

MINUTES OF KEELE PARISH COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

Held on Monday 8 September 2025 at 7.00pm at Keele Village Hall

Attendees: Parish Councillors: Mr G Bibby (Chair, GB), Ms S Hughes (SH), Ms M Downing (MD), Mr C Ashton (CA), Mr A Rowe (AR), Mr T Arnold (TA), Ms W Naylor (WN), Ms T Wright (TW), Mr J Hall (JH), County Councillor S Tagg (ST)

Parish Clerk – Ms D Powell (DP).

117/25 To receive apologies

Apologies were received from Ms V Newman (VN).

118/05 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

WN declared an interest in item 123/25.

119/25 Public Open Forum

No-one present.

120/25 To note the draft minutes of the Regular meeting held on 14 July 2025 and agree

- a. To approve the minutes

RESOLVED to approve.

121/25 To receive reports from the following sub-committees

- a. Communications

The newsletter was to be delivered and the Bulletin had been sent out over the summer. TW and GB thanked Councillors and members of the public for volunteering to distribute the newsletter.

- b. Environment and assets

- GB thanked MD, SH, WN and DP for circulating the report. The parish is looking much better.
- On Pepper Street the undergrowth under the hedge is creeping across the pavement. **RESOLVED** to ask the Contractor for a quote for siding and removal of waste. SH, MD and WN to take photographs of the footpath to inform the Councillors' decision in October.
- The war memorial is looking much better and the cobbled area had been sprayed. GB thanked the Contractor for their very good work for KPC.
- On Quarry Bank the tree in the footway needs to be crown lifted. WN to write to SCC and NBC.
- The tree overhanging the road at the boundary of Church Bank and Quarry Bank Road is obstructing the highway. WN to report to SCC.
- A branch is down by lamppost 96. WN to report to SCC.
- WN advised that they are stepping down as lead for the Environment and Assets group due to family commitments. MD and SH offered to take on the lead between them.
- JH agreed to format the Environment and Assets report for the Bulletins.
- GB thanked the Environment and Assets committee for keeping the parish tidy.

- c. Planning

GB had circulated a report which is attached to these minutes.

- d. Planning applications – to provide comments on the following:

[25/00620/PIP | Application for permission in principle for the erection of 6 to 9 dwellings | Land South Of Pepper Street Keele Newcastle Under Lyme Staffordshire](#)

Comments had been circulated and submitted to the Planning Department. GB has asked the Borough Councillor D Jones to call in the planning application.

TA raised an issue relating to land in Finney Green. GB advised that at present this is not a planning issue but an ownership issue. TA to monitor the situation.

e. Pepper Street development.

- To receive an update

SH reported that 20-25 houses are now occupied. A resident had raised a concern about the condition of the oak tree. GB and SH had looked at the oak tree which is stressed due to being enclosed on both sides by retaining walls and there may be root damage. The tree is to be re-inspected in the spring. The issue of the layby is included in the Chair's report.

122/25 To receive an update from Keele Village Hall Committee

SH had asked the Chair of the Village Hall Committee to provide written reports to the Parish Council meetings, for inclusion in the Bulletin. No meetings had been held recently. Over the summer, business had been slow but party bookings are now picking up.

123/25 Finance

- To approve payments, receipts and transfers - **Appendix A RESOLVED** to approve.
- To note and approve the bank reconciliation – **Appendix B RESOLVED** to approve.
- To note and approve the budget report – **Appendix C RESOLVED** to approve.
- To note that NALC pay award backdated to 1 April 2025. Noted and the Meeting thanked DP.

124/25 Actions arising from the meeting held on 14 July 2025

- To discuss .gov.uk parish council email addresses
DP to contact Netwise regarding the domain name and a quote for the provision of email addresses.
- To receive an update on the ROTH Management Committee
RESOLVED for DP to contact Seddons to advise that Trinity are waiting on instructions from Seddons to poll residents to set up the Management Committee.
- To receive an update on the 1998 Definitive Map Modification Application
Correspondence had been received from an Officer at SCC informing the Parish Council that the application is going forward for decision in September 2025 to the Countryside and Rights of Way Panel.
- To receive an update on the defibrillator.
Two defibrillators are now situated in the parish. GB thanked everyone for their involvement in getting the defibrillators set up.

125/25 Other matters

- To receive an update on the cutting back the outgrowth of trees flanking the lower of our two-iron sculptures (end of Station Road)
The sculpture at the lower end of the village is obscured by trees. ST to follow up with SCC. GB thanked ST.
- To discuss the Civic Pride event 24 September 2025
The Meeting discussed ideas to be sent to NBC for the Civic Pride event to be held in Keele on 24 September 2025.

126/25 To note (only) written reports circulated in advance:

- Chair's report
The report had been circulated and is attached to these minutes.
- County & Borough Councillors
ST informed the Meeting that there are funds available through the Civic Pride Investment Fund. There are County Councillor funds available for community projects. Regarding speeding issues on Highway Lane there are to be 30mph stickers made available to place on bins. **RESOLVED** for DP to request the stickers.

Signed Date.....

127/25 General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

Data Breaches (72 hrs)/Information Security/Subject Access Requests. None.

128/25 Keele Neighbourhood Plan (Standing Item)

The NDP Policy document had been reviewed and signed off. The dates for the commencement of Regulation 14 and the distribution of consultation material in November are to be considered at the meeting in October. The consultation materials are to be reviewed at the meeting in November.

129/25 Borough Local Plan (Standing Item)

GB informed the Meeting that HM Government requires NBC to begin a new Borough Plan to be completed in two years once the current Plan is approved. There is a requirement to use the new NPPF housing target of 400-545 per annum. If the new Borough Plan in 2028 does not allocate extra houses it could be challenged. KPC needs the NDP to be in place to offer protection. GB had circulated the Inspector's findings with comments relevant to Keele and had circulated the response from NBC. ST advised that no more sites had been added where the Inspector had taken sites out. NBC is working with the Inspector.

130/25 To note the Staffordshire Parish Councils Association Bulletins and correspondence received. Noted.

131/25 Any other business for future agendas

Plans for the Community Orchard (WN)
Grants for the Community Orchard (GB)
Projects for grant funding.

Meeting closed at 8.35pm

Dates of the next meetings:

13 October 2025, 10 November 2025.

Appendix A

**Keele Parish Council
Payment Schedule August 2025**

Date	Chq no./BACS	Details	Description	Net £	VAT £	Total amount £
18/08/2025	BACS	Payroll	August 2025	610.07	0.00	610.07
18/08/2025	BACS	VAST	HMRC month 5	101.69	0.00	101.69
18/08/2025	BACS	Steve Hough	Noticeboard inspections, grass cutting around the Yew tree, cleaning of 4 noticeboards, trimming of hedges at noticeboards on Highway Lane and Quarry Bank, clearing of brambles from the footpath at Chapel Close.	275.00	0.00	275.00
		Total		986.76	0.00	986.76

Signed Date.....

**Keele Parish Council
Payment Schedule September 2025**

Date	Ch no./BACS	Details	Description	Net £	VAT £	Total amount £
08/09/2025	BACS	Payroll	September 2025 includes NALC pay award backdated to 1 April 2025	727.60	0.00	727.60
08/09/2025	BACS	VAST	HMRC month 6 and payroll charges	178.13	5.00	183.13
08/09/2025	BACS	Steve Hough	Noticeboard inspections, hedge cutting around the A525 road sign, weed spraying to the base of the Church wall, weed spraying, hedge cutting and strimming of borders at the War Memorial, removal of batteries from the Pepper Street speed sign recharged and refitted.	550.00	0.00	550.00
08/09/2025	BACS	Office expenses	Mileage and MS Office x 2 months	31.47	0.00	31.47
08/09/2025	BACS	Keele Village Hall	Room hire	22.00	0.00	22.00
08/09/2025	BACS	Keele SU Trading Ltd	Yew Tree newsletter August 2025 printing	91.00	0.00	91.00
08/09/2025	BACS	Litter picking contract	April to August 2025	282.87	0.00	282.87
		Total		1883.07	5.00	1888.07

Signed Date.....

Appendix B

Keele Parish Council			
Bank Reconciliation for the period ending 18 July 2025			
	£	£	£
Balance per Bank Statement 18 July 2025			
Current account		12,630.59	
Deposit account		<u>13,659.35</u>	
			26,289.94
Less: unrepresented payments	Chq 793		-121.80
	Chq 794		-120.00
	Chq 800		-22.00
Net bank balance as at 18 July 2025			<u>26,026.14</u>
Net balance reconciled to the cashbook			
Opening balance per cashbook			
Current account	1,625.08		
Deposit account	<u>13,659.35</u>		
		15,284.43	
Add: receipts in the year			
10.04.25 Newcastle Borough Council Precept	18,827.00		
30.04.25 HMRC VAT Refund	<u>227.52</u>		
		19,054.52	
Less: payments in the year		-8,312.81	
Closing Balance as per cash book for the year to 18 July 2025			<u>26,026.14</u>

Appendix C

Keele Parish Council Budget Report 2025/26

EXPENDITURE	BUDGET	TOTAL	VARIANCE
Payroll costs (includes Employers National Insurance)	8700	4,556	-4,144
Office expenses and payroll expenses	500	324	-176
Litter picking contract	700	512	-188
Total	9,900	5,392	-4,508
Councillor expenses/Room hire/Subs/Printing	400	232	-168
Miscellaneous	0	0	0
Data Protection Officer Staffs County Council	180	190	10
Audit Fee	125	138	13
Insurance	480	424	-56
Remembrance Sunday wreaths	20	0	-20
Total General Admin	1,205	985	-220
Staffordshire Parish Council Association	330	343	13
Society of Local Council Clerks	40	82	42
Campaign to Protect Rural England	15	0	-15
Information Commissioner	40	52	12
Parish Online Mapping	90	0	-90
Total Subscriptions	515	477	-38
Grounds maintenance, seats, shelters, noticeboards, Yew tree report (funded from reserves £800)	4280	2,375	-1,905
Church Yard Contribution S137	1100	1,100	0
Yew Tree Annual Maintenance (Spring and Winter)	620	358	-262
Total Maintenance	6,000	3,833	-2,167
Special Projects (website, planning consultant, defibrillator)	100	0	-100
War memorial	300	0	-300
Expenses - Chairman	250	240	-10
S137 Defibrillator pads	340	0	-340
S137 (Church clock)	215	0	-215
Neighbourhood Development Plan	0	0	0
VAT recoverable	0	261	261
Total Other Expenses	1,205	501	-704
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	18,825	11,188	-7,637

Chair's Report and Planning: September 2025

Chair's remarks

Our August edition of the Yew tree has now been finalised and I will circulate it with this report, it remains broadly unaltered since the final draft was circulated.

Signed Date.....

Unfortunately, our previous delivery service is not currently contactable. We have been trying alternatives but with no luck. We can discuss at our meeting on Monday but our fall-back solution would be to use volunteers again.

I had hoped to meet with Staffordshire Highways Community Liaison Officer: Rob Steele at the end of August to discuss some outstanding issues in the Parish. The Parish Council are concerned to engage in a productive discussion regarding the lay-by on Pepper Street and the preservation of part of it as a bus pull-in.

Unfortunately, Rob was unwell and couldn't attend but I had a conversation with him over the phone. He assured me that the issue had been escalated to David Greatbatch, Strategic Community Infrastructure Manager and that he would engage with the Parish Council. We will discuss this with the Site Manager of the Oakes at our meeting on Friday 5 th September.

The Borough Plan Inspection ended in June and the. Inspector wrote to the Borough with her interim findings. I have shared this letter and the Borough's response with you together with my summary. The Inspector judges that plan requires work in some areas before it can be adopted. These areas are pertinent to the development on the Old Golf Course, University, land off the A53 and the development of a link road between the A53 and A525. The Borough has undertaken to address the points raised. It should be noted that if the emerging plan is adopted, HMGov will require the Borough to immediately commence a new plan using the elevate housing targets mandated by the national planning framework. It is unclear where the Borough might find the necessary land for the list uplift in the annual housing land supply.

The situation is further complicated by HMGov mandating local government reorganisation. The intention is that all areas should be covered by unitary authorities. The Borough is currently consulting with residents on the form this authority should take. The survey can be found here:

<https://online1.snapsurveys.com/Interview/3e11fbc7-1e46-409c-804d-e1ae97bd60de>

In further news, the defibrillators and blood packs at the Sneyd and Village Hall have now been registered with Keele First Responders and are back in commission.

Planning matters:

Footpath from Quarry Bank to Silverdale.

I am pleased to note that, following a direction from the Secretary of State to the County Council, the case officer is recommending that the application for a footpath from Quarry Bank to Silverdale be approved by the Countryside and Rights of Way Panel. Watch this space!

Hawthorns

We await a response from Trinity, the agents of the Management Company, about their intentions to move control from Seddon to residents of the Hawthorns.

August

Application for permission in principle for the erection of 6 to 9 dwellings, Land South Of Pepper Street Keele Newcastle Under Lyme Staffordshire

Ref. No: 25/00620/PIP | Validated: Wed 20 Aug 2025 | Status: Pending

Consideration

We have already responded at length to this application, recommending refusal. Our reasons for this recommendation have been circulated to Parish Council. Briefly, the claim that this land be considered as grey belt is dubious, the application ignores the existence of a railway tunnel across the site and the argument misrepresents the housing land supply and position of the emerging Borough Plan.

Variation of condition 2 of planning permission 23/00055/FUL to substitute approved plans to reflect amendments to design to exclude the second storey element. 5

Signed Date.....

Cressing Place Keele Newcastle Under Lyme Staffordshire ST5 5FJ

Ref. No: 25/00567/FUL | Validated: Tue 29 Jul 2025 | Status: Pending Consideration

This is a re-presentation of a previous application withdrawn for technical reasons. It asks to reduce the scale of an extension. I recommend that we do not object.

July

Outline planning application for one dwelling (including the reserved matter of means of access). Land Fronting Highway Lane Keele Newcastle Staffordshire. Ref. No:

25/00439/OUT | Validated: Mon 30 Jun 2025 | Status: Permit

Application for certificate of lawfulness of proposed works to a listed building - conservation fabric repairs. Keele Hall Keele University Keele Newcastle Under Lyme Staffordshire ST5 5BE. Ref. No: 25/00442/PLDLB | Validated: Fri 06 Jun 2025 | Status: Permit

Proposed two storey side extension. 18 Highway Lane Keele Newcastle

Staffordshire ST5 5AN. Ref. No: 25/00392/FUL | Validated: Thu 05 Jun 2025 |

Status: Permit

April

REF. NO. SCC/25/0035/MDPO Application to Modify a planning obligation to amend Schedule 3 of the Section 106 Agreement in relation to planning permission

N.02/17/258 MW to remove the restriction on the supply of Etruria Marl from Keele Quarry. Deadline for comments passed. This is a technical application, if approved it would result in marl which is not currently in use being taken to Tunstead near Buxton for cement manufacture. It will result in an increase in heavy vehicles on the A525. I am content to leave this matter to officers. Status currently awaiting more information from the applicant to address matters that have been raised during the consultation process. Highways have requested further information on traffic movements.

December/ January 2024/5

24/00290/CN07 | Application for approval of a Habitat Management and Maintenance Plan as required by condition 07 of planning permission reference 24/00290/FUL for replacement of existing stepped access to existing fire escape door with proposed ramped & stepped access to the north elevation of the Grade: II Listed Chapel; as well as proposed external landscaping works within the same scheme: including a retaining wall & #39;dug out' seating area, other above ground seating areas, drainage improvements to lawn, permeable paths and soft landscaping. | The Chapel Keele University Keele Newcastle Under Lyme Staffordshire. No objections, still pending.

24/00871/DOB | Application for the modification or discharge of planning obligations relating to affordable housing provision made under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act relating to planning permission 13/00970/OUT | Plots 23, 24 And 82 To 85 (inclusive) Land North of Pepper Street Keele Newcastle Under Lyme Staffordshire. No objections, still pending.

Environment and Assets September Report 2025

The Parish Council continues to walk the parish regularly to check on our footways, footpaths, highways, and community assets such as the War Memorial. We work closely with our contractor and with Borough and County Councils to address any issues as quickly as possible. Below is an update on what has been completed since our last bulletin, what is currently in progress, and the matters we continue to monitor.

Pepper Street and the A525

Signed Date.....

The hedges along the footway leading down Pepper Street to the A525 have now been cut back by the owners. However, there remains a great deal of undergrowth which still restricts the path. The Parish Council has asked our contractor to provide a quote for clearing this, so that the footway can be fully accessible.

At the exit onto the A525, the visibility had been obstructed by vegetation, but this has now been cut back by the County. The hedge opposite the exit from Quarry Bank has also been cut by Seddon's. A complaint was received about the hedge at the Quarry Bank/Pepper Street junction; upon inspection we found it had been cut to a reasonable standard, and no further action is proposed.

The road signs on the A525 near the Pepper Street exit were previously obscured by outgrowth, but these have now been cleared by our contractor. There is still the ongoing matter of the layby next to the Oaks. County Highways have requested its full removal to protect visibility at the new pumping station, while Keele Parish Council have asked that part of the layby be retained as a bus pull-in. The matter has been escalated, and our County Councillor, Simon Tagg, is pursuing a prompt resolution with Highways.

Finally, at the end of Pepper Street by the A525, the bollard on the small traffic island is down. This will be reported to County Highways.