

# ALSTONEFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

**Draft Minutes of a meeting of Alstonefield Parish Council was held on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 7.20 pm in Alstonefield Village Hall.**

**Present:** Chair: R Hignett (RH), Vice Chair: G Campbell (GC), Sarah Jeffery (SJ), R Longdon (RL), C McIlroy (CM), M Newman (MN) and the Clerk, M Jinks. There were approximately 20 members of the public in attendance, following the Annual Community meeting.

## **23.05.1 Apologies**

Alan Hayes (AH) had sent his apologies; as had the District Councillor, Edwin Wain (EW).

## **23.05.2 Officers**

All of the Councillors had been re-elected, unopposed. Rupert Hignett offered himself for Chair and was unanimously appointed. Gordon Campbell offered himself for Vice Chair and was also unanimously appointed. All Councillors signed their Acceptance of Office form(s) which were witnessed by the Clerk. The Clerk also reminded the Councillors to ensure their published Register of Interests was correct and up to date.

## **23.05.3 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.

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

None declared.

## **23.05.5 Clerk's Report**

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

## **23.05.6 Items to/from the District Councillor**

It was noted that EW had been re-elected. There were no other matters for or from the District Councillor.

## **23.05.7 Year end accounting and compliance statements**

- a) The Clerk advised that the Internal Audit Report had been received and was signed as unqualified. The auditor had suggested the Councillors have dedicated e-mail addresses; this would be considered when the Risk Assessment is reviewed later in the year. It was unanimously agreed to re-appoint Mrs Kim Squires as the Internal Auditor for the 2023-24 year.
- b) The Certificate of Exemption was read, agreed and signed by the Chair
- c) The Annual Governance Statement was read, agreed and signed by the Chair
- d) The Clerk presented the Accounting Statement; this was accepted and signed by the Chair
- e) The Confirmation regarding the exercise of public rights was read, agreed and signed by the Chair
- f) The Standing Orders had previously been circulated to the Councillors for their review; these were unanimously adopted.
- g) The Financial Regulations had also been circulated to the Councillors for their review; these were unanimously adopted.

## **23.05.8 Planning matters, decision notices and appeals**

Application NP/SM/0423/0443 at Grange Farm, Stanshope was discussed and there were no objections. Amended application NP/SM/1122/1439 for the pay meters at the toilets was discussed; the amendment only appeared to be in respect of the address. The Councillors reiterated their concerns against the original application. The Clerk was instructed to report the above discussions back to the Planners.

There were no decision notices to discuss.

There were no appeals to discuss.

### **23.05.8 Financial matters - items of expenditure and income**

Car park monies had kindly been collected by AH in the sum of £115.54. The Clerk had also received £220 in respect of the early May car boot sales.

The following payments were approved:

Chq 1501	Ian Redfern – mowing duties	£231.85, no VAT
Chq 1502	Kim Squires – Internal Audit	£145.20, no VAT
Chq 1503	Martin Jinks – reimbursement of defibrillator battery	£318.00 incl VAT
Chq 1504	BHIB Ltd – annual insurance	£329.75, no VAT

The Clerk confirmed he had submitted the VAT reclaim in the sum of £183.71. Furthermore, the Council should have now received the first instalment of the precept, a sum of £4,250.

After taking into account the above transactions, the Council had balances of £16,888 in the current account and £4,056 in the deposit account.

The Clerk advised of an e-mail exchange between himself and two previous Chairs of the Council. Apparently, there is a PayPal account in existence (linked to a Barclays account) which is used to collect funds, donations and other receipts from the community website. These receipts include the sale of walking guides and church leaflets. As the website is owned and maintained by the Parish Council, the PayPal and Barclays accounts are in the Council's name. It was unanimously confirmed that any funds within these accounts are NOT the property of the Council; they are being held solely on behalf of the community.

### **23.05.9 Items for community magazine**

At the Annual Community Meeting, one of the Councillors had agreed to co-ordinate (in a personal capacity) the reporting of pothole concerns within the parish. The Clerk agreed to forward an article about this to the Magazine editor.

### **23.05.10 Parish Member for PDNP**

The Clerk had received a nomination paper allowing the Council to nominate a person for the above position. The Vice Chair indicated that he would be interested in standing and it was agreed he would put himself forward on the Council's behalf.

### **23.05.11 Emergency action plan**

SJ confirmed that little action had been taken on this item and it was agreed to carry the matter forward.

### **23.05.12 Lengthsmen's contracts.**

These had previously been circulated and reviewed by the Councillors. It was noted that the Alstonefield lengthsmen was not actually working the hours allocated, though was only being paid for those hours actually worked. There were no other comments from the Councillors; SJ was asked to contact the Alstonefield lengthsmen for any comments he may have.

### **23.05.13 Future of The George**

The Vice Chair advised that, in their digital e-mail, the proprietor of The George had indicated they may have to close in the near future. Whilst it was generally agreed that it is NOT the Council's concern how people run their business, it would not like to see the property de-licensed. CM added that it may be worthwhile applying for an Asset of Community Value – this was something he would research further.

### **23.05.14 Membership of Peak District Rural Housing Association**

The Clerk had recently had discussions with PDRHA who initially claimed the Council was not a member. This was retracted to say the Council had been a member, but it had been cancelled due to non-attendance at two consecutive AGMs. The Vice Chair produced the Share Certificate as evidence of membership and the Clerk was instructed to take this up with PDRHA to get our membership reinstated.

### **23.05.15 Road Closure**

GC advised that the highway immediately outside the Watts Russell would be closed on 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> July for their music festival.

The date and time of the next meeting was agreed to be 7:00pm on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> June.

The meeting was declared closed at 8.10pm

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