

BLITHFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary General Meeting dated 03 July 2025

Present: Cllr Peter Atkins (chairman) Cllr Anthony Vernon (vice chairman) Cllr Stan Hulme, Mrs Fiona Shipley (clerk)

From the Parish: Mrs Alice Ashcroft, Mr Paul Riley, Mr Andrew Bastable, Mrs Nicola Bastable, Mr Philip Jones

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

25.07.01 Apologies: for Absence: Cllr Bev George (ESBC), Cllr Jacqui Jones (ESBC), Cllr Vicki Gould (ESBC), Cllr Gary Hales (SCC)

25.07.02 Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting and the Annual Meeting held on 15.05.2025 were circulated to the councillors in advance and signed by the chairman.

25.07.03 To receive declarations of interest by members in respect of items on the agenda. There were none.

25.07.04 Matters Arising from the Minutes There were no matters arising from the minutes.

a) Solar Farms – concerns about the number of applications in the surrounding area

The entire parish council and the clerk attended a meeting in Stow-by –Chartley Village Hall on 19 May 2025 regarding this issue of which there is great concern.

Cllr G Hales has commented that he shares the concerns about the increasing numbers of applications and his colleagues at SCC are currently coordinating efforts to pause these applications until further investigations have been conducted into their safety and effectiveness.

25.07.05 Resignation of Cllr Phyllis Massey 16.06.2025– adoption of Policy for Co-option. The clerk had circulated to the parish councillors a Policy for Co-opting a new member on to the parish council. A notice of vacancy has been posted within the parish for 14 days, 10 electors had not requested an election to fill the vacancy, therefore the parish council, will now post an advertisement for applicants, from whom they will choose a suitable person to be co-opted on to the council.

25.07.06 Clerk Update

Clerk Update

a) New domain Bliithfieldparishcouncil@gov.uk – this is up and running and working well. Some members of the council had found that the emails were going to ‘junk’ initially. The old website address and email accounts are automatically redirected to the new domain if anyone uses them.

b) Windows 10 will not be supported from October 2025 – having initially thought we would have to have a new laptop to use Windows 11, it now seems a simple update for around £35 will suffice. The clerk will organise this.

c) Parish Facebook Page - Mrs Alice Ashcroft presented to the parish council the new Blithfield Update Facebook page. She will run this for the community. The parish council approved and the Facebook page has now been launched. Thanks to Mrs Ashcroft for setting the Facebook page up.

d) Fly tipping on Newton Lane – there was recently an incident of fly tipping, which was very quickly and efficiently tidied up by ESBC.

25.07.07 Public Participation. A resident of Admaston reported that Connect Fibre had dug up a footpath between School Lane and Smithy Lane and had not replaced it to the original standard leaving an uneven surface. The clerk will contact Connect Fibre to request that this is repaired satisfactorily. It was reported

that there have been further issues of Connect Fibre damaging a ditch at The Booth, which a local resident had repaired and was now seeking compensation from them.

25.07.08 Upgrade of Broadband in the Parish - In progress.

25.07.09 To receive oral reports from Borough and County Council In his absence, Cllr Hales had sent the clerk various comments regarding items on the agenda.

25.07.10 To receive Chairman's report The chairman suggested in order that we have greater co-operation and collaboration with The Parochial Church Council for Blithfield and Admaston Village Hall, we should request a copy of their minutes. This was approved.

25.07.11 Police and Crime – more information can be found at <https://www.staffordshire.police.uk/>

Needwood area 60 crimes in March 2025, 65 crimes in April 2025

PCSO Tim Leathers has returned to Uttoxeter along with PCSO Dominika Bond-Siwiek.

It is good to have PCSO Tim Leathers back in our area, he is helpful and communicates regularly.

25.07.12 Speeding Cars and Motorbikes. There has been an upturn in the noise and speeding issues since the weather improved and the evenings became lighter. Cllr Hales has commented that he has raised this issue with David Evans the deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for the area, who confirmed his awareness of the situation and is currently looking for solutions. Cllr Hulme reiterated that the issue encompassed the stretch of road, over the reservoir, through Admaston village and all the way to Colton on the B5013.

25.07.13 Village gateway signs Cllr G Hales commented that he believed Parish Councils funded their own village gateway signs. The clerk will make Cllr Hales aware of the history of this project and again ask for support to replace the existing village signs with standard council village signs at eye level, and on new, none corroded posts.

25.07.14 Admaston Telephone Box. The lengthsman and Mr Paul Riley will reinstate the telephone box soon. The delay is due to other work pressures. The lengthsman asked the clerk to order some parts for the job. A resident of Newton has kindly undertaken to tidy up the Newton telephone box. We have some paint which will be passed on to them.

25.07.15 Admaston Village Hall update. The Elvis Event on 27.06.25 was well supported.

25.07.16 Planning

- a) New
- P/2025/00598 Remove to ground level one Pine tree (T1)
Location: Orchard House, The Old Rectory, Blithfield Church Road, Admaston, Staffordshire, WS15 3NL Grid Ref: 404168 323992
- P/2025/00349 Conversion of one dwelling house to form two dwelling houses with associated internal alterations Location: The Hayloft, Stansley Wood Court, Newton Hurst Lane, Dapple Heath, Staffordshire, WS15 3PH Grid Ref: 405369 324789
- b) Pending
- P/2025/00098 Erection of a part two, part single storey side and rear extension, including Dormer windows to front and rear, and erection of Porch. Location: Rose Cottage, Steenwood Lane, Admaston, Staffordshire, WS15 3NG Grid Ref: 405111 323168 NO COMMENT

P/2024/00696 Construction of a solar farm comprising ground mounted photovoltaic solar arrays and associated infrastructure and landscaping Location: Land at Newton Farm, Lea Lane, Newton, Staffordshire, WS15 3NP Grid Ref: 403822 325257 Planning meeting held on 25 March 2025, no official notification of result although the planning committee appeared to pass the application with conditions. It is understood that it may be sometime before the conditions associated with this application can be ratified.

P/2025/00166 Erection of a slurry store. Location: Newton Hurst Farm, Newton Hurst Lane, Newton Hurst, Staffordshire, WS15 3PL Grid Ref: 405331 326265.

c) Decisions P/2025/00497 Proposal: Felling of one Lime tree Location: Faults House, The Old Rectory, Blithfield Church Road, Admaston, Staffordshire, WS15 3NL Grid Ref: 404157 323996 NO OBJECTION

d) Following the withdrawal of funding for the creation of local plans, the parish council have been asked to debate the following motion. This is part of a nationwide campaign by local councils to have the funding re-instated.

Blithfield Parish Council acknowledges that:

- i Neighbourhood planning empowers local communities to shape the development and growth of their areas through the creation of Neighbourhood Plans.
- ii The preparation of Neighbourhood Plans requires significant time, expertise, and financial resources, often placing a burden on parish and town councils.
- iii Neighbourhood Plans contribute to more democratic, locally-informed planning decisions and support the delivery of sustainable development aligned with community needs and aspirations.

The parish council unanimously agreed to support this motion and

Therefore it is Resolved to -

1. Call upon His Majesty's Government to provide increased and sustained funding to support the development, review, and implementation of Neighbourhood Plans.
2. Request that the Government ensures funding is accessible to all communities, to promote inclusivity and fairness in the planning process.
3. Write to Dave Robertson MP and the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities, and Local Government to communicate this resolution and advocate for enhanced support for neighbourhood planning.

It was however agreed that due to the rural nature of our parish and the comparatively small size and population it would not be feasible to create a neighbourhood plan for our parish at this time.

25.05.17 Highways and Lengthsman

- a) Grit bin – Rectory Farm – Reported again
- b) School Lane, Admaston – replacement of verge posts, it was agreed that the parish council would pay for up to 10 posts at £10 ea. Plus VAT, to be completed by the lengthsman in due course.

Scheduled road repairs to School Lane has not taken place.

- c) Steenwood Lane - Amey have communicated that repairs to the road surface on Steenwood Lane will take place asap.

- d) Newton Lane – Ditches, potholes, excess of water, between Manor Lane and Dapple Heath – 2 of the worst potholes have been filled in, in a very haphazard fashion and unless something is done about the surface water they will soon re-appear. There are numerous other potholes on Newton Lane.

- e) Newton Hurst Lane, Dapple Heath deep pothole – re-opened, a second vehicle had to be towed out of it, further investigations by Amey pending. Cllr Hales will look into this.

- f) Over hanging branches from the ground adjacent to the bridge at Dapple Heath -- The clerk will ask the farmer to rectify these.

- g) Hedges on Booth Lane - A resident has reported his concern about the hedges close to the gas works and a lack of response from Cadent, who he has asked to cut them back, as they are blocking visibility on an already narrow lane. The clerk has reported the issue to Amey.

25.07.18 Finance

Ref/Cheque	Item	Amount
Chq 613 13.05.25	CPRE Membership	£100.00
13.05.25	SPCA	£188.18
13.05.25	Zurich Insurance	£241.00
19.05.25	Bank Charges	£5.25
SO 28.05.25	Fiona Shipley clerk salary	£249.58
A/c Balance 28.05.25	A/c 054 £4636.24	A/c 575 £5109.05

25.07.19 To discuss any other business including items for the next agenda. There was none.

Cllr Hulme reported that he had twice emailed SCC to ask for a street sweeper to sweep the roads in Admaston and had no reply. He reported that historically one had come every 2 to 3 months.

25.07.20 Date of next meeting - 28.08.2025

The meeting closed at 8.00 pm

Signed Chairman

Signed Clerk