

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Blackthorn				
Held:	Blackthorn Village Hall		On:	Thursday 6 July 2023 at 7.30pm.
Present:	Chairman Mrs J. Lamont (JL), Cllrs. Parish Council Vice-Chairman Cllr. Mr R. Rue (RR), R. Lamont, Mr R. Burden (RB) and Mrs A. Stevenson (AS).			
In Attendance:	T. Charlesworth (Clerk/RFO) and District Cllr. J. Nedelcu.			
Item No	Topic		Action owner	Due Date
23.116	Apologies: Accepted from: Accepted from Mr C. Hegarty-Swain (CHS).			
23.117	To receive declarations of Personal or Personal and Prejudicial Interests':			
	- Register of Members' Interest: - Cllr. R. Rue declared an interest in 23.126-11.4-a - Withdrawal Notice: Application No.:22/03742/F: As the withdrawal was just noted Cllr. R. Rue did not leave the meeting.			
23.118	Minutes			
	RESOLVED: 3.1: Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 1 June 2023 at 7.30pm were approved and signed by the Chairman Cllr. J. Lamont. 3.2: Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parishioners of Blackthorn held on 18 May 2023 at 8pm were approved and signed by the Chairman Cllr. J. Lamont.			
23.119	Vacancy/Co-option:			
	No applications.			
23.120	District/County Cllrs:			
	Election: District Cllr. J. Nedelcu was welcomed to the meeting, as a Liberal Democrat he was elected in May for Launton and Otmoor; he is a member of the Planning Committee; following introductions reported: - The District Council parties consists of: Labour ten members; Conservatives twenty members and Liberal Democrats fourteen members; an unelected member stands as Chair. The next district election will be difficult to manage. Budget: The District Council budget is okay, whereas the County Council is struggling financially. Planning: Is running behind and needs another nine officers in order to catch up.			
23.121	Code of Conduct:			
	a. Code of Conduct Training – YouTube: Councillors reminded to view: Cllr. RL has viewed. Link to be resent to councillors. Clerk.			
23.122	Civility & Respect Pledge:			
	a. Training: Cllr. R. Lamont has reviewed all the information and looked at the training. b. Dignity at Work Policy: To be revised. c. To put in place a training programme for councillors and staff: To be reviewed carried forward. RL			
23.123	Matters for Report			
	8.1: None.			
23.124	Project Reports:			
	9.1: Drainage and Flooding: a. River Bank Repairs/Network Rail: Three members of the Parish Council attended the Ray Valley Forum meeting; it was noted that for the first time since 1878 one of the parishes farmers lost the use of 35acres of land due to flooding. A meeting is to be held in Blackthorn in the next month inviting various parties to discuss previous recommendations. O.C.C. have a toolkit available to prepare a Water Management Plan. b. Blackthorn Brook: O.C.C. advised that the Parish Council will be raising a letter of complaint. RR			
	9.2: Traffic Calming: All items c/fwd. a. Village Plan: Review of proposals:- i. White Traffic Calming Gates: Update on condition of gates and proposals: Measurements of gates to be reviewed. CHS Proposed new gate on Station Road at the junction of Weir Lane: Consider if permission needs to be sought. i. Speed Check: To consider contacting the Police to carry out speed check. ii. 20mph Application: Second consultation: List of questions to be prepared for next meeting with a view to carrying out a door-to-door survey. iii. It was noted that legislation has now caught up with the 20mph speed limit. RL b. Residents Only Road: Update.			
	9.3: Play Area: a. Maintenance: Works following quarterly inspection completed and invoice submitted. b. Maintenance Procedure: A template to be devised. JL			
	BUSINESS			
23.125	Finance:			
	10.1: To accept the list of accounts paid prior to the meeting and receipts received and to approve payment of invoices:			
	a. Accounts Paid Prior to the Meeting: i. None.			
	b. Receipts: i. None.			

ii.	Allotment Rent: Reminders to be sent out.	Clerk	
c.	Invoices for payment: It was RESOLVED that the list of invoices were approved for payment:		
i.	Clerks Pay/Exp June 2023 - £179.65 – Cheque No: 101467.		
	Working from Home Allowance - £6.00 per week: To be reviewed as part of the Clerks contract.	RFO/Clerk	
ii.	M.R. & J.S. Cross – Inv. No's: 191 - £732.00 (grass cutting verges 20.6.2023) – 192 - £324.00 (Grass cutting play area 6.6.2023/20.6.2023) – Total £1,056.00 – Cheque No: .101468.		
iii.	Trevor Stewart Play Equipment – Inv. No: TS211 - £811.20 – (Quarterly May Inspection £225.00 - shackles, Swing Seats x 2, Small Ramp as per quote £451.00 both subject to VAT) – Cheque No: 101469.		
iv.	Navitas Design Ltd - £71.99 - Cheque No: 101470: Approved as annual website hosting and domain name.		
v.	Local Council Administration (formerly known as Charles Arnold Baker after the first author):		
	RESOLVED:		
	- That a copy of the 13th Edition of Local Council Administration be ordered from SLCC – Cost £137.00 plus £4.00 postage plus VAT. - Clerk to approach Merton Parish Council with a view to sharing the cost rather than purchasing a copy each.	RFO/Clerk	
	10.2: Bank Reconciliation to date: (attached): It was RESOLVED to accept and approve the bank reconciliation as follows:		
	1.4.2023 Up to 30.6.2023 (Bank St. Issue Date: 19.6.2023): Noted that there is no interest recorded from Scottish Widows Plc:		
	- Balance B/fwd £ 23,865.37 - Add Total Receipts £ 7,274.21 - Less Total Payments £ 5,508.68 - Balance C/fwd £ 25,630.90 - Clerk to contact Scottish Widows Plc regarding bank statements. - Internal Controls: Review C/fwd; dates of last period to be checked.	Clerk RL Clerk/RFO	
	10.3: Budget Comparison:		
	RESOLVED		
	- To accept and approve the budget comparison 1 April 2023 up to 6 July 2023. - Payments and Receipts: First quarter in-line with budget with the exception of the Clerks overtime for 2022/23.	Clerk	
	10.4 VAT Claim:		
	a. Spreadsheet: Presented and accepted:	Clerk/RFO	
	b. Claim: Submitted to HMRC for £755.36.		
	10.5: Quotes:		
	a. Allotment Post: C/fwd.	JL	
	b. White Gates: See 23.124-9.2-a-i.	CHS	
	10.6: Grants/Funding: To consider applications for:-		
	a. O.C.C. - FW: BUPA Green Community Grant - Deadline 30/6/2023:		
	b. O.C.C. - £280,000 SSEN Community Resilience Funding – 2023		
	c. Councillors Priority Fund: Re-opened application process:	JL	
	10.7: End of Year Audit 2022/23:		
	a. Internal Auditor Report – Action from Report:		
	i. Reserves Policy:	RL/Clerk	
	RESOLVED:		
	To approve the adoption of the amended reserves policy.		
	ii. Staff Appraisal: Chairman to respond to Clerk.	JL/Clerk	
	iii. Payroll Controls: OALC advised the Clerk to start the financial year as a new employer; any further advice from the Employer Advisor would be forwarded:		
	iv. Chair to speak to volunteer (bus shelter/play area bins) a Risk Assessment would be required to meet Insurance requirements.		
	v. Document Management: An email has been received from the History Centre advising on requirements.	Clerk	
	b. Certification of Exemption: Submission acknowledged by External Auditor.		
	c. Exercise of Public Rights: Publication on website and notice board 30 June 2023.	BPC	
	d. Publication: All documents for required by the Audit and Transparency Code published on the website before the 1 July 2023:.	Clerk	
	10.8: Review of Payment or Charge Card: Annual review as per Internal Audit recommendations.		
	RESOLVED:		
	That having reviewed its current arrangements as adequate; the Parish Council would not be signing up to a payment or charge card.		

	- That allowance of £200.00 maximum spend would be set in order that the Clerk/RFO could commit to a training opportunity, that arises between now and the next meeting, on an invoice basis to the Parish Council; a policy will be drawn up and agreed at the next meeting to formalise the arrangement ongoing. - That the Clerk would discuss with Merton Parish Council a shared training cost as both parish council would benefit from any training.	JL/Clerk	
	10.9: Risk Assessment: Review to be carried out in-line with the Practitioner's Guide using the matrix format.	JL	
23.126	Planning Matters:		
	11.1: New Applications: None.		
	11.2: Decision Notices: None.		
	11.3: Appeal Notices: None.		
	11.4: Withdrawal Notices: Noted. a. Application No.:22/03742/F Applicant's Name: Mr Randal Rue Proposal: Demolition of outbuilding and erection of three cottages, four garages and central boiler house; internal and external works to main property Location: The Old Bakehouse 11 Weir Lane Blackthorn Bicester OX25 1UL Parish(es): Blackthorn .		
	11.5: Planning Issues: a. Network Rail: EWR - No update recorded; it was noted that the rail link to Milton Keynes is due to open in one year. b. Deddington Neighbourhood Development Plan 2020 – 2040: Public Consultation: No comments. c. Oxford United's proposals for the land known as 'the Triangle': RESOLVED: That the Parish Council was opposed to the proposals and would comment accordingly.	Clerk	
23.127	Data Protection Regulations:		
	a. Generic Emails: To raise issues with Navitas Design.	RL/Clerk	
23.128	Correspondence: B.P.C.306 Circulated for comments prior to the meeting:		
	The following items were reviewed and noted with actions. a. BPC306(21) 13.6.2023 OALC - Places Still Available on Oxfordshire County Council Day 27 June 2023! b. BPC306(24) 13.6.2023 OALC - OALC Invitation to AGM 3rd July 7.30pm Beckley Village Hall. c. BPC306(29) 14.6.2023 O.C.C. - Agenda and Teams invitation: PTRs Meeting, Tuesday 4th July, 1:30pm. d. BPC306(37) 20.6.2023 O.C.C. - Highway maintenance open day - Saturday 15th July -invitation.		
23.129	Website/Issues raised through 'Facebook': Items to be approved for publishing:		
	a. Issues raised through 'Facebook': The PC utilises Facebook for items of interest not for its business: No issues raised.	Clerk	
23.130	Village Matters: Reported incidents:		
	a. Elm Tree Close: Street lamps and road adoption of road: C/fwd. b. Footpath Blackthorn to Ambrosden: Clerk to raise with Ambrosden Parish Council.	CHS Clerk	
23.131	Matters for Further Information or Discussion at the Next Meeting:		
	a. Matters for Further Information: i. Oxford Bus Service: £2.00 bus ticket offer extended to 31 October 2023 after which it will raise to £2.50. b. Matters for Discussion: i. To review Clerk's contract; working hours and home working allowance. ii. Staff Appraisal. iii. Risk Assessment to include volunteers. iv. Civility & Respect: Training programme. v. 20mph Speed Limit Survey. vi. Budget.	Agenda	
23.132	Date of the Next Meeting: Coronavirus: Update advice to be considered.		
	a. Meetings for 2023/24: i. Parish Council Meeting 7 September 2023 at 7.30pm.		
There being no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9:02pm. Minutes approved 7 September 2023 – Minute Ref: M8/2023-23.135-3.1. Signed by: Chairman J. Lamont			