests for dispensations

There were no disclosures of interests or requests for dispensations.

24.6. To consider councillor co-option for vacancies on the Parish Council

None to consider.

24.7. To appoint representatives to outside bodies

24.7.1. Magna Park Community Liaison Group

Resolved to appoint Councillor Clarkson.

24.7.2. Leicestershire & Rutland Association of Local Councils

Resolved to appoint Councillor Chapman.

24.8. To consider appointing a LRALC representative to attend its AGM on 05 October 2024

Resolved to appoint Councillor Chapman as representative to attend the meeting.

24.9. To review the Asset Register

The Asset Register at 01 April 2024 was **approved**.

24.10. To review the council's Standing Orders

The council **resolved** to approve the Standing Orders with no amendments.

24.11. To defer the Financial Regulations review due to NALC publishing a new version the Financial Regulations

The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) has recently published a new version of the model Financial Regulations. These have been significantly updated from the 2019 version. The council **resolved to defer** the approval of the new regulations until they can be scrutinized and tailored to the Parish Council.

24.12. To review the policies below:

21.12.1. Annual Leave Policy

Resolved to adopt the document as presented.

21.12.2. Annualised Hours Policy

Resolved to adopt the document as presented.

21.12.3. Data Breach Policy

Resolved to adopt the document as presented.

21.12.4. Data Protection Policy

Resolved to adopt the document as presented.

21.12.5. Document Retention Policy

Resolved to adopt the document as presented.

21.12.6. Equal Opportunities Statement

Resolved to adopt the document as presented.

21.12.7. Expenses Policy

Resolved to adopt the document as presented.

21.12.8. General Privacy Notice

Resolved to adopt the document as presented.

21.12.9. Health and Safety Policy

Resolved to adopt the document as presented.

21.12.10. Home Working Policy

Resolved to adopt the document as presented.

21.12.11. Lone Working Policy

Resolved to adopt the document as presented.

21.12.12. Privacy Notice

Resolved to adopt the document as presented.

21.12.13. Reserves Policy

Resolved to adopt the document as presented.

21.12.14. Village Green Policy

Resolved to adopt the document as presented.

21.12.15. Risk Assessment & Management Policy

Resolved to adopt the document as presented.

21.12.16. Risk Assessment – Installation and Site Rotation of MVAS

Resolved to adopt the document as presented.

24.13. To review the council's Code of Conduct

Resolved to adopt the document as presented.

24.14. To review the council's insurance needs for 2024-2025

Resolved that having reviewed the current level of cover no amendments were required. The year 2024-2025 will be the 3rd year of a 5 year long term agreement.

Agreed to consider adding cyber-attack cover. For discussion at the next meeting

24.15. Finance**24.15.1. Bank reconciliation and bank statement verification for year ended 31 March 2024**

Resolved to approve the bank statement verification and bank statement reconciliation. The documents were signed by the Chairman.

24.15.2. To approve the Accounts and Financial Statement for year ended 31 March 2024

Resolved to approve the Accounts and Financial Statement.

24.15.3. To note the Direct Debit and Standing Order instructions that are in place for regular payments

The continued use of direct debit payments for pension payments, mobile phone contract and Data Protection fee was noted. The continued use of standing orders for payroll and salary payments was **noted**.

24.15.4. To approve the schedule of payments and sign confirmation receipts for electronic payments

It was **resolved** to approve the schedule of payments below and the receipts for electronic payments was countersigned by the Chairman.

Ref No.	Method	Payee	Description	Total
E24-85	BACS	Origin Environmental Arboriculture Ltd	Tree survey and report	£801.72
E24-86	PPDC	Royal Mail	Postage (large letter 2nd class)	£0.00
E24-87	CHQ	Harborough District Council	Admin fees for non-contested Parish elections 2023	£210.00
E24-88	431	Mark Osborne	Churchyard Extension grass cutting (mow 2)	£330.00
E24-89	PPDC	Busy B	Office supplies	£15.84
E24-90	SO	Cathy Walsh	Salary - Jan 2024	X
E24-91	SO	DCK Payroll Solutions	Payroll - Jan 2024	£36.00
E24-92	DD	NEST	Pension - Jan 2024	X
E24-93	BACS	Mark Osborne	Village Green grass cutting 06.02.24	£250.00
E24-94	DD	Sky Mobile	Mobile phone contract - Feb 2024	£15.00
E24-95	SO	Cathy Walsh	Salary - Feb 2024	X
E24-96	SO	DCK Payroll Solutions	Payroll - Feb 2024	£36.00
E24-97	DD	NEST	Pension - Feb 2024	X
E24-98	BACS	HM Revenue & Customs	PAYE Q4	X
E24-99	BACS	FairFX	Pre paid debit card top up	£300.00
E24-100	BACS	Mark Osborne	Village Green grass cutting final cut for 2023/24 season	£250.00
E24-101	BACS	Mark Osborne	Churchyard Extension final cut for 2023/24 season	£330.00
E24-102	DD	Sky Mobile	Mobile phone contract - Mar 2024	£15.00
E24-103	BACS	Cuttlefish Multimedia Ltd	Website, email and domain 01.06.24 to 31.05.25	£552.00
E24-104	PPDC	Geosphere Ltd	Parish Online digital mapping for Neighbourhood Plan	£81.00
E24-105	PPDC	McAfee	McAfee LiveSave 2 year subscription ends 28/04/2026	£119.99
E24-106	BACS	Leicestershire County Council	LED Conversion 5th Installment	£225.78
E24-107	SO	Cathy Walsh	Salary - Mar 2024	X
E24-108	SO	DCK Payroll Solutions	Payroll - Mar 2024	£36.00
E25-01	BACS	LRALC Ltd	Membership 2024-25 LRALC £300 NALC £31.28	£331.28
E25-02	BACS	DCK Payroll Solutions Limited	PAYE Year End 2023-2024	£36.00
E25-03	BACS	Cathy Walsh	Additional hours for 2023-2024	X
E25-04	DD	Sky Mobile	Mobile phone contract	£15.00
E25-05	CHQ	Zurich Municipal	Insurance for 01.06.24 to 31.05.25	£1,347.93
E25-06	DD	NEST	Pension contribution 01.03.24 to 31.03.24	X
E25-07	BACS	Bitteswell Village Hall	Hall hire on 10.01.24	£12.00
E25-08	BACS	Julie Morris	Internal Audit 2023/24	£90.00
E25-09	SO	Cathy Walsh	Salary - Apr 2024	X
E25-10	BACS	Mark Osborne	Grass cutting x 3 cuts for 2024/25 season	£750.00
E25-11	SO	DCK Payroll Solutions Limited	Payroll - Apr 2024	£36.00
E25-12	DD	NEST	Pension contribution 01.04.24 to 30.04.24	X
E25-13	BACS	Mark Osborne	Grass cutting (churchyard) 2024/25 season 1st cut	£330.00
E25-14	DD	Sky Mobile	Mobile phone contract	£15.00
E25-15	CHQ	Cathy Walsh	Clerk's expenses	£16.98
E25-16	CHQ	Helen Denton-Stacey	Neighbourhood Plan Clerk allowances	£63.36

24.15.5. To note the Bank Reconciliation at 16 May 2024

Resolved to note the Bank Reconciliation.

Opening Balance	1-Apr-24	£33,553.18
Receipts to	31-May-24	£18,001.87
Payments to	31-May-24	-£4,113.92
Cash in hand at	31-May-24	£47,441.13
<i>(as per Cash Book)</i>		

Cash in hand per Bank Statements

Current Account	£15,156.13
Business Reserve Account	£32,198.04
Pre-paid Debit Card	£167.30
Plus unrepresented receipts	£0.00
Less unrepresented payments	-£80.34
Bank Reconciliation at	£47,441.13
31-May-24	

Approved & Signed:

Meeting Date: 22 May 2024

24.15.6 To note the Receipts & Payments Summary at 16 May 2024

Noted the Receipts & Payments Summary at 16 May 2024. This monitors the council's income and expenditure against the agreed budget.

24.15.7 To approve the clerk's expenses and allowances claim

Resolved to approve the clerk's claim.

24.15.8. To approve the Neighbourhood Plan clerk's expenses and allowances claim

Resolved to approve the Neighbourhood Plan clerk's claim.

24.15.9. To note the Neighbourhood Plan expenditure to date

This was **noted**.

24.15.10. To consider opening a higher interest account for the capital funds held

The council **resolved** to open a 35 Liquidity Manager Notice Account which will provide a higher rate of interest for the capital funds held.

24.15.11. To consider how to reinstate the shortfall of capital funds held from the sale of the pumphouse

In previous years the precept set by the council was insufficient to cover its day-to-day operating costs and it had to borrow money from the capital funds (from the sale of the pumphouse in 2013) to cover this. As capital funds should not be used for revenue purposes, the money used may need to be reinstated. The capital fund should stand at £20,340. It has a shortfall of £4,342. The council was asked to consider how best to address this, especially when considering next year's budget. **Agenda** item for the next meeting.

24.16. To consider and approve documents relating to the Annual Governance & Accountability Return 2023-2024**24.16.1. To receive the Annual Internal Auditor's Report 2023-2024**

The internal audit was carried out on 18 April 2024. The internal auditor ticked 'yes' to all internal control objectives she was required to consider, with the exception of those not covered i.e. objective F as the council does not hold any petty cash and objective K as the council did not declare itself exempt from a limited assurance review in 2022-2023. No recommendations were made by the auditor for the council to consider.

24.16.2. To complete, approve and sign the Annual Governance Statement 2023-2024

Resolved that statements 1-8 of the Annual Governance Statement 2023-2024 be agreed as 'yes' responses; the Annual Governance Statement 2023-2024 be approved and signed by the Chairman and the Clerk.

24.16.3. To receive, approve and sign the Accounting Statements 2023-2024

The Accounting Statements had been prepared and signed by the Clerk before being presented to the council for approval. **Resolved** to approve the Accounting Statements which

were duly signed by the Chairman.

24.16.4. To receive and consider the explanation of variances

The council received and **noted** the explanations of variances.

24.16.5. To agree the dates for the period of public rights

The council confirmed the dates of the period for the exercise of public rights as Monday 3 June 2024 to Friday 12 July 2024, covering the required 30 working day period and first 10 working days of July 2024.

24.17. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2024

Resolved to approve the minutes as a true record of proceedings.

24.18. To review any actions from the minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2024

Councillor Chapman is undertaking some work looking at who owns various parcels of land in the separation area, with a view to potential tree planning. **Agenda** for the next meeting.

24.19. To note any matters raised from District/County Councillor Rosita Page

Councillor Page sent her apologies and circulated all updates to the Parish Council by email prior to the meeting.

24.20. To note any comments or matters from residents

24.20.1. Lighting

The council was notified that the light on the 'Give Way' sign and street light by the White Cottage are out. The clerk will report this to Leicestershire County Council.

24.20.2. Lutterworth Road Footpath

The trustees of United Charities Bitteswell asked if instead of providing funding towards the village green grass cutting it could be used towards the cost of sweeping Lutterworth Road footpath. **Agenda** for the next meeting.

24.20.3. Lutterworth Road Footpath

A resident asked if there were any further updates on Lutterworth Road Footpath. The council will contact Iain Millington for an update as he was dealing with this before resigning from the council. **Agenda** for the next meeting.

24.20.4. Neighbourhood Plan

A resident requested and was provided with details of Neighbourhood Plan expenditure. He also asked whether it was worth pursuing the production of the Plan considering the cost and time spent to date. The council responded to say that it had a statutory obligation to produce a Neighbourhood Plan.

24.20.5. Pavement Parking

Vehicles parked on pavements in the village are causing problems to pedestrians, in

particular those with mobility issues and pushchairs. The council agreed to publish an article in the newsletter reminding people to be mindful of pavements users when parking.

24.20.6. Village Noticeboard

A resident requested whether a community noticeboard could be installed in the village. The Parish Council has explored this idea previously and would rather not install any more noticeboards, preferring communication by electronic means.

24.20.7. Village Green Event

The Village Hall Committee requested permission to hold an event on the Village Green on Sunday 23 June to celebrate the Summer Solstice. The Parish Council confirmed that it is happy for this to proceed.

24.21. To consider memorial plans for the late Councillor Margaret Foster

The Parochial Church Council put forward a memorial suggestion to Margaret's family for their approval. **Agenda** item for the next meeting.

24.22. To receive an update on proposals to repair the lychgate at St Mary's Church

Potential sources of funding are being explored by the Wycliffe Fellowship. An architect, with expertise in ecclesiastical work has been approached and is awaiting firm appointment once funding is secured.

24.23. To receive an update on local wildlife proposed designation and site schedule at Ash Tree Farm

The visit was postponed due to the poor weather. **Agenda** item for the next meeting.

24.24. To discuss the Rugby Club, Ashby Lane parking problems

On match days there is approximately 100-150 cars parked on Ashby Lane, parked on both sides of the highway and either side of the Cauldwell Lane Junction. This presents a dangerous situation for other road users. Cyclists, emergency vehicles and caravans are unable to get through and cars struggle due to the lack of passing places.

The police, Harborough District Council enforcement and Leicestershire County Council Highways have all been approached by both residents and Councillor Page but to no positive avail.

Leicestershire County Council Highways has been approached with a request for a clearway, it advised, at present Ashby Lane, Bitteswell is not appropriate for a clearway.

Leicestershire County Council advised that this location does not meet the current criteria for County Council intervention.

Resolved to invite the neighbourhood police sergeant to a Parish Council meeting to discuss the matter.

It was also raised that parking at the Lutterworth Athletic Football Club was also causing problems on match days with cars double parking all along Hall Lane causing obstructions and dangers for other road users.

As the Football Club mainly falls under Lutterworth Town Council's jurisdiction, it was **agreed** to contact Lutterworth Town Council to see if joint action can be taken to address the parking problems on Hall Lane.

24.25. To consider adopting a .gov.uk domain name for the council's website and email account

The council **resolved** to adopt a .gov.uk domain name for its website and clerk's email account. The Cabinet Office is offering funding to facilitate Parish councils with the switch and the clerk will apply for this.

24.26. To consider installing several posts on the Village Green to deter vehicles from driving across it

Recently a number of vehicles have driven over the Green causing damage. The council **resolved** to instruct Mark Osborne to install a wooden post by the Manor Road cobbles to see if this deters vehicles driving across the Green. Mark will also reinstate the 2 posts missing by Turnpike.

The council will monitor the situation before considering whether to install any further posts.

24.27. To consider delegating authority to the clerk to authorise a capped expenditure limit for the council's grass cutting contractor to make good any damage to the Village Green

Previously Mark Osborne (grass cutting contractor) has used his own money to repair any damage to the Village Green. The council is happy to pay for any future repairs and the council **resolved** to delegate authority to the clerk to authorise these up to a cost of £100.

24.28. To note the Tree Risk Management Report, January 2024 and address any required actions

The tree survey was completed on 05 January 2024 and report dated 12 January 2024 was noted. Currently only 3 trees require work undertaking within 2-3 years. With a re-inspection by a competent person to be completed within 2 years.

24.29. Planning Matters

24.29.21. To review and comment on any new planning applications

(a) 24/00507/FUL: Demolition of existing outbuilding, erection of a self-build dwelling.

(b) 24/00519/TCA: Works to trees. The Lodge, The Nook, Bitteswell

Resolved to make no comment.

24.29.22. To note any other planning matters

None.

24.29.23. To receive an update on the Bitteswell with Bittesby Neighbourhood Plan

The amendments have been made to the Plan in preparation for submission.

24.30. Any other business

None.

24.31. To confirm the date of the next meeting

Thursday 11 July at 7.00pm.

24.32. To schedule the date of the village walkabout

Deferred until the next meeting.