

ALSTONEFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

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

Present: Chair: G Campbell (GC), A Hayes (AH), R Hignett (RH), S Jeffery (SJ) and the Clerk, M Jinks. There were five members of the public in attendance together with M Newman (MN)

23.01.1 Apologies

Councillor McIlroy had previously sent his apologies.

23.01.2 Minutes of the previous meeting

The draft minutes of the previous meeting had been published and forwarded to members of the Council in advance of the meeting. These were amended by the addition of paragraph 22.11.18 concerning the end of the Clerk's probationary period (previously discussed as a confidential matter). The revised Minutes were confirmed as a true record of proceedings and signed by the Chairman (GC).

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

None declared.

23.01.4 Clerk's Report

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

23.01.5 Items to/from the District Councillor

Nothing advised

23.01.6 Vacancy for Councillors and office holders

Councillor McIntyre had resigned shortly after the last meeting, thus creating two vacancies and a vacancy for Vice Chair. MN had been invited to the meeting following his expressing an interest in becoming a Councillor; he gave a brief introduction and was then unanimously co-opted to the Council. MN signed the relevant Declaration of Acceptance of Office which was witnessed by the Clerk

The Chair (GC) advised that he is stepping down as Chair, but wished to remain as a Councillor. RH stated his desire to become Chair and was keen to work with GC as his Vice Chair. Both positions were agreed unanimously.

23.01.7 Planning matters, decision notices and appeals

Application NP/SM/1122/1457 concerning the installation of a solar powered ticket machine at Milldale carpark was discussed. There were significant concerns that this would cause significant roadside parking which would become a highways safety issue. The Clerk was instructed to respond setting out the council's objections.

The Council had also been advised of a proposal to upgrade footpath 10 (terminating at Plum Tree Farm) into a Bridle Way. There were concerns that this would encourage trail bikes and run the risk of gates being left open allowing livestock to mix and/or escape on to the highways at either end. The Clerk was instructed to respond setting out the Council's objections.

Application NP/SM/1222/1612 concerning the installation of solar panels on Manifold Cottage was discussed. The Clerk was instructed to respond stating that the Council had no objections.

There were no decision notices to note or discuss

There were no appeals to note or discuss

23.01.8 Financial matters - items of expenditure and income

Car park monies had kindly been collected by AH in the sum of £54.55

The following payments were approved:

Chq 1488	Staffordshire Parish Council Assoc	£90.00, incl VAT
Chq 1489	Alstonefield Village Hall	£80.00, no VAT
Chq 1490	Audrey Snodin (re Wreath)	£25.00, no VAT

Chq 1491	M Jinks (Clerk's 1/4ly net salary)	£786.04, no VAT
Direct Debit	HMRC (PAYE)	£132.80, no VAT

After taking into account the above transactions, the Council had balances of £16,277 in the current account and £4,044 in the deposit account.

RH advised that he had contacted the Milldale lengthsmen for an update report; the latter stated he had “not yet finished his work” and would submit his invoice for work done before the financial year end.

23.01.9 Bank account and signing mandate

GC advised that Councillor McIntyre's resignation had delayed the introduction of online banking. Both he and RH were now set up and would authorise the Clerk as soon as possible. The Clerk, in his capacity as Financial Officer was keen to transfer surplus funds from the current account to the deposit account, to benefit from increasing interest rates.

23.01.10 Policies update – ownership of land assets.

GC produced Land Registry extracts that confirmed the Council was the registered owner of Green Hill. He also produced documentation indicating that Green Well appeared to be unadopted – it was not registered in anyone's name – the Council agreed to continue to maintain it.

Archford Moor quarry also appears to be not registered; though it is believed it is owned by the Council.

GC was still working on ascertaining ownership of Lode quarry and “The Bog”

23.01.11 Items for community magazine

The Clerk was instructed to renew the vacancy for a Councillor in addition to advising about the new member and officers.

23.01.12 Highway issues

As noted at the last meeting, Staffordshire CC had advised that the lane in front of The George is privately owned and not their responsibility. GC had undertaken a land registry search and it appears that the lane is unadopted. The Council will monitor the situation and write to the property owner (Marstons PLC) if any further subsiding becomes apparent.

23.01.13 Correspondence and electronic communication

An anonymous letter had been received concerning agricultural waste on some of the parish roads. Anonymous letters are, generally, not given as much consideration as signed ones. In this instance, the Council were of the opinion that any mess is part of living in a rural setting. As none of the Councillors shared the writer's concerns, no further action is to be taken. The organiser of the car boot sales had provided a list of dates and had agreed to the new rates. The Clerk had entered the dates into the “playing field diary”

A request had been received from Hartington Surgery Patients Group seeking funding for a portable, 24-hour, ECG monitor. The Council agreed to send a £100 contribution.

23.01.14 Bad Weather Action Plan

SJ had been in contact with the Village Hall representatives. Due to the festive season, there had been little progress and a fuller report should be available at the next meeting.

23.01.13 Any other business

Following public representations prior to the meeting, the Clerk was instructed to contact Staffordshire DC about the state of the wall, between the footpath and the river, along the road from Lode Mill to Milldale. The wall is in a state of disrepair and stones are ending up on the road surface – thereby presenting a potential safety hazard.

The Clerk asked the Councillors, ahead of the next meeting, to consider any events or plans for the King's Coronation in May.

SJ to remind the lengthsmen about the fence repairs needed in the playing field – they have deteriorated.

GC produced signs to be lightly affixed to cars, parked overnight, in the playing field car park; these were approved.

Date of next meeting

Wednesday, 22nd February 2023 at 7.00 pm in the Village Hall.

In addition, it was decided that the Annual Community meeting would not be held separately this year; as before, it would immediately precede the Annual Council meeting in May.

The meeting was declared closed at 8.15pm

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