

BETLEY, BALTERLEY AND WRINEHILL PARISH COUNCIL

22nd January 2026

Commenced: 7.30 pm

Terminated: 8.50 pm

Present: **Councillor Bettley-Smith (Chair)**
Councillors Berrisford, Bullock, Daly, Hales, Head, Karling, Lovatt, Speed, Owen and Watkin

Councillor Whitmore – Borough Councillor

There were 2 members of the public in attendance

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Ecclestone, Councillor Williams (County Councillor) and PCSO Hodgkinson.

The Chair reported that Councillor Williams had sent a written report, and the Clerk agreed to circulate this to the Parish Councillors.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members of the Parish Council.

3. STAFFORDSHIRE POLICE

In the absence of a representative of Staffordshire Police, Councillor Bullock provided feedback on notes received from PCSO Hodgkinson, on policing matters relating to the Parish.

4. MINUTES

The Minutes of the proceedings of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 27th November 2025 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

5. PUBLIC FORUM

A member of the public thanked Councillor Berrisford for her efforts in pursuing the ongoing broadband matter.

6. REPORTS

The following reports were received:-

- (i) **The Chair** reported that the Christmas decorations had withstood the poor weather, with only four bulbs requiring replacement. The lights were removed after the 12th night and the animals would be removed at the end of epiphany or Candlemas.
- (ii) **The Vice Chair** thanked the members of the community who facilitated the process of installing and dismantling the lights.
- (iii) **The Clerk** reported that whilst she had hoped that email correspondence with the Local Planning Authority had been resumed, she had once again, encountered difficulties in communications.

Contact had been made on two occasions with the MP regarding broadband, but neither message had received a reply. Members of the Parish Council requested that the Clerk writes again to the MP, highlighting that the previous correspondence had not received replies, and explaining that the Parish Council was extremely disappointed in this outcome, and was requesting a response to the matter relating to broadband.

- (iv) **County Councillor and Borough Councillors** Councillor Whitmore reported on several Borough-wide matters. The Parish Council was particularly concerned to hear about a recent road traffic accident on the A531, and would support endeavours, wherever possible, to improve this situation.

Councillor Berrisford provided a brief update on a highways matter in the Parish.

- (v) **Representatives on Outside Bodies**

There were no reports presented to the meeting.

7. FOOTPATHS WORKING PARTY

Councillor Berrisford reported that donations of four kissing gates had been received. The gates were on order and would be installed as soon as possible.

RESOLVED

- (i) **That an application to the Betley Bonfire Committee, to be submitted by Councillor Berrisford, on behalf of the Parish Council, for 5 kissing gates, be approved. (If the application was successful, the Parish Council would arrange the installation of the gates in consultation with the Bonfire Committee).**
- (ii) **That consideration be given to the purchase of gates by the Parish Council, at the next meeting.**

8. BUDGET AND FINANCE 2025-2026

The Parish Council considered a report of the Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer on the following matters:-

(i) Applications for Financial Assistance

The Clerk reported that there were no applications for financial assistance.

(ii) CO-OP Bank Transfer to Unity Trust Bank

RESOLVED

That the transfer of £2,000.00 from the Co-op Bank to the Unity Trust Bank Account, be approved.

(iii) Transactions – Unity Trust Bank

RESOLVED

That the following transactions in the Unity Trust Bank, be approved.

PAYEE/PAYER	DETAILS	RECEIPTS	PAYMENTS
ICO	Annual Subscription		£47.00
Staffordshire Pensions	November Pension		£174.22
M Clough	November Salary		£468.67
HMRC	PAYE/NI		£147.64
Robert Bettley-Smith	Reimbursement for sweets		£57.51
Unity Trust Bank	Monthly Service Charge		£6.00
Betley Farm	Christmas Tree - VAT exempt		£220.00
Luke Rimmer	Invoice 619		£140.00
	Transfer from COOP	£2,000.00	
WaterPlus	Direct Debit (Water Plus)		£1.55
Staffordshire Pensions	December Pension		£179.77
HMRC	PAYE/NI		£154.41
M Clough	December Salary		£483.54
Unity Trust Bank	Service Charge		£6.00

(iv) Transactions – CO-OP Bank

RESOLVED

That the internal transfer of £2,000.00 from the Co-op Bank to the Unity Trust Bank, as agreed at the last meeting of the Parish Council, be noted.

(v) Payment of Invoices and Reimbursements

RESOLVED

That the following payments be approved:-

M Clough	January 2026 Salary	£468.67
HMRC	January 2026 PAYE & NI	£147.64
Staffordshire Pension	January 2026 Pension	£174.22
Luke Rimmer	January Maintenance	(Contracted and within budget)
Unity Trust Bank	Monthly service charge – January	£6.00
Microsoft 365	Annual subscription renewal	£84.99

(vi) Budget Expenditure to 14th January 2026 – Unity Trust Bank

RESOLVED

That the following Budget Head expenditure to 14th January 2026, be approved:-

Budget Head	Total	Budget Allocated	£ Difference
Salary	£4,092.95	£5,758.00	£1,665.05
Income Tax/National Insurance	£1,321.82	£1,800.00	£478.18
Pension	£1,562.42	£1,784.00	£221.58
Insurance	£927.16	£975.00	£47.84
Audit Fees External	£0.00	£875.50	£875.50
Audit Fees Internal	£262.50	£262.50	£0.00
Venue Hire	£196.00	£450.00	£254.00
Subscriptions	£342.32	£350.00	£7.68
Website	£120.00	£150.00	£30.00
Emails	£0.00	£150.00	£150.00
Information Commissioner	£47.00	£47.00	£0.00
Stationery	£46.21	£50.00	£3.79
Payroll Services	£595.80	£625.00	£29.20
Mileage	£116.64	£150.00	£33.36
Footpaths	£655.49	£2,500.00	£1,844.51
Grants	£0.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
Sandy Croft	£830.82	£1,100.00	£269.18
Memorial Garden	£3,542.66	£3,550.00	£7.34
Chair's Expenses	£0.00	£250.00	£250.00
Unity Trust Bank Fees	£54.00	£100.00	£46.00
	£14,713.79	£21,927.00	£7,213.21

(vii) Explanation of Variances

RESOLVED

That the virements of £50.00 and £12.00 from the External Audit Fees Budget Head to the Memorial Garden and the Information Commissioners Budget Heads, be approved.

(viii) Bank Reconciliation as at 14th January 2026

RESOLVED

That the following Bank Reconciliation for Co-op Bank and Unity Trust Bank as at 14th January 2026, be approved:-

<u>Bank Reconciliation 14th January 2026</u>		
BETLEY BALTERLEY AND WRINEHILL PARISH COUNCIL		
Financial year ending 31 March 2025		
Prepared by: Muna Clough, Parish Clerk & RFO		
Balance per bank statements as at		£
Current Account UNITY (20500409) - 31st December 2025		£3,873.25
Reserve Account CO-OP (49148300) - 2nd December 2025 (£8,000 to be retained as a Reserve)		£30,156.25
Less: any unpresented cheques/payments		
Current Account UNITY (20500409)		
Reserve Account CO-OP (49148300)		
Add: any unbanked cash - Unity		
Add: any unbanked cash - CO-OP		
Net bank balances as at 14th January 2026		£34,029.50
The net balances reconcile to the Cash Book (receipts and payments account) for the year, as follows		
CASH BOOK		
Opening Balance		
Unity Trust Bank @ 1st April 2025		£5,016.90
Co-op Bank @ 1st April 2025		£20,965.25
Add: Receipts in the year		
Unity Trust Bank		£570.14
Co-op Bank		£22,191.00
Less: Payments in the year		
Unity Trust Bank		£14,713.79
Co-op Bank		
Closing balance per cash book [receipts and payments book] must equal net bank balances above		£34,029.50

The Chair reported on the possible cancellation by the government, of the Borough Council elections on the 7th May, and the possibility of election recharges to the Parish Council, if a separate election was held.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the Clerk makes enquiries regarding the possibility of election recharges to the Parish Council;
- (ii) That the Clerk investigates an interest account for the money held in the Co-op Account.

(ix) Bank Statements

RESOLVED

That the following Bank Statements, as circulated with the Report, be approved:-

- Unity Trust Bank Statement – 30th November 2025
- Unity Trust Bank Statement – 31st December 2025
- CO-OP Bank Statement – 4th December 2025

9. IT POLICY

RESOLVED

That the IT Policy, as circulated with the Agenda, be approved and adopted.
(This decision was unanimous).

10. PLANNING MATTERS

The Parish Council considered the following planning matters:-

• Comments on applications submitted under the provisions of the Standing Orders

- (i) **Reference:** 25/00646/FUL and 25/00906/FUL

Alternative Reference: PP-14531679

Address: The Old Wood Betley Hall Gardens Betley Crewe Staffordshire CW3 9BB

Proposal: Extensions and alterations including replacement entrance, single storey side extension, replacement windows, roof tile, installation of solar panels, and fascia cladding

In relation to application 25/00906/FUL, Councillor Daly reported that at the time of submitting the initial comments, the supporting documents were not available, therefore the Parish Council had no alternative but to object to the proposals. However, following correspondence with the Borough on this matter, an extension had been granted and the Parish Council had now had an opportunity to view the associated supporting documents.

RESOLVED

- (i) **That now that all the information has been made available to the Parish Council, the Parish Council has resolved to rescind its previous decision and has no objections to this application.**
(For the purpose of the Minutes, this decision was unanimous)

- (ii) **That the Clerk and Councillor Berrisford each write (individually) to the Local Planning Authority explaining that the Parish Council is experiencing some serious concerns in the planning process, in terms of IT, communications and difficulty accessing documents on the planning portal, which is restricting the statutory opportunity to comment as a consultee.**

At this juncture, the Chair agreed to defer Area Matters to later on the Agenda.

11. DECOMMISSIONED PAYPHONE, MAIN ROAD (A531), BETLEY VILLAGE, CHESHIRE

The Parish Council considered the adoption of a decommissioned kiosk.

RESOLVED

That this matter be considered at the next meeting, and in the meantime, the Clerk to circulate all documents to the Parish Councillors for their information.

12. .GOV EMAIL ADDRESSES FOR COUNCILLORS**RESOLVED**

That this matter be deferred to the next meeting.

13. SECTION 106 MONIES

Councillor Daly reported that the Village Hall Committee was now in communications with the Borough Council. The Parish Council would not be involved in this matter, as an intermediary.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

14. 800TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MARKET CHARTER IN 2027.

The Parish Council noted that the 800th anniversary of the Betley Market Charter would be held in 2027. The Chair suggested that the Parish Council might wish to start planning, to celebrate this event.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted and placed on future Agendas, as an aide memoir.

15. AREA MATTERS

Parish Councillors discussed the following matters relating to the individual areas of Balterley, Betley and Wrinehill:-

- Ongoing fires on land at Doddlespool
- Wildflower planting at Sandy Croft

RESOLVED

That the appointment of Councillor Head to lead a Working Group, including Councillors Speed and Hales, to consider ways to implement this project, be approved.

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Parish Council noted that the next meeting would be held on Thursday, 26th February 2026.

17. URGENT ITEMS

The Chair reported that there were no matters requiring consideration as a matter of urgency.