

BETLEY, BALTERLEY AND WRINEHILL PARISH COUNCIL

29th July 2025

Commenced: 7.30 pm

Terminated: 9.30 pm

**Present: Councillor Bettley-Smith (Chair)
Councillors Berrisford, Bullock, Hales, Owen and Watkin.**

**Councillor Helen Arnold - Staffordshire County Council
Councillor Paul Williams – Chair of Staffordshire County Council
Councillor Jill Whitmore – Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council**

There were 4 Members of the Public in attendance

1. WELCOME TO COUNTY COUNCILLOR

The Chair welcomed and introduced the new Staffordshire County Councillor, Councillor Helen Arnold and the Chairman of Staffordshire County Council, Councillor Paul Williams.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Daly, Ecclestone, Head, Karling and Speed.

RESOLVED

That in accordance with Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972, all apologies for absence be approved by the Parish Council.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Berrisford declared an interest in Item 8 – Sale of Playing Field, as she owned neighbouring boundary land. The Parish Council agreed a dispensation to enable Councillor Berrisford to remain in the meeting during consideration of the item.

4. STAFFORDSHIRE POLICE

There were no representatives from Staffordshire Police, in attendance.

5. MINUTES

The Minutes of the proceedings of the Extraordinary Meeting held on 25th June 2025 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

6. CO-OPTION OF COUNCILLOR

The Parish Council received presentations from Mr Jacob Lovatt and Mr Nigel Eastham to support their expressions of interest for co-option onto the Parish Council.

RESOLVED

That Mr Jacob Lovatt be co-opted onto the Parish Council.

7. PUBLIC FORUM

A member of the public expressed his strong objections to the Parish Council's consideration of purchasing Lot 3 of Agricultural Land (Item 8 on the Agenda) and explained his reasons for his objection.

A question was raised on the progress of Broadband, and Councillor Helen Arnold (the new Staffordshire County Councillor), agreed to liaise with the resident on this matter.

8. SALE OF PLAYING FIELD – LOT 3, AGRICULTURAL LAND, LICENSEE AT WILL

The Chair reported that he had been liaising with the vendor and the Parish Council had a Notice to Treat in respect of the possible purchase. The two main elements that required consideration were the Capital Costs and the Running Costs. In both respects, possibilities were being explored.

The Chair confirmed that the Parish Council's aims should be that it does not have to borrow money for the purchase, and the running costs should not impact the Precept.

Members discussed the implications of the proposal, and the negative considerations of the purchase becoming a financial, administrative and/or legal burden, would be considered when and if, the purchase became viable.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted and if necessary, an Extraordinary Meeting of the Parish Council be called in August.

9. TAKING FORWARD THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Chair provided an update on matters relating to the Neighbourhood Plan and the Parish Council agreed the next steps in taking forward this matter.

RESOLVED

- (i) That Councillor Hales be appointed to the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**
- (ii) That the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group be mandated to consider the Planning Checklist and draft an Action Plan.**
- (iii) That the Planning Checklist be submitted to the next meeting of the Parish Council for further consideration.**
- (iv) That the Action Plan be submitted to the following meeting of the Parish Council for approval.**

10. USED BATTERY COLLECTION

The Chair reported on this initiative, aimed at providing a safe place to dispose of batteries. He added that Pool Farm Vets and the Village Hall had offered to provide appropriate receptacles, and that he would periodically collect and dispose of the contents of the receptacles at the local tip.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

11. REPORTS

The Parish Council considered the following reports:-

(i) County Councillor and Borough Councillors

Councillor Arnold explained her main areas of focus at the moment, which included:

- Highways matters
- Creating hubs in communities
- Ongoing discussions about the possible purchase of the playing field

Councillor Whitmore (Borough Councillor) referred to ongoing highways matters and Councillor Berrisford (in her capacity as Borough Councillor) provided a brief update on Walleys Quarry Landfill site.

RESOLVED

That Highways Matters be added to the Agenda in September, to enable the County and Borough Councillors to provide updates.

(ii) The Chair

The Chair had no reports to present.

(iii) The Deputy Chair

The Deputy Chair had no reports to present.

(iii) The Clerk

The Clerk reported on additional Freedom of Information requests from the same member of the public who had submitted previous requests. Many of the questions were a repeat of previously answered questions.

A resident had reported a concern over a locked gate blocking a footpath. [This matter was now clarified and resolved].

A query had been received regarding the recording of a decision in the Minutes, and a reply had been provided.

(iv) Representatives on Outside Bodies

There were no reports to consider from Representatives on Outside Bodies

12. FOOTPATHS WORKING PARTY

Councillor Berrisford advised that there was no further progress to report at this meeting.

13. BUDGET AND FINANCE 2025-2026

The Parish Council discussed and 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 be approved:-

PAYEE/PAYER	DETAILS	RECEIPTS	PAYMENTS
Newcastle Plumbing	Postcrete		£18.90
Robert Bettley-Smith	Reimbursement for cylinder keys and tags for Notice Board at Sandy Croft		£15.37
Robert Bettley-Smith	Reimbursement for two keys		£15.00
Luke Rimmer	Invoice 564		£1,200.00
HMRC	PAYE/NI		£137.72
M Clough	June Salary		£447.03
Staffordshire Pensions	June Contributions		£166.12
Unity Trust Bank	Monthly Service Charge		£6.00
Luke Rimmer	June Maintenance		£180.00

(iv) Transactions – CO-OP Bank

The Clerk reported that there have been no transfers from the Co-op Bank since the 3rd June 2025.

(v) Payment of Invoices and Reimbursements

In relation to the August salary of the Clerk, the Local Government national annual pay increase from 1st April had just been approved and whilst the payroll provider had not yet provided the payroll documents, it was anticipated that the increase would impact the Parish Council and the Clerk by approximately 46p per hour gross. Whilst the payment of a salary was a contractual payment which must be paid, approval of the Parish Council was still sought before requesting authorisation via the bank. As there was not a meeting of the Parish Council in August, Members

approved the Clerk's August salary at this meeting, and authorised the signatories of the Unity Trust bank to make the payment, in line with the documents that would be issued by the Payroll provider.

RESOLVED

(a) That the following payments be approved:-

M Clough	July 2025 Salary	£447.03
HMRC	July 2025 PAYE & NI (111.60 & £26.12)	£137.72
Staffordshire Pension	July 2025 Pension	£166.12
Luke Rimmer	Invoice not yet received – July maintenance	In Budget
	Petrol Reimbursement for Notices 16 th January 2025 – 32.4 miles 21 st February 2025 – 32.4 miles 13 th March 2025 – 32.4 miles 17 th April 2025 – 32.4 miles 30 th April 2025 (Parish Meeting) – 32.4 miles 21 st May 2025 – 32.4 miles 18 th June 2025 – 32.4 miles 18 th July 2025 – 32.4 miles Total = 259.2 miles @ 0.45p per mile	£116.64
M Clough		
Zurich Municipal	Annual Insurance Premium (Long Term Agreement)	£927.16

(b) That the signatories of the Unity Trust bank be authorised to make the appropriate salary related payments in August, in line with the documents issued by the Payroll provider.

(vi) Budget Expenditure to 19th July 2025 – Unity Trust Bank

RESOLVED

That the following Budget Head expenditure to 19th July 2025, be approved:-

Budget Head	Total	Budget Allocated	£ Difference
Salary	£1,230.51	£7,558.00	£6,327.49
Income Tax/National Insurance	£413.36	£384.00	-£29.36
Pension	£498.36	£1,784.00	£1,285.64
Insurance	£0.00	£975.00	£975.00
Audit Fees External	£0.00	£937.50	£937.50
Audit Fees Internal	£262.50	£262.50	£0.00
Venue Hire	£91.00	£450.00	£359.00
Subscriptions	£342.32	£350.00	£7.68
Website	£0.00	£150.00	£150.00
Emails	£0.00	£150.00	£150.00
Information Commissioner	£0.00	£35.00	£35.00
Stationery	£46.21	£50.00	£3.79
Payroll Services	£344.40	£625.00	£280.60
Mileage	£0.00	£150.00	£150.00
Footpaths	£0.00	£2,500.00	£2,500.00
Grants	£0.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
Sandy Croft	£829.27	£1,100.00	£270.73
Memorial Garden	£1,618.90	£3,500.00	£1,881.10
Chair's Expenses	£0.00	£250.00	£250.00

Unity Trust Bank Fees	£18.00	£100.00	£82.00
	£5,694.83	£22,211.00	£16,516.17

(vii) Explanation of Variances

The Clerk reported that the Income Tax/National Insurance Budget Head was under-budgeted, whilst the Salary Budget Head was over-budgeted.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Income Tax/National Insurance Budget Head be amended to £1,800.00 and the Salary Budget head be amended to £5,758.00

(viii) Bank Reconciliation as at 19th July 2025

RESOLVED

That the following Bank Reconciliation for Co-op Bank and Unity Trust Bank as at 19th July 2025, be approved:-

<u>Bank Reconciliation 19th July 2025</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) - 30th June 2025	£1,741.05
Reserve Account CO-OP (49148300) - 4th June 2025 (£8,000 to be retained as a Reserve)	£41,156.25
Less: any unrepresented cheques/payments	
Current Account UNITY (20500409)	£180.00
Reserve Account CO-OP (49148300)	
Add: any unbanked cash - Unity	
Add: any unbanked cash - CO-OP	
Net bank balances as at 19th July 2025	£42,717.30
The net balances reconcile to the Cash Book (receipts and payments account) for the year, as follows	
<u>CASH BOOK</u>	
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	£238.98
Co-op Bank	£22,191.00
Less: Payments in the year	
Unity Trust Bank	£5,694.83
Co-op Bank	

Closing balance per cash book [receipts and payments book] must equal net bank balances above	£42,717.30
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(ix) Bank Statements

RESOLVED

That the following bank statements, submitted with the Report, be received:-

- **Unity Trust Bank Statement – 30th June 2025**
- **CO-OP Bank Statement - 4th June 2025**

14. PLANNING MATTERS

The Parish Council considered the following planning application:-

- **New Application**

Application Reference: 25/00471/DEM

Location: Workshop Cracow Moss Betley Crewe Staffordshire CW3 9BS

Proposal: Application for prior approval of demolition of temporary buildings attached to red brick building

Councillor Watkin reported on the details of the application.

RESOLVED

- (i) **The Parish Council has no objection to the proposals.**
- (ii) **That the Parish Council is pleased that the brick building is being retained as there is Strong evidence that the building has some historic and architectural merit.**
- (iii) **The Borough Council is asked to consider whether the building should be added to the Register of Locally Important Buildings and Structures.**
(For the purpose of the Minutes, this decision was Unanimous)

15. AREA MATTERS

There were no area matters for consideration at this meeting.

16. CIVIC PRIDE EVENT

RESOLVED

That the date of the Civic Pride Event for Betley on Thursday, 25th September 2025, be noted.

17. REMEMBRANCE ARRANGEMENTS (FIGURES AND POPPIES) FOR 2025

There were no matters for consideration at this meeting.

18. SOLAR POWERED REAL TIME PASSENGER INFORMATION (RTPI) POLES

The Chair sought the opinion of the Parish Council whether to consider the purchase of Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) poles for the Parish. The cost of each pole was £6,750.00.

RESOLVED

That this proposal is not progressed.

19. MILEPOSTS

The Chair sought clarification of the maintenance/condition of the Parish Mileposts, in the following areas:-

- Milepost in Wrinehill, 50 metres south of The Hand and Trumpet. The milepost was Grade II listed.
- Milestone (outside the Parish) on the A531 on the left hand side between Bowsey Wood and Betley.
- Balterley - between the Broughton and the boundary with Audley (near the former church).
- There is one on the main road in Betley. On the west side opposite Bow End House.

RESOLVED

That the Mileposts do not require painting, at this time.

20. CONSULTATION ON A DRAFT LIST OF LOCAL VALIDATION REQUIREMENTS

The Members of the Parish Council were encouraged to view this consultation at [Information requirements and validation for planning applications – Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council](#)

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

21. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Parish Council noted that the next meeting was scheduled for Thursday, 25th September 2025.

22. URGENT ITEMS

The Chair considered the following item of business should be discussed as a matter of urgency, to enable work to commence imminently.

23. NOTICEBOARD MAINTENANCE

RESOLVED

That Councillor Hales be authorised to purchase oil to refurbish the Parish Council's Notice Boards, to a maximum of £100.00.

23. EXEMPT ITEM

RESOLVED

That the following item of business be deferred to the next meeting of the Parish Council.

24. ANNUAL APPRAISAL OF PARISH CLERK

RESOLVED

That due to workloads, the Parish Clerk had not yet received her annual appraisal, therefore this matter was deferred to the next meeting.