

MINUTES of the PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
Tuesday 7th January 2025, 7.30 pm at Finstall Village Hall, Finstall

Councillors present: Cllr Will Taylor, Chairman
Cllr Christine Orr-Cooper, vice-Chairman
Cllr Norman Hewer
Cllr Molly Molloy
Cllr Rosemarie Ryan
Cllr Caroline Spencer

Councillors absent: Cllr Wendy Molloy

In attendance: One member of the public
Gill Lungley, Clerk/RFO.

1. Chairman's welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and declared it open.

2. Apologies for absence. Cllr Wendy Molloy had submitted apologies for absence.

3. Declarations of interest. None declared

4. To consider any request from a councillor for a dispensation to be allowed to stay in the meeting after declaring an interest. None requested.

5. Public Forum.

a) An opportunity for members of the public to raise matters of interest or concern relating to this agenda or for future meetings.

The attending resident spoke as follows:

- On the subject of speeding traffic, speeds of between 35mph and 42mph had been noted whilst standing by the vehicle activated speed sign (VAS) in Alcester Road as vehicles travelled into Finstall from Tardebigge.
- If a Speedwatch team is established, is advice provided on how to maintain the personal safety of those taking part?
- Visibility for pedestrians using the pavement / crossing the Alcester Road near the VAS is poor due to the overgrowing hedge.

A Speed Watch representative would be asked to attend a future FPC meeting.

b) County and District Councillors; Safer Neighbourhood Team: no updates.

6. To consider the minutes of the previous council meeting held 03/12/2024.

The minutes of the meeting held 3/12/2024 were approved as an accurate record of proceedings, and were signed by the Chair.

7. Planning Development. To (a) comment on any planning consultations received and (b) note Planning Authority (Bromsgrove District Council) decisions made, and (c) consider any other planning matter.

No items to report relating to the above.

8. FINANCE

a) To note the bank reconciliation to 31/12/2024

For period 01/04/2024 – 31/12/2024		
Opening bank balances 01/04/2024	19,771.86	
Add actual receipts for year to date	8,162.20	
Less authorised payments for year to date	-11,390.82	
Total	A	£16,543.24
Bank balances as at 31/12/2024		
Unity Trust Bank	6,043.24	
Bromsgrove DC short-term investment (confirmed)	10,500.00	
Less unrepresented payments	0.00	
Total	B	£16,543.24
	-	A=B=balance

The reconciliation with latest bank statements was checked and signed by the Chair.

b) To consider and authorise payments and note receipts.

Vno	To	Reason	Gross amount	VAT paid
Payments for authorisation				
76	Unity Trust Bank (d/d)	Bank charges, November 2024	6.00	0.00
77	Staff	Salary back pay (from 01/04/2024)	125.92	0.00
78	Scribe (Starboard)	Bookkeeping software, Jan 2025	14.40	2.40
79	Staff (standing order)	Salary for January 2025	298.22	0.00
80	HMRC	PAYE & NI contributions (3 rd quarter)	204.88	0.00
81a	IDG Garden Services	Bin maintenance & waste removal	90.00	0.00
81b		Bus stop cleaning and maintenance	50.00	0.00
81c		Lengthsman duties	150.00	0.00
82	Staff	Salary for January 2025 (post-review)	tba	0.00
83	Unity Trust Bank (d/d)	Bank charges, December 2024	6.00	0.00
RECEIPTS (December)				
R10, R11	Allotment rent for 2025 x 2			30.00
R12	Lengthsman reimbursement for November (inc £10 admin)			280.00
R13	Allotment rent for 2025 x 1			15.00

The clerk, as RFO, confirmed each invoice had been checked to ensure:

- i. Expenditure has been agreed prior to receipt of invoice.
- ii. The budget for each purchase had been agreed.
- iii. Each invoice complies with the purchase order and is as expected.
- iv. Each invoice is arithmetically correct including appropriate VAT calculation.

The schedule was checked and signed and each invoice was available for inspection and will be attached to the online payments schedule circulated to all members.

The online authorisers would be Cllr W Taylor and Cllr N Hewer.

It was noted that invoices are expected from Finstall Village Hall for the use of the hall during 2024 for meetings and events, and from Tardebigge Cider for the Christmas Carols event held on 20/12/2024.

- c) To agree the budget for 2025/26 financial year and
d) To agree the precept at £12,896, same as for current year.

The proposal was amended, and it was **AGREED** to set the precept at £12,972.

The budget was **AGREED** as below.

Bromsgrove DC's notification of a slight increase in the council tax base figure (317.9 for 2025/26 compared to 316 for 2024/25) means that even though the precept for 2025/26 is marginally increased the impact of the precept on the council tax payer would stay the same as for the current year.

£12,972 precept will impact the Band D council tax payer by £40.81 annual contribution.

FINSTALL PARISH COUNCIL - 2025/26 BUDGET PREPARATION V3 - 31/12/2024					
	Last year Actual	This year budget	Actual to date	Expected total by year end	Next year proposed
Receipts					
Bank Interest	361	350	0	350	200
Grants/Donations	-	-	0	-	-
Other inc Lengthsman	1,981	3,400	1,714	3,500	3,500
Precept	10,105	12,896	6,448	12,896	12,972
From reserves	3,706	-	0	-	924
VAT Refund	940	-	-	-	-
SUB TOTAL	17,094	16,646	8,162	16,746	17,596
Payments					
Admin (Stationery, Printer, Postage etc.)	1,119	1,400	446	800	900
Audit & Professional Fees	282	300	292	292	295
Communications (Phone, W'site, B'band, Newsletter)	492	550	276	400	550
Elections	157	200	0	-	200
Events, grants	316	500	536	600	600
Expenses & Training	119	250	0	250	250
Insurance	532	558	683	683	750
Lengthsman, bus shelters, tubs, bins	1,998	4,182	3,349	5,500	5,500
Playing Field	3,429	2,500	1,250	2,500	2,576
Reserves / projects	3,630	4,000	267	-	-
Staff Costs	4,472	5,513	3,495	5,513	5,500
Subscriptions & Memberships	529	550	434	450	475
s.137 (not used since GPoC adopted)	20	-	-	-	-
VAT					
SUB TOTAL	17,094	20,503	11,028	16,988	17,596

- e) To agree purchase of ground lock fixing system for litter bin.

Members considered requirements for installing a litter bin near the grit bin at the canal bridge in Upper Gambolds Lane, and would check on existing provision.

- f) Updates to previous matters.

- i. **Temporary investment with Bromsgrove DC.**

Progress has been made via an update received the previous day such that previous years' interest is due to be paid imminently.

- ii. **Siting of parish grit bin in Upper Gambolds Lane.**

WCC Highways officer had indicated it was unlikely there would be sufficient space to site a grit bin near the entrance to Finch End Farm.

9. Clerk's reports and correspondence received, for information:

i.	Report on highways matters , reported via Lengthsman; relating to clearing drains across the parish and trees brought down by stormy weather in Upper Gambolds Lane.
ii.	Verbal report on staff recruitment progress. The applicants would be interviewed by the Chair and vice-Chair during the week commencing 13/01/2025.

iii. Correspondence:
a) NALC and WorcsCALC updates
b) Neighbourhood Watch updates
c) Bromsgrove and Redditch councils' Partnership News
d) Breakthrough Communications – effective communication.

10. To consider and decide upon the following:

a) To request a new (second) VAS speed sign.

It was **AGREED** to request a second VAS is installed on Alcester Road facing traffic travelling into Finstall from the Oakalls.

The county highways officer would be asked to check the feasibility of this.

The district council ward member and county council division member would be approached as possible sources of funding, along with the Police and Crime Commissioner who had made funds available for similar projects last year.

11. Members to raise items for discussion at next meeting

- i. Safety concerns were expressed about a teenage male riding an e-scooter on the roads in the village, with no protective clothing or helmet and behaving erratically; could representatives of the Safer Neighbourhood team be asked to attend the next meeting?
- ii. Concern was raised about the parish council not being notified of a 'noisy' event that is to take place at the rugby club on an unspecified date. Is the parish council no longer notified of such events?

12. Date, time and venue of next meeting:

Tuesday 4th February 2025, 7.30pm at Finstall Village Hall.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.30pm before presenting the retiring clerk with a bouquet and card, with thanks for her work over the last 18 months.

Signed..... Date

Chairman, Finstall Parish Council