

**Minutes of the Meeting of Bitteswell with Bittesby Parish Council  
Held at The Church Meeting Room, St Mary's Church, Bitteswell  
on Wednesday 08 January 2025 at 7.00pm**

**Present:** Councillor John Allsopp (Chairman)  
Councillor Nigel Chapman  
Councillor Pippa Clarkson  
Councillor Kevin Dumbill  
Clerk Cathy Walsh  
District and County Councillor Page  
2 member(s) of the public

**25.1. To receive apologies for absence**

None.

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

As a Church Warden at St Mary's Church, Councillor Chapman declared a registerable interest in item 25.16.

As the Parish Council's representative to the Magna Park Community Liaison Group, Councillor Clarkson requested and was granted a dispensation of 4 years.

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

None to consider.

**25.4. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 06 November 2024**

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

**25.5. To review any actions from the minutes of the meeting held on 06 November 2024**

None.

**25.6. To note any matters raised by District and County Councillor Rosita Page**

Councillor Page reported on the financial pressures faced by Leicestershire County Council, school places, The Household Support Fund, Harborough District Council's (HDC) emerging Local Plan, the Government's plan to reorganise local government so every region of England has a Mayor, heading a combined authority. Under the proposals, the county's existing seven district and borough councils could be abolished.

**25.7. To note any comments or matters raised by residents**

None.

**25.8. Bitteswell Village Hall**

**(a) To consider a request from Bitteswell Village Hall Committee for a letter of support to accompany its application to Harborough District Council's Community Grant Fund**

Bitteswell Village Hall Committee is applying to the Community Grant Fund for £5,000 towards repairs and improvements at Bitteswell Village Hall. A requirement of the

application is a letter of support from the Parish Council.

The total amount of money allocated from the Community Grant Fund to the parish is £10,000. As the council is also considering applying to the fund it **resolved** to approve support up to £5,000 from the fund towards the project.

**(b) To consider a grant funding request from Bitteswell Village Hall Committee towards the cost of the village hall renovation project**

The committee is seeking grant funding towards the project. It has already secured funding from various sources. The council **resolved** to approve funding of £2,500 towards the project.

The two members of the public and Councillor Page left the meeting.

**25.9. Finance and Audit**

**(a) To approve payments and sign receipts for any BACS payments**

It was **resolved** to approve the schedule of payments below. There were no BACS payments made in the reporting period.

Ref No.	Type	Payee	Description	Total
E25-62	SO	Cathy Walsh	Salary - Nov 2024	X
E25-63	DD	NEST	Pension - Nov 2024	X
E25-64	DD	Sky Mobile	Mobile phone bill 02.12.24 to 01.01.25	£15.00
E25-65	SO	DCK Payroll Solutions Limited	Payroll - Nov 2024	£36.00
E25-66	SO	DCK Payroll Solutions Limited	Payroll - Dec 2024	£36.00
E25-67	SO	Cathy Walsh	Salary - Dec 2024	X
E25-68	DD	NEST	Pension - Dec 2024	X

**(b) To note the Bank Reconciliation at 03 January 2025**

**Resolved** to note the Bank Reconciliation.

**Bank Reconciliation for year ending 31 March 2025**

Opening Balance	1-Apr-24	<b>£33,553.18</b>
Receipts to	3-Jan-25	£34,013.70
Payments to	3-Jan-25	-£13,795.39
<b>Cash in hand at</b>	3-Jan-25	<b>£53,771.49</b>
<i>(as per Cash Book)</i>		

**Cash in hand per Bank Statements**

Current Account	£16,647.23
Business Reserve Account	£16,338.05
Pre-paid Debit Card	£83.58
Liquidity Manager 35 Day	£20,702.63
Plus unrepresented receipts	£0.00
Less unrepresented payments	£0.00
<b>Bank Reconciliation at</b>	<b>£53,771.49</b>
3-Jan-25	

Signed by Meeting Chair: .....

**(c) To note the Receipts & Payments Summary at 03 January 2025**

The Receipts & Payments Summary was noted. This monitors the council's income and expenditure against the agreed budget.

**(d) To note the Neighbourhood Plan expenditure to date**

The expenditure to date was noted.

**(e) To approve the budget for the financial year 01 April 2025 to 31 March 2026**

It was resolved to set a budget of £36,575 for the financial year 2025-2026 which included estimated income from other sources of £2,621

**(f) To approve the precept for the financial year 01 April 2025 to 31 March 2026**

It was resolved to send a precept request to Harborough District Council for the sum of £36,575. This equates to £149.67 per year for each Band D dwelling, an increase of £17.26 per year or 13.0%.

**25.10. To approve the grass cutting rates for the 2025-2026 season**

It was resolved to increase the rates the council pays its contractor to £275 per cut for the Village Greens. To increase the rate to £350 per cut for the Churchyard Extension. To keep the rates for cutting the urban areas (verges) the same.

**25.11. To approve the rates for using the clerk's home as the council's office for 2025-2026**

It was resolved to increase the rates the council pays the clerk to £83.33 per month.

**25.12. To receive an update on parking at the Football Club, Hall Lane**

Councillor Page made observations of dangerous/almost impassible parking along Hall Lane when she drove past this evening. Michael English, Chairman of Lutterworth Athletic FC is keen to meet with the Parish Council to find a way forward. It agreed to arrange a meeting with Mr English and to extend the invitation to Lutterworth Town Council.

**25.13. To receive an update on Lutterworth Road footpath flooding**

An estimate to sweep the footpath is being prepared by The Traditional Handyman Company. The clerk will ask Mark Osborne to see if he would also like to provide an estimate.

**25.14. To receive an update on the timeline for the emerging Harborough Local Plan**

Harborough District Council will be considering recommending that the Local Plan goes to public consultation (under Regulation 19) at its forthcoming Cabinet and Council meetings. It is expected that the draft Local Plan will be published for public consultation before 12 March 2025 for a minimum of 6 weeks.

**25.15. To consider whether to run Parish Council surgeries**

To improve engagement between the council and residents, members considered whether it was worth holding a trial Parish Council surgery. Surgeries provide an opportunity for any resident to go and talk their councillor face to face. It was noted that as Parish Council

meetings/the Annual Parish Meeting is never well attended by residents, it was likely that the footfall would be low/zero. A better solution might be to include details about Parish Council activities in the village newsletter. Councillor Dumbill volunteered to liaise with the editor of the newsletter.

**25.16. To discuss the lack of external lighting at St Mary's Church**

Due to financial pressures, St Mary's Church is no longer lit externally. As a feature of the village, desire to highlight an historic landmark and to improve visibility for visitors, the council discussed whether it should make a financial contribution towards the running costs to get the external lighting reinstated. The council has received 2 estimates for the annual cost and is keen to explore the idea further.

**Agenda** for the next meeting.

**25.17. To schedule the annual village inspection**

This is deferred until the spring once there are more daylight hours.

**25.18. To Planning Matters**

**(a) To review and comment on new planning applications**

None.

**(b) To note any other planning matters**

None.

**(c) To receive an update on the Bitteswell with Bittesby Neighbourhood Plan**

Councillor Allsopp has contacted Matt Bills at Harborough District Council to seek information on the current housing allocation number.

**25.19. Any other business**

**(a) Fly-Tipping**

Councillor Dumbill updated member on fly-tipping issues. Two people are in the process of being prosecuted for fly tipping on Woodby Lane. Due to the contamination risk of materials dumped on Mere Lane, Environmental Health is investigating.

**(b) MVAS**

The MVAS has been out of operation for at least 3 weeks. Councillor Dumbill volunteered to take responsibility for charging and moving the unit throughout the village. Due to the age of the unit, outdated technology and lack of solar power, the council is considering upgrading the MVAS.

**Agenda for the next meeting.**

**(c) Food Banks**

It came to light over Christmas that Food Banks are unable to accept donations from members of the public unless they come officially from supermarkets. It was suggested

that in future, people should advertise donations of surplus food on the village Facebook page.

**(d) Community Fundraising Meeting – Lychgate and Margaret’s Gate**

A meeting has been scheduled for 28 January 2025.

**25.20. To confirm the date of the next meeting**

Wednesday 12 March 2025 at 7pm in the Church Meeting Room at St Mary’s Church, Bitteswell. All welcome to attend.

Meeting closed at 8.27pm.

Signed by Meeting Chair: .....