

West Bradford Parish Council

Clerk:

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Minutes of the meeting of West Bradford Parish Council held on Wednesday 1 November 2023* at West Bradford Village Hall

***This meeting date had been rearranged from the original date of 25 October 2023.**

Members present:	Parish Cllr A Bristol (Chair) Parish Cllr R Chew (Vice Chair) Parish Cllr H Best Parish Cllr M Fox Parish Cllr R Marsden
Apologies:	Cllr K Horkin MBE (RVBC)
Clerk present:	Andrew Glover
County Cllr present:	None
Members of the public / other persons present:	Malcolm Taylor (for minute item 14a)

1.	Declarations of Pecuniary, Other Registrable and Non-Registrable Interests AS members of the Village Hall Management Committee, Cllrs Chew and Fox declared an ORI in relation to minute item 17c and did not participate in the discussion.	
2.	Minutes / Matters Arising a) <u>Minutes of the last meeting (27 September 2023):</u> The minutes of the meeting held on 27 September 2023 were to be signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record. Proposed by: Cllr Best Seconded by: Cllr Fox Resolved The minutes of the meeting held on 27 September 2023 would be posted on the Parish Council website	Clerk

<p>b)</p> <p>i)</p> <p>ii)</p> <p>iii)</p>	<p><u>Matters arising:</u></p> <p><u>Water running down from junction of Eaves Hall Lane / West Bradford Rd</u></p> <p>Members noted that further works to halt the continuing flow of water onto Grindleton Rd had now been completed by LCC. It remained to be seen whether these latest works would resolve the issue.</p> <p><u>Traffic concerns– junction of Chapel Lane / Grindleton Rd</u></p> <p>Members had previously asked the Clerk to report their concerns on this matter to Lancashire Constabulary. As a result, the Clerk had made contact with PC Green, who confirmed that officers from Lancashire Constabulary had assessed the situation. In the Constabulary’s view, any risk to public safety posed by parked cars at this junction was not significantly high; it should be borne in mind that drivers approaching the junction from Chapel Lane were generally able to assess the traffic coming from the right by looking behind the parked cars and edging slowly forward. In addition, both Grindleton Road and Chapel Lane are subject to a 30mph speed restriction at the point where they meet, which should ensure that drivers have sufficient time to safely join the carriageway.</p> <p>Members thanked PC Green for his feedback and asked the Clerk to advise the complainant accordingly.</p> <p>Resolved Clerk to update complainant</p> <p><u>Update to website</u></p> <p>Members noted that Jon Pendrill had updated the Parish Council website with the photograph of Parish Cllr Roger Marsden.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>Public questions, comments or representations:</p> <p>None</p>	
<p>4.</p>	<p>Update from Ward Councillor present:</p> <p>In the absence of Cllr Horkin, no update was given.</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p>Attendance by Lancashire Constabulary</p> <p>PC David Green had hoped to attend the meeting on its original date of 25 October, in order to introduce himself and outline the work of the Constabulary in and around the village. However, he was unable to attend on the revised date. Members agreed that PC Green should be invited to attend the next meeting of the Parish Council, to be held on 29 November 2023.</p> <p>Resolved Clerk to invite PC Green</p>	<p>Clerk</p>

6.	<p>Bradford Bridge</p> <p>No update</p>	
7.	<p>Haweswater Aqueduct Resilience Programme (HARP)</p> <p>a) <u>Update – planning application 3/2021/0661</u></p> <p>No update</p>	
8.	<p>Overview of financial position:</p> <p>a) <u>Concurrent Functions Grant 2022/23</u></p> <p>The Clerk had received confirmation from RVBC that the sum of £791 had been awarded; this had been paid to the Parish Council on 2 October. This sum equated to 25% of the total claim submitted to RVBC (£3,162).</p> <p>b) <u>Monthly accounts – September 2023</u></p> <p>The Clerk submitted details of income and expenditure for the month of September 2023 for approval by the Parish Council and signing-off by the Chair.</p> <p>Resolved That the record for September 2023 as presented would be signed off</p> <p>c) <u>Fees for grass cutting 2023/24</u></p> <p>At the September meeting, the Clerk had confirmed to members that – with regard to grass cutting arrangements in 2023/24 - the following questions had been posed to RVBC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • as a client, could the Parish Council ask for the grass be cut less frequently than it has been in 2023/24, with an appropriate price reduction? • alternatively, would the cost be cheaper if certain designated areas were left to grow wild?; or • would the price quoted to be quoted by RVBC for 2024/25 be given on a “take it or leave it” basis? <p>It had been agreed that no payment for 2023/24 would be made by the Parish Council pending a response to the above questions. No response had been received.</p> <p>Members agreed that they would revisit the matter at the November meeting, and – if no response had then been received by RVBC – ask the Clerk to seek an update from RVBC on its stance.</p> <p>Resolved Clerk to diary for the November meeting</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Clerk</p>

d)	<p><u>Precept 2024/25</u></p> <p>The Parish Council had been asked to officially advise RVBC of its requested precept for 2024/25 by the deadline of Friday 22 December 2023. In order to encourage discussion, the Clerk had prepared a document outlining options available to members in setting the 2024/25 precept. These included a range of increases from 0% to 10%.</p> <p>In considering the various options, members noted that the current national financial situation remained exceptionally gloomy, with the Financial Statement due on 22 November 2023 being likely to reflect this. In particular, the rate of inflation (as calculated under the Consumer Price Index) remained high, the cost of living having risen by 6.7% in the 12 months to September 2023.</p> <p>After lengthy deliberation, it was agreed that – in order to ensure the Parish Council could meet its commitments for 2024/25 - a rise in the precept of 10% would be appropriate. (This increase was proposed by the Chair and seconded by Cllr Chew; it was carried on a unanimous vote). In reaching this decision, members commented that, unlike some other parish councils, West Bradford Parish Council did not carry a high level of reserves. Members were also conscious that capital outlay over the previous 12 months had been higher than anticipated (eg a new notice board, and two firework displays to mark (i) the platinum jubilee and (ii) the coronation of King Charles III); and further outlay would be required in 2024/25 to mark the 80th anniversary of the D-Day Landings. Whilst reluctant to add to the financial burdens of residents at a difficult economic time, members considered that a 10% rise in the precept (equating to £806, from the current £8,061 to £8,867) was appropriate, given that it would result in payments rising by only £1.82 for each of the 384 Band D households in the parish, with each household then paying the sum of £23.09.</p> <p>Resolved Members agreed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • raise the precept for 2024/25 by 10%, from £8,061 to £8,867 (an increase of £806); • authorise the Chair and Clerk to sign the documentation provided by RVBC accordingly; • ask the Clerk to forward the completed documentation to RVBC by the stated deadline of Friday 22 December 2023; and • ask the Clerk to place information on the Parish Council website which would update local residents on the proposed increase and explain its rationale 	<p>Chair/ Clerk Clerk Clerk</p>
9. a)	<p>Governance</p> <p><u>Member training – Code of Conduct</u></p> <p>As agreed at the September meeting, the Clerk and Cllr Best had attended the RVBC training session on the Code of Conduct, held on 5 October 2023. This session had been considered helpful and well-presented by RVBC officers. <u>(cont)</u></p>	

Following his attendance on the course, the Clerk had updated the guidance which he attached to section 2 of each agenda (declarations of interest). The Clerk presented the document to members, who noted and approved its content.

Resolved

Members:

- acknowledged that training on the Code of Conduct (either in the form of personal attendance at the RVBC session by Cllr Best, or the cascading by the Clerk to other members of information provided at the RVBC session) had taken place; and
- approved the revised guidance note for inclusion on each agenda for future meetings

Clerk

b) External audit arrangements for 2023/24 - information from LALC

The Clerk had received information from LALC regarding the need for parish councils to provide a dedicated email account. In order to answer a new question (which would appear in the Annual Governance Statement for 2023/24) in the affirmative, the Parish Council would be required to have a generally accessible email account; this ideally would be a .gov.uk or .org.uk address, or could be an address linked to the council website.

The Clerk advised members that, whilst the Parish Council did currently have a dedicated email address (westbradfordps@gmail.com) which was linked to the Parish Council website, this was neither a .gov.uk nor a .org.uk address as suggested.

Members noted that – on the basis of the specific wording received from LALC – the Parish Council would indeed be able to give an affirmative response during a external audit as its current gmail address was linked to the Parish Council website. However, should the future wording of the question differ from that above (in such a way that the Parish Council would not be able to answer positively) then the Parish Council would reconsider its position at that time.

10. **Planning applications considered**

a) Planning Applications

None

b) List of contested applications

As requested, the Clerk continued to compile a list of contested applications which would be submitted to members on a regular basis for their consideration. The purpose of the list was to assist members in keeping track of contested applications, and to have more clarity around the subsequent determinations made by RVBC / Planning Inspectorate.

An updated version of the document was presented for members' information.

11.	<p>Lancashire Best Kept Village Competition (LBKVC) 2023</p> <p>a) <u>Presentation event</u></p> <p>The presentation event had been held at Eaves Hall on Monday 16 October 2023. As a result, the Parish Council had learned that the following successes had been achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Championship category – Highly Commended (ie 3rd / 4th out of 8) • Hotel/Guest House - Winner – Eaves Hall (7 entries) • Public Playing Fields - Winner – Village Hall (17 entries) • Children’s Play Area - Runner up – Village Hall (19 entries) • Public Building – Runner up - Village Hall (24 entries) • War Memorial - Highly Commended (24 entries) • Community Notice Board - Grindleton Rd - 4th (22 entries) • Public Houses - 3 Millstones (6th out of 31 entries) • Places of Worship & Grounds – St Catherine’s (7th out of 29 entries) <p>Members agreed that this represented a very favourable return on the year’s efforts, with particular credit going to the Village Hall Management Committee.</p> <p>b) <u>Judges’ feedback</u></p> <p>Members were provided with copies of the judges’ reports which had now been received from the event organisers. Whilst much of the feedback was positive and complimentary, the main points of concern were as set out below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bench at War Memorial Gardens needs painting; • Overflowing litter bin at Village Hall car park sited in children’s play area was bad on both visits – 2nd visit we counted 25 pieces alongside new track; • Pub on car park with dead [] prunings left behind kerb stones on both visits. [NB – credit given for impact of recent fire]; • Eaves Hall – bench outside gate house needs some painting; [the building] is impressive but one area that let it down was the area at the back used for bins storage. This is quite clearly seen from the road and would be better gated or screened off; • the Covid Vaccination Centre notice was still behind the bench on the Coronation Gardens, probably not the fault of the villages, but as such a long time has passed maybe this could be removed and left somewhere less prominent; and • Local Church – the building is well maintained for its age and the church yard is cared for with well mown areas around the headstones. However paths had weeds and the borders to the land needed to be tidier. <p>Members noted the comments, and asked the Clerk to circulate them to the participating entrants in the Outstanding Features category as appropriate.</p> <p>Resolved Clerk to circulate (cont)</p>	
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Clerk

	<p>Members discussed whether the village’s secondary notice board, located on Chapel Lane, should be removed before next year’s competition. On balance, this was considered to be a good idea, members noting that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • judges had commented on the lack of content displayed in the main notice board on Grindleton Rd; • the paintwork of the second notice board was in poor repair, with constant attention required due to drips from the overhanging trees; and • any information displayed on the second notice board was hard to read in dark conditions as the surrounding lighting was weak. <p>Resolved Chair to arrange for removal of the second notice board on Chapel Lane</p>	<p>Chair</p>
<p>12.</p> <p>a)</p>	<p>Land in which the Parish Council has an interest</p> <p><u>Pinfold: Land ownership / proposals to improve Pinfold site</u></p> <p>At the September meeting, the Clerk had reported his discovery of a deed of conveyance which purported to transfer title of the Pinfold from Lord Clitheroe to the Parish Council. However, it had been agreed that it would be prudent to send a scanned copy of the deed to Maureen Pickup (the legally-qualified person who had been assisting the Parish Council with its enquiries), and seek her view on whether the deed did in itself provide definitive evidence of a transfer of title (or whether further documentary proof was required).</p> <p>Helpfully, Maureen had since provided a detailed assessment of the situation now faced by the Parish Council. She advised that the deed of conveyance had in fact not been correctly witnessed in accordance with the required legal formalities, and was therefore not legally sealed. (Each signature to the deed should have been witnessed by a third party who then added their name and address; this did not appear to have happened).</p> <p>In light of Maureen’s findings, it now fell to members to consider whether to apply to the Land Registry for a voluntary registration of absolute title. Maureen’s advice on this point was clear; she felt that submission of an application at this time would be an appropriate next step. It was possible that the Land Registry, having considered an application from the Parish Council “in the round”, would overlook the fact that the deed was not properly sealed and proceed to register the title. If the Land Registry did not overlook the lack of procedural compliance, or sought further evidence from the Parish Council, members would need to decide at that point whether further effort and expense could be justified.</p> <p>Members agreed that submission of an application to register title was the best way forward at this stage, feeling that failure to do so would simply leave the legal situation unresolved. Should the Parish Council be obliged to continue with registration at a future date, it would then fall to parish councillors (and a Clerk) who were not as familiar with the situation as the current incumbents.</p> <p>(cont)</p>	

	<p>Members noted with gratitude Maureen’s offer to provide further support on completion of the relevant forms if required.</p> <p>Should the services of a professional valuer be required, Cllr Fox was confident that an appropriate surveyor could be commissioned.</p> <p>Resolved Clerk to commence the completion of Land Registry form FR1, seeking further guidance from Maureen as and when required Clerk to report back to members with details of progress (and fees to be incurred) as the situation became clearer</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
<p>13.</p> <p>a)</p> <p>b)</p> <p>c)</p>	<p>Draft Action Plan 2023</p> <p><u>Review of Action Plan 2023</u></p> <p>The Clerk presented an updated Action Plan for 2023.</p> <p><u>Flying of the Union flag</u></p> <p>The Clerk would be away for the following 2 dates when the flag was to be flown:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11-12 November (Remembrance Service / weekend) • 14 November (birthday of King Charles III) <p>Resolved Chair to arrange for flying of the Union flag</p> <p><u>Arrangements for Armistice / Remembrance Sunday</u></p> <p>At the September meeting, members had proposed that – due to the unavailability of the Vicar on Sunday 12 November – the annual service of remembrance would be held on Saturday 11 November. As agreed, Cllr Chew had liaised with Revd Wood and secured his agreement to this proposal. The wreath laying and Act of Remembrance would therefore take place at 10.45am on Saturday 11th November at the Memorial Gardens, followed by coffee/tea and biscuits at St. Catherine’s. Residents had been advised via messages on the community Facebook page, village email network and Parish Council website; no objections to this change of date had been received.</p> <p>The Chair thanked members for their assistance in erecting the display of poppies around the village on 25 October. It was agreed that the display would be removed around 18 November.</p> <p>Resolved Clerk to arrange removal</p> <p>The wreath had been acquired from the Royal British Legion, and it was agreed that this year Cllr Best would lay the wreath at the Act of Remembrance.</p> <p>(cont)</p>	<p>Chair</p> <p>Clerk</p>

	<p>Resolved Cllr Best to lay the wreath on behalf of the Parish Council</p> <p>With regard to the Act of Remembrance, it was also agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Chew would obtain the speakers etc through which the Last Post could be played; and • Members would seek to unofficially stop the traffic as it passed the war memorial during the minute's silence. Two volunteers (Terry Pike and Barry Marsh) had kindly offered to act as stewards. <p>d) <u>Village Christmas tree</u></p> <p>Members discussed whether Hanson Cement may once again be willing to donate a Xmas tree for display on the Coronation Gardens.</p> <p>Resolved Cllr Chew to discuss with Sam Wrathall</p>	<p>HB</p> <p>RC</p> <p>RC</p>
14.	<p>Lengthsman</p> <p>a) <u>Replacement Lengthsman</u></p> <p>Since the September meeting, the Parish Council had advertised for a replacement Lengthsman and received one expression of interest. The applicant (Malcolm Taylor) had been invited to appear before members of the Parish Council to consider his application. Members discussed the role of Lengthsman with Mr Taylor, and outlined their expectations with regard to the nature of tasks to be undertaken and the flexibility of working hours etc.</p> <p>Members thanked Mr Taylor for his interest and it was agreed that he would be offered the role, although initially this would be on a 12-month rolling basis. Remuneration would be at the current rate of £15 per hour. In terms of next steps, the Chair and Clerk offered to walk round the village with Mr Taylor; this would give a further opportunity to go through the contractual / procedural issues to be addressed, as well as outlining the role in more detail.</p> <p>Resolved Clerk to contact Mr Taylor with a view to (i) confirming the offer of employment and (ii) arranging the walk around the village Clerk to amend the contract of employment to ensure it becomes renewable on a 12-month rolling basis</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
15.	<p>Defibrillator issues</p> <p>a) <u>Defibrillator pads – renewal</u></p> <p>The replacement pads had been received and had been fitted by Darren Hudson.</p>	

b)	<p><u>Defibrillator pads – registration</u></p> <p>Since the September meeting, Andrew Marsden had confirmed that the defibrillator at the Village Hall had already been registered with The Circuit.</p>	
16.	<p>Reports from sub-committees / other meetings attended</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playing Field / Village Hall – Cllr Fox reported that the car park had now been fully resurfaced; new chairs for use inside the Village Hall had been received; and changes to the running track had been completed. Although Peter Bamber was still due to submit plans for the new patio area to RVBC, the Clerk had received no further contact in this regard. Resolved Cllr Fox to seek an update from Peter Bamber • Parish Councils’ Liaison Committee – next meeting to be held on 9 November. Resolved Chair to attend Clerk to forward any relevant minutes, agenda etc • Lancashire Association of Local Councils – no update; and • Hanson Cement Liaison Committee – members considered a note circulated by Cllr Chew after she and Cllr Fox had attended the meeting. Members discussed at length the poor condition of the highway between the Tarmac facility and the Chatburn Rd roundabout. Resolved Clerk to write to LCC Highways and seek repairs 	<p>MF</p> <p>Chair Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
17.	<p>Correspondence / requests received</p> <p>a) <u>“Don’t be blown away by all the hot air”</u></p> <p>At the request of County Cllr Mirfin, the Clerk had circulated a report from Cllr Mirfin (co-authored by Cllr Horkin) which highlighted the issue of greenhouse gas emissions as a major problem within the Ribble Valley. The report identified a number of key issues, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the specific problems arising from heavy industry (such as Hanson Cement) as well as farming; and • the lack of charging points to facilitate the desired growth in the use of electric vehicles. <p>Resolved Members noted the report</p> <p>b) <u>RVBC Playing Pitch & Outdoor Sports Strategy (PPOSS)</u></p> <p>The Parish Council had been approached by RVBC, who wished to better understand the current and future provision of playing pitch and outdoor sports facilities within the borough. As a result, officers had commissioned management consultants to carry out a needs assessment in the area, which would result in the</p>	

	<p>production of an authority-wide Playing Pitch & Outdoor Sports Strategy (PPOSS). Accordingly, the Parish Council had been invited to complete a short online survey in order to provide information on facilities currently in use in the parish, which would help to form an accurate picture of provision across the borough. However, as the village's sports facilities were managed by the Village Hall Management Committee (VHMC), it was agreed that the invitation to complete the survey should be forwarded to that body.</p> <p>Resolved Clerk to forward the message and link</p>	Clerk
c)	<p><u>RVBC Xmas lunch grant</u></p> <p>The Parish Council had received details of a grant available from RVBC, from which funding community groups could each access £250 for the purpose of holding Xmas lunches for residents. Again, it was agreed that details of this funding opportunity should be forwarded to the Village Hall Management Committee.</p> <p>Resolved Clerk to forward on to VHMC</p> <p>In addition, members noted that in previous years the Parish Council had made a grant of £275 to VHMC in relation to the Xmas lunch for elderly citizens. It was agreed that this year a grant of £275 would once again be paid by the Parish Council.</p> <p>Resolved Clerk to advise VHMC and arrange payment</p>	Clerk
18.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>a) <u>Footpath adjacent to the River Ribble</u></p> <p>At previous meetings, members had commented on the complaints received regarding the wet / muddy condition of the footpath in the vicinity of Mary Horner's bench. It had been agreed that Cllr Chew would raise the matter with Mr W Horner; this had now been done, with Mr Horner appraised of the complaints and invited to respond to these concerns as he saw fit.</p>	
	<p>Date / time of next meeting:</p> <p>The next scheduled meeting of West Bradford Parish Council was to be held at 7.30pm on 29 November 2023.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 8.23pm.</p>	
Signed by:		

	Date: 29.11.23	Cllr A Bristol Chair
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