

PITSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Pitstone Parish Council held on 15 May 2025
at Pitstone Pavilion commencing at 7.30pm

Election Matters:

28/25 ELECTION OF A CHAIR FOR THE FORTHCOMING YEAR

Councillor Nicholls was nominated for the position of Chair. There being no other nominations Councillor Nicholls was duly elected as Chairman for the forthcoming year.

Cllr Nicholls completed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office for the position of Chair, in the presence of the Clerk/Proper Officer, who duly countersigned the Declaration.

29/25 2025 PARISH COUNCIL ELECTION

1. Election Result

It was noted that nine members had been 'elected unopposed' to the parish council to serve the forthcoming 4-year term of office.

2. Declarations of Acceptance of Office

All nine members had completed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office in the presence of the Clerk/Proper Officer, who had duly countersigned their Declarations.

3. Co-option for Remaining Seats

As there are eleven seats available on the parish council, it was **RESOLVED** to co-opt to fill the remaining 2 vacancies.

A member of the public was in attendance at the meeting and wished to express an interest in joining the council. The council welcomed them and will supply the information pack of materials that explains more about the role, including the charity trusteeships, so that the gentleman can give the matter proper consideration before confirming.

It was **RESOLVED** to advertise the remaining vacancy(ies) via the normal channels.

30/25 ELECTION OF A VICE CHAIRMAN

Councillor Mrs Nash was nominated for the position of Vice Chair. There being no other nominations Councillor Mrs Nash was duly elected as Vice Chair for the forthcoming year.

General Matters:

31/25 ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

1. Council present

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

2. Apologies & Absence

It was noted that Cllr Dr Frearson and Cllr Blunt were not in attendance.

3. Others present

Buckinghamshire Councillor Peter Brazier. 1 member of the public.

32/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATION REQUESTS FOR MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE MEETING

- It was noted that eight members of the council had supplied their new Register of Interests. Remaining Register to be supplied within 28 days of appointment. All will then be published to pitstone.co.uk and supplied to the monitoring officer at Buckinghamshire Council.
- 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.
- No other declarations nor dispensations were received.

33/25 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC/PRESS

No questions were tabled from the public gallery.

34/25 QUESTIONS FOR, AND UPDATES FROM, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNCILLORS

Buckinghamshire Councillor Peter Brazier was congratulated on his re-appointment to office. Cllr Brazier advised that no single party had overall control of Buckinghamshire Council, but the Conservative party retained its majority (1 seat short of an overall control position). The first full meeting of the council would be held next week.

Cllr Brazier then answered a number of questions posed by the council.

35/25 MINUTES OF THE MEETING held on 24/4/25

It was **RESOLVED** that the draft minutes of the Pitstone Parish Council Meeting held on 24 April 2025 were a true and accurate record. The Chairman was duly authorised to sign them on behalf of the council.

36/25 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 (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 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.
 - Planning Inspectorate Consultation WA0210001 Grand Union Canal Transfer – in progress.
 - **Events:** Party in the Park 12 July 2025 on the Recreation Ground; WindmillFest 27/7/25 at the Pavilion; Housemouse and comedy night 23 & 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.
 - Community Board grant funding for silent soldier project complete.
 - Moving to a .gov domain name investigation in progress by Cllr Nicholls.
 - Volunteer of the Year – will be presented at the Annual Assembly.
 - Please refer to Sport & Leisure Committee minutes for full list of S&L related matters.

37/25 CORRESPONDENCE

The list of correspondence received was noted.

Annual Meeting Matters:

38/25 STANDING DISPENSATIONS

It was **RESOLVED** to confirm the following standing dispensations, as quoted in the Code of Conduct, for the forthcoming year:

"The following Standing Dispensations have been adopted and will remain in place until the next election unless otherwise resolved:

- Where there is an interest common to the majority of inhabitants of the parish
- Where an interest is so remote that it is not likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest
- When setting the council tax/precept
- Interests arising from posts within the authority.
- Interests arising from membership of a body to which the authority has appointed or proposes to appoint you (where dispensation exists to discuss but not vote)"

Pitstone Parish Council also has standing declarations relating to the affairs of the Pitstone Parish Charity and Pitstone Recreation Ground Charity, for whom the parish council as corporate body is sole trustee.

39/25 ANNUAL REVIEW OF KEY POLICIES

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the following key policies, and the Chair was duly authorised to sign on behalf of the council:

- The Code of Conduct – based on the latest Buckinghamshire Council code (as recommended by the Monitoring Officer) with minor amendments to reflect the local position.
- Standing Orders – based on the new NALC template with local personalisation, includes the observation raised by IAC and new financial regulation values.
- Financial Regulations – based on the new NALC template to reflect tender requirements, with local personalisation, and includes the observation raised by IAC and the BMKALC note re Find-Tender instead of Contracts Finder.
- Risk Management Policy and associated Risk Assessment – with minor annual updates the reflect the current position.

40/25 COMMITTEE STRUCTURE, APPOINTMENTS AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Committee and Working Group Structure

It was **RESOLVED** to operate the following committees:

- Planning (convened on an ad hoc basis, if planning matters can't be accommodated within the main council meeting timetable)
- Staffing (convened quarterly on average)
- Sports and Leisure (held monthly)

It was **RESOLVED** that both Pitstone Parish Charity and Pitstone Recreation Ground Charity should operate with management by the full council (corporate body) and not committee.

It was **RESOLVED** to operate the following working parties:

- Youth Café

2. Appointments

It was **RESOLVED** to make the following appointments to committees:

- Planning Committee
Chair = Cllr Weber. Other members: Cllr Hawkins (Vice Chair), Cllr Mrs Crutchfield, Cllr Mrs Nash, Cllr Blunt and Cllr Nicholls.
- Sports and Leisure Committee
Chair = Cllr Saintey. Other members: Cllr Hawkins (Vice Chair), Cllr Mrs Crutchfield, Cllr Weber and Cllr Nicholls.
- Staffing Committee
Chair = Cllr Blunt. Other members: Cllr Nicholls and Cllr Saintey. No Vice Chair required as only three committee members.

It was **RESOLVED** to make the following appointments to working parties:

- Youth Café Working Party
Cllrs Blunt, Hawkins and Nicholls meet with the Youth Café manager when required and attend café on a rotational basis every other week.
Cllr Mrs Crutchfield also to meet with Café Manager but not be on rota for attendance.

It was **RESOLVED** to make the following appointments to external bodies:

- Pitstone Memorial Hall Charity - vacant.
- BC Community Board – Cllr Saintey, Cllr McCarthy, and Cllr Mrs Crutchfield
- BALC/BC Parish Liaison – Cllr Saintey and Cllr McCarthy

It was **RESOLVED** to make the following appointments to other matters:

- Pitstone Hill – Cllr Saintey
- Allotment Officer – the Clerk
- Footpaths – Cllr Hawkins
- Web Site – Cllr Nicholls
- Waste and Minerals – Cllr Blunt

3. Terms of Reference

It was **RESOLVED** to set the following Terms of Reference for committees:

- Planning Committee

This committee meets ad/hoc once per month if required depending upon the number and timing of deadlines imposed by the planning authority.

- The committee members have delegated power to determine standard applications (eg extensions) and advise BC on the outcome of their decision on behalf of the Parish Council. Any correspondence relating to such applications will be circulated to relevant committee members.
- For applications of 5+ developments / where development may be contentious / unusual, full council to be summoned to attend the meeting. Any correspondence relating to such applications to be circulated to full council.
- Meetings must be open to the public and advertised in the same manner as a council meeting.
- The committee has no delegated spending power.
- If any planning committee meeting is anticipated to be non-quorate, any other member of the parish council (without an interest) may substitute for an ordinary committee member.
- Sports and Leisure Committee

This committee meets monthly and considers all sports & leisure related issues eg management and development regardless of the site, management of play space, football pitch allocation, village green etc.

 - The Committee has delegated power to manage all day-to-day decisions, taking advice from external representatives on the committee, as necessary.
 - The committee has delegated power in line with Financial Regulations, up to £5,000.
 - All items of major expenditure or decisions of a strategic nature (such as final approval of capital projects towards the redevelopment of the pavilion site) would require referral back to full council for consideration and approval.
 - All correspondence relating to sports and leisure matters to be circulated to members of the committee.
 - Meetings must be open to the public and advertised in the same manner as a council meeting.
 - If any sports & leisure committee meeting is anticipated to be non-quorate, any other member of the parish council (without an interest) may substitute for an ordinary committee member.
- Staffing Committee

To be convened, when necessary, generally quarterly.

 - The committee has delegated power to determine routine staffing matters such as holiday leave/cover, training, sickness, appraisals, pensions, PAYE/NI, overtime, volunteer/staff events etc.
 - Meetings must be advertised and minuted in the same manner as a council meeting, but public may be excluded for privacy reasons.
 - No member of staff should be present at Staffing Meetings but may be requested to submit a report.
 - The committee has no delegated spending power over and above matters related to staffing.
 - Final decision on appointments should be referred to full council for approval.
 - If any staffing committee meeting is anticipated to be non-quorate, any other member of the parish council (without an interest) may substitute for an ordinary committee member.

41/25 DELEGATION ARRANGEMENTS

The below extracts from the financial regulations approved earlier in the evening, outline the delegation arrangements approved for the forthcoming year:

- Individual purchases within an agreed budget for that type of expenditure may be authorised by:
 - the Clerk, under delegated authority, for any items below £500 excluding VAT.

- the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Council, or Chair of the appropriate committee, for any items below £2,000 excluding VAT.
- a duly delegated committee of the council for all items of expenditure within their delegated budgets for items under £5,000 excluding VAT
- in respect of grants, either the full council, or a duly authorised committee within any limits set by council and in accordance with any policy statement agreed by the council.
- the council for all items over £5,000.
- No individual member, or informal group of members may issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the council.
- No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the budget for that type of expenditure other than by resolution of the council, or a duly delegated committee acting within its Terms of Reference, except in an emergency.
- In cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises, the clerk may authorise expenditure of up to £2,000 excluding VAT on repair, replacement or other work that in their judgement is necessary, whether or not there is any budget for such expenditure. The Clerk shall report such action to the Chair as soon as possible and to the council as soon as practicable thereafter.
- the Clerk has delegated authority to incur expenditure on office stationery, equipment, postage, toner, sundries, consumables or reference books etc as deemed necessary.
- The pavilion cleaner and litter pickers have delegated authority to incur minimum expenditure on replacement gloves etc.

42/25 DELEGATED/DEVOLVED POWERS

As a reminder, it was noted that the council has accepted devolved powers from Buckinghamshire Council to undertake grass verge maintenance, right of way maintenance and minor works. Devolution agreement in place for 4-years.

43/25 ELECTRONIC DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS

It was **RESOLVED** that all information should be disseminated electronically unless a member specifically requests a hard copy of a specific document via the Clerk, when it will be home delivered or supplied at the next convenient meeting.

Magazines/periodicals supplied in hard copy are available for circulation and can be collected when attending a meeting or via arrangement with the Clerk.

Committee Matters:

44/25 PLANNING COMMITTEE AND RELATED MATTERS

This section of the meeting was Chaired by Cllr Weber, Chair of the Planning Committee.

1. Minutes

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

2. Application Consultations

- Railway Cottages, Cheddington Road; 25/01047/APP; Householder application for single storey side/rear extension and render flank of house. No representations were received in relation to this application. It was **RESOLVED** to advise Buckinghamshire Council that the Parish Council had no objection to this application.
- 4 Greenacres; 25/00848/APP; Householder application for construction of single storey front extension and new conservatory. No representations were received in relation to this application. It was **RESOLVED** to advise Buckinghamshire Council that the Parish Council had no objection to this application.
- 138 Vicarage Road; 25/01037/APP; Householder application for erection of single storey side extension. No representations were received in relation to this application. It was **RESOLVED** to advise Buckinghamshire Council that the Parish Council had no objection to this application.

3. Decisions notified by Buckinghamshire Council

- 6 The Pightle; 25/00694/APP; Householder application for part garage conversion: approved by Buckinghamshire Council.

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); 23 Marsworth Road; 87 Marsworth Road, 44 Vicarage Road

5. Appeals 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.
- Land to the Rear of 12 Marsworth Road; 24/01969/APP; Demolition of detached garage and erection of a self-build dwelling; Appeal Ref: 25/00029/NONDET; Planning Inspectorate Ref: APP/J0405/W/25/3365073. The Parish Council's previous comments will be passed to the Inspectorate. It was **RESOLVED** that no further comments needed to be submitted.

6. Pitstone Neighbourhood Development Plan

It was **RESOLVED** that the Parish Council wished to undertake a review of the Pitstone Neighbourhood Plan and further **RESOLVED** to form a working group to undertake all associated matters.

It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Cllrs Weber, Mrs Nash, Mrs Crutchfield and Hawkins to the working group.

It was **RESOLVED** to engage Neil Homer to attend the initial meeting and help the members to decide which review option may be most appropriate to our circumstances, and to meet any initial costs associated with this meeting.

It was envisaged that once the most appropriate route had been determined that the working group would be able to present recommendations to the full council relating to process/timescale/cost etc and rcnh would be able to provide a quotation for consultancy services.

It was noted that working groups had no powers to formally make decisions on behalf of the council, nor to expend any funds. All recommendations and proposals to be referred back to full council.

The date of the first meeting to be arranged, in liaison with Neil Homer.

Buckinghamshire Councillor P Brazier departed the meeting.

45/25 SPORTS AND LEISURE COMMITTEE AND RELATED MATTERS

This section of the meeting was Chaired by Cllr Saintey, Chair of the Sports & Leisure Committee.

1. Minutes

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

2. Bellway LEAP

- TP1 transfer to be enacted by Gateley Legal who are liaising with Horwood & James. It was noted that the Parish Council will then need to register the transfer with Land Registry (which Horwood & James will undertake).
- Signage to be updated by the Parish Council re the transfer of ownership.
- It was noted that no maintenance gate access has been provided by Bellway. Ross Lawry Agricultural Services to advise if the fence can be adapted, as per the Recreation Ground, or if more substantial adjustments are required.

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

It was noted that the Parish Council is waiting for a response from the Board, regarding the Repair Café's request to substitute some items originally requested, before any purchases can be progressed.

A grant of up to £997.89 had originally been offered.

4. Legend on the Bench donation from PRS Office Furniture

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the installation of the bench on a plinth between the new memorial bench for A Mitra and the run of 3 benches outside the Memorial Hall (close to, but not in the way of, the garage) where the footfall from the new estate/Castlemead across the Recreation Ground was heaviest. It was further **RESOLVED** to meet the associated costs of installation of the plinth (approx. £300).

5. Buckinghamshire Council Waste Charges

It was noted Buckinghamshire Council has invoiced for the annual duty of care charge in respect of the waste collection agreement, cost £85.00 per annum, no increase on last year.

The ongoing charges have also slightly increased with general waste emptying now £11.50 per empty, mixed recycling emptying now £5.90 per empty and hire of general waste wheelie bin now £3.05 per week. There remains no charge for renting the recycling wheelie bin.

It was **RESOLVED** to meet these costs.

6. Pitch Barriers

It was noted that no proposals had yet been submitted by P&IUFC.

7. Basket Swing

It was noted that a resident had reported a potential issue with the hanging basket swing on the Recreation Ground which was being investigated by the council's contractor.

8. Showers at the Pavilion

It was noted that the two of the away changing room showers needed replacement cartridges as they were still not functioning correctly following the previous remedial works. The Chair of the Council and Chair of the Sports & Leisure Committee had electronically approved a quotation of £235 + VAT for Ambivent to supply the parts and the Facilities Manager will install. It was **RESOLVED** to ratify this expenditure.

9. Skate Park Lessons

It was noted that an individual had been advertising on Facebook offering skateboarding lessons on the Parish Council skate park. It was **RESOLVED** to contact the individual, provide a copy of the council's policy on the use of the Recreation Ground, request a copy of their Public Liability Insurance and DBS Certificate, and open discussions regarding timing of use etc.

46/25 STAFFING COMMITTEE AND RELATED MATTERS

1. Minutes

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

2. BMKALC Employee Assistance Programme

It was **RESOLVED** to re-enrol for the forthcoming year. It is not anticipated that there will be any rise in cost, remaining at £8.10 per person per year. With 11 members of council and 6 members of staff to be enrolled. Total cost £137.70.

Charity Matters:

47/25 PITSTONE PARISH CHARITY

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

48/25 PITSTONE RECREATION GROUND CHARITY

- It was noted that no charity meeting had taken place during the month, so no draft minutes were due.
- It was **RESOLVED** that Pitstone Parish Council, as Local Authority, was willing to undertake the maintenance of the village green/charitable field, under its open spaces scheme on behalf of the Recreation Ground Charity. To include (but not limited to) grass care, tree maintenance, care of the street furniture, litter picking etc.

Working Group Matters:

49/25 YOUTH CAFÉ

1. Rota app

Still under investigation.

2. Community Board Grant

It was noted that the Claim Form, Supporting Report and Invoice have been submitted to the Board to enable the release of the funds. Suitable cabinet for the storage of the guitars is still being investigated.

3. Summer Term and Year 6

It was noted that the council was awaiting feedback from the Café Manager on the date/time of the visit to Brookmead year 6, and any end of year activity for the young leaders.

Other Matters:

50/25 DEVOLVED AND AGENCY SERVICES

- It was noted that permissions had been granted to Pitstone Church committee for vinyl banners for the theatre productions in June and August and to Beacon Choir for their opera event in June.
- It was noted that Aldbury May Fair had been asked to remove their banner from outside pavilion as the event has now passed & to request that they seek permission in future years.
- It was noted that Pitstone Green Museum had been contacted to let them know their sign has been down for a while & requested they seek permission ahead of each year's events so we can issue them with any updated Terms & Conditions from Buckinghamshire Council annually.
- It was noted that a report had been received of an overgrown hedge on the left as you enter The Green. Ownership of the land being investigated with Buckinghamshire Council before can progress.
- 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. A meeting has been arranged for 20/5/25.

51/25 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 investigate initial designs, timescales and any updated costs. Works to be funded by Nicholas King Homes S106 payment.

2. Local Wildlife Site Parking

- Meeting arranged with Bidwells, who are acting on behalf of Taylor Wimpey, for week commencing 19/5/25, 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.
- Consideration to be given in due course to scheduling a public meeting.

3. Children's Anti-Speeding Poster Competition

It was noted that the Thames Valley Police visit and assembly at Brookmead school had been well received. Competition live from 21/4/25 to 23/5/25.

52/25 ALLOTMENTS

Water Tap Installation

The National Trust (NT) will respond in due course, once consideration has been given to the latest information supplied by Pitstone Allotment Association.

53/25 OTHER MATTERS

1. Croudace Street Lighting

It was noted that payment had now been received from Croudace for the extra 2 columns. UMS Certificate and supply can now be finalised and revised data submitted to Tomato.

2. Christmas Lighting

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the quotation submitted by Lamps & Tubes Illuminations to supply 25 sets at 10m per set x 100 LED bright white, static, 24 volt extendable lights with transformer, for the Recreation Ground tree as the previous string lights had now reached the end of their life.

Cost £1,208 + VAT.

It was **RESOLVED** to write-off the disposal of the old Recreation Ground Christmas lighting. Current value on the Asset Register £4,022.

3. Defibrillator Project

- It was noted that the Parish Council was still waiting for permission from Buckinghamshire Council Asset Management regarding the Windsor Road location.
- It was **RESOLVED** to progress with the structural testing of two lamp post columns, in the meantime.
- It was **RESOLVED** to investigate possible sources of grant funding, for 3 units and cabinets, in the meantime.

4. Moving to .Gov

The new requirements stipulated in the Practitioners Guide and Audit Regulations were noted. Cllr Nicholls provided an update. Further details to be provided.

5. Dog Bin Emptying Contract

It was noted that Buckinghamshire Council had apologised for not having issued any renewal terms as yet. Carry forward to the next meeting.

6. Revaluation of Assets for Insurance Purposes

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the quotation of £480 + VAT from Beacon Surveying Services to provide an updated re-build valuation of Pitstone Pavilion for insurance purposes.

54/25 POLICIES

1. Policy on the Use of the Recreation Ground

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the annual review of the Policy on the Use of the Recreation Ground/Village Green, and the Chairman was duly authorised to sign on behalf of the council.

It was further **RESOLVED** to display laminated copies around the Recreation Ground.

2. Guide to Information Available

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the updated Guide to Information Available, and the Chairman was duly authorised to sign on behalf of the council.

55/25 CONSULTATIONS

It was **RESOLVED** that no response was required to the Chilterns National Landscape public consultation on the draft Chilterns Nature Recovery Plan.

56/25 EVENTS

• Party in the Park 12/7/25

- No further feedback from the committee for consideration at the meeting. Invoice paid.
- It was noted that the payment date for the remaining 50% of the Eclipse invoice re the stage was the end of June.

• WindmillFest 27/7/25

- No further feedback for consideration at the meeting. Applicant applying for TEN and will provide this and site layout in due course.
- Invoice issued.

- HouseMouse 17/5/25 and Comedy Night 16/5/25
- No matters received from the event committee for consideration.

57/25 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 the supplier of benches in the park and the planning application process.
- It was noted that residents of The Pightle had raised concern regarding ongoing problems with Anglian Water sewage drainage in the road. The Parish Council had made initial enquiries with both Anglian Water and Bucks Council. It was **RESOLVED** that the Parish Council would seek to escalate higher within Anglian Water.
- It was noted that no further matters had been raised by residents for inclusion on the next agenda.

Financial Matters:

58/25 ANNUAL REVIEW OF FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

1. Direct debit and standing order arrangements

It was noted that the Parish Council does not operate any Standing Orders.

It was **RESOLVED** to continue with Direct Debits for:

- utility provision (water (at allotments and pavilion), gas, electric and unmetered electricity)
- financial services (NEST, credit card and bank charges)
- software subscriptions (Sage accounting and payroll, Microsoft Office 365, 1password)
- telephony (Sipgate for clerk & assistant; Clicksend for car scheme, EE for Facilities Manager)
- refuse & recycling bin hire & emptying at the pavilion site.
- The Information Commissioners Office.

2. Payments arising as a result of continuing contract, statutory duty or obligation

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the ongoing use of the contracts and duties listed below:

- employment matters eg staff contracts/payments, PAYE/NI, NEST
- HMRC VAT
- part-spent contracts for utilities and telephony.
- rolling contract with Lamps & Tubes Illuminations for street light maintenance
- rolling contract with Groom Grounds Maintenance for ground keeping at pavilion
- part-spent contract with Groom Grounds Maintenance re ground keeping at village green.
- part-spent contract with Ross Lawry Agricultural Services to fulfil devolved services.
- rolling agreement with R Haynes re bus shelter cleaning
- use of Hartgraph to print PPP
- part-spent contract with D Rollins to supply Youth Café Management services.
- part-spent contract with Buckinghamshire Council re dog bin emptying.
- use of Horwood & James solicitors
- use of R Leonard Ltd for ad-hoc remedial works around parish
- long term agreement re Came & Co insurance broker.
- long term agreement with IAC re internal audit
- part-spent contract with Tanswell Technology for IT services at the pavilion.
- part-spent contract with Buckinghamshire Council for bin hire and emptying at the pavilion.
- maintenance contracts with ACE re technology and with Ambivent re heating/water at pavilion

- ongoing Software subscriptions

3. Bank account and credit cards with associated mandates/terms

It was noted that the Council holds the following bank accounts:

- Unity Trust current account. Main account. Electronic banking with the clerk raising payments and any two councillors individually approving online before payment released. Cheques optional, signed by two councillors. Current signatories: Cllrs Nicholls, Blunt, Crutchfield and Weber.
- Nat West current account. NatWest maintain at £10 balance. Cheques only. At least 2 councillors must sign cheque. Current signatories: Cllrs Nicholls, Blunt and Saintey.
- Nat West reserve account. Linked to Nat West current account. Transfers can only be made into the NatWest current account where normal signatory rules apply to associated cheques. Clerk and Chairman to both sign any transfer requests. Holds reserves and accruals.
- Nat West S106 reserve account. Transfers can only be made into the NatWest current account where normal signatory rules apply to associated cheques. Clerk and Chairman to both sign any transfer requests. Holds S106 maintenance funds for Hever Close play area only.
- CCLA PSDF: Two authorised signatories must sign transactions to transfer funds to Unity account. Main contact (also signatory for transfers): Parish Clerk (L Eagling) Current authorised signatories: D Nicholls, J Hawkins and K Weber.

It was noted that the Council holds the following credit card:

- Lloyds Bank multi-payment card through Unity Trust Bank. Direct debit in place to clear full balance at end of each month. Only the clerk to hold a card. Card to only be utilised for purchases where no invoice can be issued eg online shopping for refuse sacks or Amazon.

It was noted that the Council currently holds no long-term investments or bonds.

It was **RESOLVED** that no amendments were required to any of the above and the Chairman was duly authorised to sign the bank mandate review on behalf of the council.

4. BACS & confirm bacs/cheque signatory requirements

It was noted that all payments are enacted by BACS whenever possible, with the Clerk only permitted to raise payments and two other councillors required to authorise online transactions before being processed by Unity. In exceptional circumstances payments can be issued by cheque eg Volunteer of the Year, requiring signature of cheque and counterfoil by 2 members of council. It was **RESOLVED** that no changes were required to this procedure.

5. General Power of Competence

It was **RESOLVED** that the parish council meets the eligibility criteria set out in the Parish Council's (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order of 2012, namely:

- That the clerk holds the necessary CILCA qualification including the new Section 7 of GPC and
- That at least two thirds of the councillors were elected at the last ordinary election in May 2025.

It was therefore **RESOLVED** to adopt the General Power of Competence (Local Government Act 2011 S8) and use this as 'the power of first resort'. It was noted that adoption of GPC means that the Parish Council is now unable to utilise S137.

Eligibility for GPC will remain in place until the council's annual meeting after the next ordinary election (2029), when it must re-assess.

6. Parish Basic Allowance Scheme for members

It was **RESOLVED** not to operate an allowance scheme for members during the forthcoming term of office.

7. Chairman's Allowance scheme

It was **RESOLVED** not to operate a chairman's allowance scheme during the forthcoming term of office.

8. Land and Asset Register

It was **RESOLVED** that the year-end asset register presented and approved last month was an accurate record of the councils closing position as of 31/3/25, and of its opening position for 2025/26. The Chairman was duly authorised to sign on behalf of the council.

9. Annual Review of Supplier Banking Details

It was noted that this had been undertaken last month, and approved by council, no further action required this month.

10. Review of investments and year end transfers

The following was noted:

- NatWest Reserve Account for 'S106' funds received from Croudace and Bellway

Closing balance (31/3/25) = £63,448.96

£30,600 received from Croudace to date, with another £3,600 now received and due to be transferred in. £32,640 received from Bellway. £199.94 received in interest from NatWest since the above deposits made. No funds called down from either fund to date.

It was **RESOLVED** that no year-end transfers, or other changes, were required this year.

- Council holds two main accounts for holding of funds prior to requirement, the CCLA PSDF and the NatWest Reserve Account.
- The Financial Services Compensation Scheme covers balances up to £85,000.
- NatWest Reserve Account (accruals etc)

Closing balance (31/3/25) = £25,161.34. Council transferred £39,000 out of this account in September and invested it in the CCLA PSDF as that was generating a higher level of return.

Interest earned during the year = £631.43 (2.5%)

It was **RESOLVED** that no year-end transfers, or other changes, were required this year.

- CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund

Closing balance (31/3/25) = £66,524.41. Council transferred £39,000 into this account in September from the above NatWest account.

Interest earned during the year = £2,078.21 (3%)

It was **RESOLVED** that no year-end transfers, or other changes, were required this year.

59/25 **GENERAL FINANCIAL MATTERS**

1. Donation

It was noted that the Pitstone Over 60's Club had kindly donated £100 to the Parish Council and **RESOLVED** to write and thank them for their generosity.

2. Staff Overtime

It was **RESOLVED** to ratify the staff overtime for the month (35 hours of overtime for the Clerk and 48 hours for the Parish Assistant), approved by the staffing committee and to be included in the May payroll.

3. VAT Return

Details to be provided.

4. Financial Summaries and Expenditure

- The bank reconciliation information and monthly financial summary, as currently available given the early meeting date, 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.

5. Procedures for Month End BACS transfers etc

It was noted that as the May meeting had to take place within 14 days of the election, that some of the financial information was not yet available, eg payroll. It was **RESOLVED** that all normal financial information would be circulated electronically for councillors to consider. Councillors to respond if they wish to raise any concerns. If no response was received the authorised signatories will approve the transactions. All information to be ratified at the June parish council meeting.

6. Internal Controls

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

7. 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, the new Christmas lighting will need to be added, and the old lighting written off.

8. Budget Monitor for 2025-26

To be circulated for approval at the next meeting.

60/25 **AUDIT**

1. Practitioners Guide 2025

- It was **RESOLVED** to note receipt of the updated SAPPP 2025, associated summary of changes including the revised assertions, and the subsequent amendment to clarify that Parish Councils were not required to appoint a Data Protection Officer (DPO).
- The new .gov requirements were noted. Switch being investigated and will be enacted ahead of the next audit.
- The new IT Policy requirement was noted, along with the new assertion 10 relating to digital and data compliance. It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Nicholls would consider the exiting IT Manual for Members vs the template IT Policy and present a recommendation to full council for consideration.

2. Internal Audit by IAC Ltd 2024/25

- It was **RESOLVED** to note receipt of the conclusion of Internal Audit by IAC, and the supply of the signed Internal Audit Report, with no 'non-compliances' identified that would give rise to a negative response on the Annual Internal Audit Report.
- It was **RESOLVED** to note receipt of the Explanation of 'Not Covered' items from IAC.
- It was **RESOLVED** to note that no further observations were raised by IAC.

3. External Audit by PKF Littlejohn 2024/25

- a. It was **RESOLVED** to re-approve the closing bank reconciliation for the Year Ending 31/3/25, approved at last months full council meeting.
- b. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the May 2025 Review of Effectiveness of Internal Control, which had been updated to reflect the new SAPPP Practitioners Guide requirements and the IAC observations, as well as the latest general updates. See above comments re IT Policy & .gov. It was **RESOLVED** that no further changes were required, and the Chairman was duly authorised to sign on behalf of the council.
- c. Following consideration of the Council's position relating to the stated assertions and criteria, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the Annual Governance Statement 2024/25 (Section 1 of AGAR) and the Chair and Clerk were both duly authorised to sign on behalf of the Council.
- d. The Accounting Statement, signed by the Clerk/RFO before presentation, was considered. Following consideration, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the Accounting Statement 2024/25 (Section 2 of AGAR, signed by the RFO) and the Chair was duly authorised to sign on behalf of the council.
- e. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Explanation of Variances for the Year Ending 31/3/25 and the Chair was duly authorised to initial on behalf of the council.
- f. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Reconciliation between boxes 7 and 8 arising as a result of Income & Expenditure accounting and the Chair was duly authorised to initial on behalf of the council.

- g. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the additional papers to be submitted to the external auditor arising from the Intermediate Review requirements, namely:
- The 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 as no corrective actions were previously raised.
4. Public Rights
- It was **RESOLVED** to approve the period of public rights and publication of unaudited accounts utilising the recommended period of Tuesday 3 June – Monday 14 July 2025. To comply with the Regulations and IACs comments, the Parish Council must only publish the notice 1 day prior to the period ie Monday 2 June, and not give additional notice. It was noted that the Notice must appear on the front page of the website.
5. Descriptive Report for 2024/25
- The draft descriptive annual report and accounts for publication to residents in the next PPP had been circulated. Councillors to feedback any comments ahead of the next meeting.

Reports & Other:

61/25 REPORTS

- It was noted that no new street light issues had been reported this month.
- It was noted that the broken glass in the RTI panel of the Marsworth Road bus shelter had been reported to BC Passenger Transport for resolution.
- Cllr Mrs Nash provided feedback from the site visit to Brookmead School.
- No other reports were presented.

62/25 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 26 June 2025.

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

- Williamson Trust/Towns Land Trust to notify if any trustees need to step down/re-volunteer for next four years.
- Approval of street light structural testing in July for those previously identified as requiring a 3-year retest. 15 columns due for retest, £1215 + VAT.
- Insurance renewal.
- Parish Assistant investigating potential noticeboard renovation required this year and will get quotes from Abode/James Cato.
- Annual review of Equal Opportunities Policy.
- Annual review of mVAS procedures manual and risk assessment.
- PPP submissions.
- Consider if wish to increase the youth café entrance fee for the forthcoming year.
- Full council annual fire evacuation drill.
- No other agenda items were requested.

3. Date and Time of Annual Assembly

It was noted that the Annual Assembly was due to be held on 29/5/25 at 7.30pm. It was determined that no further actions were required.

4. Reminders and Forthcoming Events

The following reminders & events were noted:

- Parish Council meetings: 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: 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: 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).
- BC Planning Forum 26/6/25

63/25 CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

There being no further business to transact, the Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 21.45.

Signed

Date:

Chairman