

Watermead Parish Council Meeting

Thursday 19 January 2023 at 7.30pm

Held at the Village Hall, Watermead

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

22.54 Apologies

None received.

22.55 Declarations of Interest

To declare any personal or prejudicial interests regarding the agenda - Cllr I Schwab on any items relating to Land Registry or Legal, Cllr Bond on any items relating to Planning or the Community Board.

22.56 To Receive Police Report re Protection of Persons & Property

No report received.

Our Local Neighbourhood Policing Team intends to attend Parish Council meetings. We are scheduled for attendance July 2023 meeting.

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

BC Cllr Blamires reported on the Pride of Bucks Awards and asked for any nominations.

The BC Precept increase was expected to be 4.99%.

The Chairman thanked the visitors for their attendance.

Council Meeting

22.58 To agree the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 17 November 2022

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

22.59 Planning Matters

- (1) **To update on any Planning Applications submitted** – no new applications submitted. No update on existing applications.

Cllr Bond reported that the Aylesbury Vale Local Plan is due to be completed in 2025.

		Code	Note	2020/2021 Budget	2020/2021 Actual	2021/2022 Budget	2021/2022 Actual	2022/2023 Budget	2022/2023 Actual
Admin	Post, Phone, Station'y	post /H		1300.00	2178.77	1500.00	859.29	1500.00	836.70
	Office	off /H		660.00	660.00	660.00	669.45	660.00	440.00
	Petty Cash (Held in Office)	pc /H		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Clerk's salary	clrk /H		17510.00	18598.84	17912.00	20220.32	17912.00	14689.39
	Clerk's Expenses	exps /H		100.00	157.24	100.00	22.00	100.00	15.20
	Ass Clerk	ass /H		2987.00	2766.24	3055.00	3135.92	3055.00	2286.78
	Legal Fees	law /H		10000.00	66.00	5000.00	1650.00	2500.00	3.00
	NI/Tax	ins /H		6000.00	6005.60	6500.00	7152.52	6500.00	5677.25
	Web Site & Software	web /H		100.00	476.76	100.00	212.48	100.00	215.82
	Payroll/Audit	aud /H		1000.00	896.70	1000.00	903.23	1000.00	810.00
12/13 Clerk 2	Insurance	bank /H		2150.00	2081.66	2500.00	2504.65	2500.00	221.22
Subscriptions	LC Clerks/NBPPC	lc /H		100.00	50.00	100.00	20.00	100.00	20.00
	Data Protection	data /H		40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
	SLCC	slcc /H		175.00	208.00	205.00	215.00	205.00	0.00
	BALC	balc /H		420.00	432.45	440.00	417.55	440.00	355.66
	Community Action	bca /H		50.00	30.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	54.17
Councillor	Allowances	all /H		1000.00	0.00	1000.00	651.69	1000.00	309.95
	sub total			43592.00	34648.26	40162.00	38724.10	37662.00	25975.14
Land	Repairs & Mainten'	r&m /I		11000.00	23661.15	15000.00	19204.85	15000.00	8081.07
	Allotments	allot/I		1500.00	1563.97	1600.00	3101.38	1600.00	2472.67
	Signs	sign /I		250.00	0.00	250.00	0.00	250.00	0.00
	Litter	lit /I		6000.00	8626.00	7500.00	8085.45	7500.00	6410.35
	Grass	grass /I		6000.00	6500.00	6000.00	6000.00	6000.00	4500.00
	Energy	ener /I		100.00	132.68	100.00	381.66	100.00	165.82
	Recreational Facilities	rec /I		0.00	624.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1078.00
	Dog Bins	dog /I		1200.00	1181.44	1200.00	1217.45	1200.00	0.00
	ROSPA	rospa /I		250.00	75.50	250.00	116.97	250.00	77.00
	sub total			26300.00	42364.74	31900.00	38107.76	31900.00	22784.91
Village Hall	Refurbish	ref /J		500.00	2681.00	500.00	75.00	500.00	9.98
	Energy & Services	ener /J		2600.00	2616.82	2600.00	3476.23	2600.00	1443.38
	Cleaning Materials	clean /J		350.00	489.00	450.00	357.62	450.00	292.28
	Council Tax	tax /J		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Manager	mngn /J		7200.00	7200.00	7200.00	7200.00	7200.00	4800.00
	Insurance	ins /J		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	sub total			10650.00	12986.82	10750.00	11108.85	10750.00	6545.64
View	Village View	view /K		10000.00	8802.13	7000.00	6162.43	7000.00	5119.27
Pension	Pensions	pens /L		2600.00	2315.04	2600.00	2897.76	2600.00	1543.36
Other	Gatehouse	conf/P		900.00	848.32	900.00	913.24	900.00	503.20
	Elections	vote /P		1750.00	0.00	1750.00	2360.75	1750.00	946.00
	Training	trng /P		400.00	41.55	400.00	0.00	400.00	38.00
	Health & Safety	h&s /P		200.00	238.87	200.00	117.70	200.00	50.00
	GPC Expenditure	oth /P		0.00	2195.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	sub total			3250.00	3323.74	3250.00	3391.69	3250.00	1537.20
Routine Expenditure				96392.00	104440.73	95662.00	100392.59	93162.00	63505.52

		Code	Note	2020/2021 Budget	2020/2021 Actual	2021/2022 Budget	2021/2022 Actual	2022/2023 Budget	2022/2023 Actual
Localism/Events	inc C. Fair & Jubilee	lark /M		1000.00	787.72	1000.00	1350.53	3500.00	3881.34
	Carol Concert	carol /N		650.00	390.00	650.00	600.82	650.00	160.00
Wildflower Meado	Gardening Project	garden/P		0.00	400.00	0.00	400.00	0.00	0.00
	sub total			1650.00	1577.72	1650.00	2351.35	4150.00	4041.34
Project Plan	Defibrillator/MVAS/CCTV	powr/O		300.00	107.00	300.00	0.00	300.00	102.00
Project Plan	Large Lake Walkway	mater/O		0.00	0.00	9000.00	4537.04	0.00	101616.00
Project Plan Grant	Events Trim Trail Park	plans/O		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Lakeside Dev.	Contribution Piazza	renm/O		0.00	3929.94	2667.00	6600.00	2667.00	1351.35
Project Plan	Neighbourhood Plan Costs	conte/O		0.00	2024.70	0.00	1777.50	0.00	400.00
	sub total			300.00	5964.14	11967.00	12914.54	2967.00	103469.35
Walkway & Erosion	Loan repay't	loan/O		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Contribution/Donation Fee	fees /O	fees /O		7424.00	7408.80	7424.00	7408.80	7424.00	5815.99
	sub total			7424.00	7408.80	7424.00	7408.80	7424.00	5815.99
Project Expenditure				9374.00	14950.66	21041.00	22674.69	14541.00	113326.68
VAT EXPENSE				3500.00	4536.28	3500.00	3793.73	3500.00	22247.90
Income less Expenditure				-19.56	2128.94	8417.44	6810.49	-1582.56	-6718.33

b) The Precept for 2023/2024 was unanimously approved.

Input 1

Select your Organisation using the drop down Box in the Pink Box

Parish

Input 2

Enter either your proposed Precept Demand D11 or Band D Council Tax for 2023/24 D13

Precept
 Or
 Band D Tax (Estimated)

Table - Summary of Results		Do not enter data below		
Year	2022-23	2023-24	Difference	
Precept	£81,000.00	£85,000.00	£4,000.00	
Income	£81,000.00	£85,000.00	£4,000.00	
Tax Base	941.02	949.04	8.02	
Band D Tax (Estimated)	£86.08	£89.56	4.04%	

c) The minutes of the Finance & Precept Meeting held 15th December 2022 were approved.

4. External Auditor Changes

Notification of external auditor appointment for the 2022-23 financial year for the 5 year period until 2026-27

Watermead Parish Council, Buckinghamshire,

Dear Clerk/RFO/Chairman, Watermead Parish Council,

Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments (SAAA) is the independent, sector led organisation responsible for the appointment and contract management of external auditors to smaller authorities since the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 established new arrangements for the accountability and audit of local public bodies in England. Smaller authorities are those whose gross annual income or expenditure is **less than £6.5 million**.

Under the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015, SAAA is responsible for appointing external auditors to all opted-in smaller authorities, for setting the terms of appointment for limited assurance reviews and for managing the contracts with the appointed audit firms.

This communication is to notify you that SAAA has appointed an external auditor to the authority for the 5-year appointing period from 2022-23 until 2026-2, following a procurement exercise to appoint auditors to each contract area from 1 April 2022.

Your current appointed auditor will conclude any outstanding work on the 2021-22 Annual Governance and Accountability Returns and the new appointed auditor (if changed) will be responsible for the arrangements in respect of the 2022-23 AGAR process onwards.

The contact details of your appointed external auditor and fee scales are shown in the appendix to this letter and can also be found on the SAAA website: www.saaa.co.uk.

The audit firms all have previous experience of conducting limited assurance reviews for smaller authorities and have dedicated support personnel. SAAA will monitor the performance of the appointed firms in providing the audit services in terms of quality and compliance with their statutory terms of appointment.

If your authority has any potential conflict of interest relating to the auditor appointment, for instance if a Councillor or close relation is employed by the appointed auditor, you should advise SAAA immediately.

Exempt authorities

Since 2017-18, authorities where the higher of income or expenditure for the financial year was £25,000 or less and who meet all the qualifying criteria have been able to declare themselves as 'exempt' from a limited assurance review by an external auditor. However, all authorities, even if they declare themselves 'exempt', still need to fully complete, agree and publish an annual return (AGAR).

All authorities require an external auditor appointment even if the authority meets the criteria to qualify for exemption, as a Certificate of Exemption is required to be submitted to the external auditor and a named auditor must be in place to deal with questions or objections from local electors about the accounts.

Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) needs to be completed in accordance with "proper practices" as set out in '*Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England, a Practitioners' Guide*', and then be published in accordance with any applicable Transparency Code.

Annual Governance and Accountability Return forms will be sent out by your appointed auditor electronically at the end of the financial year. It is assumed that

your authority is willing and able to accept documents electronically by e-mail; whilst an authority may request paper copies this may incur an administration charge.

Yours faithfully,

Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments Ltd

Your Authority's Audit Appointment for 2022-23 to 2026-2027

Your appointed auditor will be **PKF Littlejohn LLP**.

5. Communications Received

Communications have been received from Dr E. Rose with regard to the Jubilee Event 2022. Emails had been circulated to Cllrs. It was agreed that the Clerk should respond advising that a factual answer had already been given to the issues raised. The Parish Council had no further comment on this matter.

22.61 Neighbourhood Plan and Open Day

A vote of thanks was given to Peter Dean and Noreen Shardlow who had both undertaken an enormous amount of work on the Neighbourhood Plan.

A handout of the proposed structure for Watermead Draft Neighbourhood Plan had been produced for review. Natural Environment section to be completed by Cllr Forder and the Traffic & Transport section to be completed by Cllr Severn. It was hoped to have a draft by the end of March for review by Sally Chapman.

A bus service to the centre of Berryfields was discussed and would be included in the Traffic & Transport section.

Feedback from the Open Day held on Saturday had been positive. More effort had been put into advertising the event. Feedback had included making better use of the pockets of land with wildlife or adventure trails, educational learning for children being suggested. Felicity Brooks had offered the opportunity to discuss further with the Head of Bierton School. Forest School facilities were also discussed.

Cllr Blamires advised that there may be funding available from the Community Board to update the outdoor gym equipment.

Cllr Forder/
Cllr Morgan
Cllr Severn

Two further Open Days were arranged for Wednesday 15 February from 6pm and Saturday 4 March 12-3pm both to be held in the Village Hall.

Contact to be made by email with businesses and key stakeholders asking if there was anything the PC can do to assist local business. Drawing competition to be organised and judged at the March Open Day. The March date to be included in the Village [View](#).

22.62 Councillors' Reports and Recommendations

1 To update on Land Registry Matters

Cllr I Schwab updated on the land registry. The only outstanding issue is finding out from the Crown's solicitors whether there is any consideration for the land. It was unanimously agreed (Cllr I Schwab abstained from voting) to spend £1750 plus VAT to pay Burgess Salmon for Land Registry and £1200 plus VAT to OJN for the land transfer, subject to the confirmation of the consideration amount.

2 To update on Land & Routine Land Work

Watermead Small Lake Walkway – Currently under water, unable to check the level of the dip. At time of report I am awaiting an update from David Patrick from Environments For People and Contractors.

Works agreed and awaiting completion:

Existing Benches Ground Works D Lucas.

Graffiti

Graffiti had been removed from the gatehouse door and the gates this morning. The Clerk to email photos of the graffiti to Cllr Blamires.

3 To update on Large Lake Walk Project

To update Cllrs on the meeting with Mr Deitz. The boardwalk surface of the new walkway was discussed. The specification of the surface was low slip and chicken wire was not recommended.

4 To Update on Allotments

No update.

5 To Report on Village View

Editorial meeting to be held on Sunday 22 January. Deadline for submissions is 26 January. Summary of proposed structure for Watermead Draft Neighbourhood Plan to be included and dates of the Open Days.

6 To update on Village Hall

To discuss the rear wall and contact with Compton's Property Management.

A request has been made for the scope of works that they have recently carried (as advised by Joseph Irwin. I attach below a copy communication that I was sent of the works needed (copy provided recently by Joseph Irwin).

I refer to your email of 15th July. The problem with rainwater leaking into the nursery accommodation at ground floor level, is the result of the build-up of rainwater levels on the balcony of the flat above the nursery. The asphalt balcony has been overlaid with pre-cast concrete slabs and there would seem to be only one rainwater outlet through the parapet at the side of the balcony. I have lifted a number of slabs with Kieron (contractor for ACC Facilities Management) and we found the build-up of silt on the asphalt, to have got to a point which is obstructing the flow of rainwater from the balcony. At the time of inspection (probably about 12 months ago), the outlet to the balcony was also noted to be partly blocked.

Arrangements need to be put in hand for the balcony to be washed clear and clean. The only way to achieve this would be to lift the precast concrete slabs. This may have to be done in two halves. It would probably not prove to be practical to lift the slabs down to ground level and then lift them back onto the roof. Nor would it be practical to stack the slabs to one side of the balcony as this may overload the building structure. I therefore recommend as follows;

* To arrange for the removal of all leaseholders' furnishings and equipment from the balcony to leave clear open plan space.

* To lift one half of the precast concrete balcony concrete slab and set aside.

* To wash clear and clean the exposed asphalt balcony. Remove silt and weeds, etc.

* To reinstate the concrete slabs upon the cleaned asphalt surface.

* Lift and set aside the remaining concrete slabs and to continue cleaning the balcony roof until the whole area has been fully and properly cleaned. Include for cleaning out of rainwater outlet(s).

* Include for the jet washing and cleaning of the precast concrete slabs individually before re-setting into position.

* Include for all labour and materials required to carry out the works. This should include for two operatives minimum and pressure jet washing equipment. Water supply and electricity to be provided by leaseholder for the flat.

I trust that this summary of information is sufficient for your purposes. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need any further assistance on this matter.

Charles Mallard
Aston Building Surveyors Ltd

The Clerk to continue to chase.

7 To update on Highways & Transport including Devolution Update

Devolved services was being re-evaluated.

Cllr Blamires advised that streetlights would be the top priority of the new contractor when they start in April.

Potholes were also an issue. Cllr Blamires reported that there were more potholes reported in the first 2 weeks of January than the whole of last year due to the ice and rain. Emergencies are being fixed but permanent fixtures are not possible while the poor weather continues. Any works not being carried out to be reported to Cllr Blamires who would escalate.

Graham Severn reported that there were a number of workmen looking at the broken lamp post on the spine road but it had only been rewrapped. Cllr Blamires confirmed this would be looked at when the new contractor took over in April.

8 Christmas Events

Cllr Singleton to include her report in the Village View. Thanks were given to Graham Severn for organising the craft fair, Dot Toler for catering and Cllr Singleton for Name the Bear and the Carol Concert.

There were 5 winners of the best decorated house:

22 Kingfisher, 16 Kestrel Way, 12 Mallard Close, 2 Sandpiper & 2 The Heron.

9 Spring Event (Watermead Events Committee)

An initial approach has been made to the Watermead Events Committee with regard to a Spring Event. They have made contact to confirm that they would like to host a May event. Dates have not yet been discussed nor has the full Committee met. The Parish Council confirmed it was happy for an event to go ahead on either the Coronation or late May Bank Holiday.

Cllr Blamires advised that the Community Board are taking applications for trees and bulbs to celebrate the Coronation.

22.63 Date of meetings

16 February 2023, 16 March 2023, 20 April 2023, 18 May 2023 and APM, 15 June 2023, 20 July 2023, 17 August 2023, 21 September 2023, 19 October 2023, 16 November 2023, 21 December 2023

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.16pm and thanked people for their attendance.