

BLITHFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary General Meeting dated 07.11.2024

Present: Cllr Peter Atkins (Chairman), Cllr Anthony Vernon (vice chairman), Cllr Phyllis Massey, Cllr Stan Hulme, Cllr Kevin Massey, Fiona Shipley (clerk)

From the Parish: Mr Paul Riley, Mr John Hyde, Ms Abi Pollock, Mr Jim Ross

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

24.11.01 Apologies: for Absence: Cllr George, Cllr Jones, Cllr Gould

24.11.02 Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 07.11.2024 were circulated to the councillors in advance, approved and signed by the vice chairman and the clerk.

24.11.03 To receive declarations of interest by members in respect of items on the agenda. Cllr Vernon declared an interest in P/2024/00696 planning application for Moreton Brook Solar Farm.

24.11.04 Matters Arising from the Minutes There were no matters arising from the minutes.

24.11.05 Clerk Update

- a) Green Waste Collection - The ESBC councillors are trying to fight the brown bin tax.
- b) We have received an invitation to have a tree at the St Nicholas Church Abbots Bromley Christmas tree festival. The parish council decided not to take up this invitation.
- c) Robert Pritchard the new county officer of the SPCA has commenced work.
- d) The SPCA AGM is on 16 December 2024 in Stafford. Cllr Atkins will try to attend.
- e) Emergency plan for the unexpected absence of parish clerk – instructions have been given to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.
- f) East Staffordshire Borough Council are holding a Town and Parish Forum on 21 November 2024.
- g) Agree dates of future meetings 6 March 2025, 15 May 2025, 3 July 2025, 28 August 2025. These were approved.
- h) NALC have a new website. Councillors are encouraged to set up their own accounts so that they can access all the information on it.
- i) Staffordshire County Council are working on a Local Transport Plan, more information can be found on the parish council website.
- j) National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) has reached an agreement on rates of pay applicable from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025. The clerk should now be paid £14.36/hour (SCP12) back dated to 1 April 2024 in line with her contract. The parish council resolved to pay the clerk the new rate with back pay.

24.11.06 Public Participation. A request was made for 'please drive carefully' signs to be added to the Admaston hamlet signs and for the Admaston signs to be made more visible.

24.11.07 Upgrade of Broadband in the Parish - There is action taking place.

24.11.08 To receive oral report from Borough and County Councillors. There were none.

24.11.09 To receive Chairman's reports The chairman has written to Cllr Philip Atkins about, the poor state of the roads in some part of the parish and the state of the passing places in the parish. He is also concerned that the 60 mph speed limit is not suitable or safe on many of the lanes.

24.11.10 Police and crime

Police and Crime – more information can be found at <https://www.staffordshire.police.uk/>

Needwood area 63 crimes in July 2024, 52 crimes in August 2024

24.11.11 Speeding Cars and Motorbikes. Nothing to report.

24.11.12 Admaston Telephone Box. Unfortunately by the time the clerk was able to apply for the Community Fund Grant, the funding for this year had run out. It was agreed that the telephone box would be reinstated by members of the parish as soon as possible and that the parish council would pay the costs estimated to be £140 from parish funds.

24.11.13 Admaston Village Hall update. Recent events have been successful. Further planned events are:

November 25th. Our annual Whist Drive

December 14th. Christmas get together and Quiz

24.11.14 Planning

a) New

b) Pending P/2024/00371 Conversion and alterations of former education centre to form 7 no dwelling houses with associated works. Location: Blithfield Education Centre, Newton Hurst Lane, Dapple Heath, Staffordshire, WS15 3PH

c) Decisions P/2024/00643 Retention of two unauthorised windows on north east elevation Location: 2 Stansley Wood Cottages, Newton Hurst Lane, Dapple Heath, Staffordshire, WS15 3PH
Grid Ref: 405284 325116 PERMITS

P/2024/00515 Retention of a single storey rear extension, the alteration of a pitched roof to flat roof and associated alterations including installation of first floor side window Location: 1 Stansley Wood Cottages, Newton Hurst Lane, Dapple Heath, WS15 3PH Grid Ref: 405282 325123 PERMITS

P/2024/00858 Felling of one multi-stem Lleylandii tree Location: Blithfield Hall, Uttoxeter Road, Admaston, Staffordshire, WS15 3NL Grid Ref: 404474 323943 NO OBJECTION

P/2024/00850 Installation of roof mounted 76.56kW solar PV system comprising of 176 x Canadian Solar 435w modules Location: Newbuildings Farm, Lea Lane, Newton, Staffordshire, WS15 3NR Grid Ref: 403147 325584 PERMITS

d) P/2024/00696 Moreton Brook solar Farm was validated on 04.11.2024

Construction of a solar farm comprising ground mounted photovoltaic solar arrays and associated infrastructure and landscaping, Location: Land at Newton Farm, Lea Lane, Newton, Staffordshire, WS15 3NP Grid Ref: 403822 325257.

The parish council had planned to have held an informal meeting with a representative of Aura Power prior to this parish council meeting, but due to a misunderstanding, their representative missed the meeting. A further informal meeting is scheduled for 14.11.2024.

The parish council will arrange a Public meeting on Wednesday 27 November 2024 at 7pm. Aura Power have been invited to attend. This will be followed by a Planning Meeting.

e) P/2019/01105 Leaways, Newton – apparent non-compliance with planning decision.
The planning enforcement officer suggested that we write to the resident to ask them to remove the black polythene from the grass verge, as it is not a breach of planning regulations. He also stated that it is hoped that the hedge be planted by the end of November 2024.

24.11.15 Highways and Lengthsman

a) Booth Lane Potholes – majority repaired.

b) Newton Lane Pothole – majority repaired.

c) Newton Hurst Lane Road Surface – majority repaired.

d) Grit bin – Rectory Farm – the clerk will check the grit bins.

f) School Lane, Admaston – verge posts, these will need to be replaced by members of the parish as they are not the responsibility of SCC highways.

h) ESBC and Admaston signage upgrade on B5013 – Staffordshire County Council have now agreed that they are responsible for removal of the ESBC sign if ESBC are not willing to replace it. Clerk has asked that they remove it and lower the Admaston sign to the usual height of village signs. The clerk will chase the SCC and at the same time make enquiries about adding 'please drive carefully signs'.

Thanks to resident Mr Paul Riley for straightening the Newton sign which had been bent by the verge mower.

The clerk will follow up a report of potholes on Steenwood Lane.

24.011.16 Finance

| Ref/Cheque | Item | Amount |
|----------------------|--|------------------|
| SO 28.08.24 | Fiona Shipley – Parish Admin | £220.65 |
| Chq 597 11.09.24 | K Massey Lengthsman | £600 |
| Chq 598 11.09.24 | British Heart Foundation | £100 |
| Chq 599 11.09.24 | Rugeley First Responders | £100 |
| Chq 600 11.09.24 | Midlands Air Ambulance | £100 |
| Chq 601 11.09.24 | Katharine House Hospice | £100 |
| Chq 602 11.09.24 | Douglas Macmillan Children's Hospice | £100 |
| Chq 603 11.09.24 | St Giles Hospice | £100 |
| Chq 604 11.09.24 | Admaston Village Hall Hire and defib electricity | £130 |
| Chq 605 12.09.24 | Fiona Shipley clerks expences /working from home allowance | £165.90 |
| A/c Balance 01.10.24 | A/c 054 £4741.95 | A/c 575 £5076.00 |

2nd precept payment £2718.00 received 20.09.2024

b) to approve the budget for 2025 – 2026, previously circulated to parish councillors and agree precept for 2025 - 2026. It was agreed to defer the approval of the budget and agree a precept for 2025 -2026 until we know more about expenses to be incurred relating to the Moreton Brook Solar Farm planning application.

c) A mid year audit carried out by Cllr A Vernon 16.10.2024. Cllr Vernon reported that everything was in order and the audit was adopted.

24.11.17 To discuss any other business including items for the next agenda

Lloyds Bank have changed our Treasurers Account (current account) to a Community Account which will now incur charges of approximately £80 per year. The clerk will do some research and try to find an account with more favourable terms.

Cllr Hulme suggested that we contact our MP Dave Robertson and ask him for an informal meeting with the parish councillors.

24.11.18 Date of next meeting - 09.01.25

The meeting closed at 8.25 pm

Signed Chairman

Signed Clerk