

## Watermead Parish Council Meeting

Thursday 18 January 2024 at 7.30pm  
Held at the Village Hall, Watermead

Attendees: Cllr Severn (Chair), Cllr A Schwab , Cllr M Singleton, Cllr A Bond  
BC Cllr Diana Blamires, Noreen Shardlow (Clerk), Michelle Jackson (Assistant Clerk)  
plus 2 members of the public – Graham Severn & Peter Dean

### 23.68 Apologies

Cllr M Morgan, Cllr D Forder, Cllr I Schwab, Cllr A Schwab would be late

### 23.69 Declarations of Interest

To declare any personal or prejudicial interests regarding the agenda – Cllr A Bond on any items relating to Trees, Planning, the Community Board or Buckinghamshire Council.

### 23.70 To Receive Police Report re Protection of Persons & Property

3 x Thefts  
1 x Criminal Damage  
1 x Public Order

Cllr Blamires reported that there would be more cuts in the budget, household recycling centres would be reducing their opening hours and less money would be spent on the weed spraying chemical. Parking charges would be increased. To bring in funds the county offices in Amersham had been sold off, the old county office block in Aylesbury was being considered for selling off or demolishing. £70M has been saved by becoming a unitary authority.

Cllr Bond reported that there was a new co-ordinator for the Community Board, Michelle Parker who was very efficient and it was hoped she would stay on beyond March. Money was available from the Community Board budget. The Clerk to apply for funding for roundels and bunting for the lampposts for D-Day commemoration..

The Clerk

The Clerk to try Fairhive for funding for the hanging baskets

The Clerk

### 23.71 Open Forum for Parishioners at 7.40pm – 8.10pm followed by the Council Meeting

Peter Dean enquired about progress on lighting the Aquaway stretch between Watermead and Cleveland Road. Cllr Bond to discuss with the Clerk to get information.

Cllr Bond

Peter had reported an incident on Fix my Street and received a reply 3 days later stating there wasn't an issue. This had happened to other issues reported on many occasions. Cllrs Blamires/Bond to raise at the next LAT meeting.

Cllr A Schwab arrived.

The Chairman thanked the visitors for their attendance.

### Council Meeting

### 23.72 To agree the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 16 November 2023

The Minutes were agreed and signed as a true record of the meeting.

### 23.73 Planning Matters

1. To update on any Planning Applications submitted – Former football stadium application - The recommendation is that the application be deferred and delegated to the Director of Planning and Environment for APPROVAL subject to the satisfactory completion of a S106 agreement to secure the matters set out in the report, subject to the receipt of no new material representations, and the

conditions as proposed and any other considered appropriate by Officers, or if these are not achieved for the application to be refused.

Drone photographs taken by Richard Crouch of the recent flooding to be submitted by Cllr Severn.

#### **23.74 Neighbourhood Plan**

Following discussion with Sally Chapman our retained Neighbourhood Plan consultant, we now understand that the 'final plan' must be formally signed off and minuted by the Parish Council prior to holding the final phase of Open Day consultations.

The required documents are now in the process of being sent to Sally for review and include the following:

- Amended Draft Neighbourhood Plan
- Consultation Statement and accompanying appendices including all evidence, surveys, results and engagement spreadsheet.
- Policy Maps (Allocation & Green Spaces)

The above documentation will also be sent to all Cllrs and members of the Neighbourhood Planning team, please do read through and any comments can be incorporated to Sally's review. If this can be done as soon as possible (if possible by end of day Monday). We are then very hopeful to review by the end of January and therefore the Parish Council will be able to vote on this at the Feb 2024 meeting. It is therefore, necessary to reschedule the Open Day / Consultations that are currently in the diary in February.

Sally has also recommended that when we have all of this in place we provide Buckinghamshire Council with the opportunity to complete the 'screening' process to ensure that we are fully prepared prior to Regulation 14 confirmation.

Throughout February/March we can start making preparations for the layout of the website, prepare advertising material (a grant application has been submitted) and prepare the letters of consultation for all stakeholders as per schedule Sue has been working on.

Please also note that the significant work regarding 'consultation evidence' has now been completed by Peter & Noreen and Sally will review and incorporate into the NP. Huge thanks again to Peter & Noreen, without their hard work we simply wouldn't be where we are now!

Noreen and I have reviewed the diary and availability of the hall and the best time to schedule the Open Days / Consultations is 2 April through to 7 April (Tues-Sun). This is the school holidays and therefore we can keep the boards and documents out continuously in the hall.

#### **23.75 Finance & Administration**

- 1. The accounts to the end of December 2023 were agreed.**
- 2. The payment schedule for December 2023/January 2024 was agreed**



		Code	Note	2022/2023 Budget	2022/2023 Actual	2023/2024 Budget	2023/2024 Actual	2024/2025 Budget
Admin	Post, Phone, Station'y	post /H		1500.00	1495.81	1500.00	830.59	1500.00
	Office	off /H		660.00	660.00	660.00	385.00	660.00
	Petty Cash (Held in Off	pc /H		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Clerk's salary	clrk /H		17912.00	22373.39	21500.00	12300.50	23000.00
	Clerk's Expenses	exps /H		100.00	38.51	100.00	16.50	100.00
	Ass Clerk	ass /H		3055.00	3525.91	3200.00	1880.27	3500.00
	Legal Fees	law /H		2500.00	6.00	2000.00	4012.00	10000.00
	NI/Tax	ins /H		6500.00	8527.93	7000.00	4373.89	8000.00
	Web Site & Software	web /H		100.00	504.97	300.00	267.25	550.00
	Payroll/Audit	aud /H		1000.00	890.00	1000.00	1050.00	1000.00
12/13 Clerk 2	Insurance	bank /H		2500.00	3376.17	2500.00	0.00	3000.00
Subscriptions	LC Clerks/NBPPC	lc /H		100.00	20.00	100.00	20.00	100.00
	Data Protection	data /H		40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
	SLCC	slcc /H		205.00	222.00	250.00	0.00	250.00
	BALC	balc /H		440.00	355.66	440.00	360.53	400.00
	Community Action	bca /H		50.00	54.17	50.00	54.17	60.00
Councillor	Allowances	all /H		1000.00	834.95	1000.00	106.48	500.00
	sub total			<b>37662.00</b>	<b>42925.47</b>	<b>41640.00</b>	<b>25697.18</b>	<b>52660.00</b>
Land	Repairs & Mainten'	r&m /I		15000.00	11229.87	15000.00	10415.57	12000.00
	Allotments	alot/I		1600.00	3042.67	2000.00	1906.78	1500.00
	Signs	sign /I		250.00	159.07	250.00	0.00	100.00
	Litter	lit /I		7500.00	8020.74	8000.00	6588.48	8000.00
	Grass	grass /I		6000.00	6700.00	8000.00	4300.00	8000.00
	Energy	ener /I		100.00	289.70	200.00	226.26	200.00
	Recreational Facilities	rec /I		0.00	1078.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Dog Bins	dog /I		1200.00	1253.98	1500.00	0.00	1300.00
	ROSPA	rosp /I		250.00	77.00	500.00	337.50	100.00
	sub total			<b>31900.00</b>	<b>31851.03</b>	<b>35450.00</b>	<b>23774.59</b>	<b>31200.00</b>
Village Hall	Refurbish	ref /J		500.00	769.53	500.00	243.98	500.00
	Energy & Services	ener /J		2600.00	2927.52	2600.00	1582.78	2000.00
	Cleaning Materials	clean /J		450.00	453.81	450.00	289.38	500.00
	Council Tax	tax /J		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Manager	mngn /J		7200.00	7200.00	7200.00	4200.00	8000.00
	Insurance	ins /J		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	sub total			<b>10750.00</b>	<b>11350.86</b>	<b>10750.00</b>	<b>6316.14</b>	<b>11000.00</b>
View	Village View	view /K		<b>7000.00</b>	<b>8032.57</b>	<b>8000.00</b>	<b>4111.97</b>	<b>8000.00</b>
Pension	Pensions	pens /L		<b>2600.00</b>	<b>2347.80</b>	<b>3000.00</b>	<b>3011.12</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Other	Gatehouse	conf/P		900.00	883.64	1250.00	614.40	1250.00
	Elections	vote /P		1750.00	946.00	4000.00	0.00	0.00
	Training	trng /P		400.00	38.00	400.00	0.00	400.00
	Health & Safety	h&s /P		200.00	50.00	200.00	50.00	200.00
	GPC Expenditure	oth /P		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	sub total			<b>3250.00</b>	<b>1917.64</b>	<b>5850.00</b>	<b>664.40</b>	<b>1850.00</b>
<b>Routine Expenditure</b>				<b>93162.00</b>	<b>98425.37</b>	<b>104690.00</b>	<b>63575.40</b>	<b>104710.00</b>

		Code	Note	2022/2023 Budget	2022/2023 Actual	2023/2024 Budget	2023/2024 Actual	2024/2025 Budget
Localism/Events inc C. Fair		lark /M		3500.00	3881.34	1500.00	-233.57	250.00
Carol Concert		carol /N		650.00	629.17	750.00	0.00	750.00
Wildflower Mea	Gardening Project	garden/P		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	sub total			<b>4150.00</b>	<b>4510.51</b>	<b>2250.00</b>	<b>-233.57</b>	<b>1000.00</b>
Project Plan	Defibrillator/MVAS/CC	powr/O		300.00	102.00	300.00	0.00	300.00
Project Plan	Large Lake Walkway	mater/O		0.00	101616.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Project Plan Gran	Events Trim Trail Park	plans/O		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Lakeside Dev.	Contribution Piazza	renm/O		2667.00	1351.35	2667.00	1516.67	1600.00
Project Plan	Neighbourhood Plan C	conte/O		0.00	3842.47	0.00	107.78	0.00
	sub total			<b>2967.00</b>	<b>106911.82</b>	<b>2967.00</b>	<b>1624.45</b>	<b>1900.00</b>
	land/O			0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Walkway & Erosi	Loan repay't	loan/O		7424.00	7408.80	7408.00	5815.99	7408.00
Contribution/Donation Fee		fees /O		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	sub total			<b>7424.00</b>	<b>7408.80</b>	<b>7408.00</b>	<b>5815.99</b>	<b>7408.00</b>
<b>Project Expenditure</b>				<b>14541.00</b>	<b>118831.13</b>	<b>12625.00</b>	<b>7206.87</b>	<b>10308.00</b>
<b>VAT EXPENSE</b>				<b>3500.00</b>	<b>23129.00</b>	<b>3500.00</b>	<b>1656.63</b>	<b>3500.00</b>
<b>Income less Expenditure</b>				<b>-1582.56</b>	<b>25986.47</b>	<b>4361.84</b>	<b>-29993.00</b>	<b>-3812.00</b>

#### 4. To agree the Precept for 2024/2025

The Precept for 2024/2025 was agreed.

The tool below will help you set your Council Tax for 2024-25.

Input 1  
Select your Organisation using the drop down Box in the Pink Box  
Parish: Watermead

Input 2  
Enter either your proposed Precept Demand D11 or Band D Council Tax for 2024/25 D13  
Precept: £89,000.00  
Or  
Band D Tax (Estimated): £0.00

Table - Summary of Results				Do not enter data below	
Year	2023-24	2024-25	Difference		
Precept	£85,000.00	£89,000.00	£4,000.00		
Income	£85,000.00	£89,000.00	£4,000.00		
Tax Base	949.04	949.04	0.00		
Band D Tax (Estimated)	£89.56	£93.78	4.71%		

**5. To agree the minutes of the Finance & Precept Meeting held 7<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

The Minutes were agreed and signed as a true record of the meeting.

**6. Amendment to Existing Complaints Policy**

The updated version had been circulated by email and was unanimously agreed.

**7. Community Ownership Fund - Grant Funding**

Levelling up is about a big, ambitious shift in investment and powers to reverse persistent geographic inequalities and unleash opportunity in overlooked, undervalued places right across the United Kingdom.

But, as set out in our Levelling Up White Paper, it is also about safeguarding the small, but much-loved local assets on which we cannot put a price.

Ranging from sporting and cultural institutions to community centres, pubs and high street shops, these assets are the golden thread in our social fabric and shared heritage; enhancing pride, belonging and quality of life.

When they find themselves in peril, we have often seen communities rallying around against the odds to save them.

It's right that we do more to re-stack the odds in their favour.

This is precisely what the £150 million Community Ownership Fund aims to do; to ensure that local people across the UK can support and continue benefiting from treasured local institutions whose future may be in doubt.

Whether it's the pub on the high street that's facing closure, a village shop or a local sports team that might lose its ground, the Fund offers a great opportunity for local groups to take them over and to run them as businesses – by the community, for the community.

We are making good progress on this important work; with almost £50 million announced for 195 projects so far which will benefit community centres, heritage buildings, pubs, and sporting facilities across the whole of the United Kingdom. This is just the start. With 2 more years for more bids and investment to be released, I look forward to seeing many more small but mighty local assets levelling up the places we love and secured for future generations.

As with most grant applications an expression of interest was registered and the following response was received.



Department for Levelling Up,  
Housing & Communities

**Department for Levelling  
Up,  
Housing and Communities**  
4th Floor, Fry Building  
2 Marsham Street  
London SW1P 4DF

[www.gov.uk/dluhc](http://www.gov.uk/dluhc)

Noreen Shardlow  
Watermead Parish Council  
[noreen.shardlow@watermead-  
pc.gov.uk](mailto:noreen.shardlow@watermead-pc.gov.uk)

Email:  
COF@levellingup.gov.uk

Dear Noreen Shardlow,

8<sup>th</sup> January 2024

#### **Outcome of Community Ownership Fund Expression of Interest (EOI)**

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) would like to thank you for expressing your interest in applying to the Community Ownership Fund (COF).

We are pleased to inform you that your EOI application has indicated that you are likely to be eligible for the Fund, and we would like to invite you to submit a full application.

**Your unique reference number is ANON- 1AQE-KQ6P-A.** Please make a note of your unique reference number as you will need to provide this at full application. More information regarding the full application stage can be found in the [COF Prospectus](#).

Support is now available to applicants via the [My Community](#) website which includes an enquiry form as well as a range of helpful documents and webinars.

Before submitting any application to the fund, please consider whether your project could benefit from revenue funding support – this funding does not need to be matched and can be used to assist with first year running costs, such as energy bills and staff. You can only apply for this funding at the main application stage. Further details can be found in the prospectus and the assessment criteria guidance which you can access [here](#).

**The Community Ownership Fund is currently open for full applications.** If the time is right for your project, you can choose to submit your full application during this application window, which closes at **11:59am (midday) on Wednesday 31st January 2024.**

The link to the application page can be found here: <https://frontend.access-funding.levellingup.gov.uk/funding-round/cof/R3W3>. Please note that this link should only be used for your project's own application to the Fund and is not for further sharing.

Thank you again for your interest in the Community Ownership Fund.

Yours sincerely,

*The Community Ownership Fund team*

It was unanimously agreed to proceed with the application of up to £1.75M to buy the piece of land owned by Len Bone.

It was proposed and agreed to have the gatehouse and land behind valued with a view to creating a licence for the crematorium or any other interested party as a potential revenue stream from a disused asset.

## **23.76 Reports, Requests and Recommendations Received**

### **1 To update on Land Registry Matters**

Burgess Salmon had advised that a surveyor needs to be instructed and a minimum consideration of £5k for the land. The survey fee would be a cost of £1750 which was approved.

### **2 To update on Land & Routine Land Work Storm Damage Trees**

Following the recent storm/high winds and the two trees reported, the quotations received are as follows:

Bond Consulting £650 plus VAT  
RTM £850 plus VAT  
Patrick Kernan £1000 plus VAT

Tree at the top end of the lake:

Bond Consulting £750 plus VAT  
RTM £850 plus VAT  
Patrick Kernan £2000 plus VAT

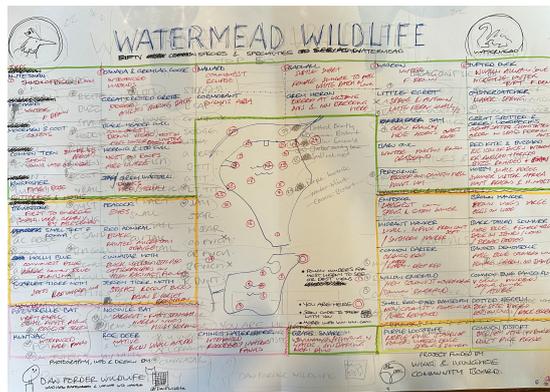
It was proposed and unanimously agreed to proceed with the work on the tree on Sandpiper due to the risk, subject to due diligence and defer the large fallen tree until the next meeting. It was also agreed to make the Crown Estate aware of the work being undertaken as the land owner and request a contribution to the work.

The Clerk

### Small Lake Walkway Bridge

Michael Comley from Maydencroft inspected the bridge Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2023. Ideally if the water levels were lower, he would have a better understanding of what has happened. He has taken a series of images away with him but he may make contact to advise he needs a return visit once the water levels are lower.

**Bird Information Boards** – The application is in progress for the new Wildlife boards, presented at the October 2023 Parish Council Meeting.



Existing Benches Ground Works D. Lucas Walkway Brackets and Walkway Caps.

### Meeting with the Environment Agency - Local Fisheries Officer

Thursday 23rd November Martin Mynott, Don Smith, Steve (the Bailiff) and I met with the Local Fisheries Officer, Laurence Hook. The main reason for Laurence attending was to meet the Watermead Piscatorials as we wanted to seek clarification on the process of dredging the small lake. Laurence was very informative and realistic that the process would not be easy and prepared us for estimated costs. Off the top of his head a figure of a minimum of £250,000 was given. After we all picked ourselves up from the wet grass, Laurence agreed to the following.

He has agreed to prepare a survey of the lake bed so we can get an exact idea of the condition of the small lake bed. This will be carried out by launching a small boat into the lake and rods will be placed sporadically into the bed to measure the depths.

This survey will be carried out at no cost to the Piscatorials and Parish Council.

3

### Large Lake Walkway Project including results and feedback from Poll Phase 2 – The Dip

The Walkway Poll results have been sent via separate email. The document sent also includes the comments/feedback we have received.

I insert below a copy of all the recent communications received (previously sent), between the EA and the PC.

I have been passed your enquiry about installing a bridge in Watermead, Aylesbury. I am not sure if you have seen the following page: [Exempt flood risk activities: environmental permits - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) – if you are able to meet the criteria set out for exemption 5 ‘footbridge over a main river not more than 8m wide from bank to bank’ the process will be fairly simple as it is free and just needs registration to get permission. I can confirm the site is not within 500m of any of the designated areas listed as part of the exemption. Our fisheries and biodiversity team are satisfied that a site visit is not required due to the location and the proposal being considered suitable in principle.

If the exemption is not feasible for what you require, you will need a bespoke permit. More information can be found here: [Flood risk activities: environmental permits - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#). It would be helpful to know what criteria is missed so this can be the focus of the application.

Once you have determined how you wish to proceed, please let me know and I am happy to help with the next steps.

Kind regards,

**Katie Bradford**

Flood and Coastal Risk Management Advisor (Berkshire and Buckinghamshire)

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Dear Katie,

Apologies for my delay in replying to you but I just wanted to seek clarification on a couple of matters with our local specialist before responding to you.

First of all I would like to reconfirm that the works that we are looking to do does not cross the River Thames but is a path that runs alongside it. As mentioned in previous emails to West Thames Consents when the River Thames levels rise they flow into the lake here at Watermead. Over the years the route the water flows is wearing away our natural paths. We have also discussed this problem with our local specialist and also mentioned to our Local Fisheries Officer when he was here on another matter.

As the water has caused damage to our footway, Exemption 28 (FRA 28) has been mentioned, can you advise if this is something that we can consider. We would like to rebuild the pathway back up to its original height (as shown in the hand drawing).

I attach for your benefit some drawings of area and also some potential designs we have received from our engaged specialist. Can I ask if permitted would a boardwalk be allowed or would we have to consider the pipe and natural path option.

Please, if you require any further information or have a problem with the below attachments, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards,

Noreen

\*\*\*

Good afternoon,

Apologies, I misread your initial email. I have run the screening report for FRA 28 and you can apply for the exemption based on the location. Looking at the criteria for the exemption there are not any specifications regarding the design, but the limits on height increase may impact what you can do. However, as there is a label of 100mm on your drawing this may have been considered.

If you feel that you meet the five points, then you can apply for the exemption and you will be informed in 10 days in the exemption has been registered.

I hope that helps but please let me know if you would like more information.

Kind regards,

**Katie Bradford**

Flood and Coastal Risk Management Advisor (Berkshire and Buckinghamshire)

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Dear Katie,

Please no need to apologise and I have one quick final question for you.

Can you please confirm that we are able to restore the path to its former height using this exemption or does the 100mm apply to the level it is now which has significantly lowered due to all the overflow from the River Thames.

Kind regards,

Noreen

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As the criteria isn't prescriptive it is difficult to be certain as the decision is made by another team, but I would assume the 100mm is based on the existing height. You could apply for the exemption based on the original height to see if it is accepted and if it isn't then you can apply for a bespoke permit. If you apply for a bespoke permit, the application should be fairly simple as the works would be very similar to the exemption.

Thanks,

**Katie Bradford**

Flood and Coastal Risk Management Advisor (Berkshire and Buckinghamshire)

**Environment Agency | Partnerships and Strategic Overview Team | Thames**

Red Kite House, Howbery Park, Crowmarsh Gifford, Wallingford, OX10 8BD

The Clerk to continue contact with Michael Comley and the EA for a more definitive response.

Previous Updates

The Parish Council was unable to find a way to provide a bridge or walkway over the dip as the Environment Agency (EA) would not approve our plans due the construction being close to the River Thames. This, in turn, meant that we could not obtain grant funding (a condition of which is to have planning permission).

Having researched alternative means we enlisted the help of a specialist company who provide complete structures to cross over water. The company is Maydencroft. Their advice is that it can be done, but we need to apply to the EA for approval. To gain approval we need to pay an application fee providing technical drawings as well as other information. Total cost of this application is c£5,000. The process will take several months and Maydencroft's experience in other places has been that permission is frequently refused, despite best efforts to submit best design. If permission were to be refused, we would need to re-apply at the cost of another £5,000 since fresh designs would be required.

Throughout the process of attempting to solve this problem the Parish Council has been in touch with the EA to seek their advice and to request a site visit. To date we have been sent their guidance on activities and permits only. Maydencroft confirm that it is highly unlikely that the EA will attend site. The process is very similar to that of the Local Planning Authority who only become involved once an application is made. At the time of this report the EA have made contact, asking for the Grid References of the land. This has been sent and we are currently awaiting a response. The Local Fisheries Officer of the EA is attending a site visit at Watermead to meet with the Piscatorial's. The Clerk would be attending this meeting and will ask him to take a look at the area in question.

**4 To Report on Allotments**

No update.

**5 To update on Village View**

The editorial meeting had taken place on Sunday. The deadline for contribution was 26 January. Distribution would be the last weekend of February.

**6 To report on Village Hall**

No update.

**7 To update on Transport/Highways**

There is a pothole in the turning circle outside a resident's property in the Comfrey which is getting bigger. There was a similar issue outside Peter Dean's property. The Clerk to email details to Cllr Blamires/Cllr Bond for them to raise at the LAT meeting the following week.

**8 Watermead Christmas Fair and Carol Concert**

Both events had been a great success with funds raised being donated to Tiggywinkles. Thanks were given to Graham Severn and Mary Singleton for organising.

**9 Watermead Events Committee – Larks by the Lake**

Larks by the Lake would take place on Sunday 26 May.  
Thanks were given to the Crematorium for their donation of £1200 to cover the licensing costs.

**10 Regatta event update received from Smiles Charity Mick Dorr/Graeme Catten**

The event would take place on 13 July. The Clerk to ensure that the event organisers arrange portaloos on the field.

The Clerk

**23.77 Date of meetings**

**15 February – Cllr Schwab gave his apologies in advance**

21 March, 18 April, 16 May, 20 June, 18 July, 19 September, 17 October, 21 November, 19 December (budget meeting).

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.42pm and thanked people for their attendance.