

**MINUTES OF KEELE PARISH COUNCIL ORDINARY MEETING**  
**Held on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2026 at 7pm at Keele Village Hall**

**Attendees:** Parish Councillors: Cllr T Arnold (TA), Cllr C Ashton (CA), Cllr G Bibby (Chair, GB), Cllr M Downing (MD), Cllr S Hughes (SH), Cllr V Newman (VN), Cllr A Rowe (AR)

**48/26 To receive apologies**

Apologies received from Cllr J Hall (JH), Cllr W Naylor (WN), Cllr T Wright (TW), Clerk

**49/26 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

None received.

**50/26 Public Open Forum**

No members of the public were present

**51/26 Confirmation of Minutes**

Council considered and **resolved** unanimous to approve and sign as a factual record the minutes of the ordinary parish council meeting held at **7pm on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2026**. Council noted that Cllr W Naylor appeared twice in the list of attendees.

The Chair thanked those councillors who had not stood for re-election for their work during their time as a councillor.

**52/26 To receive reports from the following sub-committees**

a) Communications

AR thanked the chair for his assistance with the election nomination forms.

AR reported there had been some confusion over guardianship of the defibrillator at the Village Hall, but this was due to a technical glitch and the guardianship remained with the first responders.

AR further reported that neighbours of the latest property to have been approved for change of use were concerned about the movement of vehicles and parking.

b) Environment and assets

MD gave a verbal report and highlighted that fly tipping remained a major issue in the parish. The sub-committee have complained to NULBC regarding the length of time it is taking for rubbish to be removed and the council are investigating.

There is a lot of fly tipping on Quarry Bank and NULBC are investigating this. Another dumping of tyres etc. on Lymes Road has also been reported.

There was some discussion about the Lymes Road sign, but it was not considered essential that it be "righted", and it could encourage more traffic to use the road, which was not considered desirable.

**Outstanding ACTION: WN to contact Rob Steele regarding getting A525 litter picked.**

The area around Welcome Break has been tidied up considerably, so it was not considered necessary to contact them.

There was a sweep of the village following the March council meeting, and coinciding with the Easter vacation it meant Keele Road was swept too. However, there are a lot of blocked grids throughout the parish following recent high winds producing debris.

**ACTION: Clerk to contact litter pickers and thank them for their efforts since there is a major improvement**

c) Planning

The salami slicing of applications on Pepper Street are to be called in to committee, but prior to this are being investigated by NULBC legal. The government are also intending to send clarification on the issue.

d) New Applications

No new applications received.

e) To receive an Update on the Pepper Street Development

New ground workers have been appointed therefore the development is continuing.

**53/26 To receive an update on Keele Village Hall Committee**

Jeremy Lefroy is to manage the finances.

An electrical certificate has been issued that is valid for 5 years.

Martin's law is not applicable to the hall.

Sam Summerfield has submitted a report to the clerk.

**ACTION: Clerk to write and thank the VHMC for the work they are doing in maintaining the condition and use of the hall.**

**54/26 Finance**

- a) Payments, receipts and transfers were approved. It was requested that the SLCC job advert payment be made by the due date of 16/04/26
- b) Bank reconciliation was approved.
- c) The 25/26 budget report was approved. Council noted that expenditure was slightly under budget. Congratulations to be given to the clerk/RFO for excellent financial management. The 26/27 budget was also approved.

**ACTION: Clerk to include an item on the May agenda to consider increasing the amount in reserves for election costs.**

**ACTION: Chair to contact elections to determine cost for elections and the cost of an election for one councillor.**

**ACTION: Clerk to investigate whether the Information Commissioner service could be provided more cheaply.**

**ACTION: Clerk to include churchyard maintenance contribution on the next agenda.**

**ACTION: Clerk to check if council are actually using the online mapping facility. If not the payment may be cancelled.**

#### **55/26 Actions arising from the meetings held on 9 March 2026**

a) Clerk's Appointment Update

2 applications were received. Interviews scheduled for 23<sup>rd</sup> April in the Village Hall. If the May council meeting needs to be postponed until May 18<sup>th</sup> due to the elections, council will need an EGM to approve the selection so the candidate is not left waiting for a decision.

**ACTION: Chair to check if this could be a Zoom meeting**

b) Elections Update

7 nominations were received for the Parish Council, therefore the election was uncontested and there are 4 vacancies. Since there was no election and the outcome was known it would be possible to get calling notices to the new Councillors 3 working days before the May 11<sup>th</sup> meeting date. If this were legal then councillors agreed unanimously it would be preferable.

**ACTION: Chair to check with NALC whether this is legal and compliant**

#### **56/26 Other matters**

a) Policies

The following policies were all voted on separately and unanimously approved and adopted by council.

- Maternity Leave
- Paternity Leave
- Disciplinary
- Harassment and Bullying
- Sick Leave
- Grievance
- Lone Working
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
- Safeguarding

These will need to be reviewed and accepted by the incoming council as they should be accepted annually.

b) Bank Account

**Resolved:** Cllr. Andy Rowe to become a digital signatory on the council's bank account and Cllr. Val Newman be removed.

c) Hayling Wood 4 x 4 Group

Council agreed that the Hayling Wood off-roaders were an issue due to mud etc. left on roads.

**ACTION: WN to work with clerk and write to the group**

d) Renewal of Sneyd Arms Asset of Community Value Status

Registration of the Sneyd Arms as a community asset has expired. VN volunteered to produce a submission to get it re-instated and submit to the Parish Council for approval.

**ACTION: VN to produce a submission**

e) Financial Continuity

Council agreed the need for a policy to provide financial continuity in the result of accidents, ill health, etc. of the RFO. It was recognised that this needs to be done in conjunction with NALC and will be brought to a future meeting when prepared.

f) Clerk Handover

It was proposed that there is a formal meeting with an agenda for the handover of the clerk's documentation, PC, passwords etc. Two parish councillors will attend the meeting in addition to the clerks.

g) Migration of website to new provider

Council considered moving the website provider from moon-creative to 123-reg. This has been suggested by Moon-creative since it will be cheaper for council.

VN also needs to handover ownership of the domain name to the parish clerk and the bank details need to be provided for the payment to be made.

Council also noted that the new parish councillors will all have keeleparish.gov.uk email addresses.

**ACTION: VN to work with the clerk to get information to moon-creative and progress the changes required**

## h) Newsletter

It was proposed that council should move away from distribution of physical newsletters and encourage digital platforms.

**Resolved** (unanimous): this last physical newsletter would provide details of new councillors & their email addresses and provide details for signing up to the Bulletin and details of the facebook page. Since WN was not present at the meeting this is to be held over until the next meeting.

**ACTION: Clerk to include on next agenda**

**57/26 To note and discuss written reports circulated in advance and receive other reports**

## a) Chair's Report

The chair raised the opportunity of applying for funding for a new noticeboard on Pepper Street. Since this matter was not included on the meeting agenda no decision could be reached, however council agreed that it should not miss the opportunity.

**Resolved:** 2 councillors would request an EGM and give the necessary notice so the application may be submitted. EGM will be held at St. Johns Church 11.30am on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> April.

## b) County &amp; Borough Councillors Reports

County Councillor Simon Tagg and Borough Councillor Dave Jones not present.

**58/26 General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)**

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

**59/26 Keele Neighbourhood Plan (Standing Item)**

NDP Regulation 14 consultation is now complete and all responses have been submitted to Urban Vision so they can make appropriate modifications to the plan.

**60/26 Borough Local Plan (Standing Item)**

No update available in relation to the Borough Council Local Plan since no decision has been made by the Planning Inspector.

**61/26 To note the Staffordshire Parish Councils Association Bulletins and correspondence received.**

SPCA bulletins noted

**62/26 Any other business for future agendas**

**ACTION: Clerk Items to be included on the next agenda:**

Signed .....

Dated .....

**Discuss parking near the junction of Westerdale Drive and Station Road that blocks any view of oncoming vehicles.**

**The meeting closed at 8.45pm**

DRAFT FOR APPROVAL