

## MINUTES OF KEELE PARISH COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

**Held on Monday 10 November 2025 at 7.00pm at Keele Village Hall**

Attendees: Parish Councillors: Mr G Bibby (Chair, GB), Ms S Hughes (SH), Ms M Downing (MD), Ms W Naylor (WN), Ms V Newman (VN, part), Mr C Ashton (CA), Mr A Rowe (AR), Ms T Wright (TW)  
Parish Clerk – Ms D Powell (DP)

In attendance – One member of the public attended the meeting.

### **147/25 To receive apologies**

Apologies were received from County Councillor S Tagg (ST), Mr T Arnold (TA). The Meeting noted the resignation of Ms C Cox.

### **148/05 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests. None.**

### **149/25 Public Open Forum.**

The Meeting welcomed Keele University's Vice Chancellor Professor Kevin Shakesheff who updated the Meeting on the student numbers, the financial position and plans for developments at the University. GB thanked the new Vice-Chancellor for attending the Meeting.

### **150/25 To note the draft minutes of the Regular meeting held on 13 October 2025 and agree**

- a. To approve the minutes. **RESOLVED** to approve with a minor adjustment.

### **151/25 To receive reports from the following sub-committees**

#### a. Communications

AR informed the Meeting regarding the increase of amount payable by Hawthorns' residents for grounds maintenance. For 2024/25 the cost was £697 per resident. For 25/26 the amount has increased to £1796 per resident. Item to be included on the January agenda as the play area is also used by other residents.

#### b. Environment and assets

A report received from MD had been circulated and would be included in the Bulletin.

The Meeting discussed the issue of the fly tipping of leaves on Quarry Bank. Matter to be discussed at the January Meeting.

DP to ask the contractor to clean the bus shelter on Station Road.

#### c. Planning

GB had circulated a report. There had been no update on the university roundabout.

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

[25/00788/PIP | Application for Permission in Principle for 1-9 Dwellings | Land Off Three Mile Lane Keele Newcastle Under Lyme Staffordshire](#) **RESOLVED** to object.

[25/00789/PIP | Application for Permission in Principle for 1-2 Dwellings | Land Adjacent 32 Highway Lane Keele Newcastle Staffordshire](#) No objection.

#### e. Pepper Street development.

- To receive an update

SH updated the Meeting. A meeting had been held on 24 October with nothing significant to report. A question had been raised about the ownership of the Pumping Station. The next meeting is to be held on 5 December 2025.

### **152/25 To receive an update on Keele Village Hall Committee**

GB reported that he is working to improve communications between the Parish Council and the Village Hall Committee. There is a new Treasurer for the Village Hall Committee.

**153/25 Finance**

- a. To approve payments, receipts and transfers - **Appendix A RESOLVED** to approve.
- b. To note and approve the bank reconciliation – **Appendix B RESOLVED** to approve.
- c. To note and approve the budget report – **Appendix C RESOLVED** to approve.
- d. To consider the budget setting for 2026/27. Councillors were asked to consider the budget for the January Meeting.

**154/25 Actions arising from the meeting held on 13 October 2025**

- a. To receive an update of Church of St John the Baptist (GB)  
GB reported that the church had been full for Remembrance Sunday. The boiler is being repaired at the end of November. Christmas events are being organised and a Christmas card has been designed. GB is optimistic for the growth of the church community.
- b. To consider the use of the Bulletin for St John's the Baptist (GB/VN)  
**RESOLVED** to approve that the church information be included in the Bulletin.
- c. To approve the invoice received from Agrovista relating to fertiliser for the Yew tree (WN)  
**RESOLVED** to approve.
- d. To receive an update on the cutting back the outgrowth of trees flanking the lower of our two-iron sculptures (end of Station Road)  
Awaiting update from ST.

**155/25 Other matters**

- a. To discuss plans for the Community Orchard (WN)  
**RESOLVED** to approve the work at the Orchard. WN has arranged for Street Scene to clear back the branches of the fruit trees. WN has a volunteer to help. The Meeting thanked WN.
- b. To discuss grants for the Community Orchard (GB)  
Funding is no longer available.
- c. To discuss projects for grant funding  
Funding is no longer available.
- d. To consider a noticeboard for Quarry Bank.  
Funding is no longer available.
- e. To discuss the recruitment of Litter Collector  
Matter to be discussed at the January meeting
- f. To discuss Parish Council elections and recruitment of new councillors  
GB advised on the need to recruit new councillors. Matter to be included in the February Yew tree.
- g. To discuss the suspension of the December meeting and delegating authority to the Chair and Clerk  
**RESOLVED** to approve.

**156/25 To note (only) written reports circulated in advance:**

- a. Chair's report  
As circulated.
- b. County & Borough Councillors  
None present.

**157/25 General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)**

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

**158/25 Keele Neighbourhood Plan (Standing Item)**

- a. To agree to move to Regulation 14 Consultation from Thursday 20 November 2025 12:00 noon to Thursday 15 January 2026 12:00 noon. This is for the minimum six-week period and includes an extension for a further two weeks as it covers the Christmas period.  
DP advised the Councillors that a quote for Planning Consultant's fees had been requested a number of times however, the fee quote had not been received to date.

Signed ..... Date .....

**RESOLVED** to move to Regulation 14 consultation.

Community consultation dates, arrangements for the printing of materials and areas for the display of hard copies of the Plan were agreed. DP advised the Meeting of the extra hours worked relating to the NDP during October and November 2025.

b. To approve the Consultation materials.

**RESOLVED** to approve the Regulation 14 Consultation publicity materials prepared and presented by DP.

c. To confirm a meeting on 12 November 2026 to discuss the NDP Consultation and publicity events.  
This meeting is no longer required as matters have been covered at the PC Meeting.

**159/25 Borough Local Plan (Standing Item)**

Awaiting updates.

**160/25 To note the Staffordshire Parish Councils Association Bulletins and correspondence received.** Noted.

**161/25 Any other business for future agendas**

**Meeting closes**

**Dates of the next meetings:**

12 January 2026, 9 February 2026, 9 March 2026.

**Keele Parish Council  
Payment Schedule November 2025**

Date	Ch no./BACS	Details	Description	Net £	VAT £	Total amount £
10/11/2025	BACS	Payroll	November 2025	628.40	0.00	628.40
10/11/2025	BACS	VAST	HMRC month 8	109.73	0.00	109.73
10/11/2025	BACS	Steve Hough	Noticeboard inspections, grass cutting at the Yew tree, siding of Pepper Street, cleaning of 2 bus shelters, hedge trimming, strimming and tidying of the War Memorial	770.00	0.00	770.00
10/11/2025	BACS	Office expenses	Mileage, MS Office and RBL poppy wreath	43.60	0.00	43.60
10/11/2025	BACS	Keele Village Hall	Room hire	22.00	0.00	22.00
10/11/2025	BACS	Agrovista UK Ltd	Proforma invoice 1 bag of farm mix - Yew tree	115.00	23.00	138.00
10/11/2025	BACS	Access Irrigation Ltd	Winter service visit 2025 - Yew tree	260.00	52.00	312.00
		<b>Total</b>		<b>1948.73</b>	<b>75.00</b>	<b>2023.73</b>

Signed ..... Date .....

<b>Keele Parish Council</b> <b><u>Bank Reconciliation for the period ending 29 September 2025</u></b>		
	£	£
Balance per Bank Statement 29 September 2025		
Current account	9,755.76	
Deposit account	<u>13,659.35</u>	
		23,415.11
Less: unpresented payments		
Chq 793	-121.80	
Chq 794	-120.00	
Chq 800	-22.00	
		<u>23,151.31</u>
<b>Net bank balance as at 29 September 2025</b>		<b><u>23,151.31</u></b>
<b>Net balance reconciled to the cashbook</b>		
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		-11,187.64
<b>Closing Balance as per cash book for the year to 29 September 2025</b>		<b><u>23,151.31</u></b>

## 5. Chair's Report and Planning: November 2025

### Chair's remarks

The modifications to the Borough Plan following the comments from the Inspector are now open for public consultation. Until the plan is approved, its proposals have limited weight in deciding planning applications. What this means is that the Borough is very poorly protected from developers who can argue that it cannot meet its House Need targets. As a result, proposals for development, even in the Green Belt, are likely to be approved. Unfortunately, even if the pending plan is approved by the Inspector, following modification, it will still not provide sufficient houses to meet this Government's new targets. It will provide a much greater degree of protection from speculative development, but the Borough will immediately need to begin a new plan with significantly higher housing targets.

The situation is further complicated by Local Government reform which is leading towards all local government being delivered by unitary authorities in the new couple of years. This would mean that Newcastle Borough is likely to cease to exist before any new Borough Plan could be put in place. The nature of the authority that would replace it has yet to be determined.

Signed ..... Date .....

Keele Parish Council will be replying to the consultation on the modifications to the Local Plan before the deadline of 17<sup>th</sup> December. We remain in favour of the plan being adopted as soon as is possible but will consider the proposed modifications carefully in the light of the Inspectors original comments.

Given the pressure on us regarding speculative applications to develop green belt land and the liberal interpretation of the concept of grey belt being taken by the local planning authority, our Neighbourhood Plan will be critical in providing Keele Parish with a degree of extra protection. We are due to approve the consultation materials at our meeting on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> November and the regulation 14 consultation will start on the 20<sup>th</sup> November and run until 15<sup>th</sup> January. We will need to get individual mailings through doors at pace and I propose we use the same distribution volunteers employed for the Yew Tree.

In further news, we have yet to hear back from Seddon regarding the Management Company at the Hawthorns. You will remember that the current state of play is that the management contractors, Trinity, have noted they are awaiting instructions from Seddon to poll residents regarding volunteers for a residents' led company.

There is still no contact from County Highways concerning the pull-in on Pepper Street and our proposal it be ploughed shared into a bus stop. We need to consider escalating our attempts to get a response from David Greatbatch of County Highways. Our meeting at the Oakes in October confirmed that Seddon have no immediate plans to remove the layby but will have to do so before the site is signed off.

I have made posts of the Facebook site over the last month, linking to the bulletin, offering advice on Halloween and Bonfire Night, promoting the consultation on the Borough Plan and linking to smart alerts. We need to look at putting together a program of releases for each month.

Finally, the Parish Council was represented at the well-attended All Souls service on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> November where members of the congregation and others had an opportunity to light a candle for the departed. The heating is not currently working in the church, but a repair is due in the next month so that the Church will be warm for Christmas services. The Remembrance event will be held on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> at 10:45 at the war memorial where a wreath will be laid by Keele Parish Council. All Councillors are invited to attend. The event has been publicised through the bulleting list, notice boards and on Facebook.

### **Other planning matters:**

**Boggs Cottages:** we are working with residents and with our Borough Councillor to obtain clarity on the status of the permission to occupy the site granted at appeal nearly two years ago. Key conditions have not been satisfied by the owner and the original building has been demolished. We recognise that the owner of the site may seek new permission for development of the site and the LPA's current interpretation of what counts as 'grey belt' gives cause for concern.

## **November**

### [Application for Permission in Principle for 1-2 Dwellings](#)

Land Adjacent 32 Highway Lane Keele Newcastle Staffordshire

Ref. No: 25/00789/PIP | Validated: Tue 21 Oct 2025 | Status: Pending Consideration

### [Application for Permission in Principle for 1-9 Dwellings](#)

Land Off Three Mile Lane Keele Newcastle Under Lyme Staffordshire

Ref. No: 25/00788/PIP | Validated: Tue 21 Oct 2025 | Status: Pending Consideration

Signed ..... Date .....

*Both of these applications use similar arguments to those used in the recently permitted application for 6-9 houses on land south of Pepper Street. The essence of the argument hinges on the absence of a made Borough Plan and the fact that the plan under examination does not provide sufficient houses to meet the target set by the current algorithm. I recommend we object, these are dangerous precedents.*

## September

Ref. No: 25/00731/FUL | Validated: Thu 02 Oct 2025. Proposed Installation of first floor window above garage8 Holly Mews Quarry Bank Road Keele Newcastle Under Lyme Staffordshire ST5 5LT Status: Pending Consideration. I recommend that the Parish Council do not comment on this application.

## 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: Permit

Unfortunately, our objections and those of Borough Councillor Dave Jones were given no weight. Officers had written strongly recommending the application be permitted, basing their arguments on those made in the application. It would seem that the fact that the Borough Plan had yet to be 'made' meant that it only had moderate weight in this matter. Until a Borough Plan and Neighbourhood Plan are in place, it would seem any application to build less than 10 homes in the green belt is likely to be accepted.

## 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 & '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.

## Keele Parish Council Budget Report 2025/26

EXPENDITURE	BUDGET	TOTAL	VARIANCE
Payroll costs (includes Employers National Insurance)	8700	6,002	-2,698
Office expenses and payroll expenses	500	392	-108
Litter picking contract	700	512	-188
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,900</b>	<b>6,906</b>	<b>-2,994</b>
Councillor expenses/Room hire/Subs/Printing	400	276	-124
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	25	5
<b>Total General Admin</b>	<b>1,205</b>	<b>1,054</b>	<b>-151</b>
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
<b>Total Subscriptions</b>	<b>515</b>	<b>477</b>	<b>-38</b>
Grounds maintenance, seats, shelters, noticeboards, Yew tree report (funded from reserves £800)	4280	3,440	-840
Church Yard Contribution S137	1100	1,100	0
Yew Tree Annual Maintenance (Spring and Winter)	620	618	-2
<b>Total Maintenance</b>	<b>6,000</b>	<b>5,158</b>	<b>-842</b>
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	336	336
<b>Total Other Expenses</b>	<b>1,205</b>	<b>576</b>	<b>-629</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>18,825</b>	<b>14,171</b>	<b>-4,654</b>