

# BITTERLEY PARISH COUNCIL

## Draft Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2025

**Members Present:** Cllrs Jon Reardon-Smith (Temporary Chair), Richard Osborne (Vice Chair), Anthony Bevington, Karen Parry. **In Attendance:** H Coonick (Clerk).

**2025/476 Apologies**

**RESOLVED:** to accept apologies from Cllrs Millard and Rogers.

**2025/477 Declarations of Interest:** There were no Declarations of Interests.

**2025/478 Public Participation:** No members of the public were present.

**2025/479 To Approve the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> October 2025:**  
**RESOLVED:** to accept the minutes as an accurate record and they were signed by the chair.

**2025/480 Consider Methods of Attracting Candidates for Co-option to the Vacant Seats:** there are three empty seats for Bitterley Ward and one for Cleeton St Mary Ward.  
**RESOLVED:** to attend the Community Breakfast in January to discuss the role with members of the public. Cllrs will also approach parishioners individually who may be interested in standing.

**2025/481 Solar Farms**

- i. Update and Actions on the Community Benefit Fund for Ledwyche: Aukera have not provided the agreement for the CBF.  
**RESOLVED:** to write to Stuart Anderson, MP, informing him situation.
- ii. Consider the Lack of Response from Cllr Heather Kidd, Leader of Shropshire Council to Letter Regarding Community Benefit Funds and Solar Farms:  
**RESOLVED:** to write again to Cllr Kidd to express the councils concern at the lack of a response to their letter.

**2025/482 Shropshire Councillor Report –** Cllr Shackerley-Bennett was not in attendance and had not sent apologies or a report.

**2025/483 Policies**

- i. General Review of Policies:  
**RESOLVED:** that the council would not longer have a Councillor Vacancy Policy or Press and Media Policy and they would be removed from the website. The Clerk will review the Personal Data Management and Audit Policy and the Vacancies Procedure and report to the next meeting.
- ii. Consider Removing the Grants Policy:  
**RESOLVED:** To retain the Grants Policy but change item 4 to read 'No 1 application may receive more than £150 in any 1 year'.

**2025/484 Discuss Benefits of Affiliation to Shropshire Association of Local Councils:** Councillors discussed the benefits and cost of the affiliation. It was accepted that SALC do provide support to the clerk in matters relating to the legal status the council.

**2025/485 Financial Matters:**

- i. Note the Election Recharge Fee of £250 Charged in January 2026: Noted

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- ii. Review the Finance Report: As of the 11<sup>th</sup> October the Instant Account held £10947.04 and, on the 3rd November, the Current Account held £8,797.71. The expenditure was within the budget but there is a forecast overspend of £469.35 for the year due to the increase in the clerks' hours earlier this financial year from 4.5 to 5.5 hours per week.
- iii. Review the Reserves Policy:  
**RESOLVED:** to adopt the Reserves Policy.
- iv. Review the Personnel Committee Report: a review meeting had been cancelled due to sickness. The Clerk has since given her notice of resignation to the Personnel Committee.  
**RESOLVED:** to start the recruitment process immediately. Cllr Parry was elected to the Personnel Committee.
- v. Review the Draft Budget: councillors discussed the budget and the level of general reserve.  
**RESOLVED:** Once the council tax base is known the budget will be recalculated to ensure that there is not an increase in the Band D property charge and will be presented for agreement at the January 2026 meeting.
- vi. Approve Payments:

Payee	Inv No	Amount
D Lewis (Environmental Maintenance)	890	£236.50
H Coonick and HMRC (Clerks Salary Oct-Dec)		£1045.99
H Coonick (Clerks Travel Expenses)		20.70

**RESOLVED:** to make the above payments.

- 2025/486 Consider New Tasks for the Environmental Maintenance Contractor:**  
**RESOLVED:** for the contractor to continue working in areas identified in 2024-25 including clearing drains along Squirrel Lane.
- 2025/487 Councillors Reports:** Cllr Osborne reported that further daffodil planting was planned.
- 2025/488 Items for the next Agenda:** a. Co-option of Councillors for Vacant Seats b. Ledwyche Community Benefit Fund c. Review the Need for Personal Data Management and Audit Policy and the Vacancies Procedure d. Adopt the Budget and Set the Precept e. Receive an Update on the Recruitment of a Replacement Clerk

**Ordinary Parish Council Meeting: 7.00pm Monday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2026 at Bitterley Village Hall**