2025/15

MINUTES
DEFFORD & BESFORD PARISH COUNCIL
https://defford-besfordparishcouncil.co.uk

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Defford & Besford Parish Council held on Wednesday 19th November 2025 in Defford Village Hall at 7pm

PRESENT: Chairman I Stephens, Cllrs: D Lamont, L Peake and I Spiers and 3 members of the public

1. **APOLOGIES** were received from Cllrs. G Marshall and S Rees, County Cllr A Hardman and District Cllr P Middlebrough

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:**
   a) *Cllrs are reminded of the need to update their register of interests.*
   b) *To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in items on the agenda and their nature*
   c) *To declare Other Disclosable Interests in items on the agenda and their nature*
   d) *Written requests for the council to grant a dispensation (S33 of the Localism Act 2011) are to be with the clerk at least 4 clear days prior to a meeting.*

   Cllrs who have declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, or Other Disclosable Interest which falls within the terms of the code of conduct, must leave the room for the relevant items.

   None Declared

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

- *Concerns raised with regard to Application: 25/01883 Neilson Park, Defford Arms*

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** from meeting 17h September 2025 – proposed approval Cllr Lamont, seconded Cllr Peake – all in favour

4. **FINANCE / GOVERANCE:**
   a) Approval of receipts and payments to 10th November 2025 (made since last meeting)
   Payments for authorisation:

VAS Sign Locks / Clips	49.00		Lengthsman - September	260.00
Lengthsman - August	260.00		Defford - Church Wall	3744.00
Audit Costs	252.00		Headstone Survey	292.50
Service Charge	6.00		Defford Arms - Refreshments	96.50
Clerks Expenses	15.00		Service Charge	6.00
Clerks Salary	391.92		Clerks Expenses	15.00
Poppy Appeal	50.00		Clerks Salary	391.92
Street Lighting Electric	242.52		Grass Cutting	525.00
Hall Hire	20.00			

Payments approved, proposed Cllr Stephens, seconded Cllr Lamont – all in favour

Receipts:

Precept / Grant	11281.00
Interest	142.42
Lengthsman August	260.00
VAT reclaimed	803.56

b) Account Balances:
Unity Trust Current Account: £5,202.11
Unity Trust Savings Account: £27,159.67

c) Expenditure Items 2025/26 – Cllrs agreed that we should use some of the reserves for the installing of 30mph roundels as previously discussed with WCC for Upton Street and Harpley Road and the road markings from Besford into Defford to be 're-marked'. Clerk to also ask about markings for the blind bend on Blue Bell Lane (by Upper Street). Clerk to check costs with WCC Highways before sharing with Cllrs for final approval via email before instructing line marking to be carried out – *All Cllrs approved*

d) Budget / Precept Request 2025/26 – Cllrs agreed that the draft budget be shared with Cllrs early January for comments in advance of the parish council meeting in January to enable approval at meeting.

5. COUNTY & DISTRICT CLLR REPORTS had been received by both Cllrs in their absence, and shared with Cllrs

6. PLANNING:

a) W/25/01883/FUL Neilson Park, Defford Arms – use of land for stationing of caravans for residential purposed and a replacement village shop – *discussion took place with reasons for objection including:*
- ✓ Demand – currently a number of existing caravans up for sale
- ✓ Reduction of parking spaces for Defford Arms
- ✓ Lack of continuous footway and bus service is one per day during term time

Cllrs were in agreement that an objection be submitted and a request for this application to be agreed at full committee.

b) W/25/02296/HP Copelands Farm, Woodmancote – demolition of front porches, single storey extension & installation of side ground floor window – *there were no objections to this application*

c) 25/00854 – application to be taken to Appeal on grounds of non-determination. To consider any additional comments to be made.

7. HIGHWAYS & BYWAYS

a) Public Rights of Way – *Nothing* to report

b) Woodmancote Traffic Calming – Cllr Lamont had met with the police representative who appreciated her concerns and advised a return visit would be made with a colleague.

7. REPORTS:

a) Lengthsman – Cllr Lamont reported the LM continues to work diligently.

b) Parish Council Coffee Morning was a success and well attended with lots of positive comments coming forward. A request from a resident was for an additional noticeboard (location to be agreed) for the benefit of parishioners unable to walk as far as the church – this would be considered when the parish council considers the budget for 2026/27. It was agreed that the coffee mornings should held a few times a year as a positive exercise to engage with residents and that an allocation should be included within our budgeting process for 2026/27.

8. MILLENNIUM GREEN, Ground Levelling – Cllr Spiers advised of the problems with getting any vehicle (with trailer) through the barrier at MG. To defer to a future meeting

9. CLOSED CHURCHYARD:

a) Headstone Survey – Headstone surveys had been carried out and reports from stone mason noted and taken on board and actioned after making contact with 'stand-in' church representative in the absence of vicar (on long term sick-leave).
Clerk reported on communication from PCC following headstone survey and actions carried out at Defford. Clerk advised to speak to CALC for guidance in first instance.

b) Church wall – second phase of repairs had now been completed

10. CORRESPONDENCE / EMAILS: These had all been shared with Cllrs.

12. OTHER MATTERS FOR INFORMATION / FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

- Expenditure 2025/ 26 – to consider any expenditure needed once year end figures are clear.
- Budget / Precept 2026/27 – to consider items for inclusion in new budget (January 2026)

13. DATE OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING – Wednesday 21st January 2026 at Defford Village Hall