

PITSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Pitstone Parish Council held on 24 April 2025
at Pitstone Pavilion commencing at 7.30pm

General Matters:

1/25 ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

1. Council present

Cllr Saintey (Vice Chairman and Acting Chairman), Cllr Mrs Crutchfield, Cllr Mrs Nash, Cllr Hawkins, Cllr Blunt, Cllr Weber and Cllr McCarthy plus the Parish Clerk - Mrs Eagling.

2. Apologies & Absence

It was **RESOLVED** to accept apologies from Cllr Nicholls (annual leave), Cllr Dr Frearson (work commitment) and Buckinghamshire Councillor Derek Town.

Cllr Mrs H Bates was absent.

3. Others present

Buckinghamshire Councillors Chris Poll and Peter Brazier. 5 members of the public in relation to planning matters. Mr R Kemp of PRS Office Furniture in relation to their proposed donation of a bench.

2/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATION REQUESTS FOR MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE MEETING

- It was noted that all councillors have standing declarations of interest as the council, as a corporate body, is trustee of the Recreation Ground Charity and Pitstone Parish Charity.
- The Clerk expressed the usual pecuniary interest in the overtime, which is approved by the staffing committee, and the clerk never has a vote.
- Cllr Hawkins declared that the applicant for 87 Marsworth Road planning is known to him, and therefore he will abstain from discussion and voting in relation to the planning consultation.
- No other declarations nor dispensations were received.

3/25 DONATION OF A SUICIDE PREVENTION BENCH BY PRS OFFICE FURNITURE

- Mr Ross Kemp of PRS Office Furniture explained the reasoning behind their kind offer to donate a Legend on the Bench Charity suicide prevention bench for the Recreation Ground.
- Every bench displays quick access to information at any time of the day or night for anyone experiencing mental health issues. The solar panel powers the small light to ensure the QR code/contact details are visible after dark.
- The Charity arrange publicity when the bench is installed and can assist with any major ongoing costs/repairs if necessary.
- The Charity normally appeal for a local person to lay slabs for it to sit on (FOC) but the council is able to use its own contractors to lay a plinth, or reutilise an existing plinth, if it prefers.
- The Parish Council was supportive of the initiative and **RESOLVED** to accept the bench as a donation to the Parish Council, to list it on the council's asset register, insure it, and accept the ongoing costs of care and maintenance (eg weekly checks, annual oil of the wood).
- PRS were open to suggestions about the exact location and or whether this is an additional bench or whether it replaces an existing bench (in which case there will already be a suitable plinth). Site visit to be arranged to discuss. Council **RESOLVED** to accept any additional costs associated with a plinth and/or disposal of an old bench etc.
- Mr Kemp was thanked for his time, and the kind donation, and departed the meeting.

4/25 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC/PRESS

It was **RESOLVED** to accept comments relating to planning at the relevant section of the meeting. No other questions were tabled from the public gallery.

5/25 QUESTIONS FOR, AND UPDATES FROM, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNCILLORS

Buckinghamshire Councillor Derek Town had circulated an email prior to the meeting. As he is not standing for election, the Parish Council asked Cllrs Brazier and Poll to please pass their thanks to Cllr Town for all his support over the period of office.

As we are still in the period of purdah, there were few updates from Bucks Council to discuss.

Cllrs Poll and Brazier are both standing as local candidates in the upcoming election. Both were thanked for their service over the previous term of office and wished well for the upcoming election.

6/25 MINUTES OF THE MEETING held on 27/3/25

It was **RESOLVED** that the draft minutes of the Pitstone Parish Council Meeting held on 27 March 2025 were a true and accurate record. The Chairman was duly authorised to sign them on behalf of the council.

7/25 CLERK'S REPORT ON MATTERS ARISING

This section provides updates on issues that are ongoing. Resolutions cannot be passed on items in this section of the agenda as insufficient detail will have been provided to councillors to satisfy the legal requirements, therefore minor updates will only be noted. This information is provided to keep members of the public up to date on the various ongoing matters.

1. Where third parties are responsible

- Castlemead Highways Issues:
 - BC and TW liaising. Phase V of Castlemead & business park remain outstanding with TW/BC. Legal issue re parcel of land ownership to be resolved before can progress.
 - Castlemead Lighting: BC converted existing lighting to LED. Installing the columns that are missing and relocating the columns incorrectly installed on private land instead of public land. BC has confirmed that they still intend to then transfer the residential columns to the parish council once works complete. No visibility yet of process/timescale.
- Castlemead Public Open Space Phase III: TW to transfer to BC. Complications arising from legal charge in favour of Sancem Group which have yet to be resolved and classified as exempt disposals by TW/Sancem.
- Croudace/Buckinghamshire Council holding £10k of funds for "Sustainable Community Transport and Dial-a-Ride" arising from Rushendon Furlong development (to be spent by 2027)
- Bellway Street Lighting: the parish council has resolved that it would be willing to adopt the street lighting within the development. BC to adopt internal highways prior to PPC adopting lighting. Section 38 agreement not currently adopted to enable transfer.
- NKH replacement car park: Illuminated car park will pass to the parish council along with the MUGA in due course.
- NKH MUGA: BC liaising with NKH. 6-month period to lodge an appeal against the BC planning decision expired 6/8/24. BC confirmed that they have instructed their Legal Team to write to NKH formally regarding non-compliance with the MUGA requirements and plans to remedy the situation.
- NKH lighting: internal lighting will transfer to their management company. PPC will adopt the replacement column on Vicarage Road once BC agree that the site remedials have been completed.
- NKH provided £216,584 of sports and leisure funding to Buckinghamshire Council. Review once information available from Town Lands Charity and Pitstone Memorial Hall Charity etc.
- NKH community areas / conversion to residential: NKH withdrawn one application relating to the restaurant/café area. The other planning application relating to the day nursery remains outstanding with BC.
- NKH open space: Transferring to "Ravensmoor (Pitstone) Management Co Ltd" and not Pitstone Parish Council.
- NKH to (a) repair the hole in their hedge to the toddler play equipment & arrange for this hedge to be cut (NB: NKH have not yet confirmed they will carry out this work) (b)

advise about replanting the hedgerow to the open space (if replanted, the parish council has agreed to protect with a section of green plastic mesh fencing).

- TW investigating balancing pond transfer issues, along with fence remedials. TW considering re-opening discussions with Network Rail re transfer of main parcel of land.
- TW own the trees blocking the light by Meadow Lane – written to TW requesting remedials and provided the land registry docs.
- Land off Westfield Road/'The Mounds': with Taylor Wimpey.
- Buckinghamshire Highways Issues (Buckinghamshire Councillors aware of all issues). The parish council continues to chase BC for resolution:
 - Reconstruction of Vicarage Road footpath from Tun Furlong towards Church Road added to capital footway program (eta 2024/25)
 - Collapsed footpath in Queen Street & failed footpath at far end of Glebe Close – on work list but outstanding with no eta.
 - Marsworth Road speed humps – BC hoping to add to capital maintenance program.
 - Westfield Road potholes – completed
 - Westfield Road (Marsworth Road to village gates) – Jan 2025 BC advise that this is now on the Capital Maintenance list for extensive resurfacing which they hope will be carried out within the next 12-24 months.
 - Cheddington Road repeater signs –Discussions continue with BC and escalated to Bucks Councillors.
 - Pedestrian safety under Cheddington Road railway bridge – BC arranging to side out under the bridge & repaint the markings down one side.
 - Pedestrian safety by Windsor Road play area – BC arranging for installation of staggered chicane fence panels at the end of the footpath.
 - Signage: replacement sign (excluding canal cruises) for Cooks Wharf turning to be supplied, replacement cul-de-sac sign for Chequers Lane to be supplied; additional cycle path signs for Westfield Road to be supplied; replacement lighting for sign on Westfield Road roundabout following collision to be supplied; repaint 30 roundel in Vicarage Road.
 - Marsworth Road roundabout planters – continue to seek to find permanent solution with BC. Commercial sponsorship available via MarketingForce should any commercial companies wish to pursue.
 - Replacement of broken fencing along Brook Lane BOAT – on list but no eta.
 - Tree works in Old Farm outstanding.
 - Installation of painted cycle path decals in respective paths by the bus stops on Westfield Road and at the maintenance gates into the Local Wildlife Site.
 - Resurfacing of section of Stocks Road – to be reviewed four times per year
 - Rushendon Furlong, Vicarage Road and Durham Road nameplates to be replaced.
- Safety Scheme works along Marsworth Road: roundabout to Rushendon Furlong – pending.
- Cycle improvements to Tring station (HCC/CRT/BC): Taylor Wimpey did not raise any objections to the alternative provision for improvements to the canal path route. HCC will be progressing this with the Canal and Rivers Trust over the next 1-2 years (2025-2027).
- Pitstone Memorial Hall Charity: PMH investigating car park issues with NKH; Land Registry raised queries re transfer of the strip of land.
- Traffic speeds: SID manufacturer will revert to the parish council once resolved technical issues to make the units more mobile.
- Pitstone Town Lands Charity – working with their charity advisors and will respond to the parish council in due course. Advised in December 2024 that they were not yet in a position to respond to the Parish Council.

- Buckinghamshire Council Open Space – with BC legal and property departments, there are still a number of issues to resolve.
 - Buckinghamshire Council / Hertfordshire Council Footpath from Westfield Road to College Lake along Upper Icknield Way – included on BC & HCC Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans for consideration if funding becomes available.
 - Buckinghamshire Council / Hertfordshire Council engineered cycle path from Westfield Road to Tring Station along Northfield Road – a 'corridor' between Pitstone and Tring in both the Herts and Bucks Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans for consideration if/when funding becomes available.
 - Buckinghamshire Council / Red Eagle Bus Service to Tring Station – new timetable from April 2025 plus additional number 63 peak-times bus introduced to better align with train times and provide more frequent service (operates between Cheddington-Pitstone-Tring Station-Tring). Utilised the Nicholas King Homes £74k S106 public transport funding, alongside some Cheddington S106 funding and school transport funding.
 - Buckinghamshire Council CCTV policy and joint working proposals – awaiting final details of any offer and costs from BC.
 - Brook – BC advised that riparian responsibilities lie with the adjacent landowner on either side. Advise BC Flood Management Team of any issues, they will assess and if they agree that maintenance works or vegetation clearance are required, they will send letters to the riparian owners of the watercourse to remind them of their responsibilities.
 - Substation on Westfield Road/Harlech Road: GTC declined to remove graffiti as not offensive or derogatory. Monitor and provide additional information if required.
 - **Events:** Party in the Park 12 July 2025 on the Recreation Ground; WindmillFest 27/7/25 at the Pavilion; Housemouse 24 May 2025 at the Pavilion.
2. Within the scope of the parish council:
- PAA – long term aspiration for additional allotment land within the parish.
 - Hedgehog Highway Surrounds – Still plenty of units for sale.
 - Parish council representation on Pitstone Memorial Hall Charity – outstanding.
 - Grants Awarded:
 - PMH transfer of walkway, awaiting completion by Land Registry, not yet paid.
 - Eclipse stage hire, remaining 50% of fee still to be paid, £663.30. Invoice due 1/6/25.
 - Silent soldier project: all reports and evidence submitted to Buckinghamshire Council and payment received. Publicity completed.
 - Moving to a .gov domain name investigation in progress by Cllr Nicholls.
 - PPP Editor – Publisher software supplied. Email partly set up. Access to a shared One Drive set up.
 - Switch to Tomato Energy for UMS electricity – in progress.
 - Volunteer of the Year – will be presented at the Annual Assembly.
 - Unity Trust signatory issue now resolved.
 - Please refer to Sport & Leisure Committee minutes for full list of S&L related matters.

8/25 CORRESPONDENCE

- The list of correspondence received was noted.
- It was **RESOLVED** to note the Notice of Uncontested Election for Pitstone Parish Council from Buckinghamshire Council.

Committee Matters:

9/25 PLANNING COMMITTEE AND RELATED MATTERS

1. Minutes

It was noted that no committee meeting had been held so no draft minutes were due.

2. Application Consultations

- 23 Marsworth Road; 25/00792/APP; Householder application for demolition of storage shed and erection of single storey rear extension. It was **RESOLVED** to accept comments in relation to this application from members of the public. The applicants (3 members of public) explained that they wished to convert the property into a family home. Two members of the public explained they were adjoining neighbours and in favour of the application. It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to advise Buckinghamshire

Council that the Parish Council had no objection to this application. The members of the public were thanked for their attendance and input and departed the meeting.

- 44 Vicarage Road; 25/00746/APP; Householder application for proposed demolition of existing conservatory and rebuild as extension: No representations were received in relation to this application. It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to advise Buckinghamshire Council that the Parish Council had no objection to this application.
 - 87 Marsworth Road; 25/00891/APP; Householder application for demolition of existing outbuildings. Cllr Hawkins abstained from taking part in the discussion or voting for this consultation. It was **RESOLVED** (by a majority of those present and voting) to oppose the application on the grounds that insufficient grounds had been provided for demolition in advance of the full planning application being duly considered by Buckinghamshire Council. In particular concerns were raised in relation to the cited wildlife, heritage aspects and any mitigating measures that may have been stipulated by BC as part of the full applications.
 - It was also noted that 3 new consultations had been received, which would be considered at the 15/5/25 annual meeting (in relation to 138 Vicarage Road, 4 Greenacres and 2 Railway Cottages on Cheddington Road).
3. Decisions notified by Buckinghamshire Council
 - None advised by Buckinghamshire Council this month.
 4. Applications outstanding with Buckinghamshire Council

Land Adjacent to Allotment Gardens (nursery site only), Land to the rear of 87 Marsworth Road (5 dwellings), 12 Queen Street (3 dwellings), Land to the rear of 12 Marsworth Road (1 dwelling), 15 Windsor Road, Little Barley End on Stocks Road, redevelopment of Pitstone Quarry (minerals and waste planning application with both BC and HCC); 6 The Pightle.
 5. Decisions notified by the Secretary of State

Regulation 31 Application by London Luton Airport Limited for an order granting development consent for the proposed London Luton Airport Expansion: Development Consent Granted by the Secretary of State (passenger numbers to increase from 18m to 32m).
 6. Appeals Lodged with the Planning Inspectorate

Land adjacent to The Duke of Wellington Public House, Cheddington Road, Marsworth; 24/02222/AOP; Appeal ref: 25/00019/REF; Planning Inspectorate Ref: APP/J0405/W/25/3363581; Outline planning application with all matters reserved except access and layout for the erection of 9 dwellings with associated parking and access. The Parish Council's previous comments will be passed to the Inspectorate. It was **RESOLVED** that no further comments needed to be submitted.
 7. Planning Inspectorate Consultation in relation to Grand Union Canal

WA0210001 Grand Union Canal Transfer - EIA Scoping Notification and Consultation. It was **RESOLVED** to respond to the consultation and note that no mention had been made to the Ivinghoe Freight Strategy nor any impact on the quarry, and to request that the Parish Council is consulted further in due course.
 8. Pitstone Neighbourhood Development Plan

To be considered after the election, so will be an agenda item for 15/5/25 annual meeting.
 9. Other

It was noted that the Land East of Tring, known as Marshcroft (Allocation reference: Tr03) had originally been refused permission but was now included within the draft Local Plan, and the developer would be submitting an application in due course.

10/25 SPORTS AND LEISURE COMMITTEE AND RELATED MATTERS

1. Minutes
 - It was **RESOLVED** to note receipt of the draft minutes arising from the committee meeting held on 10/4/25.
 - The committee had referred the following two matters for consideration by the full council:
 - It was **RESOLVED** to advise P&IUCF that the council saw no reason to remove Clause 6, in relation to the payment of players fines, especially in view of the outstanding duration of the clawback period from the Football Foundation.

- It was **RESOLVED** to advise P&IUFc that the annual increase to rental fees, applicable to all hirers, would need to remain in place. This was directly related to the costs of providing the facilities and services available at the pavilion during their hire period and has always been treated separately to any capital development project.

2. Bellway LEAP

- All remedials at the site are now complete and report provided by the contractor.
- TP1 transfer to be enacted by Gateley Legal.
- Staff advised to commence asset checks and grass cutting contractor advised to commence grounds maintenance.
- Signage to be updated by the Parish Council re the transfer of ownership.

3. BC Community Board grant application for support for the Repair Café

It was noted that a grant offer has been received from the Community Board for up to £997.89 towards the specified items to assist the Repair Café. It was further noted that some of the items had become urgent and had already been purchased by the Café.

The Parish Council has reverted to the Board to enquire if these items can be substituted for other required equipment, so long as the total value of expenditure remains below that offered. Council is currently waiting for a response from the Board before progressing any purchases.

4. Ground/Mining Bees

It was noted that some early, small, ground/mining bees had been seen near the embankment slide at the Recreation Ground. They had been identified as harmless by the contractor and likely to disperse once it rained. Therefore, no further action had been required.

5. Pitch Barriers at the Pavilion

It was noted that P&IUFc had made an enquiry about pitch barriers, but no further information had yet been supplied. Therefore consideration of this matter will carry forward to a future meeting.

11/25 STAFFING COMMITTEE AND RELATED MATTERS

1. Minutes

It was noted that no committee meeting had been held so no draft minutes were due.

2. Election/Councillor Update

It was noted that an uncontested election had been declared for Pitstone with 9 of 11 seats filled. The Parish Council will be able to co-opt for the remaining 2 seats once it takes office in May.

3. New Payroll Year

- It was noted that all new payroll year tasks had been undertaken. Tax codes updated. Confirmed not eligible for Employment Allowance nor Small Employers Relief. Problem resolved with Sage payroll and Nest.
- It was noted that the previously agreed payroll increases had been implemented including National Minimum Wage increase for applicable staff, hourly rate increase for Parish Assistant and Facilities Manager, and single Spinal Column Point grade increase for the Clerk.

4. Duke of Edinburgh Litter Picking

It was noted an enquiry had been received and information provided, however the resident had not then confirmed that they wished to progress with the initiative. Therefore, no further action to be taken at present.

Charity Matters:

12/25 PITSTONE PARISH CHARITY

It was noted that no charity meeting had taken place during the month, so no draft minutes were due.

13/25 PITSTONE RECREATION GROUND CHARITY

It was noted that no charity meeting had taken place during the month, so no draft minutes were due.

Working Group Matters:

14/25 YOUTH CAFÉ

1. Rota app

Still under investigation.

2. Community Board Grant

It was noted that the final items of sports equipment, two Jazzminton sets, had now been received. Photographs supplied by the Café Manager. The Claim Form, Supporting Report and Invoice will now be prepared and submitted to the Board to enable the release of the funds.

3. Action for Youth

It was **RESOLVED** to renew the annual membership with Action for Youth (£110 + VAT), who supply support services, training, template documents etc for the youth café.

4. Basketball Base

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the quotation from Maydom to install a concrete base for the basketball hoop (£350 + VAT).

5. Summer Term and Year 6

- It was **RESOLVED** to invite the Year 6 intake for the 2 sessions in July.
- It was **RESOLVED** that the Café Manager and some of the Young Leaders would book and attend an introductory meeting at Brookmead School to extend the invite.
- It was noted that the Café Manager would revert to the Parish Council re end-of-year activity.
- For a number of reasons, it was **RESOLVED** not to create a marked off area by the pitches during the summer renovation and to continue to prohibit use of the rear grounds during this period.

6. PAT testing

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the costs of annual PAT testing for all the youth café electrical equipment.

Other Matters:

15/25 DEVOLVED AND AGENCY SERVICES

- It was noted that there had been no new banner requests this month.
- It was noted that tendering for fulfilment for the BC Devolved Services contract for 2026-2028 would be organised for later this year.
- It was noted that the National Trust now wish to re-engage with the Parish Council regarding the Pitstone Hill Agreement. They have taken legal advice and are now in a position to meet with the Council. Meeting date tbc.

16/25 HIGHWAYS AND RIGHTS OF WAY

1. Pitstone and Ivinghoe Safety Scheme (Westfield Road to Roundabout)

It was noted that the Parish Council was waiting for Buckinghamshire Council to confirm the next steps and timescales. Works to be funded by Nicholas King Homes S106 payment.

2. Local Wildlife Site Parking

- Meeting to be progressed with Taylor Wimpey regarding options and proposals.
- Investigating the raised concrete strips that only tractors can drive over, as these may be more aesthetically pleasing than the concrete barriers.
- To consider scheduling a public meeting, advertised via a sign on the gate, so that all parties are able to discuss/understand all points of view. Review in May, post the election.

3. Children's Poster Competition

Competition live from 21/4/25 to 23/5/25.

4. mVAS Reports

It was **RESOLVED** to note receipt of the mVAS reports for Westfield Road (Warwick Road junction) and Marsworth Road. Both had been uploaded to the website for the benefit of residents. Both showed a decrease in traffic speeds.

Westfield Road lamppost:

- 85th percentile was 36.8mph and is now down to 34.2mph
- Average speed was 29.71mph and is now down to 28.58mph

Marsworth Road:

- 85th percentile was 27.4mph and is now down to 26.7mph
- Average speed was 21.79mph and is now down to 21.31mph

17/25 ALLOTMENTS

1. Water Tap Installation

The National Trust (NT) responded to the query regarding the installation of water taps at the site and requested further information, which has been compiled and submitted by Pitstone Allotment Association. NT will respond in due course.

2. Risk Assessment

It was **RESOLVED** to note receipt of the latest site risk assessment. No issues were identified, and no matters arose for the Parish Council.

18/25 OTHER MATTERS

1. Croudace Street Lighting

Awaiting payment from Croudace for the extra 2 columns. UMS Certificate and supply to be finalised once transfer complete to Tomato.

2. Defibrillator Project

- It was noted that the column and defibrillator for Meadow Lane would be installed by Lamps and Tubes Illuminations.
- It was noted that the Parish Council was still waiting for permission from Buckinghamshire Council Asset Management regarding the Windsor Road location.
- Structural testing of lamp post columns and the mounting of defibrillators to lamp post columns on hold pending receipt of the permission from BC.
- Grant funding to be sought once the BC permission is in place.

19/25 MEMBERSHIPS AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

- It was **RESOLVED** to approve the annual re-subscription to BALC and NALC (£607.645).
- It was **RESOLVED** to approve re-subscription to Rural Services Network (£52.60 + VAT). It was further noted that RSN require 12-months' notice to cancel membership, and therefore to enable a free choice next year, the parish council would give that notice at the same time.

20/25 POLICIES

1. Community Self Help Plan/Emergency Plan

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the annual review of the Community Self Help Plan, and the Chairman was duly authorised to sign on behalf of the council.

2. Pitstone Parish Post

Given that black and white advertising charges had not been increased since 2018, and colour charges since 2023, and considering the small pricing differential between b&w and colour, it was **RESOLVED** to:

- Increase black and white advertising charges by approximately 10% with effect from the next edition, and
- Increase colour advertising charges by approximately 20% with effect from the next edition.
- Having undertaken the annual review, it was **RESOLVED** that all other PPP terms and conditions etc were approved, and the Chairman was duly authorised to sign the

policy document on behalf of the Council once the quoted advertising prices had been updated.

21/25 **EVENTS**

- Party in the Park 12/7/25
 - No further feedback from the committee for consideration at the meeting.
 - It was noted that PitP had confirmed that they would reimburse the Parish Council for the staff charges in relation to litter picking during and after the event.
 - It was noted that the payment date for the remaining 50% of the Eclipse invoice re the stage was the end of June.
 - It was **RESOLVED** that no comments needed to be submitted to the Buckinghamshire Council consultation regarding the application for a Premises Licence at Pitstone Memorial Hall and Grounds for the duration of this event.
- WindmillFest 27/7/25
 - The completed application form and risk assessments had been received from the applicant. It was **RESOLVED** that the Council had no further comments or queries at this stage. Applicant to supply site layout in due course.
 - Applicant applying for TEN.
- HouseMouse 17/5/25
 - No matters received from the event committee for consideration.
 - It was noted that the comedy evening had been confirmed for the Friday night.

22/25 **ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

- As well as items on the agenda, and those listed under reports, it was noted that council had responded to resident enquiries regarding community gyms; event parking; replacement tree by Lancaster Way; routing agreement for Plot C on Westfield Road and reporting suspicious activity to TVP.
- It was noted that there were no other new matters raised by residents for consideration or to be tabled on the next agenda at present.

Buckinghamshire Councillors Chris Poll and Peter Brazier were thanked for their attendance and departed the meeting.

Financial Matters:

23/25 **GENERAL FINANCIAL MATTERS**

1. Staff Overtime

It was **RESOLVED** to ratify the staff overtime for the month (37 hours of overtime for the Clerk and 37.25 hours for the Parish Assistant), approved by the staffing committee and included in the April payroll.

2. VAT Return

It was noted that the monthly VAT return had been submitted. HMRC to refund £100.79 for the period.

3. Financial Summaries and Expenditure

- The bank reconciliations, monthly financial summary, confidential salary payments, pavilion & allotment monthly summaries, debtors and creditors were noted.
- It was **RESOLVED** to make the payments outlined in the financial summary and two councillors were granted approval to enact the bacs transfers. The Chairman was granted authority to sign the financial papers on behalf of the council, and Cllr Blunt was granted authority to sign the bank reconciliations and statements.

4. Internal Controls

It was noted that the Internal Controls had been undertaken with no issues or actions arising.

5. Asset Register / Insurance / Write Off

It was noted that no changes were required to the Asset Register or Insurance this month.

Pending: funding/permissions being sought for 3 further defibrillators, the Repair Café grant had been approved which may include additional items eg tables.

6. Quarterly Grant Considerations

It was noted that no applications had been received for consideration this month.

7. Annual Review of Electronic Banking Payments

- It was **RESOLVED** to note the report confirming that Direct Debit schedules had been reviewed to ensure only current agreements were active and any historic direct debit mandates had been cancelled.
- It was **RESOLVED** to note receipt of the report confirming that the Parish Council did not operate any Standing Orders.
- It was **RESOLVED** to note that the annual check of individual supplier banking details had been carried out, and any ad-hoc or historic account listings had been deleted from the Unity Trust Bank system.

8. Budget Monitor for 2025-26

To be presented at the May annual meeting.

24/25 **AUDIT**

1. Internal Audit by IAC Ltd

- It was **RESOLVED** to note receipt of the Interim Internal Audit report.
- It was **RESOLVED** to note receipt of the cover letter and summary.
- The Observations and Recommendations advised by IAC were considered, and **RESOLVED** to respond to IAC Ltd as follows:
 - Standing Orders and Financial Regulations to be updated to the newly issued templates at the May annual meeting. Both to reflect the updated tender requirements. Financial Regulations to be updated to reflect that the monthly payment listings are published to a separate area of the website.
 - Levels of Fidelity Insurance to be considered alongside the annual insurance review.
 - ICO Model Publication Scheme & Guidance now adopted and published to the website, with issue numbers added to the Guide to Information Available to make checking easier in subsequent years.
 - The Notice of Electors Rights had been published in accordance with the Guidance Template provided by the External Auditor ie 'not less than 1 day', rather than '1 day' as quoted in Regulation 15.3. Note in file for future years that only one days' notice must be given.
- It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Year End Bank Reconciliation in audit format and the Chairman was duly authorised to sign on behalf of the Council.
- It was **RESOLVED** to approve the draft AGAR accounting statements, explanation of variances and reconciliation between box 7 and 8 for submission to the internal auditor.
- It was **RESOLVED** to approve the year end trial balance, year end debtors and creditors reports and year end VAT return for submission to the internal auditor along with the other stipulated reports and documents.
- It was **RESOLVED** to approve the year-end Asset Register. It was noted that assets had been checked by members of the council and council accepts the register as an accurate record of fixed assets to 31/3/25. The Chairman was duly authorised to sign on behalf of the council. It was **RESOLVED** to submit this document to the internal auditor.
- It was noted that all documents must be submitted to IAC by 25/4/25. Internal Audit report to be returned to the Parish Council by 8/5/25, for approval at the 15/5/25 May annual meeting.

2. External Audit by PKF Littlejohn

- It was **RESOLVED** to note receipt of the External Audit information supplied by PKF Littlejohn, including:
 - All audit papers must be submitted by 1 July at the latest.
 - Suggested period for electors rights is quoted as 3 June to 14 July, so the submission to the external auditor would need to be approved at the May council meeting.

- The additional documentation to be submitted for an Intermediate level of audit was cited as:
 - A reconciliation between box 7 and 8
 - Minutes and agenda papers for review of risk during 2024/25
 - Any corrective actions for matters raised by external auditor – not applicable to Pitstone Parish Council.

Reports & Other:

25/25 REPORTS

- It was noted that 1 street light issue had been reported to Taylor Wimpey for resolution.
- It was noted that a broken gate on Footpath 2 had been reported to BC Rights of Way & the landowner for remedial action. BC advised that it should be the landowners responsibility but they have a spare catch and will arrange a repair on this occasion.
- It was noted that fly-tipping in the Windmill Field car park had been reported to National Trust & BC for uplift.
- It was noted that fly-tipping in Chequers Lane at the start of Footpath 2 had been reported to the landowner for uplift.
- It was noted that Fly-tipping in Glebe Close had been reported to Fairhive for uplift.
- The Clerk provided feedback from the BC Clerks Forum held on 23/4/25 regarding the public access portal, fix my street, community boards and the parish charter.
- It was noted that Martyns Law received Royal Ascent on 3 April 2025 and is expected to come into force in 24 months. NALC will issue draft policies and guidance in July.
- No other reports were noted.

26/25 OTHER

1. Date and Time of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the full council was scheduled for 7.30pm on Thursday 15 May 2025.

2. The following items were noted for inclusion on the agenda:

- Election results and co-option to fill remaining vacancies.
- Must appoint new Chairman/Vice Chairman & Committee Members.
- Annual review Financial Regulations and Standing Orders and Risk Assessment.
- Re-approve dd's/standing order payments and all those which arise on a regular basis as the result of a continuing contract, statutory duty, or obligation.
- Annual re-confirm agreement to maintain the recreation ground on behalf of charity.
- Annual review of bank mandates & actual banking arrangements plus the same for the credit card.
- Annual review of interest paid on investments/deposits etc, review of deposits/investments held in each, and agree any transfers between.
- Year End reconciliation S106 account, reserve account and PSDF to see if wish/need to transfer funds between.
- Re-confirm eligibility for General Power of Competence.
- Check with Williamson Trust/Towns Land Trust if trustees need to step down/re-volunteer for next four years
- Get quotes for street light structural testing in July and sign off on agenda (3-year retests due 2025)
- Re-confirm electronic receipt of council information.
- Review the policy on use of the recreation ground/village green for regular hall hirers.
- Arrange insurance renewal for June.
- Dog waste bin emptying contract due for renewal with BC.
- Annual membership to BMKALC Employee Assistance Programme due for renewal

- Descriptive Annual Report for 2024/25
- Formal approval of replacement Christmas lights (included within the budget)
- No other agenda items were requested.

3. Reminders and Forthcoming Events

The following reminders & events were noted:

- Parish Council meetings: 15/5/25, 26/6/25 (to include Ashridge Committee report), 31/7/25, 28/8/25, 25/9/25, 30/10/25 (to include Ashridge Committee report), 27/11/25 and 8/1/26
- Sports and Leisure Committee meetings: (no meeting on 8/5/25), 12/6/25, 10/7/25, 14/8/25, 11/9/25, 9/10/25, 13/11/25, 11/12/25.
- Staffing Committee: 17/6/25 at 7.30pm.
- Volunteer Thank You Events: 12/9/25 and 15/1/26.
- Annual Parish Assembly: 29/5/25
- Recreation Ground Charity: after the sports & leisure committee meetings in September, January and May (in 2025 the meeting will be in June as the May s&l meeting has been cancelled)
- Step-up grant application deadlines: end May, end August (Parish Charity to consider bringing forward to the end of July), end November and end February.
- Step-up grant panel/parish charity meeting dates: 19/6/25, 18/9/25 (Parish Charity to consider bringing forward to August), 18/12/25.
- PPP Publication dates: April, July, October, and January.
- BC Parish Liaison meetings: no meeting in April (pre-election), 8/7/25 and 8/10/25
- Art Exhibition 17-19/10/25 at St Marys Church in Ivinghoe (borrowing the Parish Council display boards).
- Brookmead Sandpit visit 25/4/25 Cllr Nash attending
- Brookmead Road Safety assembly 30/4/25
- BC Planning Forum 26/6/25

27/25 CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

There being no further business to transact, the Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 20.45.

Signed

D Nicholls

Date: 15/5/25

Chairman