

# BERKSWICH PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of Berkswich Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 2 January 2024

### at 7.30 pm at Walton Village Hall

**Present:** Cllr Alan Taylor (Chair), Cllr Caroline Pearson (Vice Chair), Cllr Sue Francis, Cllr Tim Luker, Cllr Bob Gilson, Cllr Malcolm Millichap, Cllr Ann Millichap, Cllr Beverley Hughes, and Cllr Michael Norris.

**In attendance:** Mrs Sue Fullwood as Clerk.

Cllr Taylor welcomed everyone to the meeting and wished everyone a Happy New Year.

#### 1 Public session

No members of the public attended the meeting.

**24/1 Apologies** – received from Cllr Vicky Campbell. **Resolved:** apologies were noted.

**24/2 To record Declarations of Interest regarding items on the agenda.** None.

**24/3 Minutes of the Council meeting held on 10 October 2023 – Resolved:** It was agreed that the minutes were accurate and the Chairman thanked the Clerk.

**24/4 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the D-Day Landings on 6 June 2024**  
Cllr M Millichap had been in touch with Berkswich Primary School by email, but they had not responded so it was assumed that they were not interested. Cllr M Millichap suggested a joint event with another group e.g. the WI or the Phoenix Club. **Resolved:** Cllr M Millichap to contact the WI Secretary and Cllr Pearson to speak to the person who runs the Phoenix Club. **Action: Cllr M Millichap/Cllr Pearson** An article to be put into the next newsletter and on social media asking for anything that could be put on display. A poster competition was suggested for children. **Resolved:** Village Hall to be booked for the afternoon of Saturday 8 June. **Action: Clerk**

**24/5 Brocton Road Weight Restriction**  
The Clerk had shared the response received from Cllr Williams. The response was felt to be dismissive and disappointing. No further action to be taken.

**24/6 Grounds Maintenance Contractor for 2024**  
The Clerk had asked four companies to tender for the contract for 2024, but only two had responded. **Resolved:** it was agreed to continue working with TGM on the basis that their quote was the lowest and that Council were happy with their work. **Action: Clerk** A leaning fence near the Chicken Run was discussed. **Resolved:** Cllr Taylor to contact a Congreve Close resident to discuss the situation. **Action: Cllr Taylor**

**24/7 Financial Matters:**

- i. **Budget for 2024/25** – Cllr M Millichap confirmed that the proposal from the Finance Committee was to go for option 3 which was an increase of 50% to cover depreciation of assets and rebuild earmarked reserves. **Resolved:** Option 3 was unanimously agreed. Cllr M Millichap thanked the Clerk for her presentation of the figures.

	21/22 budget	21/22 outturn	22/23 budget	22/23 outturn	23/24 budget	23/24 predicted outturn	24/25 budget agreed
<b>Staff costs</b>							
Salary	8,000.00	8,898.92	11,400.00	11,847.38	11,400.00	11,847.38	11,760.00
Study time	-	-	-	1,833.38	-	518.93	-
Pension	-	2,130.64	3,000.00	3,502.32	3,000.00	4,750.00	3,560.00
Employer NI	-	142.91	300.00	663.87	650.00	450.00	500.00
<b>Total staff costs</b>	<b>8,000.00</b>	<b>11,172.47</b>	<b>14,700.00</b>	<b>17,846.95</b>	<b>15,050.00</b>	<b>17,566.31</b>	<b>15,820.00</b>
<b>Office costs</b>							
Travel	500.00	-	50.00	-	50.00	-	-
Clerk's Training	500.00	230.00	150.00	715.00	100.00	-	100.00
Use of home as office	312.00	312.00	312.00	312.00	312.00	312.00	312.00
Post & stationery inc printer, mobile	350.00	611.35	600.00	484.10	550.00	550.00	1,500.00
Hall Hire	300.00	373.17	450.00	390.00	300.00	420.00	360.00
Insurance	1,400.00	1,303.05	1,400.00	1,414.13	1,600.00	1,188.50	1,189.00
Audit	400.00	434.70	400.00	320.00	400.00	472.00	500.00
Payroll Services	60.00	120.00	120.00	622.50	140.00	120.00	140.00
Info Commissioner/subs	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
SPCA (inc. NALC)	400.00	378.00	420.00	384.30	-	377.65	400.00
SLCC	130.00	140.00	140.00	171.00	-	-	-
<b>Total office costs</b>	<b>4,392.00</b>	<b>3,942.27</b>	<b>4,082.00</b>	<b>4,853.03</b>	<b>3,492.00</b>	<b>3,480.15</b>	<b>4,541.00</b>
<b>Maintenance costs</b>							
Grounds maintenance	10,000.00	9,377.10	11,000.00	8,708.00	11,000.00	9326.30	11,000.00
War memorial	500.00	-	3,000.00	6,171.67	250.00	150.00	250.00
Village pump	100.00	-	100.00	-	50.00	50.00	100.00
Noticeboards	100.00	17.52	100.00	-	50.00	785.00	100.00
SiDs	-	-	100.00	-	50.00	-	200.00
<b>Total maintenance costs</b>	<b>10,700.00</b>	<b>9,394.62</b>	<b>14,300.00</b>	<b>14,879.67</b>	<b>11,400.00</b>	<b>10,311.30</b>	<b>11,650.00</b>
<b>Additional maintenance</b>							
School Lane trees	500.00	-	2,000.00	700.00	500.00	500.00	500.00
Trip rails	-	250.00	300.00	175.00	100.00	100.00	250.00
<b>Total additional maintenance</b>	<b>500.00</b>	<b>250.00</b>	<b>2,300.00</b>	<b>1,310.00</b>	<b>600.00</b>	<b>600.00</b>	<b>750.00</b>
<b>Play area equipment</b>							
Maintenance	3,000.00	459.00	1,000.00	30.33	500.00	500.00	500.00
Purchases	-	107.88	20,000.00	29,366.23	-	-	2,000.00
RoSPA inspection	100.00	90.60	100.00	80.50	90.00	102.60	110.00
<b>Total play area</b>	<b>3,100.00</b>	<b>657.48</b>	<b>21,100.00</b>	<b>29,477.06</b>	<b>590.00</b>	<b>602.60</b>	<b>2,610.00</b>
<b>Other purchases</b>							
SiDs	2,500.00	2,090.58	-	-	-	-	500.00
Bench	2,000.00	-	-	-	-	500.00	-
<b>Total purchases</b>	<b>4,500.00</b>	<b>2,090.58</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>500.00</b>	<b>500.00</b>
<b>Community support</b>							
Grant 1	500.00	-	500.00	-	-	-	250.00
Grant 2	500.00	-	500.00	-	-	-	250.00
Grant 3	500.00	-	500.00	-	-	-	250.00
Grant 4	500.00	-	500.00	-	-	-	250.00
Chairman's allowance	100.00	164.99	150.00	35.83	75.00	75.00	75.00
Members' training	100.00	25.00	100.00	-	300.00	120.00	120.00
Website	1,000.00	-	250.00	131.95	140.00	140.00	140.00
Parish Newsletter	600.00	690.00	1,000.00	229.00	50.00	-	50.00
Parish events	-	-	1,000.00	1,386.04	1,000.00	100.00	1,000.00
<b>Total community support</b>	<b>3,800.00</b>	<b>879.99</b>	<b>4,500.00</b>	<b>1,762.82</b>	<b>1,565.00</b>	<b>435.00</b>	<b>2,385.00</b>
<b>Projects</b>							
Educational Support	500.00	-	-	-	-	-	200.00
Phone box	200.00	-	200.00	35.00	200.00	500.00	100.00
Coppices maintenance	4,500.00	2,959.14	32,000.00	13,683.00	500.00	3,000.00	9,000.00
<b>Total projects</b>	<b>5,200.00</b>	<b>2,959.14</b>	<b>32,200.00</b>	<b>13,718.00</b>	<b>700.00</b>	<b>3,500.00</b>	<b>9,300.00</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>40,192.00</b>	<b>31,346.55</b>	<b>93,182.00</b>	<b>83,867.53</b>	<b>33,397.00</b>	<b>36,995.36</b>	<b>47,556.00</b>
<b>Receipts</b>							
Precept (April & Oct)	26,536.00	25,304.00	25,799.25	25,799.25	27,744.97	27,744.97	41,274.08
Council tax support grant	1,231.00	1,231.00	1,230.75	1,230.75	1,230.75	1,230.75	704.92
B.C. (Concurrent Function Allowance)	1,507.00	1,507.00	1,507.00	1,507.00	1,507.00	1,507.00	1,507.00
SCC Minor Highways Agreement	1,500.00	-	1,500.00	5,094.00	2,200.00	2,662.00	2,750.00
Interest on Stafford Railway BS a/c	185.00	-	185.00	591.74	250.00	600.00	600.00
Interest on Teachers a/c	125.00	154.56	125.00	374.83	200.00	400.00	350.00
Interest on Hampshire Trust Bank	125.00	83.09	85.00	61.91	75.00	75.00	70.00
Grants	-	-	-	-	-	11,000.00	-
Other Receipts (Wayleaves etc)	50.00	-	50.00	7,695.79	45.00	7,000.00	300.00
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	<b>31,258.00</b>	<b>28,279.65</b>	<b>30,482.00</b>	<b>42,365.27</b>	<b>33,262.72</b>	<b>52,219.72</b>	<b>47,556.00</b>

- ii. **Precept Demand for 2024/25 – Resolved:** It was unanimously agreed to increase the precept by 50% an increase of £17.44 per Band D household.  
**Action: Clerk**
- iii. **Bank Reconciliation and Expenditure for November and December 2023 – Resolved:** unanimously approved.

Bank Reconciliation as at 20 November 2023

Receipts			
Company	Description	Amount	Date Received
<b>Total Receipts</b>		<b>£0.00</b>	

Payments						
Paid to	Description	Invoice date	Cheque #	Gross Incl. VAT	VAT	Net
Mrs Sue Fullwood	Clerk salary November 23	30/11/2023	802	£953.27	£0.00	£953.27
Staffs Pension Fund	Employee & employer pensions contributions Nov 2023	30/11/2023	804	£295.36	£0.00	£295.36
HMRC	Employee & employer NI contributions Nov 2023	30/11/2023	805	£30.81	£0.00	£30.81
<b>Total Payments</b>				<b>£1,279.44</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£1,279.44</b>

**Cashbook**

Opening Balance at 20.10.2023 28,358.30

Add:  
Receipts 20.10.2023 to 20.11.2023 0.00

Less  
Payments 20.10.2023 to 20.11.2023 1,279.44

Cashbook Balance at 20.11.2023 **27,078.86**

**Current Account**

Bank statement Balance at 20.10.2023 35,035.82

Less payments made **4,693.63**

Less: Unpresented Cheques	Chq No.s	Amount
	(HMRC Nov 22) 729	£193.61
	766	£27.53
	791	£12.75
	798	£1,750.00
	802	£953.27
	804	£295.36
	805	£30.81
		<b>£3,263.33</b>

Add: receipts 0.00

Add: Unpresented Receipts 0.00

C/A balance 20.11.2023 carried forward **£ 30,342.19**

Available funds in C/A **£ 27,078.86**

Bank Reconciliation as at 20 December 2023

Receipts			
Company	Description	Amount	Date Received
<b>Total Receipts</b>		<b>£0.00</b>	

Payments						
Paid to	Description	Invoice date	Cheque #	Gross Incl. VAT	VAT	Net
Rob Keyzor Tree Surgeons	Works at School Lane, Walton	14/12/2023	807	£10,822.98	£1,803.83	£9,019.15
Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation	Recycled Plastic Bench	20/11/2023	808	£483.54	£80.59	£402.95
Staffs County Council	Website Hosting & Domain 23/24	11/12/2023	809	£125.00	£0.00	£125.00
Staffs Pension Fund	Employee & emp cont.s Dec 23	31/12/2023	810	£311.01	£0.00	£311.01
DM Payroll Services	Payroll admin Oct 23 - Mar 24	06/12/2023	811	£60.00	£0.00	£60.00
Walton (Berkswich) Village Hall	Room hire 7 Nov 2023	27/11/2023	812	£30.00	£0.00	£30.00
HMRC	Employer NI Dec 2023	31/12/2023	813	£37.98	£0.00	£37.98
Mrs S Fullwood	Clerk Salary 7 expenses Dec 2023	31/12/2023	814	£1,173.41	£0.00	£1,173.41
<b>Total Payments</b>				<b>£13,043.92</b>	<b>£1,884.42</b>	<b>£11,159.50</b>

**Cashbook**

Opening Balance at 20.11.2023	27,078.86
Add:	
Receipts 20.11.2023 to 20.12.2023	0.00
Less	
Payments 20.11.2023 to 20.12.2023	13,043.92
Cashbook Balance at 20.12.2023	<b>14,034.94</b>

**Current Account**

Bank statement Balance at 20.11.2023	30,342.19
Less payments made	3,029.44

Less: Unpresented Cheques	Chq No.s	Amount	
	(HMRC Nov 22) 729	£193.61	
	(SPCA Apr 23) 766	£27.53	
	791	£12.75	
	807	£10,822.98	
	808	£483.54	
	809	£125.00	
	810	£311.01	
	811	£60.00	
	812	£30.00	
	813	£37.98	
	814	£1,173.41	
			<b>13277.81</b>

Add: receipts	0.00
Add: Unpresented Receipts	0.00
C/A balance 20.12.2023 carried forward	£ 27,312.75
Available funds in C/A	<b>£ 14,034.94</b>

iv **Budget Report for November and December 2023. Resolved:** unanimously approved.

**Budget Report November 2023**

RECEIPTS	To date	Budget	Less / more than budget
Precept	27,745	27,745	-0
Council tax support grant	1,231	1,231	0
SBC (Concurrent Function Allowance)	1,507	1,507	0
SCC Minor Highways Agreement	2,662	2,200	462
Interest Stafford Railway BS A/c	0	250	-250
Interest Teachers A/c	0	200	-200
Interest Hampshire Trust	36	75	-39
Grants	11,211	0	11,211
Misc. Receipts (e.g. VAT reclaim & waylea	12,369	45	12,324
<b>Total income</b>	<b>£ 56,760</b>	<b>£ 33,253</b>	<b>£ 23,508</b>

PAYMENTS	To date	Budget	Under / Over budget
Staff costs	10,749	15,050	4,301
Office costs	3,206	3,492	286
Maintenance costs	9,200	11,400	2,200
Additional maintenance	-	600	600
Play Area	103	590	487
Capital purchases	-	-	0
Community support	160	1,565	1,405
Projects	965	700	-265
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>£ 24,382</b>	<b>£ 33,397</b>	<b>£ 9,015</b>

### Budget Report December 2023

RECEIPTS	To date	Budget	Less / more than budget
Precept	27,745	27,745	-0
Council tax support grant	1,231	1,231	0
SBC (Concurrent Function Allowance)	1,507	1,507	0
SCC Minor Highways Agreement	2,662	2,200	462
Interest Stafford Railway BS A/c	0	250	-250
Interest Teachers A/c	0	200	-200
Interest Hampshire Trust	36	75	-39
Grants	11,211	0	11,211
Misc. Receipts (e.g. VAT reclaim & waylea	12,369	45	12,324
<b>Total income</b>	<b>£ 56,760</b>	<b>£ 33,253</b>	<b>£ 23,508</b>

PAYMENTS	To date	Budget	Under / Over budget
Staff costs	12,074	15,050	2,976
Office costs	3,311	3,492	181
Maintenance costs	9,200	11,400	2,200
Additional maintenance	9,019	600	-8,419
Play Area	103	590	487
Capital purchases	403	-	-403
Community support	285	1,565	1,280
Projects	1,095	700	-395
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>£ 35,490</b>	<b>£ 33,397</b>	<b>-£ 2,093</b>

### Earmarked Funds Allocation

Elections	£10,000
Crime Prevention Measures	£24,000
Walton Coppice Maintenance Fund	£12,500
Hollybush Coppice Maintenance Fund	£10,000
Asset Replacement Fund	£45,000
Environmental Care	£35,000
General Reserve	£27,775
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>£164,275</b>

The Clerk reported that VAT on the previous FiPL Grant had been reclaimed from HMRC mistakenly and she would look into returning the incorrectly claimed money to HMRC.

### 24/8 Reports from other Meetings

- i. **Environment Group** – Cllr Luker reported that the application for a FiPL grant for further work at Walton Coppice had been successful and the Council had been awarded £9192.02. Larger scale work including thinning larger trees would be completed by Treeworks. Burton Conservation Volunteers were scheduled to attend on 4 February and 3 March to train volunteers including Scouts in how to undertake smaller tasks so that ongoing management can be undertaken by volunteers. Residents of Bluebell Hollow would also be invited to attend the training.  
A second application was being worked on by Cllr Taylor, Cllr Luker and the Clerk for work at Hollybush Coppice with plans to move the fencing over to allow direct access for Berkswich Primary School. The Clerk had written to residents of Holly Drive who back onto the Coppice and the single response received had been positive.
- ii. **Village Hall Council of Management** – Cllr Pearson had nothing to report. Cllr Taylor asked if there was a pricing structure as he knew that some groups paid less than the Parish Council. **Resolved:** Cllr Pearson to raise with VHCM at the next meeting. **Action: Cllr Pearson**

### 24/9 Agenda Items for the Next Meeting scheduled for Tuesday 6 February 2024 at 7.30 pm in the Main Hall, Walton Village Hall

Agenda items agreed were: Graffiti at the garage on The Rise/Milford Road; Interest in Best Kept Village competition.

The meeting closed at 8:40 pm.