BLITHFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary General Meeting held on 12 March 2026 at Admaston Village Hall at 7pm

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

From the Parish: Mr Paul Riley, Mr John Hyde

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

26.03.01 Apologies: for Absence: Cllr Gary Hales (SC), Cllr Bev George (ESBC)

26.03.02 Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting and the Annual Meeting held on 15.01.2026 were circulated to the councillors in advance and signed by the chairman.

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

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

26.03.05 Clerk Update

a) Lloyds Bank – The Uttoxeter branch is closing on 18 June 2026. All members of the parish council and the clerk are now signatories on the parish council bank account and all previous members have had their signatories removed. The new signatories have been sent card readers, but no change has been requested from the 2 x signatories required for payments by cheque only, so the clerk will look into this and update councillors.

b) Parish councillors must have a '@blithfieldparishcouncil.gov.uk' email address for parish council business by 31.03.2026. Cllr Wood has kindly agreed to support any parish councillor who needs help setting up the new email addresses on their personal devices. The target is for all councillors to be using a gov.uk email address by the end of March as this is a mandatory requirement of Assertion 10.

c) The website has now been updated.

d) To adopt the Health and Safety Policy for Blithfield Parish Council. It was decided that the clerk would make further enquiries and revisit this at the next meeting. The clerk intends to attend 2 online courses which will hopefully give more insight into the best way forward.

e) To adopt the IT Policy for Blithfield Parish Council. The standard IT policy created by NALC for parish councils refers to a health and safety policy, so this policy will be adopted, when the parish council has adopted a suitable health and safety policy.

f) B5013 steering group meeting organised by Needwood Ward SCC Cllr Catherine Brown, was cancelled due to bad weather. Data will be collected over the summer and a further meeting will be arranged in the autumn.

g) Defibrillators – heaters have been replaced at a cost of £75 each plus VAT and the light switch on the Admaston unit's door. The defibrillators are 11 years old and out of warranty, but are serviced as required, and are in good working order so there is no immediate concern that they are likely to need replacing. However the council should be mindful that a new defibrillator and cabinet will be around £1300.00 plus VAT. Bleed kits which often go with the defibrillator are £75.00 plus VAT. The clerk believes that we should be ring fencing more money annually to cover the maintenance of the defibrillators and will take this into account when she draws up the next budget.

h) Potholes – SCC have committed £15m over the next 2 years to specifically target those less severe potholes that are the main vulnerability risk areas for further damage occurring particularly in the wet winter months.

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i) Staffordshire Search and Rescue – request for donation. The council may consider this organisation for a charity donation later in the year.

j) Newsletter – the draft copy is ready and will be circulated to the parish councillors for any amendments.

26.03.06 Public Participation. None.

26.03.07 Upgrade of Broadband in the Parish The proposed target for completion remains 31 March 2026, and work is continuing.

26.03.08 To receive oral reports from the Borough and County Councillors. Cllr Hales (SCC) has sent notification that the Reform County Council are campaigning to stop the use of agricultural land for solar farms. They are not objecting to their use on buildings where they can provide a cleaner and cheaper form of energy.

Correspondence from Cllr Hales has also been received, explaining the challenges the County Council are facing repairing roads when the weather is so wet and frosty at this time of year.

26.03.09 To receive Chairman's report – nothing to report.

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

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Needwood Ward 70 crimes reported in November 2025, 56 crimes reported in December 2025

PCSO Timothy Leathers has a new role within Staffordshire Police from 15 March . The clerk has written to him, to congratulate him on his new post and to thank him for all his help during his time covering our area.

The clerk will ask PCSO Dominika Bond-Siwek who remains covering our area to attend the next meeting so we can meet her.

26.03.11 Speeding Cars and Motorbikes, S59 signs

Cllr Massey met with SCC Cllr Catherine Brown and SCC Cllr Hales on 27 February to discuss cameras and gates on the lay-bys adjacent to Blithfield Reservoir. Noise cameras and CCTV cameras, which could be viewed by the police remotely were suggested .

Cllr Hulme reported an increase in late night vehicle noise.

25.03.12 Village gateway signs - The clerk has contacted several parish clerks who have had village gateways signs installed in their parishs along with SCC. The impression she is getting is that it is likely to be a long process. She has received an estimate from a local contractor to install the 2 signs of £1000. The signs themselves will be approximately £1000 each. Cllr Hales has expressed a willingness to cover the cost of the necessary licences from his DHP budget. The clerk has again asked for the existing Admaston signs to be lowered, bearing in mind the time it will take for us to get the gateway signs installed, the speeding issues and the dangerous state of the existing poles they are mounted on. Cllr Hales supports this request and will apply further pressure at his next DHP meeting.

It has been noted that 2 x new signs have been situated at the bottom of Callow Hill Lane, Dapple Heath. Damage was caused to a water main during installation. We have never asked for these or had any idea that they were to be installed, yet we still cannot get the Admaston signs, which effect so many, replaced! The clerk will notify Cllr Hales.

26.03.13 Red Telephone Boxes Further refurbishment work to be carried out on the Newton telephone box in summer 2026.

26.01.14 Admaston Village Hall update. The chairman of Admaston village hall committee reported that there is a problem with a leak in the roof, which would be costly to repair, but plans are in place when the weather is better to install scaffolding and repair the roof. They are hoping to receive a grant from SCC to help resolve the cluster fly issue.

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26.03.15 Planning

a) New

b)

c) Decisions P/2024/00696 Construction of a solar farm comprising ground mounted photovoltaicsolar arrays and associated infrastructure and landscaping Location: Land at Newton Farm, Lea Lane, Newton, Staffordshire, WS15 3NP Grid Ref: 403822 325257 PERMITS

26.03.16 Highways

a) School Lane, Admaston – replacement of verge posts – ongoing, SCC scheduled resurfacing has not taken place.

b) Newton Lane – Ditches, potholes, excess of water, between Newton and Dapple Heath - a significant repair has taken place of the road surface, particularly on the hill between Dapple Heath and Newton Lane, however some deep potholes have been left. The only improvement to the ditches and drainage has been carried out by our Lengthsman. SCC have notified more work will be carried out when resources allow.

c) Dapple Heath - large potholes on junction have been reported again. A temporary repair has taken place.

d) Booth Lane – the deteriorating state of the road surface has been reported.

26.03.17 Lengthsman – The hedges along the B5013 at Admaston have been cut back by the farmer, the clerk was asked to email him and thank him.

26.03.18 Finance

a)

PAID OUT Ref/Cheque	Item	Amount
19.01.26	Bank charges	£7.75
SO/10	Fiona Shipley clerks salary	£257.58
SO/11	Fiona Shipley clerks salary	£257.58
PAID IN		
09.01.2026	Lloyds Bank interest	£2.61
A/c Balance 31.01.26	A/C 575 £5131.74	A/C 054 £3136.57

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26.03.19 To discuss any other business including items for the next agenda.

Local Government reorganisation information and links for individuals to comment have been circulated to all councillors and residents on the email mailing list. The consultation period ends on 26 March 2026 with the outcome being announced during the summer.

26.03.20 Date of next meeting - 07.05.2026

The chairman thanked everyone for attending.

The meeting closed at 7.49pm pm

Signed Chairman

Signed Clerk

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