**Bengeo Rural Parish Council Meeting 16th October 2023**

**Email:** [**bengeoruralparishcouncil@outlook.com**](mailto:bengeoruralparishcouncil@outlook.com) **Website:** [**www.bengeoruralparishcouncil.co.uk**](http://www.bengeoruralparishcouncil.co.uk)

**MINUTES**

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| **Present:** | | **In Attendance:** |
| Cllr Tony Ellis (Chair) | Cllr Matthew Lezemore | Victoria Preuss - Clerk |
| Cllr Neil Blackaller |  |  |

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| 23/24 – 045 | Apologies  Cllr Jayne Abery and Cllr Matthew Clutterbuck |
| 23/24 – 046 | Declarations of Councillors’ interests pertaining to agenda items –  None |
| 23/24 – 047 | Minutes from 11th September 2023 were approved. |
| 23/24 – 048 | Public Participation  None |
| 23/24 – 049 | Internal Audit Actions  a - The Clerk provided an update on the 22/23 internal audit actions including a summary of those actions that were completed. The Clerk requested that the completed actions were approved for closure. Approval was given by the Council.  b – As part of the internal audit, a query was raised as to whether additional inspections were required to supplement the annual ones. Following a discussion, it was agreed that this is not needed as residents within the Parish do raise concerns as and when. |
| 23/24 – 050 | Planning  None |
| 23/24 – 051 | a – The latest financial position and financial spreadsheet was presented to the Council for review. The financial position showed all payments up to 24 September and had been reconciled to the bank account. The council were informed that it had received the second precept instalment and a VAT refund.  b – The draft budget was present for discussion. Following a review, some updated were requested and it was agreed that it would be represented at the November meeting along with the proposed precept for 2024/25 for final approval.  c – The proposal to revamp the website and quote was approved. |
| 23/24 – 052 | Parish Updates  Chapmore End  Concerns were raised concerning the hedges and the need for them to be cut. Cllr Neil Blackaller had logged this on the East Herts portal and was awaiting an update. Also, the contractor hadn’t be able to locate the drainage pipe that requires clearing from the pond. They will take another look when they visit next.  Crouchfields  None  Tonwell  The contractor will continue to carry out regular grass cutting within the village until the end of the season. Following a short discussion, it was agreed that the trees that had been allocated to the Council would be planted in the wild area within the field. These will be planted between October to November.  Two of the three posts on the curb on the exit to the village had been knocked out and a quote if being sought to replace them.  There was a discussion around the proposal to create a new play area on the field and the advice given by District Cllr Aubury Holt concerning planning and requirements. Based on the advice, we would need to speak to a planning officer concerning the plans to determine if planning permission would be required. District Cllr Aubury Holt also provider additional information concerning accessibility requirements.  The consultation for the proposed closure of Tonwell school has opened, and it was agreed that the Council would make a submission.  A discussion was had in respect of the speed limit on the A602 since the new road had opened, as this had been raised by residents. It was agreed that the Parish Council would raise this with the District Council to see what steps could be taken. |
| 23/24 – 053 | a – Item covered in agenda item 23/24 – 052. |
| Date of Next Meeting  13 November 2023 | |