

## MINUTES OF KEELE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Monday 12 January 2026 at 7.00pm at Keele Village Hall

Attendees: Parish Councillors: Cllr G Bibby (Chair, GB), Cllr S Hughes (SH), Cllr M Downing (MD), Cllr W Naylor (WN), Cllr V Newman (VN), Cllr T Arnold (TA), Cllr A Rowe (AR), Cllr J Hall (JH).

Notetaker: Cllr V Newman (VN)

### **1/26 To receive apologies**

Apologies were received from Cllr C Ashton (CA), Cllr T Wright (TW) and Ms D Powell

### **2/26 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

None

### **3/26 Public Open Forum**

New resident from The Oaks attended and was interested in the Parish Council and its operation. He and his family are enjoying the area and would like to contribute to it in some way. Chair welcomed new residents and to the village, contrary to some opinions the PC is not against all development in Keele, but thinks it needs to be the right development. Believe our interventions in the planning of The Hawthorns and The Oaks have been beneficial for the residents with conservation of trees.

### **4/26 To note the draft minutes of the Regular meeting held on 10 November 2025 and the minutes of the Extra ordinary Meeting held on 8 December 2025 and agree**

- a. To approve the minutes  
**RESOLVED** to approve

### **5/26 To receive reports from the following sub-committees**

- a. Communications  
AR raised issue of letter from Adam Jogee asking residents to sign a road safety petition following an accident in Madeley by the primary school. AR contacted him regarding the fact that double yellow lines around St Johns on Quarry Bank Road are regularly ignored at school drop off and collection times.
- b. Environment and assets  
The written report had been circulated.

ACTION: MD to work with AR to produce a report for inclusion in the bulletin and to remind people that NULBC are responsible for clearing tipping on public land, but on private land it is the responsibility of the owner, the PC can report it but is not responsible for its removal. Encourage individuals to use the NULBC reporting site.

- c. Planning  
The written report had been circulated.
- d. Planning applications – to provide comments on the following:

[25/00954/FUL | Proposed second storey side extension & new garage to front & new porch to front | 39 Quarry Bank Newcastle Under Lyme Staffordshire ST5 5AG](#)

[25/00920/TWA | Works to hedge and trees | Hawthorn Villa 11 The Village Keele Newcastle Under Lyme Staffordshire ST5 5AD](#)

ACTION: GB draft and send words supporting application 25/00920/TWA

[25/00910/FUL | Retrospective full planning application for the retention of an attenuation storage pool with associated access to serve the arable farmland of the applicant's agricultural holding | Leycett Farm Leycett Lane Leycett Newcastle Under Lyme Staffordshire](#)

ACTION: TA draft words concerning application 25/00910/FUL as there is concern regarding the danger for children with insubstantial fencing around the very deep pool.

e. Pepper Street development.

- To receive an update

No comments on Pepper Street next meeting Friday 16<sup>th</sup> January

ACTION: GB&SH to ask about the area of Seddon's activity as residents believe they have seen them working in the upper field.

**6/26 To receive an update on Keele Village Hall Committee**

No VHMC meeting so nothing to report. GB did meet with Committee members and agreed that they will send any "outcomes " from their meetings to the PC.

**7/26 To note the resignation of the Parish Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer**

Councillors noted the resignation of DP. VN to write a letter. DP had agreed to stay until the completion of the audit and the Election in May.

**8/26 To appoint members to a HR sub-committee**

**RESOLVED** to appoint TA, GB and VN to a HR sub-committee for the purposes of recruitment.

**9/26 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 consider the budget for 2026/27 **RESOLVED** to approve
- To consider the following options for the Precept for 2026/27
  - Assuming Council Tax is to increase by 1.99%, Total £20,951
  - Assuming Council Tax is to increase by 1.99%, £20,951 plus the consultants' fees for the completion of the Neighbourhood Plan £6,069 (plus vat - reclaimable), Total £27,020.  
**RESOLVED** to approve Option ii. ACTION: CLERK to complete the Precept paperwork for V2 and submit to the BC by the deadline of 16<sup>th</sup> January 2026.
  - Assuming Council Tax is to increase by 1.99%, £20,951 plus the consultants' fees for the completion of the Neighbourhood Plan £6,069 (plus vat), plus the costs of a contested Election £6,000 (as £4,000 is already in Earmarked Reserves), Total £33,020

**10/26 Actions arising from the meetings held on 10 November 2025**

- To receive an update on the cutting back the outgrowth of trees flanking the lower of our two-iron sculptures (end of Station Road) (ST)  
ST not present.
- To discuss the recruitment of Litter Collector  
**RESOLVED** to approve. ACTION: VN to check that the clerk had not progressed with the Silverdale resident. ACTION: WN to work with the clerk about a handover. Agreed on a 6-month rolling contract for litter picking, automatically renewed unless notice given on either side.
- To discuss the costs associated with grounds maintenance on the Hawthorns (AR)/GB  
Hawthorns residents are paying for the children's playground area maintenance and safety checks, but it is used by many children who do not live in the Hawthorns. The question was raised as to whether KPC could help with this. Anyone living on the Hawthorns should declare a pecuniary interest. The request for funding would need to come from the Management Committee to the PC including itemised costs.

- d. To discuss fly tipping of leaves on Quarry Bank  
Item resolved.
- e. To discuss a noticeboard for Quarry Bank  
No grant funding is available.

#### **11/26 Other matters**

- a. To approve the outcomes from Extra ordinary meeting held on 8 December 2025 and matters arising (GB)  
The minutes were approved at the start of the meeting with the November minutes and all actions raised have been covered in items on the agenda.
- b. To discuss the meeting with Adam Jogee: 30th January on Grey Belt applications (GB)  
GB will meet with Adam Jogee along with other Parish Council chairs at the end of the month regarding the use of the "grey belt" definition for permission in principle on what we consider green belt development sites.
- c. To discuss the cost of contested Parish Council elections (GB)  
Questions to be asked of NULBC about election costs. ACTION: GB to ask NULBC if 10K is realistic for an election in Keele? What would the cost be if an in-term election were needed.
- d. To approve Access Irrigation Service Contract 2026 - The Yew Tree. Standard Service Plan £649.00 (£778.80 including VAT) for a Spring and Winter service.  
**RESOLVED** to approve the Standard Service. WN would like more information about the hours of watering and the flow rate. It was also unclear whether we own the equipment or not. ACTION: CLERK to confirm standard service and ask for details of what would be done and also request information about what a summer service would include.
- e. To discuss commissioning the work of the Contractor on the Community Orchard for a number of hours over the coming months (WN)  
KPC need a proposal on the work to be done and the hours involved before approving work on the Community Orchard. ACTION: WN to provide details at the next meeting.

#### **12/26 To note (only) written reports circulated in advance:**

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

#### **13/26 General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)**

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

#### **14/26 Keele Neighbourhood Plan (Standing Item)**

- a. To discuss the timetable for Regulation 14 consultation  
Proposed to start Regulation 14 for NDP on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> February. See chair's report for details. Need volunteers for the public consultations.  
ACTION: ALL Councillors to respond to GB by Thurs 15<sup>th</sup> January with availability.  
ACTION: TA, GB, JH, WN & VN to meet on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> January to agree production of materials for reg.14 consultation

#### **15/26 Borough Local Plan (Standing Item) No update.**

#### **16/26 To note the Staffordshire Parish Councils Association Bulletins and correspondence received. Noted.**

#### **17/26 Any other business for future agendas**

GB & AR both informed they will not be present at the next meeting and proffered apologies. VN agreed to chair the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 20.40

**Dates of the next meetings:**

9 February 2026, 9 March 2026, 13 April 2026.

**Keele Parish Council  
Payment Schedule December 2025**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Ch no./BACS</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Net £</b>	<b>VAT £</b>	<b>Total amount £</b>
08/12/2025	BACS	Payroll	December 2025	628.40	0.00	628.40
08/12/2025	BACS	VAST	HMRC month 9 and payroll charges	134.73	5.00	139.73
08/12/2025	BACS	Steve Hough	Inspection of 4 noticeboards, tree/bush cutting and cleaning the steps and repairing signs and gate. Cleaning of bus shelter on Station Road and siding of grass. Yew tree manure spreading.	460.00	0.00	460.00
08/12/2025	BACS	Office expenses	Mileage, MS Office	18.85	0.00	18.85
08/12/2025	BACS	Keele Village Hall	Room hire	22.00	0.00	22.00
		<b>Total</b>		<b>1263.98</b>	<b>5.00</b>	<b>1268.98</b>

**Keele Parish Council  
Payment Schedule January 2026**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Ch no./BACS</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Net £</b>	<b>VAT £</b>	<b>Total amount £</b>
12/01/2026	BACS	Payroll	January 2026	628.40	0.00	628.40
12/01/2026	BACS	VAST	HMRC month 10	109.73	0.00	109.73
12/01/2026	BACS	Office expenses	MS Office	12.10	0.00	12.10
12/01/2026	BACS	Keele Village Hall	Room hire	22.00	0.00	22.00
		<b>Total</b>		<b>772.23</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>772.23</b>

**Keele Parish Council**  
**Bank Reconciliation for the period ending 31 December 2025**

	£	£	£
Balance per Bank Statement 31 December 2025			
Current account		5,503.81	
Deposit account		<u>13,659.35</u>	
			19,163.16
Less: unpresented payments			
Chq 793	Chq 793		-121.80
Chq 794	Chq 794		-120.00
Chq 800	Chq 800		-22.00
<b>Net bank balance as at 31 December 2025</b>			<b><u>18,899.36</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		-15,439.59	
<b>Closing Balance as per cash book for the year to 31 December 2025</b>			<b><u>18,899.36</u></b>

## Keele Parish Council Budget Report 2025/26

EXPENDITURE	BUDGET	TOTAL	VARIANCE
Payroll costs (includes Employers National Insurance)	8700	7,448	-1,252
Office expenses and payroll expenses	500	478	-22
Litter picking contract	700	512	-188
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,900</b>	<b>8,438</b>	<b>-1,462</b>
Councillor expenses/Room hire/Subs/Printing	400	320	-80
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>1,098</b>	<b>-107</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	3,900	-380
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>5,618</b>	<b>-382</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	341	341
<b>Total Other Expenses</b>	<b>1,205</b>	<b>581</b>	<b>-624</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>18,825</b>	<b>16,212</b>	<b>-2,613</b>

### Environment Report

Yew tree

Specialised feed has now been given to the tree, and hopefully this will encourage better growth. Funding for this had been approved.

Bus Shelters

The bus shelter at the bottom end of Station Road has been cleaned. There had been

discussions, as to which of the shelters are under the remit of KPC.

Unfortunately, we have been unable to walk around the village, as per our norm due to the inclement weather in the past month. However, the following issues were observed in between snow showers:-

#### Litter

This was evident around the parish, but especially along the bypass, Pepper Street and Keele Road into the village. The weather has certainly hampered litter removal.

#### Fly-tipping

This was reported to be at the entrance to the Twigg Farm on Station Road.

Residents are reminded that NULBC, (Newcastle Under Lyme Borough Council) are responsible for clearing tipping on public land, but on private land it is the responsibility of the owner. The Parish Council can report it, but is not responsible for its removal. Please use the NULBC reporting site if you see fly-tipping.

### **Chair's Report: January 2026**

#### Chair's remarks

December and January proved remarkably busy. Amongst other matters, following our meeting in November, the Clerk raised issues surrounding the financing of the Neighbourhood Plan which led to me to use delegate powers to suspend the consultation until after a discussion at an extraordinary meeting, held on December 8 th . The decision of that meeting to recommence the consultation in February and to seek to increase the precept for next year to cover the funding of the plan will be finalised in our resolutions on Monday 11 th January.

Research by the Clerk indicated that the legal power for councils responsible for organising elections to charge 50% of the cost for combined polls was granted in 1989: Representation of the People Act. Further research showed this charge to Parish and Town Councils has been rolled out at different rates across the country. For example, North Yorkshire implemented the policy in 2024. Under the circumstances, my original (circulated) letter to Cllr Jones, Tagg and M.P. Adam Jogee is not fit for purpose.

Nevertheless, some questions remain to be answered:

☐ When did Newcastle implement this policy?

☐ How were Parish Councils informed?

☐ If this policy has been in place for some time, why was its impact not considered as part of our annual budgeting discussions

☐ What would be the charge for a contested Parish Council election in a combined poll in May 2026?

☐ What would be the charge for a contested Parish Council election held as a 'stand-alone' following a vacancy arising?

I will propose ways forward to answering these questions and others in our meeting Monday 11 th January.

Planning

January 2026

25/00954/FUL | Proposed second storey side extension & new garage to front & new porch to front | 39 Quarry Bank Newcastle Under Lyme Staffordshire ST5 5AG. I recommend that we do not comment

25/00920/TWA | Works to hedge and trees | Hawthorn Villa 11 The Village Keele Newcastle Under Lyme Staffordshire ST5 5AD. This is an application to reduce in height the laurels and willows fronting this property. Outgrowth from these

trees is currently impeding the footway but cannot be cut back without permission. I recommend we write supporting this application.

25/00910/FUL | Retrospective full planning application for the retention of an attenuation storage pool with associated access to serve the arable farmland of the applicant's agricultural holding | Leycett Farm Leycett Lane Leycett Newcastle Under Lyme Staffordshire. I recommend that we do not comment

December 2025

25/00873/PIP | Permission in Principle for the erection of between 5 - 9 dwellings | Land At Pepper Street Keele Newcastle Under Lyme Staffordshire. The deadline for comments on this application was 24 th December. The Clerk wrote asking for an extension and was given until 9 th January. I submitted an objection on the 6 th January. The application was approved on the 8 th January. Our comments were included in the relevant documentation. I will be attending a meeting with our M.P. and representatives of other Parish Councils on 30 th

January to discuss issues raised by such piecemeal erosion of the green belt.

November

Land Adjacent 32 Highway Lane Keele Newcastle Staffordshire Ref. No:

25/00789/PIP | Validated: Tue 21 Oct 2025 | Status: Permit

Land Off Three Mile Lane Keele Newcastle Under Lyme Staffordshire Ref. No:

25/00788/PIP | Validated: Tue 21 Oct 2025 | Status: Permit

We may now assume that any similar application for under 10 homes in the green belt will be approved whilst the status of the Borough Plan remains under consideration. We will briefly consider the consequences in our meeting of Monday 11 th January.

September

Ref. No: 25/00731/FUL | Validated: Thu 02 Oct 2025. Proposed Installation of first floor window above garage 8 Holly Mews Quarry Bank Road Keele Newcastle Under Lyme Staffordshire ST5 5LT 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#39; 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.