

BITTERLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Draft Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Bitterley Parish Council on 15th September 2025

Members Present: Cllr Richard Osborne (Vice Chair), Tony Millard, Karen Parry, Jon Reardon-Smith, Dave Rogers. **In Attendance:** Heather Coonick (Clerk/RFO).

- 2025/432 Elect a Chair:** due to the resignation of Cllr Alison Holman the position of chair was vacant
RESOLVED: to elect Cllr Osborne to chair temporarily and then rotate the position amongst the councillors for future meetings as no-one was willing to stand as a permanent chair.
- 2025/433 Apologies:** None
- 2025/434 Declarations of Interest**
- i. To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests - none
 - ii. To declare any Non-Pecuniary Interests - none
- 2025/435 Public Participation (maximum 15 minutes):** There were two members of the public present, Mr Anthony Bevington who wished to be considered for co-option at point 437 of this agenda and Cllr Middleton representing Ludford Parish Council.
- 2025/436 To Approve the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting on the 21st July 2025:**
RESOLVED: to accept the minutes as an accurate record and they were signed by the chair.
- 2025/437 Update on the Notice of Vacancies and Consider Candidates for Co-option:** the vacancies have been advertised on Shropshire Council website, West of Clee Magazine, Bitterley Parish Council website and the notice boards. Mr Anthony Bevington was asked to tell the Council why he wished to be considered for co-option. He stated that he had lived in Knowbury for 33 years and has worked in Local Government for 30 years and run his own business being an accountant by profession. As there was not a vacancy in neighbouring parishes he wished to be considered for co-option by BPC and felt he his skills would be put to good use by joining the council.
RESOLVED: to co-opt Mr Anthony Bevington to the council and he signed the Acceptance of Office form.
- 2025/438 Rock Farm Solar Farm Update –** Mark Harding and Lee Adams from Enviromena introduced themselves and explained that Enviromena is owned by a pension fund based in the UK. They use their own teams for the development, construction, management and eventual decommission of solar farms and have 30-40 similar projects across the UK. They plan to meet with the Community Liaison Group (CLG) every 3-4 months during construction and annually once the site is functioning. Cllr Middleton (Ludford Parish) reminded the meeting that the site is in Ludford Parish Council area, and the CLG will consist of representatives from both Ludford and Bitterley Parishes. The CLG will monitor how the plans are delivered and will make comment to Enviromena on the plans being submitted but Mr Harding and Adams stressed that they hope to start on site in early 2026 so any consultation on the plans would need to be dealt with quickly. They will inform the CLG of the route of the power connection. Enviromena a keen to minimize the impact of development upon residents and there will be an onsite manager during construction. Enviromena will honour the

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agreed payment of £80,000 made by the previous owners, which will be split between Ludford and Bitterley Parish Councils once the project has been commissioned. They anticipate the site will be active in late 2026 early 2027.

2025/439

Ledwyche Solar Farm –

- i. Update from the Liaison Group and the Community Benefit Fund – Cllr Reardon-Smith noted that the development is quite noisy at the moment as cables are being installed. Councillors discussed the reduced Community Benefit Fund (CBF) offered by the Aukera Energy and the options available to them. Cllr Heather Kidd, Leader of Shropshire Council had proposed setting up a group to discuss the guidance given to Parish Councils where Solar Farms were being planned BPC had not been contacted since this was proposed. BPC had tried to seek advice from 2DLaw who were affiliated with Shropshire Association of Local Councils, but they were no longer available.

RESOLVED:

- a. to not seek further legal advice beyond that already received as the council does not have a contract with Aukera Energy regarding the original CBF offered.
 - b. to not approach the MP at this point
 - c. to accept the offer from Aukera Energy made on the 24th June 2025 of a one-time contribution of £36,000 to Bitterley Parish Council to be distributed by BPC as a Community Benefit Fund
 - d. to write to Cllr Kidd raising concerns that the group had not be set up
 - e. to write to the SALC Committee raising concerns about the lack of legal advice via 2DLaw was not available and that an alternative was not available via SALC.
- ii. Response to Complaint to Aukera Energy – Aukera Energy accept that they will need to cultivate the field and ‘remain committed to delivering the ecological outcomes as outlined in the planning conditions and the LEMP’.

2025/440

Shropshire Councillor Report – Cllr Shackerley-Bennett was not in attendance and had not sent apologies.

2025/441

Consider the Memorandum of Understanding with Shropshire Council: the memorandum is not a legally binding agreement and the council felt that a closer working relationship with Shropshire Council would benefit the parish.

RESOLVED: to sign the Memorandum of Understanding.

2025/442

Update on the Planning Enforcement for Tulip Cottage: deferred to the next meeting.

2025/443

Correspondence from the War Memorials Trust re Bedlam War Memorial: deferred to the next meeting.

2025/444

Update on the Grant Application from St Mary’s Church, Bitterley: deferred to the next meeting.

2025/445

Review the Risk Assessment:

RESOLVED: to accept the Risk Assessment

2025/446

Review the Freedom of Information Publication Scheme: deferred to the next meeting.

2025/447

Review the Information Technology Policy:

RESOLVED: to adopt the Information Technology Policy.

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2025/448 Update on Parish Council Email Addresses: the clerk reminded councillors that the council was paying for 10 email addresses but so far only two councillors have transferred over to the council domain address. The Clerk would be changing the main council address to the bitterley-pc.gov.uk domain before the next meeting. Cllr Bevington will be given a parish council email address.

2025/449 Financial Matters:

- i. To Note the Error by HMRC for PAYE – HMRC have charged the Parish Council £657.92 in error. The council will be reimbursed via non-payment of PAYE until the debit is cleared.
- ii. Review the Finance Report: deferred to the next meeting.
- iii. Note the Local Government Pay Settlement for the Clerk – noted.
- iv. Note Income Since Last Meeting – deferred to the next meeting.
- v. Note Payments Since the Last Meeting – deferred to the next meeting.
- vi. Approve Payments:

Payee	Inv No	Amount
Med Uk Defibrillator Pads for Angel Bank, Middleton, Bedlam and Cleeton St Mary	13451	264.00
H Coonick Salary July-Sept (including backpay)		922.68
No payment to HMRC as account in credit		0.00
H Coonick (Travel)		38.70
Shropshire Council Electricity for Street Lights		133.96

RESOLVED: to make the above payments.

2025/450 Consider Tasks for the Environmental Maintenance Contractor:

RESOLVED: to ask Mr David Lewis to carry out maintenance on the areas highlighted during the last financial year up to the value of £770.

2025/451 Consider a Response to the Police and Crime Commissioner's Town and Parish Council Survey:

RESOLVED: that Cllr Reardon-Smith will complete the survey on behalf of the Parish Council

2025/452 Footpath Group Update: the Clerk has informed the group that the Parish Council does not insure the group and that to be covered by insurance they need to enter a partnership with Shropshire Council and become a P3 group.

2025/453 Update on Blocked Pavement on Angel Bank: the Clerk has spoken to Shropshire Council, and they are working with the landowner to cut back the hedge on the pavement.

2025/454 Update on Litter at Titterstone: the clerk had been contacted by another parish council about the litter in the buildings at Titterstone. The Clerk had contacted the owner who advised that the public should not be entering the buildings, and they would check that the signage advising of them being private property was still in place.

2025/455 Consider a Competition to Provide Photographs for the Parish Council Website: deferred to the next meeting.

2025/456 Councillors Reports – deferred to the next meeting.

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2025/457 **Action List** – deferred to the next meeting.

2025/458 **Items for the next Agenda:** a. Ledwyche Solar Farm Community Benefit Fund b. Update on the Planning Enforcement for Tulip Cottage c. Correspondence from the War Memorials Trust re Bedlam War Memorial d. Update on the Grant Application from St Mary's Church, Bitterley e. Review the Freedom of Information Publication Scheme f. Review the Finance Report: g. Consider a Competition to Provide Photographs for the Parish Council Website h. Councillors Reports i. Action List

**Next Meeting: Ordinary Parish Council Meeting: 7.00pm Monday 20th October 2025
at Bitterley Village Hall**