

BLAISDON PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk to the Council: Jonathan Martin, Whitecliff House, Newland Street, Coleford, Gloucestershire, GL16 8NB,
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**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
held at Blaisdon Village Hall.
Wednesday 18th October 2023 @
7.00pm**

In attendance:

Cllr. Richard Boyles.

Cllr. Nicola Atkinson.

Cllr. Tony Brady.

Cllr. Jane Spencer.

County Cllr. Philip Robinson.

Clerk. Jonathan Martin.

517. Welcome and Health and Safety procedure. Members of the public will be requested to declare if they intend to record the meeting.

The welcome was given to all members present and attention was drawn to the location of the fire exits and the emergency evacuation procedure.

518. Apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from Cllr. NM who is on holiday.

District Cllr. S also sent his apologies for absence.

519. Declarations of Interest & Public Forum.

Public Forum.

Cllr Robinson gave his report on Countywide issues.

- Education.

The County's Adult Education services were recently inspected by ofsted. The result being a 'Good' Rating. This was the first inspection since 2014. Under the new framework, a good rating would have previously been recognized as an 'outstanding' grade.

Adult Education had received a 2.67 million-pound grant for funding. There are approximately 6,000 learners in the county, an increase from last year. The focus will be on improving the abilities of the low skilled. For example, abilities in English and Mathematics. The aim being that this will progress into vocational training.

- Special Education.

A grant of 6.5 million for a new school for students with learning disabilities had been issued. A new school is scheduled to be opened in 2026 on land already owned by Glos County Council. This land has a condition upon it where it can only be used for education. Previous problems with special needs students have been the need to travel out of the county due to a lack of places. However, it is much cheaper to educate them within the county.

- Transport.

4.4 million had been received from the department of transport to help with bus services. There were no reported cuts to bus routes, with 21 improvements to set routes being made. These would include expanding routes to more rural areas, such as the Forest of Dean. Last year the 72 route was cut, however it is hoped that this will be reinstated.

Questions.

Cllr Brady raised the issue of Covid dropouts from schools. This has been a nationwide trend of absenteeism, however Gloucester is doing better than other areas. Attendance to county schools is seen as good in general. The speculation is that, are the missing being home educated? These so-called 'Ghost Children' slipped out of the system, although school is seen as the safest environment.

Cllr Boyles asked what was school land used for before? It was described as being waste land surrounded by residential properties, used by locals to walk their dogs. The new school would have a smaller footprint than the original plan for ordinary students, and would serve around 600 students. Local residents have expressed concerns, but most seem to be in favor. The school will bring in services for local people i.e. sports hall.

On average 200 new school places are needed a year. New special school in Stroud would create 60 places.

Cllr Spencer asked how does the placement system work in general. Cllr Robinson described that it revolves around an assessment to identify the child's needs. The overflow of this is sent out of county.

Cllr Brady asked about the recent national scandal on the poor concrete issue affecting many schools. There was only one effected school in the county, and this was in Stroud. This issue is highly localized nationally and seems to reflect architectural styles that made use of concrete.

Cllr Robinson was thanked and leaves at 7:21pm.

Clr Robinson made future apologies for the next 2 meetings, meaning that he will not be present until January's meeting.

520. Minutes of Meetings 13th September 2023 and matters arising.

Resolved.

521. Clerk's Report and Correspondence.

The Clerk read a recent email on a request for the council to forward a request from a parishioner to move the location of salt grit bins closer to where they live so that they can grit the roads more easily. The Clerk will gain more information on this and then forward the request to highways.

The Chairman reported issues with the website on broken links to local services and email forms not being received by the Clerk. This would be examined and corrected.

522. To discuss the creation of publicly accessible footpath maps.

The Clerk had contacted Flaxley Village Hall for their inclusion into this project, and a reply was being waited on.

523. To resolve on the Council's risk assessment.

Minor corrections to the document would be made, the changing of dates and the removal of the mention of a telephone box. The Clerk would, from now on present bank statements in every meeting as part of the financial report item.

Resolve.

Chairman briefed Councilors on procedures to close telephone boxes.

524. To discuss the organisation of the review of the Council's Standing Orders.

Cllr Atkison volunteered. The Clerk will find updated one template standing orders and report back.

525. Financial report – September 2023.

The report was given, with emphasis on the relocation of funds surplus to the budget moved out of the current account into the savings account.

526. Invoices for payment.

Resolved.

527. Any other urgent business.

The Clerk would investigate quotes for the creation of notice boards in either exterior or interior arrangement.

The report on the flood issues in Blaisdon would be sought, as this was promised to be concluded and delivered to the parish council several years ago.

Delivery of sandbags for flood attenuation was explained that only the bags are provided, not the sand, which is the responsibility of the locals.

Regarding the proposed budget, election expenses of £1,400 would need to be accommodated for.

Lastly, a series of recently received planning applications that could not be included into this agenda would receive an extension of 10 days so that they could be processed at the next meeting.

528. Date and Time of Next Meeting – 15th November 2023 at 7.00 pm

Meeting commenced: 7.00 p.m. Meeting finished: 7.53 p.m. Signed:

..... Date:2023

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