

ALSTONEFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Draft Minutes of a meeting of Alstonefield Parish Council was held on Wednesday 11th November 2023 at 7.00 pm in the Alstonefield Village Hall.

Present: Chair: Rupert Hignett (RH), Vice Chair: Gordon Campbell (GC), Alan Hayes (AH), Rebecca Longdon (RL), Sarah Jeffery (SJ), Charlie McIlroy (CM), Mike Newman (MN) and the Clerk, M Jinks. There were also 6 members of the public in attendance in addition to the District Councillor, Edwin Wain (EW).

23.11.1 Apologies

There were no apologies

23.11.2 Minutes of the previous two meetings

The draft Minutes of the previous meeting had been published and forwarded to members of the Council in advance of the meeting. These were confirmed as a true record of proceedings and signed by the Chair.

23.11.3 Declarations of personal and prejudicial interest of councillors related to published agenda

None declared.

23.11.4 Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported back on the action that he had taken following the previous meeting.

23.11.5 Items to/from the District Councillor

EW advised that the District Council had agreed (against his judgement) to spend £3.2m at upgrading the indoor market at Leek.

CM asked EW if he had any knowledge on the village's ACV application for The George; EW didn't know but would speak to the Senior Planning Officer.

23.11.6 Planning matters, decision notices and appeals

Application NP/SM/1023/1261 for demolition of existing, and erection of replacement, agricultural buildings at Priory Farm, Narrowdale was discussed and there were no objections.

Application NP/SM/1023/1281 for removal of the agricultural tie at Hope Farm was discussed and there were no objections.

The Clerk advised that the PC would no longer receive decision notices as routine. It was agreed that he would follow all applications where the PC had objections, and any others upon request.

There were no appeals to note.

23.11.7 Financial matters - items of expenditure and income

Car park monies had kindly been collected by AH in the sum of £76.25. The Clerk had also received £50 upon the renewal of the allotment lease.

The following payment was approved:

BACS	Donation to village playgroup	£50.00, no VAT
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After considering the above transactions, the Council had balances of £5,420 in the current account and £19,142 in the deposit account (including £16.25 interest for September and £21.92 for October).

23.11.8 Items for community magazine

None

23.11.9 Highway Issues

GC had communicated with David Rushton (of SCC) about a blocked drain just above Lode Close.

Due to weather conditions, the Chair had been unable to take pictures of the underside of Lode Bridge.

The Clerk advised that he had heard back from David Rushton who had found the opportunity to inspect the frontage of The George. DR confirmed that the whole area was Council property and should be kept clear. He had spoken to the tenants who advised him that they were leaving and would take the cobbles and fire pits with them. The clerk agreed that the encroachment and the gravel commenced long before the current tenancy. DR also advised that the bench(es) on the median strip need a licence; he confirmed that he would look very favourably on a retrospective application. The Council do not own the bench(es), but did agree to making the application and paying any reasonable associated fee. CM reminded the meeting that the Council's enquiries were on the back of parishioners' concerns.

23.11.10 Correspondence

- Peak Park confirmed they were pressing ahead with parking charges. GC had subsequently spoken with the BBC.
- The Council declined to purchase products advertising "hedgehog highways"
- A parishioner had e-mailed, concerned about the lack of lengthsman. The Clerk is to respond advising that one was now in place.
- A member of the public had e-mailed asking what the Council would do about the imminent closure of The George. The Clerk had responded that the Council had no power in the matter; that would be up to the landlord, Marston's plc.
- The tenant of The George had sent a number of unpleasant and personal e-mails to the Clerk, blaming the Council for his decision.
- The First Responders had identified a malfunction of the Milldale defibrillator; this was under warranty and had been reported to the manufacturer.

23.11.11 Emergency action plan

SJ advised that she had now tailored the central government template and would circulate it for Councillors' consideration. She advised that it largely required identifying willing volunteers for various scenarios. AH reminded that meeting that volunteering often had liability and insurance issues. Once approved by the Council, the plan could be publicised via the community magazine.

23.11.12 Alstonefield Lengthsman

The Chair advised that Colin Lovatt had agreed the role of lengthsman and had signed the contract.

23.11.13 Interim Internal Audit

The Clerk advised that the audit had been carried out. The results were mainly positive with a couple of small disclosure requirements to be made on the website – the Clerk to advise GC.

A review of the insurance document noted that the Council is insuring the War Memorial – which is in the churchyard and not Council property. GC to investigate further.

23.11.14 Risk Assessment

The Clerk had previously circulated the assessment (dated October 2023); it was unanimously agreed to adopt it.

23.11.15 Christmas Tree

GC will purchase; he and CM will assist Richard Butler in its erection and decoration. RB will, once again, kindly supply the power.

23.11.16 AOB

None

The date and time of the next meeting was agreed to be 7:00pm on Wednesday 13th December.

The meeting was declared closed at 7:53pm

These minutes remain draft until formal approval at the next parish council meeting.