

Bugbrooke Parish Council

Agenda & Meeting Minutes

Monthly Meeting of the Full Council

Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the Full Parish Council held on Monday 9th December 2024 at 7.30pm in Bugbrooke Community Centre.

PRESENT

Councillor Philip Bignell

Councillor Mark Copp

Councillor Brian Curtis

Councillor David Harries, BEM

Councillor Des Morris

Councillor Will Marriott

Councillor Colin Russell

Councillor Graham Skinner

Councillor Catherine Parry

Councillor Clare Slater

Councillor Ian Gordon

Councillor Jane Wood (she/her)

IN ATTENDANCE

11 Members of the Public

Nicola Palmer – Clerk

APOLOGIES & ABSENT

Apologies were accepted from:	Reason:
Councillor John Curtis, BEM	Personal
Councillor Paul Henson	
Absent	

Bugbrooke Parish Council

Agenda & Meeting Minutes

PC/24/12/255 TO RECEIVE AND ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received and these were accepted as listed above.

PC/24/12/256 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN RESPECT OF MATTERS ON THE AGENDA

No.

PC/24/12/257 TO CONSIDER WHETHER REGISTER OF INTERESTS REQUIRES UPDATING

None.

PC/24/12/258 TO SIGN AND APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11th NOVEMBER 2024

The minutes had been circulated in advance of the meeting and the chairman asked the parish councillors if they were happy that they be signed as a true account. **All were in favour.**

PC/24/12/259 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Councillor Adam Brown, Leader of West Northants Council and Bugbrooke Ward Councillor was in attendance to hear the concerns of the residents, provide responses and updates on initial investigations where possible and develop action points.

There were 10 members of the public present. The chairman opened the meeting by expressing empathy to those affected by the unexpected flooding on Sunday, November 24th. He highlighted the parish council's ongoing efforts to understand and mitigate the impact of the flooding, empathising with residents facing its aftermath. The chairman affirmed the council's commitment to securing answers about the cause of the flooding and invited residents to share their experiences and concerns.

Residents' Feedback on the Flooding Incident:

1. Delayed Warnings:

One resident reported alerting the Environment Agency (EA) hours before warnings were issued. It took 10 minutes for the EA to confirm that the brook was their responsibility on this call and despite residents contact with EA, houses were flooded before any formal flood warnings were issued. Why were flood warnings not issued sooner?

Action Point: Councillor Adam Brown to request a transcript of the Environment Agency's response following this alert and clarify their actions to mitigate the flooding.

2. Proposed Preventative Actions:

- Residents called for regular dredging of the brook, the once-a-year hand cut is not enough.
- Clearing of drains to reduce the risk of blockages.
- Assurance of funding from West Northants Council to implement flood defences in Bugbrooke.

Bugbrooke Parish Council

Agenda & Meeting Minutes

Action Point: Development of the Community Resilience Plan with additional Flood Wardens to report when action is needed. Ensure the Environment Agency dredge the brook fully resorting it to its previous width.

3. Insurance and Property Values:

- Residents expressed concerns about insurers either refusing flood coverage or demanding costly private flood defences.
- Property devaluation and potential difficulties in selling homes without comprehensive flood reports.

Action Point: Councillor Adam Brown to ensure each affected home receives an individual Section 19 report outlining the likely causes of flooding and recommended preparations for the future.

4. Analysis of the Flooding:

- Residents noted the flooding on November 24th differed from past events, with rapid onset and drainage.
- Previous rainfall in September was heavier, suggesting the cause was not solely due to saturated ground.
- Questions arose about operational decisions, including whether flood gates at Towcester or sluice gates at Heygates Mill contributed to the event or if rural areas were sacrificed to save areas in Northampton.

Action Point: Councillor Adam Brown to organise a meeting with the Environment Agency, Highways, and West Northants Council to analyse the unique circumstances of this flooding incident to take place at 4pm as soon as possible in January. The Environment Agency to be requested by Adam Brown to provide answers as to what was different in September and November with regard to the amount of rain.

5. Other Concerns and questions expressed during open discussions:

- WNC/Environment Agency/AWA – Who is responsible for what? Do they talk to each other? Who co-ordinates/leads the emergency plan for flooding? Do they have details of local contacts & facilities?
- Why did areas of Bugbrooke flood that had never flooded before, even during heavier and longer periods of rainfall in the past?
- Why did the flood waters rise and fall so quickly?
- The amount of runoff from housing development was cited as a potential contributor due to inadequate soakaways and increased runoff from paved areas.
- Water was running from Peace Hill to West End in a manner that did not happen before the development at The Glebe. Is enough done at the planning stage to deal with surface water for such developments, particularly in known flood plains?
- Are there enough drains in the roads for surface water to go down?
- AWA were seen at a drain in Church Lane following which local properties suffered a back surge through their toilets – Coincidence or not?

Bugbrooke Parish Council

Agenda & Meeting Minutes

- A call was made for greater accountability at regional and national levels for chronic underinvestment in flood defences and policies allowing building of flood plains.
- Residents urged West Northants Council to advocate for improved flood management and increased investment at the national level.
- Flood gates procedures were questioned in light of the experience in Towcester with the two/three-hour delay which was deemed to be unacceptable and a possible contributable factor for the flooding in Bugbrooke. Who, how, where and when are flood gates actions in the event of flooding?
- Residents stressed the financial and emotional toll of the flooding, noting that it felt exacerbated by management failures rather than natural causes alone. They called for an inquiry/review of all procedures and processes with clear transparency, accountability, and actionable measures to prevent future flooding from West Northants Council and the Environment Agency.

The Chairman assured residents that their concerns would be addressed and reiterated the council's commitment to supporting the community. The clerk spoke of the work the parish council had been doing in the background to help residents. A brief update of the new Community Resilience Plan was shared and the Trigger and Action Points for each stage. The clerk had also produced the start of a questionnaire to call for volunteers, skills and resources available in the village. The parish council will be instrumental in pulling the plan together with the help of the community who will also take ownership of the plan and its execution. It was agreed that this would not be progressed further until after the meeting with the responsible agencies.

PC/24/12/260

UNITARY COUNCILLOR REPORT

Unitary Leader Adam Brown gave a brief update. The council are working towards build a strategic report from all the agencies to assist going forward with increasing extreme weather and WNC are continuing to push in parliament for further funding for flood defences.

Councillor Brown confirmed that Spencer Close did not have the width to allow vehicle access, it is not 3m, the parish council is pushing for an alternative solution, making it private access or priority to oncoming traffic and fighting against the ruling. However, there appears that the only solution being offered is that Grand union have said that if living there is no longer tenable that residents could be relocated. The parish council do not agree with this statement, and it is extremely disappointing. The clerk showed images of where a potential light could be positioned. This has not been progressed as it positioning could further restrict access, so this issue needs to be finalised first.

West Northants Council as looking at a 4.99% increase in precept.

Bugbrooke Parish Council

Agenda & Meeting Minutes

Councillors raised the point that there was a desperate need for a Secondary School with all the new houses that are being built in the surrounding area, money needs to be put aside for this.

PC/24/12/262 REPORTS ON ISSUES PREVIOUSLY RAISED

The clerk gave a brief update. A response from Adam Brown regarding Royal Mail and the delays to the postal service had been received it cited operational changes at Crow Lane had been blamed for the delays. The postal service was recruiting more posties and anyone locally looking for employment were encouraged to apply.

Harpole Parish Council had discussed the idea of sharing the PCSO with Bugbrooke and Nether Heyford and had requested further information from the Police to be discussed early next year.

POLICE MATTERS

PC/24/12/263 PCSO REPORT

A report from the PCSO was circulated before the meeting and councillors confirmed they had seen it.

PC/24/12/264 PLANNING

- a. 2024/5255/FULL - 5 Moores Close Bugbrooke NN7 3PN - Single storey front extension, first floor side extension, part garage conversion and external material changes - **No objections**
- b. 2024/5379/FULL - Bugbrooke Bowls Club Bugbrooke- Erection of a permanent timber gazebo. Location Bugbrooke Bowls Club Bugbrooke - **No objections**
- c. 2024/5566/FULL - 77 Pilgrims Lane, Bugbrooke, NN7 3PJ- Extension to front of garage and first floor extension to existing garage linked to main house – **No objections**
- d. 2024/5571/FULL - 17 Badgers Close, Bugbrooke, NN7 3BA - New rear Extension to replace existing conservatory – **No objections**
- e. 2024/5584/FULL - Field House, 67 Pilgrims Lane, Bugbrooke, NN7 3PJ- Construction of single and two storey extensions to side and rear of the house, with replacement detached garage in garden – **No objections**

FINANCIAL MATTERS

PC/24/12/265 A financial statement and reconciliation for the month ending 30th November has been circulated with the agenda.

RESOLUTION – It was resolved that accounts below be accepted.

Proposed – Councillor Colin Russell

Seconded – Councillor Graham Skinner

All in favour.

	Income	Receipts	Totals
--	--------	----------	--------

Bugbrooke Parish Council

Agenda & Meeting Minutes

Current Account as at 31.10.24			£103,417.49
Current Account (Ring fenced)			£56,042.50
CCLA Deposit Fund as at 31.10.24			£50,000.00
Total Available			£209,459.99
Less November Payments		£13,265.26	
Less unrepresented payments			
Deposits (CCLA Interest)	£209.80		
Other income	£0.00		
HMRC VAT reclaim	£0.00		
Deposits (Ring Fenced Interest)	£60.11		
Bank Statement			£90,362.03
Total Funds at 30.11.24			£196,464.64

PC/24/12/266 Accounts for Payment

Moneys must be paid out in only in pursuance of statutory powers vested in the parish council. Details of the powers which authorise the payments are shown in the Payment Schedule.

RESOLUTION – It was resolved that payments listed above be paid.

Proposed – Councillor Coin Russell

Seconded – Councillor Mark Copp

All in favour.

Direct Debits						
Date	Payee	Invoice	Statutory Power	Description	V.A.T	Total
04.12.2024	Southern Electric	1559685	HA 1980	Street Lighting – November 2024	£	£
04.12.2024	Siemens Financial Services	001/25/0067757	LGA 1972 s111	Lease on Printer/Photocopier	£40.00	£240.00
04.12.2024	Onecom	7337178	LGA 1972 s111	November Parish Office Telephone and Broadband	£6.40	£38.40

Bugbrooke Parish Council

Agenda & Meeting Minutes

Transfers						
Date	Payee		Statutory Power	Description	V.A.T.	Total
04.12.2024	DNH Contracts	2700	Litter Act 1983 S5,6	Emptying of dog and litter bins for October	£88.20	£529.20
04.12.2024	BSACCA		LGA 1972 s111	Parish Office Rent and Room Hire for December		
04.12.2024	ALCC		LGA 1972 s111	Renewal of membership		£50.00
04.12.2024	Scribe	7401	LGA 1972 s111	Scribe Accounts Renewal		£561.60
04.12.2024	ESX CLEAN			Bus Shelter Cleaning		£119.00
04.12.2024	HMRC		LGA 1972 S112	November Tax and NI		£738.55
04.12.2024	Mrs N Palmer		LGA 1972 S112	November Salary + Backpay from industry pay increase		£2177.82
04.12.2024	Northampton shire Pension Fund	42130002 2464	LGA 1972 S112	LGPS contribution		£844.76
04.12.2024	Burleys	14015831	Open Spaces Act 1906	Christmas Trees for Lamp posts	£100	£600.00
04.12.2024	Mrs N Palmer		LGA 1972 s111	Expenses		£9.60
04.01.2.2024	Howkins & Harrison	80332	Open Spaces Act 1906	Marketing Report for Bugbrooke Charity Meadow for Land Registry	£50.00	£300.00
04.12.2024	Bugbrooke Chapel	013		Community Living Room Heating		£225.00
04.12.2024	LINK		LGA 1972 s111	Adverts 2025		£90.00
04.12.2024	Bank Charges		LGA 1972 s111	November Bank Charges		£8.40
Ratification						
12.11.2024	WAVE	14260692		Water for the Allotments		£103.59
	Arnold Thomson			Instruction to act on parish council behalf payment		£50.00
	Arnold Thomson			Searches		£515.70
	Planning Portal			Planning application - Bowls Club		£216.50
12.11.2024	R&G	121246	Open Spaces Act 1906	Pitch Maintenance		£2323.43

Bugbrooke Parish Council

Agenda & Meeting Minutes

The clerk had attached a briefing note, and the budget had been discussed at the November meeting, councillors were happy with the figures presented and agreed they were ready to approve. They had also reviewed the breakdown of the Earmark Reserves.

RESOLUTION – Councillors had the opportunity to review the final budget, and it was resolved to accept the figures presented. The Budget was set at £144,915.00

Proposed: Councillor Catherine Parry

Seconded: Councillor David Harries

All in favour.

PC/24/12/268 FULL COUNCIL APPROVAL OF THE 2025/2026 PRECEPT

Councillors had approved the final budget for 2025/2026, and it was formally resolved by councillors. The budget had been set at £144,915.00.

The precept required is: £144,915.00, this is an increase of 17.01% on last year. An annual increase of £14.92 to households in a Band D property.

RESOLUTION – It was proposed that the 2023/2024 precept demand be set at £144,915.00 and that the clerk submit this to WNC.

Proposed – Councillor Graham Skinner

Seconded – Councillor Mark Copp

All in favour.

PC/24/12/269 FLOODING & PRAISE OF COMMUNITY SPIRIT IN BUGBROOKE

These items had predominately been covered at the start of the meeting, but the clerk commented that on Sunday 24th November, Bugbrooke suffered flooding with no advanced warning, and she praised the community spirit that had been shown within the village and how this is exactly how a community should respond in times of need. The parish council were supporting through contact agencies and getting help to Bugbrooke, but the council cannot hand out heaters or ask residents to clear drains but volunteers can do these things and that is what was seen happening in the village. It was noted that although many villagers were happy to take to the keyboard, residents mentioned there were only a few that actually turned out to help in the aftermath.

PC/24/12/270 EMERGENCY PLAN UPDATE/ COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

The clerk has produced a number of documents providing an outline for a Community Resilience Plan, Action Points and a Community Questionnaire to gather information and volunteers. This will be progressed with the community in 2025 following the analysis of what had caused this flood. The resilience plan will cover other scenarios as well as flooding.

Bugbrooke Parish Council

Agenda & Meeting Minutes

PC/24/12/271 GRANT APPLICATIONS

A application had been received at the last minute from the Churchyard Volunteers for a new lawn mower. Councillors were keen to help but requested further information and quotes for the mower so this can be considered again in January.

PC/24/12/272 CAPTAINS CLOSE

The clerk gave an update on the purchase of the land called Captains Close, this was progressing, and it was felt another benefit that the parish council will own the land and that it would not be developed because this had been completely flooded on the 24th November 2024. The clerk was working through questions from the solicitor. The chairman and clerk were to meet at the land to help answer some of the questions and Councillor Catherine Parry agreed to look over the Transfer Deed.

PC/24/12/273 CHARITY MEADOW

There had been a meeting with Alan Kent, who was the sole acting trustee, and all others involved in the process including the solicitor. The clerk had managed to get access to the Charity Commission website with Alan to get the accounts submitted to enable the charity to remain active until the Charity Meadow could be transferred. Councillor Parry had been given further documents that appear to suggest that The Charity Commission is the Custodian Trustee of the land, and this may have an impact on how the registering of the land is progressed. Councillor Catherine Parry has submitted the document to the solicitor for comment.

PC/24/12/274 REMOTE MEETING ATTENDANCE & PROXY VOTING CONSULTATION

Councillors are welcome to comment on the consultation individually but due to the impact it would warrant the council submitting a formal response should also be made. The clerk had attached a briefing note, and councillors asked the clerk to submit comments on the council's behalf.

PC/24/12/275 SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

In October 2024 new legislation was created that goes further in the councils' requirements currently in the Equality Act 2010 to take proactive steps to prevent Sexual Harassment at work. To comply with the requirements the clerk has produced a policy for councillors to adopt once they have reviewed the policy. The policy was attached to the councillor's agenda notes and although it was commented that it only covered employees not the councillors, it conformed with the requirements, and it was agreed it should be adopted immediately.

PC/24/12/276 FATHER CHRISTMAS and CHRISTMAS TREES IN BUGBROOKE

Father Christmas is all set to go, and councillors wished him luck on the 20th December start at 6.15pm and finish around. The clerk was extremely grateful to Plantscape who donated 15 Christmas trees to help to cheer up the village in the aftermath of the flooding. These have been well received.

PC/24/12/277 BUGBROOKE CHAPEL

The Trustees of the Chapel wanted to announce the building known as Bugbrooke Baptist Chapel, High Street, Bugbrooke, was transferred to Baptist Heritage Assets (Bugbrooke) Limited CIO

Bugbrooke Parish Council

Agenda & Meeting Minutes

(registered charity number 1205932) ("CIO"), to be held under the terms of its own objects, namely for the advancement of the Christian faith. The freehold of adjacent property known as The Manse, 35 High Street, Bugbrooke, held by other trustees, was also transferred to the CIO by the same Scheme. It was state is anyone wishes to be considered for trusteeship of the CIO, they should contact the Secretary at bugbrookebaptistheritage@gmail.com.

PC/24/12/268 PARISH MATTERS

A *Monthly Inspection Sheets*

Inspection Sheets had been received from all areas.

B *Hedges/Trees/Fences/Walls -*

C *Footpaths –*

D *Street Lighting* – Chipsey not repaired due to no electric, National Grid needs restore the supply first.

E *Highways and Transport –*

F *BSACCA-*

F *Millennium Green – one bin top*

G *Environmental Group* – The clerk and Councillor Jane Wood had met with the mowing contractor to discuss the strategy for the areas that had been left to grow.

H *Defib* – Councillor Will Marriott had checked the Defib at the surgery.

I *Patient Participation Group*- Looking to put out a newsletter.

PC/24/12/269 ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION ON THE JANUARY AGENDA

Streetlight in Spencer Close.

Donation to Northamptonshire Search and Rescue.

Grant for Mower.

PC/24/12/270 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 13th January 2024 at 7.30pm in the small hall at Bugbrooke Community Centre.

There being no further business the chairman closed the meeting at 9.32.pm.

End of Minutes

CHAIRMAN:.....

DATE:.....