

ALSTONEFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

A meeting of Alstonefield Parish Council was held on Wednesday 19th January 2022 at 7.00 pm in Alstonefield Village Hall.

Present: Chairman, Mr G Campbell, Vice Chair Person, Mrs R McIntyre and councillors: Mr N Bonsall, Mr A Hayes and Mr R Hignett, the clerk, Mrs S Hampson and District Councillor, Mr E Wain. There were three members of the public in attendance.

22.1.1 Apologies and attendance register:

Apologies had been forwarded to the Chairman by Cllr. Ms C Osborne due to illness. All other Councillors present completed the attendance register.

22.1.2 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.

22.1.3 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.

22.1.4 Co-option and voting to fill one parish councillor vacancy

The clerk had calculated the notice period for the casual vacancy notice which had been verified by the electoral team at Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (SMDC). The clerk had also forwarded a copy of the notice to SMDC. The notice had been published within the parish and sent to the Community Magazine.

Interest had been received from three people, two of whom were eligible to submit a statement of interest for consideration and these had been forwarded to the councillors in advance of the meeting.

SMDC had not advised that it was necessary to call an election as SMDC had not received interest from 10 or more eligible candidates. This meant that the casual vacancy could be filled by co-option.

The clerk had also sent guidance to all councillors, in advance of the meeting, from Staffordshire Parish Councils Association (SPCA) on the correct process to fill a casual vacancy by co-option. The clerk had also brought printed copies to the meeting, along with printed copies of the candidates' statements.

Unfortunately, one candidate could not be present at the meeting. SPCA had been consulted on this and confirmed that it was not necessary for the candidate to be present, as his statement of interest had been received and could be read.

At this point in the meeting, The Chairman, Mr Campbell asked one of the candidates if she wished to speak further about her application but she did not wish to add anything further to her statement. Chairman, Mr Campbell suggested that the voting be deferred to the end of the meeting.

Resolved: to defer the voting on the statements of application for the vacancy to the end of the agenda.

22.1.5 Items from District Councillor

District Councillor, Mr Wain had liaised with the clerk, in advance of the meeting and reported that SMDC had, unfortunately, lost the completed grant application form for grant aid monies towards defibrillator consumables. He had forwarded another application form to the clerk for completion. This had been completed in time for the meeting and was presented to the District Councillor for consideration/processing by SMDC. District Councillor, Mr Wain advised that some matters were not moving forward very quickly with the District Council at present.

22.1.6 Emergency Village Planning

Subsequent to the December meeting, the clerk had forwarded an article to the editors of the community newsletter/magazine. One response was received detailing some contact email addresses.

Chairman, Mr Campbell had spoken to two people about the concept of facilities being made available from a central point in case of long term power and communication loss. Fortunately, the majority of vulnerable people concerned have other family members in the locality. Communication difficulties were considered a significant problem along with loss of power and water. Chairman, Mr Campbell provided some information about uninterruptable power supplies (UPS) and generators. UPS can be in excess of £10,000 to last for 24 hours.

Resolved: to consider Alstonefield Village Hall as the most sensible centre point/communications hub.

Resolved: Chairman, Mr Campbell to liaise further with village hall personnel, STWA.

Resolved: to place the matter on future agendas

22.1.7 Playing field car park

The new signs had been delivered to Cllr. Bonsall after the December meeting. These had been erected. The lengths man had out chatter down

22.1.8 Planning matters and decisions

There was one new planning applications for consideration.

NP/SM/1221/1410 Gateham Grange, Alstonefield. S73 application for removal of condition 2 on NP/SM/1120/1021

The details had been forwarded to all councillors in advance of the meeting. Chairman, Mr Campbell had brought hard copies of the plans for further consideration and the planning portal was also viewed. The proposal was not particularly clear.

Resolved: to defer the decision for further clarification and forward comments to the clerk for submission

As previously reported, Alstonefield Cricket Club had requested permission from the parish council to erect a storage shed on the playing field. It was resolved to request that the Cricket Club seek clarification regarding any necessary planning permissions. A member of the Cricket Club had done this and forwarded a response from Peak District National Park Authority (PDNPA) however, this was aimed at the parish council erecting the shed rather than the Cricket Club. Further clarification was requested. The PDNPA reported that planning permission would in fact be required for the Cricket Club to erect a shed on the parish council's playing field.

Resolved: The clerk to confirm that the parish council will grant permission to erect the shed on condition that planning permission is granted and that if the club disbands, the shed is removed from the playing field.

22.1.9 Financial matters (items of expenditure and income), lengthsman, the clerk, maintenance, car parks, Alstonefield Cricket Club, consideration of financial contribution to community newsletter/magazine

A communication had been received regarding the production costs of the community news letter/magazine together with the hard work involved by a small number of volunteers to produce and distribute this valuable, vital communication tool. The clerk reported that neighbouring parish councils contribute to similar productions in other parishes.

Resolved: to pay the sum of £50 to assist with the production the newsletter/magazine after seeking clarification of the payee (name of the magazine /organisation's account) .

Cq 1447	S Hampson	January clerk's salary	£199.95
Cq 1448	S Hampson	February clerk's salary	£199.95
Cq 1449	S Hampson	Reimbursement of expenses	£4.50
Cq 1450	S Hampson	6 months' premises allowance	£52.00*
Cq 1451	I Redfern	Lengthsman invoice 504	£137.50
Cq 1452	I Redfern	Lengthsman invoice 505	£50.00
Cq 1453	CommuniCorp	36 Commemorative mugs	£251.76 (VAT £41.96)
		For children Queen's Jubilee (See item 22.1.13)	

Car park monies had kindly been collected by Cllr. Mr Hayes in the sums of £29.10 and £13.90.

The clerk had extracted details from the lengthsman's invoices in relation to the portion of mowing of the playing field for the cricket club fixtures. She had forwarded an invoice to the cricket club for payment.

*The auditor had forwarded an email for the attention of the Chairman in relation to ‘working from home allowance’ for the Clerk. This was discussed.

Resolved: To award the sum of £104 each year for the above purpose.

22.1.10 Bank account signatories and arrangement of direct debits for regular items, including the website

The clerk had forwarded details of the parish council’s bank account as amendments to signatories etc can now only be completed on line, by two authorised signatories. A document was finalised with the addition of Cllr. Mr Bonsall’s signature to amend the correspondence address for the bank statements to be sent to the Clerk’s address.

Resolved: Chairman, Mr Campbell to arrange for the addition of Cllr. Mrs McIntyre and Cllr, Mr Hignet as signatories and to investigate setting up direct debit payments for the website and licence.

22.1.11 Precept 2022-2023

The clerk and Responsible Finance Officer had forwarded details of the tax base figure received from Staffordshire Moorlands District Council after the last meeting. The parish council’s choice of precept for the year 2022-2023, divided by the tax base figure, generates the precept figure for Band D properties as part of the council tax. The tax base was marginally different this year. Based on budget figures discussed at the December meeting, plus the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee, the clerk and Responsible Finance Officer advised that if all the budget figures were spent during the forthcoming financial year this would result in an erosion of capital reserves towards £3,000. This cannot be sustained. Income from the playing field and car parks would not mitigate this and is uncertain. Members discussed the final precept figure and the impact of raising it. The clerk provided historical precept figures and based on these, the precept figure had not really varied for over 5 years. The clerk also advised that she had successfully completed documentation with an organisation to receive £400 towards the lengthsman’s costs.

Resolved: Alstonefield Parish Council to precept for the figure of £8,500 for 2022-2023 (an increase of approximately £1,000) and the clerk to continue to submit documentation to reclaim an amount, by reimbursable expenditure, through the lengthsman scheme.

22.1.12 Review of signage policy

Members had received a copy of the parish council’s signage policy in advance of the meeting for consideration. Some items needed to be amended in relation to the highway and not on parish council land.

Resolved: To amend the signage policy, as above. The clerk amended the policy in the meeting as instructed.

22.1.13 Queen’s Diamond Jubilee

Subsequent to the last meeting, Cllr. Mrs McIntyre and Cllr. Ms Osborne had provided approximate numbers of children within the parish who may be eligible to receive a commemorative mug should the parish council decide to proceed with an order. From one supplier, the value of each mug would be £5.50 plus VAT and delivery . Based on the number of approximately 30 parish children, this would be insufficient to obtain a discount. The minimum order was for a box of 36. Councillors discussed collaboration with another parish council but due to the number involved, neither would achieve a discount.

Resolved: The clerk to complete an order for one box of 36 mugs and to subsequently reclaim the VAT.

Chairman, Mr Campbell provided some information about beacons which are being lit throughout the country to mark the Queen’s Jubilee. There are a number of health and safety requirements to consider, The clerk stated that the insurance company would also have to be contacted. The councillors discussed the topic but agreed that a lot more information was required.

Resolved: Chairman, Mr Campbell to undertake further research on beacons and report back at the next meeting in March.

Resolved: Chairman, Mr Campbell to make contact with representatives from the village hall and the church to ascertain any interest in jubilee events and to report at the March meeting.

22.1.14 Items for the Community Magazine

Resolved: to advertise a date for a parish spring clean event (Saturday, 26th March 2022 from 9.30 am) meeting at the village hall and to request volunteers to participate.

22.1.15 Highway issues, pot holes

Derbyshire County Council (DCC) had been contacted by the clerk to attend to an issue at the bottom of the Pinch, near the bridge and a reference number issued. Chairman, Mr Campbell reported that another highway issue had been attended to.

22.1.16 Correspondence and electronic communication

Details had been forwarded to members in advance of the meeting and items not already covered by the agenda included: SPCA Bulletins and training events, Covid Self Isolators Welfare Check In Service, Redlynch Leisure playground improvements,

22.1.17 Any other business

Resolved: to move all future meetings to a 7.30 pm start

22.1.18 Date of next meeting

Wednesday, 9th March 2022 at 7.30 pm

Confidential items

21.1.19 Lengthsman contracts and bonus

The clerk and Cllr. Mr Bonsall had been to see one of the lengthsman to discuss an issue he had previously raised at Mill Dale but unfortunately, he was not available.

Resolved: Mr Hignett to make a further attempt to discuss the issue at Mill Dale with the lengthsman

Resolved: Not to introduce a bonus scheme at present.

Co-option to fill one vacancy

Councillors read and discussed the statements received from two applicants to fill the one vacancy. Councillors proceeded to cast their vote by a show of hands to fill the single vacancy .

Resolved: By a majority vote to co-opt Mr C McIlroy to fill the casual vacancy.

(Completion of Acceptance of Office of new councillor and register of interest of new councillor to be completed within 28 days)

Resolved: To thank the other candidate for their interest shown in the vacancy.

The meeting was declared closed at 8.45 pm

Mrs S Hampson
Clerk
Alstonefield Parish Council

24th January 2022

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