

ALSTONEFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Draft Minutes of a meeting of Alstonefield Parish Council was held on Wednesday 5th April 2023 at 7.00 pm in Alstonefield Village Hall.

Present: Chair: R Hignett (RH), Vice Chair: G Campbell (GC), R Longdon (RL), C McIlroy (CM), M Newman (MN) and the Clerk, M Jinks. The District Councillor, Edwin Wain (EW), was also in attendance. There were no members of the public in attendance.

23.04.1 Apologies

Alan Hayes (AH) and Sarah Jeffery (SJ) had sent their apologies.

23.04.2 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 confirmed as a true record of proceedings and signed by the Chair.

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

None declared.

23.04.4 Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported back on the action that he had taken following the previous meeting. Within this, following the completion and submission of the election nomination papers for the seven councillors, it had been confirmed that all seven were re-elected unopposed.

23.04.5 Items to/from the District Councillor

EW advised that Gill Heath is to step down as District Councillor. She will remain as a County Councillor. GC updated on the lack of action from Staffs CC re the blocked drain at the top of Lode Lane.

23.04.6 Planning matters, decision notices and appeals

There was no further news regarding the plans to introduce "pay and display" parking at the toilets' car park. However, following a consultation meeting it was expected that the proposal would go ahead.

AH had received a letter from Felicity Edmeston advising that she had contacted Staffs CC with an application to upgrade Back Lane from a footpath to a restricted highway. This caused some confusion as there were already motorised vehicles that use the lane regularly. We would wait to see if SCC are going to progress the application.

Applications NP/SM/0323/0309 and 0310 had recently been received regarding significant refurbishment to Priory Farmhouse, Narrowdale. There were far too many attached documents to discuss the application at such short notice. It was agreed that the Councillors would consider the application and, if necessary, conduct a virtual discussion to enable the Clerk to feed back to the planning department.

The Clerk advised that Application NP/SM/1122/1457 (Pay and display in Milldale) had been granted permission.

There were no appeals to consider.

23.04.7 Financial matters - items of expenditure and income

Car park monies had kindly been collected by AH in the sum of £46.14

The following payments were approved:

Chq 1496	Gordon Campbell – Domain renewal	£22.79, incl VAT
Chq 1497	Martin Jinks – 1/4ly net salary	£702.84, no VAT
Chq 1498	The Ford Partnership – payroll services	£216.00 no VAT
Chq 1499	Alstonefield Village Hall – room hire	£19.00, no VAT
Chq 1500	Ian Redfern – lengthsmen duties and machine service	£575.49, no VAT
DD	HMRC - PAYE	£112.00, no VAT

After taking into account the above transactions, the Council had balances of £13,097 in the current account and £4,053 in the deposit account.

Although no formal decision had been made, it appeared that the Village Hall's potential purchase of a generator now seemed unlikely to proceed. If this was the case, then SJ's initial thoughts regarding an "Emergency Action Plan" needs to be re-visited.

The clerk advised about the number of e-mails he had received following the last meeting and the defibrillator discussions. Whilst it was clear the machines were wanted; it remains unclear whose responsibility they are as they were not purchased or installed by the Parish Council. The need to replace the battery in Alstonefield is quite urgent and it was unanimously agreed that the PC would fund the consumables for the two current machines. Further discussions need to be had about funding and maintaining replacement machines once the current ones become "*out of date.*" It was suggested that the interested parties that wrote to the Council might be approached to form a fund-raising committee. SJ had advised that one potential option would be to lease a fully maintained machine for, say, £1 per day.

23.04.8 Bank account and signing mandate

The Clerk's addition as a signatory was STILL waiting ratification from the bank!

23.04.9 Policies update – ownership of land assets.

The Clerk had asked for guidance from SPCA about registering ownership of Archford Moor quarry, Lode quarry, Blunder Castle (near Dale Bottom) and "The Bog." They were quite helpful about the process to go through but could not offer any constructive advice. As the process was detailed and lengthy it was agreed to leave things as they stand. It was clear that nobody else could "claim ownership" without the PC becoming aware.

23.04.10 Items for community magazine

The Clerk was instructed to insert a message about the upcoming Annual Community Meeting.

23.04.11 Highway issues

There was some discussion about vehicles parked on the road opposite the playing field car park. It was noted that they are not parked illegally as there are no parking restrictions in place. Whilst it was re-affirmed that the PC did not want to allow public overnight parking, it may consider issuing permits, for an annual fee, to use the car park when space allows.

23.04.12 Correspondence and electronic communication

The Clerk had received an application form for Leaden Boot grants – the initial thought was that this could assist with replacing some of the posts and chains around the village greens. After a brief discussion, the Councillors generally felt it was not appropriate for the Parish Council to be seeking charitable donations to undertake work which was primarily their responsibility. It was therefore agreed not to apply for a grant but to ask the lengthsman to repair the posts along with his normal duties.

A member of the public had asked if the PC had considered entering the Best Kept Village. It was agreed that such an undertaking could not be done at short notice and would have to wait until, at least, next year. The Clerk was instructed to revert to the enquirer and suggest that if they wish to take the lead on this, they would receive the support of the PC.

Hartington Surgery had written a long letter of thanks in response to the PC's recent donation.

23.04.13 Coronation Events

The Chair advised that he was waiting to hear from the Village Hall committee of any plans for any community events.

23.04.14 Any other business

The Clerk had, prior to the meeting, circulated the latest (out of date) contracts with the lengthsman. These were to be reviewed, discussed and updated (hopefully) at the next meeting.

Date of next meeting

Wednesday, 17 May 2023 at 7.20 pm in the Village Hall – immediately following the Annual Community Meeting.

The meeting was declared closed at 8.26pm

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