

CARLTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting held at Saint Andrew's Community Hub, Main Street, Carlton at 7pm on Wednesday 8th January 2025

Present: S G Tupling (Chairman), R G Arnold, J H Boston, I Sarson, M A Vann (Councillors), M A Cook (Borough Councillor), 1 member of the public, C J Peat (Clerk).

1. Administrative matters

a) Apologies for absence from Councillors

There were none.

b) Declarations of interests (including Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) and requests for dispensations in respect of items on the agenda

There were none.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 13th November 2024

It was resolved that the minutes be confirmed and they were signed by the Chairman.

3. Reports, questions and comments from the following

a) Parish Councillors

Cllrs expressed concern about the continued obstruction of footways by parked vehicles, and some reported being verbally abused when approaching offending drivers. **It was resolved** that the Local Beat Team be asked to take action against offenders when they encountered obstructive parking on their patrols in the village.

Cllr Boston reminded the meeting of informal discussions about the desirability of installing a defibrillator at the eastern end of the village. **It was resolved** that the Clerk investigate potential sites and report to the next meeting.

Cllr Arnold reported that a gully outside 17 Main St needed repair. **It was resolved** that this be reported to LCC Highways.

Cllr Vann expressed satisfaction with the design and operation of the church lamp.

b) Leicestershire County Council

Cllr B Harrison-Rushton **was thanked** for advice on current LCC initiatives.

c) Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

Cllr M A Cook **was thanked** for a report on local matters. This report included a concern that the Park Run held on 1/1 had been well attended in spite of atrocious weather, and that this was likely to give rise to path erosion. Cllr Arnold agreed that Park Runs appeared to be damaging the surface of the paths and allowing rainwater to wash them away. **It was resolved** that LCC Country Parks be advised of these concerns, with a copy to Market Bosworth PC.

d) Carlton Neighbourhood Watch group

Ms R Yule reported that there had been no reported crimes in Carlton in October 2024.

e) Parish Clerk

Spring Clean Litter Pick – would begin at 10 am on Sunday 16th March.

Main St – will be closed on 14/3 between numbers 34 and 70 to allow Severn Trent Water to replace a manhole.

Barton/Bosworth Rds – the Road Safety Unit had reported that surveys had been carried out between 25/10 and 5/11. On Barton Rd 33% of vehicles were found to be exceeding the National Police Chief Council enforcement threshold of 10% + 2 mph, but on Bosworth Rd the figure was over 80%. Given this poor compliance the results had been highlighted to the Police Traffic Management Dept and LCC (p.1956/3e refers).

Main St – the damaged footway outside 34 Main St was repaired on 11/12 (p.1951/3a refers).

Church lamp – the new lamp was installed above the gate on 6/12 (p.1956/3e refers).

Christmas lights switch-on – had been attended by about 50 people on a very wet evening (p.1924/3a refers). CGG volunteers **were thanked** for putting up and taking down the lights, the FoSACC for catering, and Carlton's Rock Choir for performance. Donations of £246 had been made, split 50/50 between the FoSACC and the Harley Staples Cancer Trust. **It was resolved** that the 2025 switch-on would be held at 6pm on 14th December.

Churchyard wall – had been monitored on 20/11: the bulge had shown the same deviation as the maximum observed in November 2023.

Kissing gate – the grant of £400 had been received from the H&BBC Community Equipment grant fund (p.1941/5e refers).

TPA – the Clerk **was thanked** for scrubbing algae and moss from the play equipment (see item 4 below).

Street nameplates – the Clerk **was thanked** for cleaning the street nameplates.

Parishes Forum – the Clerk had represented the PC at a meeting at Thornton on 28/11.

LRALC - Development and Member Support Questionnaire 2024 returned.

H&BBC Peer Review – the Clerk had attended a meeting of the Peer Review Panel on 3/12 and presented an assessment from the point of view of a small rural PC.

MHCLG – had issued a consultation on local authority audit with a closing date of 29/1. **It was resolved** that the Clerk review this document, circulate draft comments if appropriate, and that the Chairman & Clerk be authorised to submit a response.

Rural Conference – would be held at Mythe Barn, Sheepy Magna on 13/3.

A list of digital communications and reports received would be copied to each Councillor, and copies of any files would be forwarded on request. Additional written documentation would be circulated.

f) Members of the public

There were no questions or comments.

4. Annual independent inspection report on the Toddlers Play Area

The annual independent survey had been carried out on 18th November, and the report copied to all Councillors and uploaded to the PC website. The report listed 20 findings, of which 6 did not relate directly to the play area. Of those relating to the play equipment, it was disappointing that equipment supplied by a reputable manufacturer should contain finger traps and openings which did not meet BS EN 1176.

The most significant finding was of rot at ground level in one of the swing supports. Excavation of playbark had revealed significant penetrating rot below the playbark surface, and this had been reported to Wicksteed. The equipment had been installed in 2015 and the timber was covered by a 15-year guarantee.

Other significant matters reported were (i) shard-like pieces of wood in the playbark were being hand-picked and removed as they surfaced; (ii) the equipment had been scrubbed clean of algae and moss; (iii) wear in the swing chains and shackles was being monitored and was not yet significant; (iv) the bird deterrent spikes had worked well, and the instructor at a recent playground inspection course had advised against using cable ties; (v) splits and shakes in the timbers did not affect the fixings, and the manufacturer had advised that these should NOT be filled. Overall the site had a risk assessment score of 12 – Moderate Risk.

The play area is monitored weekly by trained Councillors and the Clerk, and the signed inspection log was examined at the meeting. **It was resolved** that the log and inspection report be noted.

5. Opening of account with the Hinckley & Rugby Building Society

The Hinckley & Rugby Building Society (H&RBS) had introduced new accounts specifically for parish councils, with attractive terms. Details had been copied to Councillors before the meeting. The account would be linked to the HSBC current account, and all withdrawals would be by transfer to this account: cash withdrawals would not be permitted.

It was resolved that a Local Council 45 Day Notice deposit account be opened with the Hinckley & Rugby Building Society; that the account be operated by post and telephone; that the named signatories shall be Stuart George Tupling (Chairman), Ian Sarson (Vice-Chairman), Judith Helen Boston (Councillor) and Christopher John Peat (Clerk & RFO); and that any one of these signatories can instruct a transfer of funds from this account to the Council's HSBC Business Current account.

It was resolved that the Barclays Business Premium account be closed and the funds in it be transferred to the new H&RBS account.

6. Repair of the church gate

It was resolved that Mr Clamp of Snarestone be invited to quote for the repair of the church gate, and that additional quotations not be sought on the grounds that Mr Clamp was the only local contractor with proven expertise in this kind of work and the cost was not likely to exceed £500 (Financial regulations 5.5, 5.6). **It was resolved** that the Chairman & Clerk be authorised to put the works in hand if the quote was less than £500.

7. Purchase of a noticeboard

Three local joiners had been invited to quote for the construction of a noticeboard: one had replied that he was not taking on any new work until September 2025, the other two had not responded (p.1956/5 refers). Details of ready-made noticeboards had been copied to Councillors before Christmas. Greenbarnes was the only company to offer an oak, no doors, 2 panels each 4xA4 design at £906.81 (excluding VAT & delivery). Arien signs had quoted £1779.60 (including delivery, excluding VAT) to make a similar noticeboard with an overhang.

Noticeboards of the same design with two lockable glazed doors were offered by Greenbarnes (£1,363.23), Arien Signs (£1,412.80), and Prestige (£1,890.00); all prices excluding VAT & delivery.

It was resolved that the oak noticeboard without doors and with two 4xA4 size panels be ordered from Greenbarnes at an estimated cost of £906.81 excluding VAT and delivery.

8. Planning matters

a) Planning applications and appeals submitted

There were none.

b) Comments submitted under delegated powers

24/01079/OUT Outline planning application for the erection of up to 126 dwellings (all matters reserved except access). Land north of Station Rd, Mkt Bosworth. PC objected on grounds that that the application site is not allocated for development in the Market Bosworth Neighbourhood Plan, the current H&BBC Local Plan or the Draft H&BBC Local Plan.

2024/TPO/0145/LCC. Primrose Cottage, 11 Barton Road. T2 Yew to fell. PC objected on the grounds that the yew tree (i) is covered by Area A1 of the LCC Carlton Tree Preservation Order 1974, (ii) makes a significant contribution to the street scene and local biodiversity, and (iii) can be expected to grow and become more significant as time passes. PC also objected to the proposal to retain the adjacent holly tree, reduce its height by 3m and shape it on the grounds that this would have an urbanising effect on the street scene. PC would have no objection to the removal of the holly tree and a limited crown raise of the yew tree in order to give more space to the yew tree and reduce the shading to the front of the dwelling. The PC noted that both trees and the TPO were in place long before the current dwelling and path were built.

c) Planning applications and appeals determined

24/00849/FUL Installation of 55 x 530 watt solar panels to existing roof. Bosworth Marina, Carlton Road. Permission granted.

d) To consider planning enforcement matters

There were none.

9. Report 2025-01: Quarterly financial statement October-December 2024

It was resolved that Report 2025-01 be approved.

10. Annual review of risk management

Risks were reviewed with reference to Report 2023-02. The following changes had occurred – (i) the insurance policy had been renewed and the sums for specified items increased through index-linking; (ii) the Power of General Competence had been renewed in May 2024; (iii) Cllr Tupling had attended a Playground Inspection course 9/24; (iv) the independent inspection of the TPA is carried out in Nov/Dec; (v) Pensions review was completed 3/24; (vi) the next election would be in May 2027; (vii) Financial regulations were reviewed 7/24; (viii) Cemetery fees were reviewed 7/23; (ix) Emergency plan was reviewed 7/23- but had no

material impact on risk. **It was noted** that although a savings account was being transferred from Barclays Bank to the Hinckley & Rugby Building Society (H&RBS), withdrawals from the H&RBS account could only be made by transfer to the current HSBC account so there was no change to risk.

It was resolved that risks remained as set out in Report 2023-02 with the changes noted above, and that Report 2023-02 be re-written for consideration at the next finance meeting.

11. Annual review of internal financial controls

Cllr Arnold noted that the wording of item 7 in the annual statement of assurance was inappropriate in that the PC was able to declare itself exempt from external audit, and therefore no matters would be raised from this source.

It was resolved that internal financial controls remain the same as set out in Report 2023-03.

12. Appointment of an internal auditor for the financial year 2025-26

It was resolved that Mrs D Igoe be appointed internal auditor for the financial year 2025-26, and that a fee of £90 be paid on completion of the audit process.

13. Donations, event support and budgets of community groups in 2025-26

a) West Leicestershire Community First Responder Group: donation

It was resolved that a donation of £250 be made to the West Leicestershire Community First Responder Group under s137 of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that this expenditure was in the interests of the inhabitants of the area and that the benefit would be commensurate with the expenditure incurred.

b) Carlton Parochial Church Council: event support

It was resolved that a donation of £50 be made to Carlton Parochial Church Council for use of the church building and electricity for the 2025 Christmas lights switch-on event under s137 of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that this expenditure was in the interests of the inhabitants of the area and that the benefit would be commensurate with the expenditure incurred.

c) Carlton Horticultural Show: event support

It was noted that the 15th show had been held in the Community Hub, but had not been well supported because of bad weather. A balance of £42.73 had been carried forward (p.1951/3e refers). **It was resolved** that a donation of £50 be made to the organisers of the 2025 Carlton Horticultural & Produce Show.

d) Carlton Footpath Group: group budget

It was noted that the Clerk was acting as Chairman of the Group as no volunteer had come forward. The current balance of the Carlton Footpath Group Fund was £57.01. **It was resolved** that the CFG be authorised to draw up to £30 at a time from this fund through the Clerk for repair works, consumables and minor improvements to public rights of way in the area.

e) Carlton Gardening Group: group budget

The current balance of the Carlton Gardening Group Fund was £48.85. **It was resolved** that the budget be increased to £100 and that the CGG be authorised to draw up to £50 at a time through the Clerk for seeds, plants, gardening equipment and consumables for work on public open spaces in the Parish.

f) Carlton News: group budget

The total production costs for 2024-25 were expected to be £177.60. **It was resolved** that the production costs of Carlton News for the 2025-26 financial year be reimbursed from the Parish Amenities Fund up to a limit of £300.

g) Keep Carlton Tidy Group: group budget

The current balance of the Keep Carlton Tidy group Fund was £151.53. **It was resolved** that the KCTG be authorized to draw up to £40 at a time through the Clerk for litter picking equipment and consumables for use in the locality.

h) Fixed Asset Fund: annual contribution

The current balance of the Fixed Asset Fund (FAF) was £7129.90. **It was resolved** that the annual transfer to the FAF remain at £1000 (p.1952/4 refers).

14. Annual subscriptions to associations

It was resolved that membership of the Leicestershire & Rutland Association of Local Councils be renewed for a further year at an estimated total cost of £350.

15. Annual review of salaries, fees, charges and variable direct debits**a) Clerk's salary and definition of costs eligible for reimbursement**

The Clerk left the meeting while this item was discussed.

It was resolved that for the 2025-26 financial year the Clerk's salary be increased to £3,400 paid quarterly in arrears; that an allowance of £20/calendar month be paid quarterly in arrears to cover the PCs share of a broadband subscription (to include all emails and telephone calls); that printed papers be reimbursed at £0.10/page; and that other approved expenses be reimbursed at cost.

b) Cemetery fees and regulations

It was resolved that the Cemetery Regulations remain as adopted on 15th November 2023 (p.1922/6 refers); that the Cemetery Plan remain as adopted on 14th September 2022 (p.1876/4 refers); and the Table of Fees remain as adopted on 12th July 2023 (p.1912/12 refers).

c) Peppercorn rental agreement

It was resolved that the agreement signed on 22nd June 1996 be allowed to stand for a further year (p.473/2a refers).

d) Variable direct debits

It was noted that the PC had three variable direct debits, payable to (i) NPower; (ii) the Information Commissioner's Office; and (iii) HSBC. The amounts paid out in the calendar year 2024 were (i) £110.48 (including VAT); (ii) £35.00; and (iii) £127.00.

16. Report 2024-16 : Preliminary financial estimates for the financial year 2025-26 version 3

The tax base for Carlton in 2024-25 had been 180.9; the PC had precepted H&BBC for £9,200, and the Band D council tax payable to the PC had been £50.86. The total Band D Council Tax payable in Carlton in 2024-25 was £2,155.82. The range in the Borough was £2252.79 to £2154.10. Of the 24 parishes and Hinckley Urban Area in the Borough, two parish councils had a lower council tax than Carlton.

The tax base for 2025-26 would be 175.3. Revised financial estimates for 2025-26 (Report 2024-16) had been copied to Councillors before the meeting (p.1923/8b refers).

Report 2024-16 had been copied to Councillors before the meeting; some of the figures in it were updated and estimates revised.

17. Precept for the financial year 2025-26

It was resolved that H&BBC be precepted for £10,000 for the financial year 2025-26, and that (with the addition of this figure, changes and group budgets minuted above, and consequential minor adjustments), Report 2024-16 be adopted as the budget for 2025-26 and published as Report 2025-02.

18. Next meeting

It was resolved that the next meeting be held at 7pm on Wednesday 12th March 2025 in Saint Andrew's Community Hub, Main Street, Carlton.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.

Signed _____

Date _____

Abbreviations used in these minutes

CDG	Carlton Defibrillator Group
CDJO	Carlton Diamond Jubilee Orchard
CFG	Carlton Footpath Group
CGG	Carlton Gardening Group
FoSACC	Friends of Saint Andrew's Church Carlton
H&BBC	Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council
KCTG	Keep Carlton Tidy Group
LCC	Leicestershire County Council
LRALC	Leicestershire and Rutland Association of Local Councils
MHCLG	Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government
PAF	Parish Amenities Fund
PC	Parish Council
TPA	Toddlers Play Area