

BLOXHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT JUBILEE HALL, BARLEY CLOSE, BLOXHAM ON MONDAY 7 APRIL 2025 AT 7.00PM

PRESENT: Chairman, Councillor David Bunn; Councillors Steve Craggs, Mike Fenner, Alex Harrison, Neil Hegarty, Richard Morley, David Morris and Nick Rayner.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Theresa Goss (Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer), District Councillors David Hingley and Gordon Blakeway and three members of the public.

188/24 Apologies – Parish Councillor Russell Avens submitted his apologies because he was unwell.

Parish Councillor Joanna Barton submitted her apologies because she was at work.

Parish Councillor Amanda Baxter submitted her apologies because she was unwell.

Resolved that the apologies from Councillors Russell Avens, Joanna Barton and Amanda Baxter be approved and the absences authorised.

189/24 Declarations of Interest – There were no declarations of interest.

190/24 Minutes – Prior to the meeting, the minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2025 had been circulated to the Parish Council and were taken as read.

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2025 be approved.

191/24 Matters Arising – There were no matters arising.

192/24 Chairman's Announcements

- Leonard Leigh – The Chairman was saddened to announce that former Chairman, Leonard Leigh had passed away. Leonard's funeral was being held on Monday 14 April 2025 in Chipping Norton and all Councillors were welcome to attend. A letter of condolence would be sent to Leonard's Family. **Action TG**
- Planning Application 24/02541/OUT, William Davis Homes – This application had been expected to be considered by Cherwell District Council's Planning Committee in March 2025. However, it had been delayed. There were a number of new documents on the planning portal relating to the application and it was now expected to be determined in May or June 2025. Councillor Gordon Blakeway would contact the planning officers for clarification. **Action GB**
- Bloxham Conservation Area Appraisal – Cherwell District Council was completing a re-appraisal of the Bloxham Conservation Area. The public consultation period ran from 6 May 2025 to 17 June 2025 and an exhibition would be held at Jubilee Hall on 7 May 2025, 3pm to 7pm.
- Courtington Lane Footpath – The County Council had surveyed the footpath, but it did not meet their criteria for patching work. The Highways Engagement Team had requested Highways to complete a category 3 repair, which would be re-surfacing of the whole area.
- White Lining – There had been numerous requests for white lining at junctions to deter parking on corners as well as the remarking of the lines outside of The Loft on the A361. It appeared that the Parish Council was being ignored by the County Council as these had not been progressed. The matters had been escalated at the County Council and officers had completed some of the white lining at the junctions, but not all matters had been addressed, which was disappointing.
- 20mph Repeater Signs – Since the introduction of 20mph speed restrictions, there had not been any 20mph repeater signs located on Barford Road. The Clerk would contact the County Council to request additional signs. **Action TG**

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- Lamp Post on Courtington Lane - The County Council had replaced a lamp post on Courtington Lane and the bracket for the VAS had been removed with it. The Clerk would contact the County Council to request that the bracket is returned. **Action TG**

193/24 Open Forum – A resident reported that traffic was turning too quickly from Barford Road onto the A361 at the mini roundabout and asked whether a ‘stop sign’ could be erected. The Chairman advised that the County Council had confirmed a number of times that unfortunately, there was nothing they could do to improve the situation at that roundabout.

The resident also suggested yellow lining, with restrictions from 8am-6pm for ‘No Waiting’ along the A361 near to The Loft. The Chairman advised that yellow lining along that stretch would also affect residents if it was reclassified as a restricted area.

The Chairman reported that car parks in Banbury charged more if customers used the Ringo app, rather than using cash or a debit card. District Councillor Gordon Blakeway reported that he would address this matter with Cherwell District Council (CDC) officers, but it was likely to be a ‘convenience charge’. **Action GB**

Councillor Blakeway also confirmed that the new CDC staff car park had been allocated to staff because it had been out of commission following the flooding. The cost was too high to put the car park back into commission for public use and had therefore been allocated for staff parking. It would also be easier to manage if there was another flooding event in the future, as it would only be CDC staff who would need to be alerted.

Councillor Alex Harrison reported that another defibrillator training course was being held on 23 April 2025, 7pm-9pm at Jubilee Hall, Bloxham. The Clerk would advertise the event on Facebook. **Action TG**

Councillor Richard Morley reported that Bloxham School was completing work at their entrance on A361, but the fencing was starting to encroach onto the footpath. Councillor Morley would contact Tim Seton and the Head Teacher at Bloxham School. **Action RM**

A resident asked about traffic calming around the Primary School and whether a crossing could be erected to improve road safety for parents and children. The Chairman advised that this could be picked up as part of the work of the Traffic Calming Working Group. Although, any funding for such a project would have to come through Section 106 funds following a new development in the village.

The Chairman reports that footballs were being kicked against the wooden fencing in Jubilee Park. The Jubilee Park Management Committee would be requested to erect some signage. **Action TG/DB**

(For information, following guidance from the National Association of Local Councils, the Parish Council did not specifically name individual residents within its minutes, unless they were speaking in an official capacity)

194/24 Reports from County and District Councillors – Councillor Gordon Blakeway reported that the County Council elections on 1 May 2025, would be the last elections before Unity Councils were formed in Oxfordshire. Three proposals were being considered by the Councils in Oxfordshire and final recommendations would be submitted to the Government later in the year.

Cherwell District Council staff had moved into Castle Quay and the move had gone smoothly. The Local Plan was continuing to be reviewed and would be submitted to the Inspectorate in due course.

The Chairman asked the District Councillors if there was a cut-off date for inclusion of planning applications in the Local Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan. Councillor Blakeway would contact officers to establish this. **Action GB**

There was no report from County Councillor Kieron Mallon.

Councillor Blakeway was thanked for his report.

195/24 Environment/Village Matters

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- i) Flooding – The Chairman reported that the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 10 March 2025 had been circulated to the Parish Council and were available on the Council's web site. Councillor Neil Hegarty had also circulated a progress report on the work of the Working Group.

The next meeting of the Working Group was being held w/c 14 April 2025.

Resolved that:

- 1) the report be noted;
 - 2) the actions of the Working Group be noted; and
 - 3) the update by Councillor Neil Hegarty be published on the Parish Council's web site. **Action NH/TG**
- ii) Annual Parish Meeting – The Parish Council discussed the plans for the Annual Parish Meeting being held on Thursday 24 April 2025 and it was agreed to progress with a similar format to the 2024 meeting.

Resolved that the report be noted.

- iii) Dog Waste Bin – The Parish Council considered a request for a new dog waste bin on the A361, near to the pedestrian crossing/Service Station.

The Chairman also reported that the condition of the dog waste bin at The Gogs was deteriorating and needed to be replaced.

Resolved that:

- 1) the report be noted;
 - 2) the purchase of a new dog waste bin to be located on the A361 near to Bloxham Service Station be approved;
 - 3) the purchase of a replacement dog waste bin at The Gogs be approved; and
 - 4) Paul Lester be requested to install both of the dog waste bins. **Action TG**
- iv) Track on the A361 (by the green), opposite The Joiners Arms, Bloxham – The Parish Council had received a report from the County Council regarding works at this site. It was not clear why this small track had been tarmacked during the resurfacing works on the A361.

The Clerk was asked to contact the Conservation Officer at Cherwell District Council regarding whether permission should have been sought for this work. Councillors also queried whether bollards could be erected to stop traffic using the track.

Resolved that the report be noted and the Clerk to seek clarification from Cherwell District Council regarding work in the Conservation Area and the County Council with regard to the erection of bollards. **Action TG**

196/24 Planning

- i) Planning Applications/Works to Trees – Prior to the meeting, the details of the planning applications/works to trees which had been considered by the Parish Council, since the last meeting, had been circulated.

Resolved that, it be noted and approved that observations had been made by the Parish Council in respect of the following planning applications/works to trees:

25/00232/TCA Long Leys, Queen Street, Bloxham
Works to reduce crown of Yew Y1-3 by 50% and reshape to hedge.

25/00270/F Red Lion, High Street, Bloxham
RETROSPECTIVE - Erection of a Marquee

25/00357/F 13 Cumberford Close, Bloxham

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Single storey rear extension

25/00426/F 2 Westbourne Court, Bloxham
Relocation of front door, removal of patio doors and replace with window and open porch to front of property, along with internal works

Resolved that, it be noted and approved that objections had been made by the Parish Council in respect of the following planning applications/works to trees:

24/03399/OUT Land West Of The Old Piggeries, Bloxham Road, Milcombe
Outline planning application, together with associated access off Bloxham Road (all other matters reserved), for up to 50 homes (Use Class C3) together with associated infrastructure, open space and landscaping; and retained agricultural field

Resolved that, it be noted and approved that observations had been made by the Parish Council in respect of the following planning applications/works to trees:

24/03321/M106 OS Parcel 0006 Adjoining North Side Of Ell's Lane Bloxham
Modification of Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for 23/00065/OUT
1. Facilitate Deeley Homes in delivering discounted market sale homes as opposed to affordable dwellings 2. Enable funds for a LAP to be re-allocated to Jubilee Park and David Tyrrell Recreation Ground Play Areas

Resolved that, it be noted that the Parish Council is considering the following planning applications/works to trees:

25/00460/F Red Lion, High Street, Bloxham
Rear extension to the Red Lion, including a micro-brewery and minor interior amendments

25/00628/F Field Day Dog Field, Barford Road, Bloxham
RETROSPECTIVE - Use of land as dog exercise area

25/00738/F The Gables, 4 Westbourne Court, Bloxham
Demolition of conservatory and erection of a single storey sunroom to rear

- ii) Results of Planning Applications – The Parish Council noted decisions made by Cherwell District Council since the last meeting of the Parish Council.

Resolved that the report be noted.

197/24 Parish Council Matters

- i) Parish Councillor Vacancy – The Parish Council considered an application for co-option onto the Parish Council.

Resolved that Laura Noakes be co-opted onto the Parish Council. **Action TG**

- ii) Drop-In and Chat – The Chairman reported on the issues which had been raised at the last session held on 8 March 2025. The next session was being held on 12 April 2025.

Resolved that the report be noted.

- iii) EV Charging Points – The Chairman reported that Councillor Russell Avens was still working on the project and would update the Parish Council in due course.

Resolved that the report be noted.

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199/24 Finance

- i) Financial Matters – Prior to the meeting, a number of financial documents were circulated to the Parish Council.

Resolved that:

- 1) the accounts for payment be approved, as detailed in appendix 1 to the minutes;
- 2) the receipts since the last meeting, the uncashed payments & uncashed receipts and the bank reconciliation, as at 7 April 2025 for the bank accounts at Unity Trust Bank be noted; and
- 3) it be noted that Councillor Joanna Barton, as Councillor for monitoring the Parish Council's internal controls, has signed the uncashed payments list, the uncashed receipts list, the bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2025 and the Unity Trust bank statements for March 2025.

- ii) Budget Monitoring 2025/2026 – Prior to the meeting, the Parish Council received budget monitoring report for 2025/2026.

Resolved that the report be noted.

- iii) General, Ring-Fenced and Ear-Marked Reserves – Prior to the meeting, the general and ear-marked reserves had been circulated to the Parish Council.

Resolved that the report be noted and the reserves be approved.

- iv) Statement of Accounts 2024/2025 – The Parish Council considered the Receipts & Payments Account as at 31 March 2025.

Resolved that the Statement of Accounts for year ended 31 March 2025 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

- v) Internal Audit Report 2024/2025 – The Parish Council considered the Internal Auditor's report for 2024/2025 and the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/2025.

Resolved that the Internal Audit Report 2024/2025 and Annual Governance and Accountability Return Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/2025 be noted and the progress with the Internal Auditor's recommendations be noted and approved.

- vi) Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the year ended 31 March 2025 – The Parish Council considered Section 1 of the AGAR, the Annual Governance Statement 2024/2025.

Resolved that Section 1 of the AGAR, the Annual Governance Statement 2024/2025 be approved and submitted to the External Auditor, Moore. **Action TG**

- vii) Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the year ended 31 March 2025 – The Parish Council considered Section 2 of the AGAR, the Accounting Statements 2024/2025.

Resolved that Section 2 of the AGAR, the Accounting Statements 2024/2025 be approved and submitted to the External Auditor, Moore. **Action TG**

- viii) Explanation of Variances 2024/2025 – The Parish Council considered the explanation of the variances over 15% compared to 2024/2025.

Resolved that Explanation of Variances over 15% compared to 2023/2024 be noted and approved. **Action TG**

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- ix) Notice of Public Rights – The Parish Council considered the public rights to inspect the Parish Council's accounting records for 2024/2025 for 30 days starting from 10 June 2025 until 21 July 2025.

Resolved that the public has the right to inspect the Parish Council's accounting records from 10 June 2025 to 21 July 2025 and the External Auditor, Moore, be advised of these dates. **Action TG**

- x) Appointment of Internal Auditor for 2025/2026 – The Parish Council considered appointing Auditing Solutions Ltd as the Internal Auditor for 2025/2026.

Resolved that Accounting Solutions Ltd be appointed as the Parish Council's Internal Auditor for 2025/2026.
Action TG

200/24 Correspondence – There was no further correspondence.

201/24 Exclusion of the Public and Press

Resolved that in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the minutes numbered 202/24, 203/24 204/24 on the grounds that it could involve the likely disclosure of private and confidential information which was not in the public domain.

202/24 Right of Access – The Parish Council discussed its agreement with Bloxham School regarding the right of access across Jubilee Park to Dewey Sports Centre.

Resolved that the report be noted.

203/24 Quote for Lights at St Mary's Church – The Parish Council considered a quote for works to the lights at St Mary's Church, which were a Parish Council asset.

Resolved that this item be deferred and David Andrews be invited to attend a Parish Council meeting to discuss the issue. **Action TG/DB**

204/24 Bloxham Neighbourhood Development Plan – The Chairman gave an update on the Bloxham Neighbourhood Development Plan and the work with the Parish Council consultants, ONH.

Resolved that:

- 1) further clarification and a breakdown of costs be sought from ONH regarding their first invoice for their work on the Neighbourhood Plan;
- 2) the Parish Council to meet and agree the scope of the review and how the project moves forward, given there is no one to lead the project; and
- 3) a meeting be arranged with Chris Cherry at Cherwell District Council to discuss the review of the Plan.

Action TG

(The public were invited back into the meeting at the conclusion of this item)

205/24 Meeting Dates – The Chairman reported that the next Parish Council meetings would be held at Jubilee Hall, Barley Close, Bloxham, commencing at 7.00pm.

Resolved that it be noted that, future meeting dates for Bloxham Parish Council are as stated below.

- Thursday 24 April 2025 (Bloxham Annual Parish Meeting)
- Monday 12 May 2025

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- Monday 2 June 2025
- Monday 7 July 2025

206/24 Items for Future Agendas/Items of Information

- Traffic Calming Working Group
- Wildlife Corridors
- Staffing Committee

(The meeting ended at 9.00pm)

Chairman – 12 May 2025