

Blackthorn Parish Council

Draft Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 5 December 2024 at 7.30pm in Blackthorn Village Hall.

Councillors Present: Mrs J. Lamont (JL) Chairman, Mr R. Rue (RR) Vice-Chairman, Cllrs. Mrs A. Stevenson (AS), R. Lamont (RL), Mr E. Burborough (EB) and Mr R. Burden (RB).

In Attendance: T. Charlesworth Clerk/RFO
One member of the Public.

24.216 Apologies: None received.

24.217 Declarations of Interest:

- Cllr. E. Burborough declared an interest in 24.224-a-i Project Reports: Drainage/Flooding.

24.218 Public Participation: None present.

24.219 Minutes: To confirm the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 7 November 2024 at 7.30pm previously circulated: Clerk tasked with resending as the draft minutes had been received in an unreadable format.

24.220 Reports:

- a. **Chairman's Report:** None.
- b. **Clerk's Report:** None.

24.221 Vacancy/Co-option:

- a. **Vacancy:** No applications.

24.222 District or County Councillors: None present.

24.223 Governance

a. **Policy:**

- i. **Employment:** Sexual, General Harassment: C/fwd to next meeting.
- ii. **Sickness & Absence:**

RESOLVED:

- To adopt as a working document.

iii. **Equal Opportunities Policy (Draft Equality and Diversity Policy:**

RESOLVED:

- To adopt as a working document.

iv. **Health & Safety Policy:**

RESOLVED:

- To adopt as a working document.

v. **Internal Controls Policy:**

RESOLVED:

- To adopt as a working document.

b. **Generic Emails:** Set up information provided: Set up instructions re-sent.

c. **Risk Assessment:**

- a. **Draft Health & Safety Risk Assessment for Volunteers:** C/fwd.

24.224 Project Reports:

a. **Drainage/Flooding:**

- i. **River Bank Repairs/Network Rail:** Noted; NWR have completed some of the work; local farmers to re-instate existing flood protection on their land during 2025.

b. **Blackthorn Brook:**

- i. **Last 15m:** No update on hand over to O.C.C: C/fwd.
- ii. **Emergency Tree Works:** Noted; that a fallen Willow Tree on Lower Road had to be removed from Blackthorn Brook as it was restricting water flow in the ditch.

c. **Village Plan: Review of proposals:**

- i. **White Traffic Calming Gates:** Gates to be reviewed and prioritized: C/fwd.
- ii. **Proposed new gate on Station Road at the Junction of Weir Lane:** To consider any information relating to an application for permission of proposed new gate: C/fwd.
- iii. **20mph Application: O.C.C. - Blackthorn: 20mph Limits –** Update on VAS replacement: Clerk to follow up.
- iv. **A41:** Reduction of Speed Limit: Nothing further to report at this time.

24.225: Play Area:

- a. **Quarterly Inspection:** Report and recommendations: The inspection had highlighted emergency works; see ii.
 - i. **Cradle Seats:** No update.

- ii. **Health & Safety Works:** See 24/226-I-iii: It was noted that approval had been given for works to be completed as recommended based on the quote received.

24:226: Finance:

- a. **Payments prior to the Meeting:** To record and approve any invoices paid prior the meeting as listed on the payment schedule:
- i. Salary – 30 November 2024 - £311.60 - plus backpay due to pay increase £88.20 – Total £399.80.
- b. **Receipts:** To record and approve any receipts received as listed:
- i. HMRC- VAT Reclaim £726.20.
- c. **Payments:**
- i. **Salary(s):**
- Salary December 2024 – £311.60 - Payment approval required for end of December.
- RESOLVED:**
- To approve payment for end of December; to be verified at next meeting. Following submission to HMRC -PAYE.
- RESOLVED:** To accept and approve payment of invoices listed on the payment schedule:-
- ii. Expenses/Home Working Allowance November 2024: Total £34.92.
- iii. HMRC – November - 2024 £37.40
- iv. M.R. & J.S. Cross — Inv. No: 314 - £139.20 (Grass cutting play area - £29.00 as 20% grass too wet to cut – 26.11.2024).
- v. Oxfordshire Tree Services – Inv. No: #523 – £180.00 – Emergency Tree Works; see 24/224-a-i.
- d. **OALC** – To note the Local Government Services Pay Agreement 2024/25 to be implemented from 1 April 2024: Noted and actioned.
- e. **Request(s) for Funding:** None.
- f. **Payroll:** To record submission to HMRC: Up to date; back pay submitted inclusive of November salary as advised by HMRC.
- g. **Bank Reconciliation:** Presented prior to the meeting: To accept the Bank Reconciliation 1.10.2024 -31.12.2024 (Barclays issue date 19.11.2024):
- | | |
|---------------------|------------|
| Balance B/fwd | £26,312.49 |
| Add Total Receipts | £ 829.61 |
| Less Total Payments | £ 6,839.37 |
| Balance C/fwd | £20,302.73 |
- h. **Budget Comparison:**
- RESOLVED:**
- To accept the budget comparison up to the 5 December 2024: Noted that everything is currently within budget apart from VAT which is not budget for.
- i. **Barclays Bank Plc:** Consider 'Business Premium Account':
- RESOLVED:**
- That the Parish Council would remain with the Barclays Bank current account.
- j. **Financial Controls:**
- i. Quarterly check to be completed and signed off by Internal Control and RFO: Noted that the next check would be done in January.
- k. **VAT Spreadsheet:** Presented prior to the meeting; was accepted, showing an outstanding amount of £830.51 up to 5 December 2024.; Next claim to be made end of December.
- l. **Quotes:**
- i. **Traffic Calming Gates:** Quote to be obtained for the spraying of wooden gates: C/fwd.
- ii. **Traffic Calming Gates – Spraying:** C/fwd as above.
- iii. **Play Area:**
- Resistance Penetration Test:** To review RoSPA report.
 - Quote as a result of Quarterly Inspection:** To note approval of emergency works following quarterly inspection based on the following quote:
 - One broken post to parallel bars.
 - One picnic table has sunk down on one side
 - Treatment of algae build up on the equipment that needs treating –
 - Total £213.00 plus VAT
- m. **Grants/Funding:** To consider any relevant applications for funding: None noted.
- n. **Budget 2025/26:** Draft figures as considered at previous meeting: No changes noted to budget figures; the draft Council Tax Base shows an increase of 1% from 149.4 to 150.9, to be confirmed by C.D.C.
- i. **Navitas Design - Notice of price changes:** To note Increase of 5% for hosting services.
- ii. **Funds:** Review of allocation including flood prevention works.

RESOLVED:

- To vire the 'Flood Defence and Surface Drainage', the 'Legal Advice' and the 'Blackthorn Village/Weir Pond' funds under one heading 'Water Management Projects Fund'; the £750.00 budgeted for 2025/26 under 'Flood Defence and Surface Drainage' will also be added to the new fund heading.

RESOLVED:

- To approve the draft budget Payments (net) of £17,066.20.

o. Precept 2025/26:

RESOLVED:

- To approve a precept of £16,422.00 which presents an 18% increase on the previous year's precept; based on the draft council tax base the precept requirement will show on the council tax bill for a band D property in 2025/26 as a 17% increase on last year; the majority increase will be the ongoing annual costs from general funds rather than ring fenced funds, for the clearance of Blackthorn Brook essential for flood alleviation.

24.227 Planning:

- Planning: Applications:** To consider all recent applications received from Cherwell District Council detailed below and any other planning applications submitted and published on the CDC planning portal between the agenda being published and the meeting: None noted.
- Decision Notices:** Noted:-
 - Application No: 24/02621/F**
Proposal: Proposed extension to existing garage to form new carport
Location: Parish(es): 1 Swan Close, Blackthorn, OX25 1TU Blackthorn
PERMISSION FOR DEVELOPMENT SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS
Decision Date: 26 November 2024.
- Appeal Notices:** None noted.
- Withdrawal Notices:** None noted..
- Planning Matters:**
 - Network Rail:** No update.
 - Land at Symmetry Park:** Comments requested by Frampton's: No comments recorded.
 - Oxfordshire County Council Planning Reference LL.0119/24** - Consultation on proposed update to Oxfordshire County Council's Local List of Information Requirements for validation of planning and related applications – Ends 2.12.2024: No comments submitted.

24.228 Clerk's Contract:

- To consider and approve Clerk's updated contract based on the NALC Model 2011:** To include amendments M3/2024-24.53-a: Clerk to review updated draft.
- Policy(s):** Review: See 24/223.
- Upon acceptance and approval to be signed:** C/fwd.

24.229 Changes to website accessibility compliance to WCAG 2.2AA: Chairman to review requirements and liaise with Cllr R. Lamont.**24.230 Footpaths:** Nothing to report. Clerk tasked with removing from agenda.**24.231 108 Bus Service:** Consultation with O.C.C: The 108 service has been and continues to be used by the village; previous negotiations with Stagecoach had failed.**24.232 Training:**

- To consider any further training:** Offered by OALC, SLCC and NALC: None noted.

24.233 Attendance at Meetings: No attendance recorded.**24.234 Correspondence/Emails: B.P.C. 323:** Comments to be considered and any matters for the next agenda not already considered as part of this agenda:

- BPC323(14)** 12.11.2024 C.D.C. - Parish Liaison Q&A Notes & Présentations : Noted.
- BPC323(31)** CDC Budget Consultation 2025/2026 – Poster for Facebook.
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24.235 Village Matters:

- Facebook: Matters for Parish Council consideration raised through the village Facebook page:** The Parish Council review matters on the Facebook page and advise authors to raise matters for the agenda through the parish council clerk:
- Publication:** To consider approve matters for publication through the Parish Council website or village Facebook page/Website:
 - C.D.C. updates.

24.236 Matters for Further Information or Discussion at the Next Meeting:

- Matters for Further Information:** None raised.
- Matters for Discussion at the next meeting:** None raised.

24.237 Date of Next Parish Council Meeting:

- Parish Council meeting schedule 2025/25:** To consider and approve dates:
RESOLVED:
 - There would be no meeting in January 2025.
 - To accept the list of dates noting that the date proposed for May will be subject to change once the election dates are confirmed by C.D.C.
 - The meetings will be held on the first Thursday of the month at 7.30pm in Blackthorn Village Hall as follows:-
 - **6 February 2025**

- 6 March 2025
- 3 April 2025
- 1 May 2025 – Subject to change.
- 5 June 2025
- 3 July 2025
- 4 September 2025
- 2 October 2025
- 6 November 2025
- 4 December 2025

There being no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8:55pm.

Draft Minutes subject to Confirmation:

Approved: 6 February 2025

Minute Ref: M1/2025-25.4

Signed: *J. Lamont*

Chairman Cllr. J. Lamont