

BITTERLEY PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Bitterley Parish Council on 17th February 2025

Present: Cllrs A Holman (Chair), G Dolphin, J Gatehouse, T Millard, R J Osborne, K Parry, J Reardon-Smith, and D Rogers. **In Attendance:** H Coonick (Clerk/RFO).

2025/311 Apologies: None

2025/312 Declarations of Interest

- i. To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests: None
- ii. To declare any Non-Pecuniary Interests: None

2025/313 Public Participation: A member of the public (MP1) raised the issue of a blocked bridleway (0508/14/2). It has been reported to Shropshire Council Outdoor Partnerships. MP2 introduced himself as Stuart Waite the Liberal Democrat standing in Clee Ward at the Unitary Election in May. Cllr Richard Huffer will not be standing again.

2025/314 To Approve the Minutes of the Meeting on the 20th January 2025:
RESOLVED: to accept the minutes and they were signed by the chair.

2025/315 PC Fern Johnson and PCSO Susan Cooke, Safer Neighbourhood Team, West Mercia Police: They will inform the Parish Council of crime rates and try to attend the meetings quarterly. They will try to attend the Community Breakfast on the 1st March. There are very few reports of crime in Bitterley Parish, and they encourage everyone to report crime or suspicious activity to the team.

2025/316 Shropshire Councillor Report – Cllr Huffer was not in attendance. In response to the Clerks letter, Tim Collard, Shropshire Council's Legal and Democratic Services, reported that Cllr Huffer had been unsure of the dates of meetings but would attempt to attend the next meeting.

2025/317 Clerks Report: H Coonick reported that the .gov.uk domain and email addresses had been applied for and the new website with Hugo Fox was in the process of being built. Rocking Horse Media will retain the present website until the end of April and will transfer the present domain to the Parish Council to enable forwarding. Shropshire Council have adjusted the invoice for electricity for streetlighting to £472.95 plus VAT to reflect the new bulbs and removal of the light at Bedlam. She met with Cllr Gatehouse to look at the route of the watercourse beside the railway line. She will contact Shropshire Council's drainage engineer to seek guidance on what action should be taken.

2025/318 Consider a Request for Affordable Housing Local Connection: This property is not within Bitterley Parish Council area and was not debated.

2025/319 Arrangements for the Annual Parish Meeting: This meeting will be held at 7pm on 12th May 2025 at the Village Hall.

2025/320 Arrangements for the Parish Council Election on 1st May 2025: Nomination Papers will be available in March and need to be returned to Shropshire Council by the 2nd April. Anyone interested in standing as a councillors can look at the Electoral Commission website or contact the Parish Clerk for further information.

2025/321 Ledwyche Liaison Group Update: the badger and otter survey will be carried out in March. There has been no information on the Community Fund that was proposed.

- 2025/322 Discuss the Notice Board at Cleeton St Mary:** Cllr Dolphin reported that the notice board was in a poor condition and needs repairing. The council will look at how to organise the repair. The board is specifically for Parish Council notices.
- 2025/323 Consider Replacing the Bulb in the Street Light at 27/28 Bedlam Lane:** Cllr Gatehouse reported that this light is working. The Clerk will inform Shropshire Council.
- 2025/324 Financial Matters:**
- i. Review the Finance Report, Expenditure Against Budget and Bank Reconciliation: There has been some expenditure above the budget as expected. As of the 29/1/25 savings account held £10,783.93 and the Current Account held £5,013.04.
RESOLVED: To accept the report and the bank reconciliation was signed by Cllr Millard
 - ii. Approve Payments: D Lewis (Environmental Maintenance) Inv:691 £319 and Inv 693 £176, H Coonick Salary Jan-March £813.73 and Travel Expenses £38.25, Rocking Horse Media £40, SALC (Training Cllr Reardon-Smith) £35.
RESOLVED: to make the payments.
 - iii. Notice of Increase in Fee for Hire for Village Hall to £12 per hour
RESOLVED: the increase was noted.
- 2025/325 Update on Volunteer Highway Maintenance Group:** Cllr Holman reported that a group of councillors had met. They were keen to look into how volunteers might contribute to making the parish look well cared for as S.C is reducing its commitment in this area. Two barriers were identified - reaching out to volunteers and insurance for people who become involved. It was felt that the resurfacing of Bitterley Lane could act as a focus for involvement. The group has also suggested that the PC could monitor the resurfacing of Bitterley Lane especially with regards to how it holds up to the use it gets from the businesses in the area. SC are in the process of publishing guidance on what Parish Councils can and cannot do on highways. The clerk will check the position of volunteers with regards to insurance with the PC insurers.
- 2025/326 Consider Monitoring Fly Tipping in the Parish:** Shropshire Council have decided to revert to not requiring cars to use a booking service for the Recycling Centre so it is anticipated that incidents of fly tipping will reduce.
- 2025/327 Update on Resurfacing of Bitterley Lane, Angel Bank 12th-18th May 2025:** the lane will be closed for one week with diversions in place.
- 2025/328 Update on the Planning Enforcement Report:** The Planning Enforcement Officer has stated that there is no time frame for when the application to alter the Section 106 affordable dwelling for Tulip Cottage. The Council is concerned that this has not been dealt with as an enforcement matter.
RESOLVED: to write to Shropshire Council Enforcement Officer asking that the issues raised by the Council are enforced in relation to the original planning application.
- 2025/329 Consider Supporting the Safety of Lithium-ion Batteries Campaign:**
RESOLVED: to not support this campaign as present legislation is sufficient.
- 2025/330 Consider the National Garden Scheme Village Garden Trail:**
RESOLVED: to put the information onto the new website.
- 2025/331 Councillors Reports:** Cllr Holman is unable to attend the next South Shropshire Area Committee Meeting, Cllr Reardon-Smith will attend instead. Cllr Millard

reported that the Civilian Police Support Officers had been delivering SmartWater kits in the Middleton.

2025/332 **Action List:** Deferred to the next meeting.

2025/333 **Items for the next Agenda:** a. consider a motion to put to SALC to ask John Campion (Police and Crime Commissioner) to attend a future SALC meeting.

Next Meeting: 7.00 Monday 17th March 2025 at Bitterley Village Hall