

BISHOP'S ITCHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting 2 September 2024

Present:

Cllr Kettle (Chairman) Cllr Colton Cllr Dugmore Cllr Horsman Cllr Howatson
Cllr Tagg-Wilkinson Cllr Thomas Cllr Tressler

In Attendance:

Karen Stevens - Clerk to the Council
Val Powell – Cemetery Manager (arrived at 19:58)
Cllr Natalie Gist – District Councillor (arrived at 19:44)
Keith Fenway – Pegasus
Sarah Brooke-Taylor – Warwickshire Rural Community Council
Neil Gulliver – Warwickshire Rural Housing Association

Public:

14

24/139 Apologies:

Cllr Ogden due to work commitments
Cllr Lamont due to annual leave
Cllr Gist for lateness
The above apologies were accepted.

24/140 Declarations of Interest:

None

24/141 Dispensations:

None

24/142 Minutes:

- i. Minutes of the ordinary parish council meeting held on 1 July 2024. It was **RESOLVED**, that with the minutes of the ordinary parish council meeting held 1 July 2024 be accepted as a true and complete record of the meeting. Proposed Cllr Horsman, seconded Cllr Tagg-Wilkinson, all in favour.
- ii. Minutes of the extraordinary parish council meeting held on 8 July 2024. It was **RESOLVED**, that with the minutes of the extraordinary parish council meeting held 8 July 2024 be accepted as a true and complete record of the meeting. Proposed Cllr Horsman, seconded Cllr Howatson, all in favour.

24/143 Public Forum:

Several members of the public were in attendance for item 6 on the agenda. It was proposed and agreed to continue the public forum after that item. They were advised that the public forum is not a question-and-answer session. Cliff Young spoke regarding the recent complaints committee. Firstly, he would like to welcome and acknowledge the recommendations made by the committee. As the

minutes of the meeting are going to be approved at this meeting, he would like to point out some inaccuracies in what has been recorded.

- The welcome and introductions records states that the complaint relates to 14 May when it relates to 14 and 17 May,
- The questions put to Cllr Kettle – what made him seek further advice on the reinstatement of the headstones, the minutes record that he saw the staking and binding of the memorials on 17 May as a continuation of the same process to make the cemetery safe. This does not answer the question that we and the committee posed
- The answer to the question regarding the parish council having the authority to act as it did is inaccurate. What Cllr Kettle said was that it was carried out using the delegated powers. This has never been said before – what was said on 17 May was that Val Powell is the cemetery manager with our working party so why was that answer put forward as the answer to the question at that meeting and we asked several times about it,
- So basically, what we would like to explain or councillors to explain is what are delegated powers because this has never been mentioned before,
- The portfolio holders apparently answered that they have the delegated powers to reinstate the stones, again, we need to know where these delegated powers are written down,
- Major point in the summary is that we questioned the fact that 25kg force was used – we never questioned that, and it was the chair of the complaints committee that mentioned that, and it is inaccurate
- Point 6, Cllr Lamont – who we did not know was a portfolio holder until that day, basically said that the council did not need to adhere to British Standards. Volunteers should not be carrying out work in the cemetery – I have been doing work as a volunteer at the cemetery for 30 plus years, so the point is inaccurate as well
- In your justification for touching my sons headstone on 17 May, you have actually stated that the Local Cemeteries Act 1977 paragraph 3 item 1 (I will not read it as you have all read it) that is right what they said in the first statement but what you should have gone on to say on item point 2 that nothing gives you the power to actually do it once it has been made safe. Therefore, are you saying that the stones were not made safe by the Clerk, Cemetery Manager and the working committee who did not have the authorisation because they never followed the actual procedures in the first place, are you saying they were made more unsafe by laying them down in which case can you explain why you felt it was in such a bad state at that point after you had done the inspection that with little notice you rushed up to the cemetery to actually reinstate them with the cemetery manager.
- Although the complaints committee who I would like to thank them as they have done a really good job and it has been very difficult for them, but certain councillors and, is it normal practice for a chair and vice-chair to alter a clerk's statement of fact. Is this normal policy for councils

Mr Young was thanked and asked to pass the comments to the Chair of the Complaints Committee so that they can be considered when the minutes are looked at.

Steve Young advised that in regard to the point Cliff was making in regard to the quoting an Act, it is not right that you should quote part of the Act and take it out of context. Quite rightly item b of the same paragraph states that you should not touch it unless it is deemed to be unsafe. All, I am saying is that it should all be there. Your

notice of this meeting was not even right – you gave three days’ notice on 29, you should be giving three clear days’ notice.

He was advised that the notice was put on the noticeboard on Tuesday 27 August, and this satisfies the requirements under the Act and if he requires to see this, it can be provided. 8 July minutes you resolved to reinstate all the headstones, why did it take until 29 July to tell the public, why was there a three-week delay? With regards to the complaints committee itself, you only put notice on Facebook 30 minutes before the meeting started, why was that delay knowing previously that people are not looking at the noticeboard, people are not looking at the webpage, but people will be responding to Facebook. Why was it left to 6.28pm to post when the meeting started at 7.00pm? With regards to the portfolio holders you did say delegated powers, I cannot see where the full council had agreed as to what these delegated powers are and what level they are? According to your Standing Orders, you should have done that after you were elected and there are several other things in your Standing Orders that you should have done which you have not done once you were elected. It does not seem that you follow your Standing Orders. The minutes produced for the complaints committee are inaccurate.

Cllr Colton responded to the point about the delay between the Council agreeing to reinstate the headstones on 8 July and announcing it to the public three weeks later. This happened because we all have responsibilities for portfolios. I am on the social media and communications Portfolio with Cllrs Dugmore and Lamont, and it took some time to get a time in the diary together for all of us to have a conversation about how we wanted to articulate that message on Facebook. Cllr Dugmore advised that there was a logistical element in regard to the responses from Stephen Hill Memorials and then we needed to craft the wording of it and it was drafted, read, checked for accuracy and we needed to get all three councillors together to do this so we could produce a positive engagement message to send out.

Cliff Young advised there was one more important thing in that you have accused me of being at the cemetery on 14 May with Cllrs Kettle, Thomas and Ogden (in the minutes) but I can categorically state now that I did not meet you or Cllr Thomas or any other member. I spoke to the Clerk, Cemetery Manager and Cllr Ogden on the phone, just me and my wife went up there on our own, so the minutes are very inaccurate, but I am assuming that during translation of what was re-written it got lost.

24/144 Housing Needs Survey Report for Bishop’s Itchington Parish December 2023

A brief introduction was given to Housing Needs Surveys (HNS). This survey was not commissioned by the parish council but was commissioned by Pegasus Group who are acting on behalf of the landowner who owns the land west/to the rear of Butchers Close. They have been interested in this land for some time and a planning application was submitted for it seven years ago and that ended up with an appeal that was withdrawn. Clients continue to have interests in the land and are looking at how they can add some value to it. They were aware that the parish councils local housing needs survey was out of date and the parish council had discussed it on a couple of occasions but for whatever reason it did not happen, so we commissioned an updated survey to be undertaken.

We are looking at this site now as 100% social site rather than market housing and to establish what the need is within the local community, that is what we needed the HNS for. Not here today to present plans saying here is a pre planning consultation and a planning application is being submitted. At this point, the way the District Councils policies work is they will consider sites so this land technically falls outside the village land envelop so we would look to work with the parish council if they are interested in supporting a development for social housing on the site and the survey

work was necessary to establish what that level of need is and what type of need it is in the absence of anything up to date.

Warwickshire Rural Community Council is a charity that works across the whole of Warwickshire. Sarah Brooke-Taylor's role is rural housing so working with rural parishes to achieve homes for local people. The LHNS have a standard format, and these surveys are recognised by local authorities and others i.e. planning inspectors. HNS forms went out to the community at the end of 2023 and the report on the returns is dated December 2023.

25 alternative homes showing as people being in need and this is analysed need having gone through the analysis process and during this process, 5 returns were discounted.

HNS report shows a need for 16 properties to rent, and this would be from a Housing Association (HA) and also one property on shared ownership with a HA.

Tenants for the properties come through from Home Choice Plus (housing waiting list held by Stratford District Council (SDC)). Cllrs may be interested to note that as of last November there were 102 households with a local address registered on the housing waiting list and the latest in June is the number now stands at 104. The survey was across the parish, and it is the local connection to this parish being through currently lives, previously lived, currently work or have immediate family (parents, siblings and adult children)

Q: The survey identified a need for 25 social housing, but you did not mention there are 8 who are of owner occupier so would not have this need

A: The survey did identify a need for 8 owner occupier homes but the proposal being brought forward is about just social homes – rent and shared ownership properties. A need for 25 properties were identified, 16 for rent, 1 for shared ownership and 8 for owner occupier but owner occupier is not to be considered under this proposal

Q: In the survey did you identify a site?

A: No. The survey is just looking at all housing need across the parish. It is a generic survey and does not relate to a particular patch of ground or any landowner although it was commissioned by Pegasus, but this does not influence my work in any way.

The format used for HNS and the analysis of the information that comes through is the same as is used by rural housing charities across England

Q: Would you say that since the National Planning Policy Development Framework came out we have had a lot of building going on and sites identified for building and we have done these type of surveys before and we seem to come up with similar figures and obviously with the building housing numbers have been increased around the villages as a dispersal strategy undertaken by SDC using new planning policy. In terms of a statistic, you could go to any village, small town, would you see a similar demand because we have had a significant amount of building work in the village and with that increase in houses you are logically going to get an increase in demand of younger kids, kids having kids etc creating additional demand, so it is always going to be there

A: There have been similar numbers coming through and you are no different to any other rural parish. We know there is a need, and we only have to look at the numbers on the housing waiting list, those people who have a local address. There will always be a need in the rural areas, people do not want to move to the local town if they have grown up locally why shouldn't they be able to stay local. Why should someone who has lived in the village their entire life be forced to move to some retirement apartment in Stratford, they want to be local. Those you have mentioned, children and children of children and those are the two extremes we find, it is pretty consistent that it is the youngsters still living at home with mum and dad that desperately want their own property and then it's the people at the other end stuck in a 3, 4, 5 bed

family home, they do not want to move out of the community, they want to stay as part of the community that's where their network is and so you need those smaller properties i.e. 2 bed houses and bungalows to enable them to stay. It is not specific to Bishop's Itchington

Q. In the space of 8 to 10 years we have seen nearly 500 new homes built here, and barre an exception on Bishops Hill, 35% are supposed to be in the 'affordable' category satisfying those needs which, with the exception is 100 plus. and this is normally consistently each time, and I was wondering if you were to pose that question irrespective of how many hundreds and thousands of houses were built you would always get some people with a wish for some houses so you would always get an apparent need. The other thing that is concerning about this one is the last time we looked, Bishop's Itchington was a Tier 7 settlement which means it is already recognised by the local planning authority as significantly over-developed – in the core strategy we have taken more than the entire category 1 local service allocation, so is there a fault in the strategy that SDC have applied or are we actually chasing a ghost in terms of these numbers? I have got some other concerns with the survey itself, but they are more comments/observations.

A. In terms of need, this is all about local needs. What the Cllr has spoken about is to satisfy a district wide need. This is all about local and local connections

Q. Looking at the map provided, if I look at our Neighbourhood Development Plan, as intimated it is outside the development area. Going back to when I was previously on the parish council, I remember having a long conversation about that tract of land remaining as a green corridor and now we are talking about green corridors in terms of biodiversity, that probably represents the remaining green corridor for the village that keeps it a village. It is a sensitive part of the village because it represents one of the oldest parts of the village as well, so it has significant biodiversity and has quite a significant value therefore to the village. It has been left, when the actual development happened at the top there was some discussion as to whether it can be managed in some way, but it went by the by. When the wildlife area was developed, initially you would see little wildlife going through there but what has happened now because you can enter from the quarry it has now become a habitat for small mammals. Therefore, just advising you that it is a very sensitive area now.

A. Some questions were raised about the methodology/technical parts of the survey. The survey that was circulated was pretty much identical to the one previously commissioned by the parish council – it was not twisted,/varied or anything clever. In terms of what we are considering for this land, the area we are looking at with potential, it would only be the land to the north of the footpath, not the area to the south. The area to the south has much more tree growth and more value in that area so we are looking principally at the area to the north of the footpath. If you look through the survey it is bungalows predominantly, a couple of maisonettes – approximately 12 in total. We are not looking at the site as being taken off the green map

Q. I assume you will have to show 10% biodiversity increase for the same area.

A. Yes

Neil Gulliver Development Services Manager from Warwickshire Rural Housing Association was introduced. He is from the Housing Association provided they are looking to work with and can talk about what they do in Warwickshire.

They are a specialist in developing homes for local people across the county, approaching 600 homes across the county predominantly in the Stratford on Avon area and the surrounding villages. Where we specialise, this is homes for local people, those homes are evidenced through the work Sarah does and Warwickshire

Rural Community Council does in evidencing those homes and those homes are covenanted in perpetuity for local people.

This is an opportunity to provide around a dozen homes for the community. Having looked at the site, it is quite rightly sensitive but a key part of that would be retaining those sensitive areas retaining biodiversity.

Q. I remember being Chairman of the community centre and we engaged with Follet's in a very positive way, and they were very keen to help us with this site because it belongs to Follet's as well. At the time there was a conversation about trying to keep the centre of the village here and improve it and they were looking potentially at putting flats for affordable homes but keeping a community centre or something within this area as well. Is that something that could be considered as opposed to developing on green land as this is brownfield and owned by Follet.

A. I can certainly take that message back to Follet.

The point about us being outside settlement boundary is correct, it would be promoted as a rural exception site, and we would be looking for parish council support. We have done the research, done the homework, you have got a need that is not being met and so we are here saying, here we have a solution for it, would you like to work with us on it.

The point was made that we have gone off the topic, which is the HNS, not promoting a planning application that we have not seen yet. The HNS is not a pre-planning application or a planning application and therefore we do need to any support or otherwise that the parish council might give to providing affordable homes, we would not be able to sanction any particular site. If you, having promoted the affordable housing survey, have a site in mind then that clearly must go through the full planning process separate to whether we as a parish council support the evidence provided by Warwickshire Rural Community Council.

The comments made about a prior HNS that did not go forward. There were a couple of reasons why that did not go forward, One was covid, the other one, I am glad to see the questions have gone back to a more objective and standardised set, we did not take it forward because the questions in that survey so accurately described the planning application that had just been withdrawn for this site it would have been impossible to promote to the community as an objective survey.

We have several members of the public who we deferred from speaking earlier on who, are now aware of what the HNS is, why it was done and what the results of it are. There is secondly a suggestion from Pegasus that they would be interested in fulfilling that need on what was originally going to be called phase 2 of what was originally the Banner Homes development, now the Carla Home development. Mr Middleton stated that the elephant in the room is that this is an HNS commissioned by the owner of a piece of land that they are trying to get planning permission to build on and however much one might try and compartmentalise that, this is part of a process that those developers to build on the land and indeed it is their land. I say it's a process because magically, that piece of land has been the subject of a successful application to the Forestry Commission to fell the entire area. This in nothing to do with the top half of this site that has just been mentioned, it is the bottom half of the site, it is precisely the area that the councillor has just mentioned is an area of specific interest from an ecological point of view. I could address you about how much water a mature tree takes out of the ground, what happens to that water when you cut the tree down, I could address you about the amount of CO2 that a mature tree withdraws and I can well foresee that I will be because no one will be surprised when, in due course, a planning application comes

through. It will inevitably come through from Follet's and what this is, is a neat way as a stepping stone along the process. I do not doubt that a certain number of people need houses, they always will. If you build these houses there will be another 25 people who will need houses. Some of the people who move into Bishop's 30 years ago, will now have children growing up and they are going to need them so whenever you do an HNS, there will always be a need. I look to you as the parish council to protect this village from overdevelopment, I don't know how else you would describe it. This is a sort of natural lung into the centre of the village right behind the pub, it's taking in CO2 and is pumping out oxygen and the step of deciding that yes, the survey commissioned by the owner of this land is seeking your approval to say yes we need 25 or 21 new houses.

Mr Mann asked how many of those trees have got ash dieback on the site? Do not know the exact numbers but that land has ash die back and Follet's are under a legal obligation to remove those trees. Trust me when I say to you it is an exceedingly expensive thing for them to do and they would much rather not have to do it but are legally obliged to have them removed.

The Chairman reminded residents that we are not looking at a planning application now. There is a separate process and there will be a proper consultation process should any application be submitted, which will take into account environmental issues. He believes the Forestry Commission does require for the felled trees to be replaced with new trees and equally, when planted, they will be covered by the Tree Preservation Order.

HNS that was undertaken, was it undertaken across the whole of the village with the village responding because certainly, I don't think many people in High Street received it so was not able to complete it.

The survey was across the parish, 1395 surveys were distributed in November 2023, one to each household. Keith Fenway advised that he would provide the chair with the evidential reports they received from the delivery company.

The chairman advised they are parish wide surveys; they are not focused on any particular sub part of the parish. Clearly there will always be some property missed. What we are looking at today is a HNS, is it your proposal that the parish council should adopt this as a properly constituted survey of what the housing need is in the parish of Bishop's Itchington?

Sarah Brooke-Taylor responded yes.

The chairman asked Councillors if they have any further questions for the Warwickshire Rural Community Council because this is not a planning application all be it that it has been promoted by a landowner who has helpfully provided us all with a map but there is other land around the village although clearly, he suspects the landowner would wish for these houses to be accommodated on their land

Q. Is there any way of tracking the need as this is a snapshot in time in November.

How do we know how fluid that need is?

A. It is accepted practice by rural housing neighbours, all planning authorities that this is only ever a snapshot in time and the data has a shelf life of 5 years.

It is worth pointing out to everyone in case you did not see it, you were only asked to complete the form if you had a need for housing and this report is based on the 25 responses they received. 30 responses were received but only 25 were analysed as valid responses.

Q. The Neighbourhood Development Plan, the map in there excludes this area as an area to be built up.

A. Yes, it is outside are Built Up Area Boundary. There is a SDC policy to make some concession for development outside the boundary so there is an interpretation that if it is justified by an HNS then parts of that policy engage. It is in the Core Strategy

Policy AS10 which allows one off development only with the support of the local community.

There needs to be some feedback to Pegasus as to whether we support it as a parish council. This is what we need to decide and vote on to whether we want to move it forward or wish to close the door.

What we are talking about here is the acceptance of a survey or if you want to turn that round and say well okay, we will do our own then we would be talking to Warwickshire Rural Community Council and the results would be no different.

What is the drive for this survey, if the survey had not been instigated by a private landowner, when would we need to do another survey?

Based on having a shelf life of five years, we currently do not have one because ours is out of date. So, any policy argument we made that said there was no identified need would fall on its face because you can't use the fact that you haven't got a current survey.

Clearly there is a huge concern amongst residents particularly having been given this map indicating where, if a planning application was submitted by Follet Property Holdings, it would be here to meet the identified demand. The difficulty we have is Warwickshire Rural Community Council have carried out that independent survey. Does the fact that it is commissioned by an existing landowner, does that validate the survey, its methodology etc or results in conclusions.

That is the tricky bit, the questions that were in that survey and will take Sarah's statement as read that they are the same as would have been used in any other locality and on the basis they are the same ones we would get were we to commission it, with that in mind were we to go and do another survey it would be the same survey. What I am saying is there is probably no benefit in rejecting this one solely to go and do another one exactly the same. What I am going to suggest, a proposal if you will, we accept the survey for what it is, that is a survey executed by Warwickshire Rural Community Council setting aside who commissioned it because we can attach to that whatever you choose. I am still uncomfortable with the fact we have only had Warwickshire Rural Community Council through with us twice in the last eight years and both times it was with the same developer in tow with the same application in mind. However, I would suggest we take the survey as it is.

The single piece of land was not mentioned anywhere in the survey

Keith Fenway said that his client did offer to fund the parish council so the parish council could commission the survey. It was said, that with respect, the survey would have cost the parish council nothing. Agreed, but as the survey did not happen, we and therefore my client commissioned it.

What we are considering is a Warwickshire Rural Community Council report not the individual who commissioned it.

Wanted to clarify we have got to detach the report from the piece of land so we can accept the survey at face value but when there is a planning application submitted, we can then give our view on that as a separate exercise altogether.

We note the survey has been carried out that has identified a need for 25 homes as defined in the document without necessarily as going so far as to support that need but we are noting it has been carried out because there is a certain wariness in this village that , notwithstanding you have carried out the survey, our allocation within the core strategy was 112 homes and we are currently at approximately 221 homes and as reflected in our NDP, we have had more than our fair share of development so you have got this conflict between, not withstanding the fact of another 275 homes up at Bishops Hill that really have had more than our fair share and a lot of these homes were affordable homes.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Parish Council notes the Housing Needs Survey and its contents. Proposed Cllr Dugmore, seconded Cllr Howatson, all in favour.

24/145 Planning Matters:

- i. To consider the holding objection submitted and whether it needs to be amended

24/01933/TPO

42 Rupert Kettle Drive, Bishop's Itchington, CV47 2PU – 2 no. sycamores - fell

It was **RESOLVED** to uphold the object to planning application 24/01933/TPO, for the reasons submitted previously on the holding objection. Proposed by Cllr Dugmore, seconded Cllr Tagg-Wilkinson, all in favour.

- ii. To note the withdrawal of the following planning application:
24/01474/FUL
Land off St Michaels Close and Manor Road, Bishop's Itchington – Demolition of nos. 9-12 St Michaels Close and garages and erection of 7 affordable housing units and associated development

The withdrawal of the planning application was noted,

24/147 County and District Liaison:

Stratford District Council (SDC) – A report had been circulated prior to the meeting and it was accepted as read. Cllr Gist highlighted that there is a community safety officer at SDC who can support domestic violence issues.

Warwickshire County Council (WCC) – Cllr Kettle had circulated his report prior to the meeting, and it was accepted as read.

24/148 Waste Bins on the Yellow Land:

Following discussion, it was suggested that the clerk was asked BING for their views on installing waste bin(s) on the Yellow Land.

The item was deferred until a response is received.

24/149 Parking on Green Open Spaces in Old Road and Central Drive:

The land is about to be transferred to the parish council. The larger green open space is used as a parking area and causes issues with destroying the area in the winter and disrupting grass cutting in the other seasons. This is a recurring/regular occurrence, and it is proposed that physical barriers are installed to deter this. It was suggested that Orbit be approached to contribute to the cost of any works.

It was **RESOLVED** in principle to install some form of physical barriers to the large green open spaces in Central Drive and Old Road to prevent damage to the areas. Proposed Cllr Tressler, seconded Cllr Dugmore, all in favour.

24/150 Gambling Act 2005 – Review of Stratford on Avon District Council's Statement of Gambling Policy:

Following discussion, it was agreed that the parish council did not wish to comment on the policy

23/151 Local Nature Recovery Strategy Survey:

Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to delegate the portfolio holder to make a response on behalf of the parish council. Proposed Cllr Dugmore, seconded Cllr Horsman, all in favour.

The social media portfolio holders were asked to post the link on Facebook so that residents could respond to the survey if they so wished.

24/152 Review of Community Emergency Plan for Bishop's Itchington:

This item was deferred to a future meeting and will be discussed under confidential matters.

24/153 Community Centre:

Cllr Colton declared an interest as chair of the community centre committee. It was agreed to give her a dispensation as she has no personal financial interest. She is therefore able to participate in the discussion but will not be able to vote on any resolutions.

It was noted that under the terms of the lease, both the parish council and the community centre committee are tenants and are liable for the costs of maintenance.

i. Emergency Fire Exit:

It was **RESOLVED** that due to health and safety concerns, a special dispensation be made to accept the quote received for £540 plus VAT to get the fire exit doors repaired. Proposed Cllr Kettle, seconded Cllr Dugmore. Of those allowed to vote, all were in favour.

ii. Replacement garage door:

It was **RESOLVED** that this is a health and safety risk and danger to helpers/volunteers that we have just been made aware of, it was agreed to accept the quote for £750 to undertake the work to replace the door. Proposed Cllr Horsman, seconded Cllr Howatson. Of those allowed to vote, all were in favour.

iii. External painting design: A local urban artist is developing a programme to engage with older members of the senior youth club. It is hoped to start the project in October and would include creating artwork (based on fauna and flora) on some of the walls in the garden. The community centre would like the parish council, as joint tenants, to support the project. The community centre was advised to contact Follet Property Holdings as the landlords to seek their permission to carry out the project.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Parish Council would support the project. Proposed Cllr Kettle, seconded Cllr Thomas. Of those allowed to vote, 6 were in favour and one against.

24/154 External Audit:

The clerk advised there had been an issue over a box not being ticked – this was because neither seemed appropriate as and there was not a not appropriate box on the form. Also, the internal auditor missed ticking a box. These were rectified and the form resubmitted. A further issue was that additional supporting evidence needed to be submitted.

Councillors asked the clerk to look at improving the process to ensure appropriate/supporting information is supplied with the annual submission.

It was **RESOLVED** to agree and accept the findings of the External Audit for 2023/24. Proposed Cllr Howatson, seconded Cllr Dugmore. Seven in favour and one abstention.

24/155 Joint Working with Neighbouring Parishes:

It has been raised that some form of informal liaison with our immediate neighbouring parish's, particularly Harbury and Southam could be beneficial particularly with the planning policy coming forward may have a significant impact on this area.

Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that the parish council supports informal liaison with neighbouring parish's and that the situation be reviewed in six months' time. Proposed Cllr Kettle, seconded Cllr Dugmore. Seven in favour, one against.

24/156 Formal Complaint from Mr and Mrs Young

- i. To approve the minutes of the Complaints Committee held on 5 August 2024. The chairman handed over to Cllr Howatson who had chaired the complaints committee and reminded him of the points raised by the Young family in the public forum.

Cllr Howatson advised that he was going to seek parish council approval of the document circulated but obviously the Young family are not happy with the contents of the document. Therefore, if acceptable to the parish council, as suggested earlier, Mr Young be requested to provide him with what factual information they believe needs changing. There are no issues with the recommendations.

Cllr Dugmore stated that the point on the agenda is to approve the minutes of the Complaints Committee from those members present as to whether they are an accurate record of what was said on the night. Therefore, the first point is not debating factual accuracy, and the second point is whether the parish council accepts the recommendations made. The first thing is to concur if they are a correct record. If they are deemed to be an accurate record then there is the consideration of is that was genuinely said and if it is incorrect, this is a different problem.

The chairman advised that, due to the comments made by the Young family in the public forum of this meeting, it has become apparent that there may be a few errors within the minutes that may need to be amended. The independent Clerk on the night made a written record. Considering the comments from the Young family, the independent clerk should be asked to check their notes of the meeting and until feedback from the clerk is received, we are not in a position to accept or reject the comments made and item 17.i should therefore be deferred.

Cllr Howatson proposed that the Youngs let him know where they do not agree with the minutes, he will then check with the independent clerk and produce a revised set of minutes if necessary for the next meeting.

Cllr Dugmore drew Cllr Howatson's attention to what he had previously said on the accuracy of the minutes as a record of the meeting. It is not for the independent

clerk to confirm the accuracy of the minutes, it is on the agenda for all members to confirm the confirm (as there is an assumption that those councillors who were not present will abstain from the vote) the minutes were a true record of the meeting. If the content of the meeting is factually inaccurate, that is a different discussion. It was reaffirmed that questions have been raised that saying that the minutes are inaccurate, so the suggestion is they go back to the independent clerk to confirm from their record if they are accurate and are then brought back to the meeting. Cllr Tressler stated that they have been challenged by the Youngs and therefore these need to be bottled out and unless they are, we are unable to move forward.

Following further discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that this item be deferred to allow the independent clerk to review the issues raised by the Young family and consider if the minutes are accurate then they come forward to the next parish council meeting. Proposed by Cllr Kettle, seconded by Cllr Colton. 6 in favour and two against (Cllrs Dugmore and Tressler)

Cllr Tressler advised that this is a serious compromise. Cllr Dugmore was asked by the chairman as to why he had voted against the proposal and responded saying you have a set of minutes that have been issued. The question is are they a true and accurate record. If you think they are not your answer is no, if you think they are the answer is yes irrespective of whether that content is disagreed with by a member of the public. The question is where the councillors present in the room who heard what was said, do they believe what was written down reflects that meeting then is, so you accept the minutes. If they are a true record of something that is incorrect, that is another problem, but you do not modify the minutes to suit.

Cllr Howatson asked the other members of the complaints committee whether they believe the minutes are an accurate record of the meeting. Cllr Colton advised that she feels the minutes are a reflection of what occurred on the night. If there are anomalies within the text that you disagree with or that somebody said something at a different time or this date was not mentioned in that piece of the text, I acknowledge that there appears to be some inconsistencies from the Youngs point of view. However, I felt that the minutes were a true reflection of what occurred on the night. Cllr Horsman advised she had read and approves them.

Cllr Dugmore stated that the issue you have got is that council minutes are circulated to the council for comment, not members of the public. You need to be careful because, with all due respect, you are now allowing a member of the public who has a very polarised interest, to influence the content of the minutes. Cllr Kettle responded and advised that a resolution has been passed and therefore Cllr Howatson will go back to the independent clerk to allow her to review her notes/minutes and a decision on accepting the minutes will be deferred until the next meeting.

- ii. To receive and accept the recommendations of the Formal Complaints Committee held on 5 August 2024.

The question was asked as to whether councillors are happy to consider this or whether this should be deferred until the next meeting. It was agreed to continue. Cllr Dugmore advised he could support the recommendations if it is a standalone proposal separate from the minutes. He went on to say he is quite happy with the recommendations but will struggle to support it because of what the minutes record. He would like to commend the complaints committee for what appears to

be an objective and reasonable set of recommendations, they look good. He would have liked to have seen stronger language used to demonstrate proper commitment from the parish council, think 'shall' and 'will' rather than 'should'. Furthermore, given the way things have gone here, he would like to offer the Youngs his personal apology to anything he has done that has compounded their distress. It has not been a pleasant experience for anyone.

Cllr Kettle advised that there was four minutes remaining of the meeting and asked whether councillors were happy to continue. Some councillors were not happy, but a proposal was put forward to suspend the Standing Order on the 2.5-hour time limit subject to going no further than item 18 plus the quotes for hedge laying (due to the urgency needed on a decision). This was agreed.

Following further discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that the recommendations section be lifted out of the minutes to form an exclusive standalone document and that these recommendations made by the Complaints Committee at the meeting held on 5 August 2024 be formally accepted. Proposed by Cllr Howatson, seconded by Cllr Colton. All in favour.

24/157 Finance:

1. To receive monthly financial report for:
 - i. June 2024: This was noted (Appendix A)
 - ii. July 2024: This was noted (Appendix B)
2. To receive bank reconciliation reports for:
 - i. June 2024: Cllr Kettle has review this and it is correct
 - ii. July 2024: Cllr Kettle has review this and it is correct
3. To approve accounts for payment 2 September 2024:
It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Accounts Payable 2 September 2024 (Appendix C). Proposed Cllr Kettle, seconded Cllr Tagg-Wilkinson. Cllrs Dugmore and Tagg-Wilkinson agreed to authorise the payments.
4. Renewal of AdvantEDGE Finance Hosted Services Contract
It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Accounts Payable 3 June 2024. Proposed Cllr Kettle, seconded Cllr Dugmore, all in favour.
5. E-On Next – to decide on a one, two or three year Fixed Business Plan
It was **RESOLVED** to enter into a one year Fixed Business Plan contract with E-On Next. Proposed Cllr Kettle, seconded Cllr Dugmore, all in favour.

24/158 Environment and Properties:

This item was deferred until the October meeting of the parish council.

24/159 Portfolio Holders Update:

This item was deferred until the October meeting of the parish council.

24/160 Reports and Questions:

This item was deferred until the October meeting of the parish council.

24/161 A motion was passed for the Exclusion of Public and Press under Section 100A of Local Government Act 1972 (all in favour):

- i. **Quotes for Hedge Laying at St Michaels Church**

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the quote from Paul Stinton Tree Surgery, Fencing and Landscaping

ii. Quotes for additional grass cutting – Scowcroft Drive and Starbold Drive

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the quote from Thomas Fox Landscaping & Maintenance

iii. Quotes to Repair fencing at the bottom of the children’s play area

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the quote from Black Sheep Services

The remainder of the agenda was deferred until the October meeting of the parish council.

24/162 Date of Next Meeting

The next ordinary meeting of the parish council will take place on Monday 7 October 2024 at 7.30pm at the Community Centre.

Meeting closed at 22:12

Signed.....Chairman Date.....

APPENDIX A:

Financial Budget Comparison

Comparison between 01/04/24 and 30/06/24 inclusive. Includes due and unpaid transactions.

Excludes transactions with an invoice date prior to 01/04/24

	Budget 2024/2025	Reserve Movements	Actual Net	Balance	
INCOME					
Bishops Itchington Parish Council					
10	Precept	£110,000.00	£0.00	£55,000.00	-£55,000.00
20	Council Tax Support Grant	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
30	Burials	£2,500.00	£0.00	£570.00	-£1,930.00
40	Sec 136 & Other Reimbursements	£1,300.00	£0.00	£0.00	-£1,300.00
50	Playing Field	£500.00	£0.00	£266.04	-£233.96
60	Interest - Current	£12,500.00	£0.00	£430.99	-£12,069.01
61	Interest - Pavilion Fund	£0.00	£0.00	£602.28	£602.28
70	Grants	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
80	Misc	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
90	VAT Refund	£0.00	£0.00	£11,331.25	£11,331.25
100	Pavilion Fund	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Total Bishops Itchington Parish Council		£126,800.00	£0.00	£68,200.56	-£58,599.44
Total Income		£126,800.00	£0.00	£68,200.56	-£58,599.44
EXPENDITURE					
Bishops Itchington Parish Council					
200	Salaries & Expenses	£39,943.00	£0.00	£8,458.64	£31,484.36
210	Councillor Allowances	£500.00	£0.00	£0.00	£500.00
220	Administration	£12,565.00	£0.00	£3,365.24	£9,199.76
230	Grounds Maintenance	£28,202.00	£0.00	£6,060.65	£22,141.35
240	Cemetery & Churchyard	£6,445.00	£0.00	£1,495.94	£4,949.06
250	Playing Field	£16,886.00	£0.00	£408.19	£16,477.81
260	Grants	£10,000.00	£0.00	£2,000.00	£8,000.00
270	Neighbourhood Plan	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
280	Other Expenditure	£500.00	£0.00	£0.00	£500.00
290	VAT	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
300	Contingency	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
310	Parish Office	£5,720.00	£0.00	£1,320.00	£4,400.00
320	Pavilion Project	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Total Bishops Itchington Parish Council		£120,761.00	£0.00	£23,108.66	£97,652.34
Total Expenditure		£120,761.00	£0.00	£23,108.66	£97,652.34
Total Income		£126,800.00	£0.00	£68,200.56	-£58,599.44
Total Expenditure		£120,761.00	£0.00	£23,108.66	£97,652.34
Total Net Balance		£6,039.00		£45,091.90	

APPENDIX B:

Financial Budget Comparison

Comparison between 01/04/24 and 31/07/24 inclusive. Includes due and unpaid transactions.

Excludes transactions with an invoice date prior to 01/04/24

	Budget 2024/2025	Reserve Movements	Actual Net	Balance	
INCOME					
Bishops Itchington Parish Council					
10	Precept	£110,000.00	£0.00	£55,000.00	-£55,000.00
20	Council Tax Support Grant	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
30	Burials	£2,500.00	£0.00	£715.00	-£1,785.00
40	Sec 136 & Other Reimbursements	£1,300.00	£0.00	£0.00	-£1,300.00
50	Playing Field	£500.00	£0.00	£293.25	-£206.75
60	Interest - Current	£12,500.00	£0.00	£582.81	-£11,917.19
61	Interest - Pavilion Fund	£0.00	£0.00	£602.28	£602.28
70	Grants	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
80	Misc	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
90	VAT Refund	£0.00	£0.00	£11,331.25	£11,331.25
100	Pavilion Fund	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Total Bishops Itchington Parish Council		£126,800.00	£0.00	£68,524.59	-£58,275.41
Total Income		£126,800.00	£0.00	£68,524.59	-£58,275.41
EXPENDITURE					
Bishops Itchington Parish Council					
200	Salaries & Expenses	£39,943.00	£0.00	£11,282.78	£28,660.22
210	Councillor Allowances	£500.00	£0.00	£0.00	£500.00
220	Administration	£12,565.00	£0.00	£3,685.21	£8,879.79
230	Grounds Maintenance	£28,202.00	£0.00	£8,382.35	£19,819.65
240	Cemetery & Churchyard	£6,445.00	£0.00	£1,495.94	£4,949.06
250	Playing Field	£16,886.00	£0.00	£760.31	£16,125.69
260	Grants	£10,000.00	£0.00	£2,108.48	£7,891.52
270	Neighbourhood Plan	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
280	Other Expenditure	£500.00	£0.00	£0.00	£500.00
290	VAT	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
300	Contingency	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
310	Parish Office	£5,720.00	£0.00	£1,760.00	£3,960.00
320	Pavilion Project	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Total Bishops Itchington Parish Council		£120,761.00	£0.00	£29,475.07	£91,285.93
Total Expenditure		£120,761.00	£0.00	£29,475.07	£91,285.93
Total Income		£126,800.00	£0.00	£68,524.59	-£58,275.41
Total Expenditure		£120,761.00	£0.00	£29,475.07	£91,285.93
Total Net Balance		£6,039.00		£39,049.52	

