**ALSTONEFIELD PARISH COUNCIL**

A meeting of Alstonefield Parish Council was held on Wednesday 15th December 2021 at 7.00 pm in Alstonefield Village Hall.

**Present:** Chairman, Mr G Campbell, Vice Chair Person, Mrs R McIntyre and councillors:

Mr A Hayes and Mr R Hignett, the clerk, Mrs S Hampson. District Councillor, Mr E Wain was not in attendance. There were three members of the public in attendance.

**21.12.1 Apologies:** Apologies had been received from Councillor, Mr R Butler, Councillor Mr N Bonsall and Councillor, Ms C Osborne.

Unfortunately, Cllr. Mr Butler was unable to attend the meeting due to being in isolation. Unfortunately, Cllr. R Butler had forwarded a written letter of resignation as a councillor. The councillors were grateful for his hard work and support to the parish council during his term of office. (Also see item 21.12.15)

**21.12.2 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting had been published and forwarded to members of the parish council in advance of the meeting.

**Resolved:** To accept the minutes as a true record of proceedings. These were ratified by the Chairman,

Cllr. G Campbell.

**21.12.3 Declarations of personal and prejudicial interest of councillors related to published agenda**

There was no need, by any councillor present, to declare an interest in any matter detailed on the agenda.

**21.11.4 Public speaking (10 minutes)**

There were three members of the public in attendance, none of whom wished to speak during the public speaking session.

**Resolved:** Chairman, Cllr. Campbell will bring hard copies of minutes and agendas to subsequent meetings for the benefit of any member of the public in attendance.

**21.12.5 Items from District Councillor**

The District Councillor was not in attendance but had pledged to chase up the grant aid monies towards defibrillator consumables.

**21.12.6 Emergency Village Planning**

Prior to the meeting, an enquiry had been received following the effects on many parishioners of the recent loss of power, water and means of communication during bad weather conditions.

The councillors discussed the suggestion of purchasing a generator; however, the cost to purchase the size of generator required to be sufficient to aid multiple people would be prohibitive to the parish council. The councillors also considered some other practical heating alternatives and how bottled water could be effectively distributed, bearing data protection regulations in mind; an emergency tool kit; the village hall as an emergency hub. Western Power had advised that, in law, they don’t actually have to do anything during power cuts. The water authority does have a duty to supply water.

**Resolved:** Cllr. Campbell to contact other agencies to ascertain what others provide in such situations.

**Resolved:** The clerk to place an article in the village newsletter seeking suggestions from parishioners.

**Resolved:** To discuss the matter during future agendas.

**21.12.7 Playing field car park sign and gates**

Cllr. Bonsall had sourced new gates for the playing field car park entrance from a local builders’ merchants. Councillors were grateful to Cllr. Bonsall for hanging the gates which had initially been locked. Cllr. Campbell had sourced advisory/information signs.

It was reported that large bags, originally placed across the entrance, had been sabotaged. These will have to be removed but will now be more difficult to move due to the vandalism. Councillors discussed the possibility of purchasing concrete ‘lego type’ blocks to place across the entrance area, if necessary.

BHIB Insurance had forwarded a response about public liability on the playing field’s car park which had been forwarded to councillors in advance of the meeting.

**Resolved:** Cllr. Bonsall to erect the signs either side of the entrance.

**Resolved:** To contact one of the lengths men to attend to the removal of the damaged bags and contents, at an additional cost.

**21.12.8 Planning matters and decisions**

There were no new planning applications for consideration.

**21.12.9 Financial matters (items of expenditure and income), lengthsmen, the clerk, maintenance, car parks, new playing field sign, gates and installation**Cq 1436 Mr P Frost Lengths man & expenses £1,138.13

The above cheque prepared in the November meeting was voided as the clerk had found a minute reference detailing a higher approved hourly rate.

Cq 1437 Mr P Frost Lengths man & expenses £1,248.13

Cq 1438 Lester Lowe Ltd New playing field gates, hangings etc £329.58 (VAT £54.93)

Cq 1439 I Redfern Lengths man duties £221.25

Cq 1440 I Redfern PC equipment storage £50.00

Cq 1441 R Butler New Christmas tree lights £55.96 (VAT £9.33)

Cq 1442 R Butler Village Christmas tree & delivery £130.00

Cq 1443 S Hampson Reimbursement of expenses £4.45

Cq 1444 S Hampson December clerk’s salary £199.95

Cq 1445 S Hampson January clerk’s salary £199.95

Cq 1446 G Campbell Playing field entrance signs £159.43 (VAT £26.57)

DD HMRC Quarter 3 income tax £161.40

The clerk had prepared an invoice to Alliance Environmental in the sum of £400. This was to reclaim monies as part of a lengths man scheme, to offset mowing/strimming costs within the parish.

The clerk had completed a Vat return to reclaim VAT from the previous year’s VAT.

**21.12.10 Authority to amend the contact address for bank statements**

The clerk had prepared an authority to be signed by two authorised signatories to amend the delivery address of the parish council’s bank statements to the clerk’s home address but unfortunately, there was only one authorised signatory in attendance.

**21.12.11 Matters arising from internal audit November 2021**

The internal auditor had met with the clerk in November to undertake an interim internal audit concerning the period April to November 2021 and matters from the previous audit. She raised the following points to bring before the council, as part of her transparency check, that do not feature on the website:

An accessibility document for the website

The annual governance statement following the last financial year ending 31st March 2021

The bank reconciliation for the accounts to 31st March 2021

The notice of public exercise rights for the accounts to 31st March 2021

Ear marked reserves

Councillors register of interests

She also commented that:

The financial regulations are the model document which will need to be customised to Alstonefield Parish Council.

VAT needs to be clearer but the new clerk now itemises the VAT portion of each item of expenditure within the minutes.

**Resolved:** The clerk to approach the internal auditors to request moving to an annual audit only, not having an interim audit in November.

**21.12.12 Budget items for precept 2022-2023**

The clerk had forwarded budget items for consideration in advance of the meeting. The precept documentation and tax bases used to indicate the parish council’s precept effect on Band D properties had not yet been received from Staffordshire Moorlands District Council. At the December meeting, members considered precepting for the same figure as in the previous financial year.

**Resolved:** To reach final precept decisions at the January parish council meeting.

**21.12.13 Request from Alstonefield Cricket Club to place a storage shed on the playing field**

Alstonefield Cricket Club had approached the parish council for permission to erect a shed on the playing field to store equipment. Possible planning permission requirements were raised. Other issues mentioned included what may happen if the cricket club should unfortunately disband; possible approaches from other community groups.

**Resolved:** To advise the cricket club that planning advice must be sought and responses provided to the parish council to enable the parish council to reach an informed decision. If a shed is placed on the playing field and the club disbands, then the shed will be removed from the playing field at the expense of the cricket club.

**21.12.14 Review of signage policy**

This was not discussed.

**21.12.15 Items for the village newsletter.**

Unfortunately, Cllr. Mr Butler had been unable to attend the meeting due to being in isolation.

Cllr. R Butler had forwarded a written letter of resignation as a councillor. The councillors were grateful for his hard work and support to the parish council during his term of office.

**Resolved:** In addition to advertising the casual vacancy notice in the village hall notice board and on the village website, the vacancy will be advertised through the village newsletter.

**Resolved:** To also seek the opinion and ideas of parishioners in the next edition of the village newsletter in relation to emergency situations.

**21.12.16 Highway issues, pot holes**

Cllr. Hignet reported that at the bottom of the Pinch, by the bridge, an accumulating build up of gravel is having an adverse effect on the direction of heavy rain water flowing towards Lode Mill and also giving the false impression that the area can be parked on by vehicles. This is generating another potential hazard near the bridge. The matter is actually a Derbyshire County Council (DCC) issue. Some patching work is also required near this area.

**Resolved:** The clerk to report the above matters and request that DCC removes the gravel and attends to necessary tarmac patching work in the vicinity.

**21.12.17 Correspondence and electronic communication**

Details had been forwarded to members in advance of the meeting and included: SPCA Bulletins, SPCA AGM, December Village & Community magazine deadline, Electoral services - advised of change of Chairman , future meeting dates confirmed and booked with Alstonefield Village Hall, Healthwatch Staffordshire E-bulletin, faulty defibrillator battery changed, SPCA Annual report, SPCA £500,000 fuel poverty fund opens for grant applications, SPCA Covid Plan B guidance for Parish and Town Councils,

Moorlands Partnership Board Grants Leaflet, Moorlands Partnership Board, SPCA Clerk's Tech Forum - Free Virtual Summit, SCC Advanced Notification of Road Closures, Hartington Town Quarter Neighbourhood Plan, enquiries for grass cutting contracts in 2022, SPCA Training courses 2022

Local Needs Affordable House in Wetton for sale with requirement to advise the parish council.

**21.12.18 Any other business**

Cllr. Hayes had been contacted by a neighbouring parish regarding the possible participation in a purchase of mugs for the parish children to commemorate the forthcoming Queen’s Diamond Jubilee. Councillors discussed VAT implications and identifying eligible children in the parish.

**Resolved:** Cllr. Hayes to advise the neighbouring parish that Alstonefield Parish Council would be interested in participating in the scheme and purchasing an identified number of mugs, net of VAT, to enable the other parish council to reclaim the VAT.

**Resolved:** Cllr. McIntyre to compile a list of eligible children to receive a commemorative mug.

**21.12.21 Date of next meeting**

**Resolved:** to hold the next meeting on Wednesday, 19th January 2022 and not 26th January, as previously reported, to enable completed precept documentation to reach Staffordshire Moorlands District Council prior to the deadline.

**Resolved**: The clerk to advise the village hall secretary of the change of date for the January meeting.

The meeting was declared closed at 8.10 pm

Mrs S Hampson

Clerk

Alstonefield Parish Council

21st December 2021

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