

**Minutes of Ordinary Meeting of Bearley Parish Council held in Bearley Village Hall at 7.00pm  
Monday 18th November 2024**

**Present:** Councillor Nick Edden (NE), Councillor Ray Greening (RG), Councillor Marion Mitchell (MM), Councillor and Chair Richard Le Page (RLP).  
**Apologies:** County Councillor Penny-Anne O'Donnell (POD), District Councillor Ian Shenton (IS).  
**Parish Clerk:** Duncan Mathison (DM)  
**Public:** 4 members of the public at start. 2 for all of the meeting.

**1. Welcome and Apologies**

Apologies received for County Councillor Penny-Anne O'Donnell and District Councillor Ian Shenton.  
 At this point the Chair took the opportunity formally to thank the previous Clerk Karen Mason for her years of service, noting that she always put the needs of the community first.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

RLP declared an interest for any discussions regarding Bearley Village Hall.

**3. Confirmation of Minutes**

For Ordinary Meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2024. MM noted one point under Item 17.1 that it had been agreed that Bearley United FC must seek approval before any cost incurred for grounds work. DM confirmed that the previous Clerk had communicated this to the football club and a note was added to the minutes. The amended minutes were then approved. Proposed RLP, seconded, NE, all in favour. Signed by the Chair.

**4. Co-option of New Councillor**

To be progressed at a later date.

**5. Previous Action Points**

5.1 Triangle at St Mary's Acre. This has been confirmed as the responsibility of Warwickshire County Council (WCC) and, at their request, local residents with any issues or questions are advised to contact the Forestry team at WCC directly.

5.2 Drain odour in Oaktree Close. Update required on actions agreed by third parties following meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> September facilitated by the Parish Council. RLP to progress.

5.3 Trees on upper play area. The Parish Council are disputing ownership of one of the two trees previously discussed. RLP and DM to progress with WCC.

**6. Public Forum**

Discussions re items 5.1 and 5.2 with actions as noted above. General discussion regarding Golden Cross pub.

**7. Updates from County and District Councillors**

Not present. Any reports received by email will be posted on the village website.

**8. Councillors' and Clerk's Reports**

RLP reported that the village hall is in profit with healthy bookings and also that lighting has been converted to LED.

RLP to give an update regarding The Bar under confidential matters. Proposed RLP, seconded RG, all in favour.

RG reported that latest speedwatch session only recorded 1 car speeding out of 194.

RG reported that flooding adjacent to Hall Park appears to be resolved.

RG is liaising with Highways at WCC regarding culverts on the A34 and degraded white line.

NE has installed the recently purchased grit bins in the agreed locations and expects them to be filled by WCC this week.

**9. Planning Matters**

9.1 Reference 24/02745/FUL. Discussion regarding the appearance of the proposed car port. Objection to be submitted. Proposed RLP, seconded NE, all in favour. RLP to draft for Clerk to send to Stratford District Council (SDC).

**10. Cemetery Upkeep**

Discussion regarding level of upkeep following concern raised by a local resident. There was no vote but general feeling was that level paid for was appropriate and any additional care should be provided by volunteers. MM advised that group connected to St Mary's church hold a "gardening party" twice yearly to tidy the area and anyone interested in joining this should contact the Church Warden David Harrison.

**11. Electricity Supplier**

Following the updating of the Unmetered Supply Certificate for streetlighting, quotes have been obtained from existing supplier and Tomato Energy (through a broker). DM advised that two other companies and one other broker had been approached but no quotes were forthcoming. Following a discussion, the conclusion was reached that the quote from Tomato Energy represented good value for money and that locking in to a 3 year deal was the right course of action. Proposed NE, seconded RLP, all in favour.

**12. Bearley Park and Other Green Spaces**

12.1 RoSPA reports and actions required. Quote for detailed assessment of state of multi-play equipment at £550 was discussed. This is a specialist service and no other quote could be obtained. Proposed RG, seconded NE, all in favour. Quote for replacement of all four swings at £950 was discussed. Despite contacting several other companies this was the only quote received. Investigation of the online cost of the items for supply only indicates that this quote from an established company in the industry represents good value for money. Proposed RLP, seconded NE, all in favour.

12.2 Play equipment checking and maintenance schedules. Agreed to be done monthly by Councillors in rotation. RG and DM to progress.

12.3 Plans for enhancements and additions. Moved to next meeting.

12.4 Potential support and/or donations. Discussion to be conducted under confidential matters. Proposed RLP, seconded RG, all in favour.

The issue of barbed wire and razor wire on the boundary of a property bordering Bearley Park was discussed. There was concern that the razor wire in particular presented a risk of injury to children. Clerk to write to property owner requesting action to remove the risk.

**13. Thomas Fox Contract Extension**

Thomas Fox were offering a contract extension for one year at current prices. Total annual cost £4,026. Following a discussion regarding previous quotes from other companies and level of service received, it was agreed that this offer represented good value for money and should be accepted. NE raised the issue of land maintained by Orbit and there was a discussion regarding whether this could be added to the contract. Decision was that the Parish Council should not bear the cost for this and would continue to encourage residents to contact Orbit directly. Contract extension to be approved as per current schedule. Proposed RLP, seconded RG, all in favour.

**14. Domain Change**

DM ran through costs received from 3 suppliers for moving to a .gov.uk domain with emails. Hugo Fox was cheapest option at £275 per year which compares favourably with current domain support that does not include emails. Decision to progress this with Hugo Fox. Proposed RLP, seconded NE, all in favour.

**15. Laptop and Monitor**

DM advised that current laptop was not fit for purpose being over 10 years old, running Windows 8 and barely functioning. Expenditure of up to £500 for a new laptop and separate monitor approved. Details to be agreed with Chair before purchase. Proposed NE, seconded RG, all in favour

**16. Payroll**

DM advised that running own payroll was appropriate for the needs of the previous Clerk but not for current. Quote obtained from Diane Malley Payroll Services at £132 per annum. No other quotes available and this was approved as representing good value for money. Proposed RLP, seconded NE, all in favour.

**17. Financial Matters**

17.1 Review payments and receipts since last meeting. Done.

17.2 Review position vs budget. Done.

17.3 Approve future payments. Done.

17.4 Bank mandate. Moved to next meeting.

All items approved. Proposed MM, seconded RLP, all in favour.

**18. Items for Future Agendas**

MM proposed that a skills audit of councillors be completed in order to identify any gaps and focus recruitment efforts. There was no vote but this was agreed to be worth doing and the Clerk will progress.

**19. The Chair closed the meeting to the public and press at 9.01 pm.**

**20. Confidential Matters**

RLP gave update regarding The Bar. No actions or votes.

Discussion regarding approaching local businesses for donations. No actions or votes.

Discussions ended 9.30pm.

Signed:

Date: