

BALSHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on
Monday 17th February 2025 at 7.30 pm
in Balsham Pavilion (Green Room)

Present: Gordon Fiddy, Nick Coates, Jennie Tipler, Jerry Wade and Lynda Henderson.

Public: 4

Also in attendance: Geoff Harvey, Henry Batchelor

Clerk: Tracy Coston

1. **Apologies for absence:** James Kiddy, Steve Wilcox, Kim Pearson
2. **Councillors are required to review the agenda, and to declare any pecuniary interest in any item:** None
3. **Presentation of Small Warden Scheme – Age Uk: Sarah Lees**

Sarah Lees explained that the Small Warden Scheme covers 7 Parishes, and the new Community Warden Sheree Geoghegan started in January. The Small Warden Service is a bespoke needs giving service with a mixture of telephone calls and home visits. Practical support is given, and the clients are helped to navigate the outside world, whilst living in their own home. SCDC help to fund the scheme, but their funding is being reduced over the next 3 years. At present 4 individuals are using the Small Warden Scheme in Balsham and there is capacity for more users.
The cost is £ 15.00 for an individual and £ 18.00 per couple for 5/6 hrs per month.
The PC agreed to increase their funding for the scheme to £ 1,035.00 from May 2025.
For more information about the scheme please contact Sheree on 07436102865 / wardens@ageukcap.org.uk
4. **Public Participation (15 mins):** None
5. **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 20th January, 2025:** The previously circulated minutes were approved and signed by the Chair.
6. **Report from District and County Councillor:**

County Councillor: Local Government reorganisation has been discussed. Every local authority has been asked to put together a proposal which has to be submitted by the end of March. They cannot cross county lines and have to follow District Council boundaries. CCC are looking to form areas of smaller numbers if the area can make the case for it. What would it mean to PC's? It is thought that PC's will be required to take on more responsibilities.

Water on West Wickham Road: The proposal is to close the road in early May and replace up the piping and resurface. Henry Batchelor will find out how many vehicles have made a claim and let the PC know.

District Councillor: A consultation is open about the 4-day week.
Zero Carbon Grant is going ahead in March/April.
No 23 Mays Ave has flooded and won't be available for rent until April/May when it has dried out.
7. **Matters arising from the minutes:**
 - a) **Refurbishment of the old map board cases on Mays Ave Green and Rosie Green Wood:** Dick Paden has been asked for an update.
 - b) **Bridge at the allotment field:** The PC reported that the bridge needed mending in September to CCC, they didn't correspond with the PC who then had the bridge repaired. Following the bridge repair CCC replaced the whole bridge.
 - c) **Trimming of Leylandii trees in High Street:** The trees were trimmed very poorly by

UK Power Networks. Clerk to contact the owners if they will trim the trees properly if they are the owners.

8. Solar Farm

a) Formulation of a creation of an Alliance of Parish Councils: No further information has been received. Clerk to speak to Simon Chandler.

b) Summaries of the Whatsapp chats KSI: Land use framework has been produced. It shows that the best land should be used for farming, but it doesn't protect against Solar Farms. KSI are organising a campaign on footpaths and nature in the Parish to get people to use the footpaths. Icknield Way and the Fleam Dyke to be promoted.

Statutory consultation: A Parish Alliance will be important. Consultation is due to be out in August time for approximately 6 weeks.

The meeting with the planners should be going ahead in March.

9. Planning:

a) For Discussion: None

b) Decisions

SCDC granted Single storey side/rear extension and replace and enlarge the existing opening for bi-fold doors.

Site address: 17 Queens Close Balsham Cambridgeshire

Reference: 24/04638/HFUL

10. Allotment update

a) Update on vacant allotments: There are 4 full sized allotments, and 5 half sized allotments vacant. An advert will be put in the review.

b) Removal of bamboo: Herts and Cambridgeshire Grounds Maintenance will remove the bamboo at the back of Hay Close.

c) Volunteer group to visit Balsham; The Clerk will organise the materials required to lay a path from Hay Close to the allotments and put mulch underneath the trees.

11. Recreation Ground/Pavilion

a) Solar panel quotations: One quotation has been received, and another quote has been requested from Solarbarn.

b) Quotes for insulation at the pavilion: The Clerk will organise a second quote.

c) TAC Cricket Club: TAC Cricket Club have been accepted by Balsham PC to hire the cricket facilities in Balsham for the 2025 season at a cost of £ 1,300.00.

d) Orchids on the recreation ground: The PC said that if the orchids are marked by concerned members of the public the contractors will try their best to avoid them.

e) Empty grass containers: Clerk to arrange for the grass container to be emptied.

12. Highway Matters:

a) Water issue in West Wickham Road: CCC has confirmed with the PC that the road will be closed in May and works will take place to complete the repairs to the drainage and surface.

b) Condition of School Lane: The condition of the lane is appalling, and the mud still needs clearing by CCC Highways.

13. Correspondence: All emailed.

- 14. Finance:-** Receipts and payments up to 12/02/2025 and any invoices/receipts received up until 17/02/2025 will be considered at the meeting.

a)

Receipts	
Balsham Singers	£ 625.00
Church Youth Club	£ 260.00
Balsham Football	£ 445.00
Bank Interest	£ 1,281.01
Total receipts	£ 2,611.01
Payments (February)	
T Coston Salary £ 1,432.60 (Gross) Tax/NA £ 107.57 Exp: £ 158.20 Pension £ 78.80	£ 1,404.43
M McCall £ 290.25 (Gross) £ 58.20 (Tax) £ 10.00 Ex	£ 242.05
S Housden (Gross £) £ 210.00	£ 210.00
British Gas Lite	£ 236.80
Recycled furniture (bench)	£ 276.60
Herts & Cambs Grounds Maintenance Inv 667	£ 126.00
PKF Littlejohn (Audit)	£ 378.00
HMRC	£ 665.58
Kleen Windows	£ 30.00
Engie Power	£ 247.36
Rob Ellam	£ 348.60
Herts and Cambs Maintenance INV 3689	£ 2,304.00
Robert Ellam	£ 78.60
E & E Plumridge	£ 48.80
JRB Enterprise Ltd	£ 292.80
TOTAL	£ 6,889.62

Bank Balances as at 12/02/2025

Community A/C:	£ 5,679.14
H.I. Account:	£ 110,045.70
3 month notice account (Lloyds)	£ 43,871.51
Total	£ 159,596.35

b) Pay rise for Village Caretaker: The PC agreed to increase the hourly rate for the village caretaker to £ 15.00 per hour. The PC thanked Mike McCall for all his hard work in the village.

- 15. Area Report:** The Clerk to write to the owners of April Cottage and Belcroft 1-3 West Watting Road asking them to cut their hedge from over the footpath.

- 16. Date of Next Meeting:** The next Parish Council meeting will take place on 17th March, 2025 in Balsham Pavilion.

The meeting ended at 10pm.

Signed

Dated