



AUDLEM
PARISH COUNCIL

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c/o Cheshire Association of Local Councils
Park View Business Park
Combermere
Whitchurch
SY13 4AL
Phone: 07507 732832
Email: parishcouncil@audlempc.co.uk

Minutes of the **Annual Meeting** of Audlem Parish Council
held in the Methodist Church, Shropshire St. Audlem
on Monday 15th May 2023 at 7.00pm.

Present: Kate Down (KD), Steve Elliott (SE), Lynette Hopkins (LH), Stephen Hopkins (SH), Tim Lawton (TL) (Vice Chair), Chris May (CM), George McLaren-Brown (G M-B), Adriana Roscoe (AR) Geoff Seddon (GS) (Chair) and Jean Stainthorpe (JS).

In attendance: Katrina Chalk (Clerk to APC) Fourteen members of the public

Prior to the meeting commencing Geoff Seddon asked all those attending to stand for a minutes silence to remember Bernard Edwards who used to be a Member of Audlem Parish Council.

PART A

A member of the public asked if they could record the meeting. GS said this was allowed.

The Chair welcomed the three new Parish Councillors to the Council, Lynette Hopkins, Stephen Hopkins and George McLaren-Brown and the members of the public.

23.1 ELECTION OF CHAIR

Cllr Seddon asked for nominations for the Chair of the Council:

SE proposed GS and AR seconded (LH proposed TL: TL declined to be nominated).

Approved: All in favour - Geoff Seddon was re-elected as Chair of APC.

Prior to addressing other items, the Chair reminded everyone present that the past four years had probably been the most turbulent years for APC. There had been an investigation into bullying, an alleged fraudulent act which left APC with no funds, accusations of damage to private land and an extremely high turnover of Councillors (30) and 5 Chairs. However, in the last few months there has been a team that has moved things forward. He hoped that the new Councillors would build on that progress. Finally, he reminded everyone of the Council's Code of Conduct.

23.2 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

GS proposed TL and LH seconded.

Approved: All in favour - Tim Lawton was re-elected as Vice-Chair to APC

23.3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – None received.

23.4 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS – None declared.

23.5 CO-OPTION OF COUNCILLORS

Action: The Clerk to contact Cheshire East to advertise to fill two Councillor vacancies (Co-opted).

23.6 Public participation

The Parish Council will consider requests from members of the public to address the meeting. However, it is at the Chair's discretion whether requests will be granted to discuss items of business on the agenda and/or relevant Parish matters. If invited to speak, individual members of the public will be allowed a maximum of three minutes. No decision can be made on these matters, but they may be placed on a future agenda.

- i. A member of the public noted there was an advert for a Clerk on the APC website – it was confirmed the current Clerk is leaving for personal reasons.
- ii. A member of the public asked if APC could add the cost of replacing the flag on the Church to their budget as these flags require replacing often due to exposure to the weather.
The Chair and LH pointed out that contributions to the Church for maintenance items was not permitted. However, this would be confirmed at the next meeting and other funding avenues would be investigated.
- iii. A member of the public asked if two serving Members have a long-term interest in Audlem if their property is for sale. They responded that they were committed, otherwise they wouldn't have stood for election.
The Chair advised this was acceptable if they moved away as they had been elected.
A second comment from the same member of the public was rejected by the Chair (SO 2. A.)
- iv. A member of the public asked if any Members of Council had a vested interest in Turnpike Field.
The Chair commented that all residents of Audlem have a shared interest in Turnpike Field. No Member said they had a vested interest.

23.7 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Councillors RESOLVED to approve the Minutes of the meeting held on **4th April 2023**.

Resolved: 6 approved previous minutes, 4 abstained.

8. BUSINESS OF THE ANNUAL MEETING

23.8.1 Review of delegation arrangements to committees, sub committees, staff, and other local authorities.

Action: Deferred to the July Meeting.

2. Review of terms of reference for committees

- Finance Committee
- Communication Group
- Planning Group
- Village Management Group

- Internal & Staff Committee
- Turnpike Field Working Group

Resolved: All Terms of Reference to be approved during the July 2023 Full Council Meeting.

23.8.3 Appointment of members to existing committees

Action: Deferred to the June meeting, once Members have had time to consider which committee fits with their experience.

4. Review and adoption of appropriate standing order and financial regulations.

CM proposed adoption of standing order and financial regulations and SE seconded.

Resolved: All in favour.

Note: The two documents will be reviewed by Members within the financial year.

5. Review of arrangements (including legal agreements) with other local authorities, not-for-profit bodies, and businesses (if relevant)

- PWLB Loan
- Turnpike Field legal agreement

Members reviewed arrangements.

6. Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back.

Current list of representatives on external bodies and vacancies

Burial Board: Cllrs Elliott, Seddon

Public Hall: Cllr Down

ADAPT: Cllr Lawton

ADAS: Cllr

AWEG: Cllr Stainthorpe

ADCA: Cllr

Audlem Traders: Cllr Stainthorpe

ChALC: Chair and Vice Chair – Cllrs

Canal and River Trust: Cllr Stainthorpe

Resolved: All in favour.

All the documentation, committee membership and Asset Register will be reviewed, and recommendations will be discussed in Full Council Meetings, approved, and adopted.

All the above will be completed (and adopted) no later than 11th March 2024

7. Review of inventory of land and other assets including buildings and office equipment.

TL recommended the review of the Asset register was deferred to the July meeting due to new items on the list which need costing. (The new fencing and board walk also needs to be added and costs noted).

Proposed by TL and Seconded by LH

Resolved: All in favour.

8. Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insurable risks.

TL advised the insurance policy will be reviewed by the Finance Committee in June and a quote sought. This will be brought to Full Council in July as the renewal is due in August when the Council doesn't meet.

Proposed by TL and Seconded by LH

Resolved: All in favour.

9. Review of the Council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies

ChALC

Cheshire Community Action. Helped us with the Neighbourhood plan.

LH requested APC subscribe to NALC.

Proposed by LH, seconded by SE.

Resolved: All in favour for APC to join NALC (National Association of Local Councils)

10. Review of the Council's complaints procedure.

11. Review of the Council's policies, procedures, and practices in respect of its obligations under Freedom of Information and data Protection legislation. *(See also Standing Orders 11, 20 and 21)*

I. CCTV Policy.

II. Freedom of Information Policy.

III. General Privacy Notice.

IV. Data Audit Questionnaire.

V. Document Retention & Management Policy.

VI. Privacy Policy.

VII. Internal Privacy Notice.

VIII. Model Publication Scheme.

IX. Subject Access Request Policy.

Resolved: All in favour.

All the documentation will be reviewed, and recommendations will be discussed in Full Council Meetings, approved, and adopted.

All the above will be completed (and adopted) no later than 11th March 2024.

12. Review of the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media

Resolved: All in favour.

The policy for dealing with the press/media will be reviewed, and recommendations will be discussed in Full Council Meetings, approved, and adopted.

This will be completed (and adopted) no later than 11th March 2024.

13. Review of the Council's employment policies and procedures.

I. Discipline & Grievance Policy

II. Health and Safety Policy

III. Staff and Member learning and Development Policy

Resolved: All in favour.

All the documentation will be reviewed, and recommendations will be discussed in Full Council Meetings, approved, and adopted.

All the above will be completed (and adopted) no later than 11th March 2024.

14. Review of the Council's expenditure incurred under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972 or the general power of competence – **none incurred.**

15. Review of Other Policies

- I. Risk Assessment
- II. Equal Opportunities Policy.
- III. Code of Conduct
- IV. Grant Application Policy and Grant Form.
- V. APC Communications Policy.
- VI. Subscriptions
- VII. Buttermarket Booking Policy.
- VIII. Turnpike Field Booking Policy.

Resolved: All in favour.

All the documentation will be reviewed, and recommendations will be discussed in Full Council Meetings, approved, and adopted.

All the above will be completed (and adopted) no later than 11th March 2024.

23.9 PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND DECISIONS

Planning Reference	Address	Description	Comments from APC
23/0814N	Pheasants Rise, Damson Lane, Cox Bank, Audlem CW3 0EU	Construction of new dwelling in garden – 3 bedroom bungalow	Objections raised – see supporting document.
23/1111N	Field to the East of Audlem Road, Audlem	The development of 25 no. residential units, including 7 no. affordable dwellings, with associated infrastructure and landscaping	Objections raised – see supporting document.

Comments submitted by APC relating to **23/0814N** The proposed site is in the Conservation Area in the historic hamlet of Cox Bank, outside Audlem settlement boundary. Policies considered under this objection were: H2 and D4 – the full comments can be viewed on Cheshire East Planning portal.

Comments submitted by APC relating to 23/1111. This application for the development of 25 residential units is contrary to the Audlem Neighbourhood Plan (ANP). Policies considered under this objection were: H1, H5 and D14 - the full comments can be viewed on Cheshire East Planning portal.

Cheshire East Planning Decisions

22/4588N Parkes Cottage, Monks Lane: Outbuilding with overall height of 3.6 metres – Approved.

23/0185N Beech Tree House, Woore Road: Listed building consent for the replacement of single glazed windows with heritage slim double-glazed windows – Approved.

23.10 FINANCIAL MATTERS

- I. Members APPROVED training courses for new Councillors, £25 per Councillor

Proposed by TL and seconded by KD.

Approved: All in favour of new Councillors attending training courses run by ChALC.

- II. Members APPROVED payment schedule covering 1st April to 5th May 2023.

LH queried the invoice for Hales Retail Sawmills. SE advised that a donation had been made from ADAS to cover this and other costs related to the gate at Turnpike Field. Therefore, whilst it is recorded as APC paying for the items, this was only possible because of the donation.

TL thanked ADAS for their donation and support.

TL proposed and SE seconded.

Approved: All in favour.

The Clerk advised the new Members that at each Full Council meeting, the paper invoices were checked against the payment schedule for record and transparency. TL informed the meeting that the invoice relating to the Microsoft license renewal (1) was found and the VAT element added.

Filing Number	Date	Supplier	Invoice NO.	Item	Net cost	VAT	Total	ChAL C confirmed
1	3//02/2023	Reimbursement to G Seddon	No invoice found - email and bank statement	APC Microsoft license renewal	£ 66.66	£ 13.33	£ 79.99	09.05.23
2	30/04/2023	M Dolan	Apr-23	Wages for April 23	£ 416.00		£ 416.00	02.05.23
3	30/04/2023	K Chalk	Apr-23	Wages for April 23	£ 1,128.45		£ 1,128.45	09.05.23
4	29/03/2023	K Chalk	038344 - Curry's	Ink cartridge	£ 22.80	£ 5.69	£ 28.49	
5	06/04/2023	Three Counties	740	March 2023	£ 420.00	£ -	£ 420.00	09.05.23
6	Jan to Mar 2023	HMRC PAYE	Ref: 475P002070732312	PAYE	£ 517.99		£ 517.99	06.04.23
7	15/01/2023	phs	69522927	16th Dec 2022	£ 285.30	£ 57.00	£ 342.40	11.04.23
8	16/03/2023	phs	69694245	16th March 2023	£ 288.30	£ 57.60	£ 345.90	11.04.24
9	Apr-23	Water Plus	wp-INV017630	1 March to 31st March	£ 99.45	£ -	£ 99.45	09.05.23
10	24/04/2023	Hales Retail	987	Material for gate	£ 520.80	£ 104.40	£ 625.00	09.05.24
11	17/04/2023	LCC	532	Locum Clerk - March	£ 2,617.00	£ 523.40	£ 3,141.00	02.05.23
				Total Amount	£ 6,383.26	£ 761.46	£ 7,144.72	

III. Members nominated and APPROVED 2 additional Administrators to be added to the new Lloyds Bank Account. Members nominated Councillors Stephen Hopkins and Chris May.

TL proposed SH and CM and seconded by SE.

Approved: All in favour

IV. Members **NOTED**: An invoice recorded as paid July 2022 (£390.00) to 3 Counties Cleaning, was paid 9th May 2023.

Council NOTED precept payments from Cheshire East will start to be paid into APC bank account as soon as possible.

11. TURNPIKE FIELD

I. Members discussed the outcome of the vote from residents of Audlem to place Turnpike Field into a Deed of Dedication with Fields in Trust. Members APPROVED for the Deed to be signed.

The slips returned were collated by the Clerk and each one checked against the Electoral Register. The results were as follows:

Ballot box votes		Online votes			
		Yes	No	Yes	No
Registered		209	16	88	7
Unregistered	4				
Late	3				
Slips with no field	2				

297 residents agreed that Turnpike Field should be registered with Fields in Trust. **23** residents voted against registering Turnpike Field with Fields in Trust.

LH pointed out that those who choose not to have their names published on the Electoral Roll, but wanted to vote, would have had their opinion discounted. GS confirmed this would have been the case, but it was stated within the article that only those registered on the Electoral Register, would have been included in the final count.

A lengthy discussion took place relating to the acreage of the field and the need to ensure the recorded size of the field was correct, especially as a part of the field is designated to be turned into a car park at some point in the future. Correspondence received from CE Planning Enforcement Officer was discussed (and will be responded to within the required time).

The Chair asked those present to moderate their behaviour on two occasions under SO 2. A. A member of the public apologised for the misheard comment and left the meeting.

JS proposed and seconded by AR.

Approved: 6 in favour, 3 abstentions

- II. Members APPROVED a new member of the Turnpike Field Working Group - Simon Platt (Recommendation from the TFWG meeting on 3 May).

JS proposed and seconded by AR.

Approved: All in favour

- III. To invite quotations to carry out a Tree Inspection.

Members approved the request but asked that local Arborologists were also contacted for quotations.

Approved: All in favour

- IV. Members APPROVED the Maintenance Plan and costings.

Approved: All in favour of the Maintenance Plan. The Chair and Vice Chair approved the necessary expenditure required before the next Council Meeting. The full costings will be presented to the Members during the June meeting.

- V. Members to DISCUSSED the change of Turnpike Field Working Group to become Turnpike Field Management Committee.

Deferred: The recommendation to be discussed during the June meeting in conjunction with the draft Terms of Reference for Committee.

- VI. Members APPROVED the use of field for the following: -

- Coronation overflow parking for 'Picnic in the Park' (retrospectively)
- Audlem Music and Arts Festival 26th May to 30th May 2023

JS proposed and seconded by KD.

Approved: All in favour

12. COMMUNICATIONS GROUP

SE asked the new Members to give him any feedback on the APC website's layout. The website has been improved, but any comments on further improvements are welcome.

13. STAFFING COMMITTEE

Members to DISCUSS and APPROVE

- i. Appointment of Clerk/RFO
- ii. To give the Staffing Committee delegated powers to:
 - recommend candidates for interview.
 - interview those candidates approved.
- iii. offer the post to their preferred candidate, subject to references and Council approval.
- iv. To increase the Salary scale LC 1/2 (SCP 13 - 23 - £12.97 - £15.57 per hour) (£24,948 - £30,151 pro rata).

TL proposed and seconded by SE.

Approved: All in favour

14. **VILLAGE MANAGEMENT GROUP (VMG)**

I. Members NOTED crime stats supplied (March only)

II. Longhill Moss – Cllr McLaren-Brown - **deferred to the June APC Meeting to be included in Part B**

For information only – a site meeting with highways is being arranged. This is to look at the conditions of the roads and planned maintenance work.

GS thanked Chris May and his wife Pippa for organising the children’s Corgi and Crown competition to celebrate the King’s Coronation. The competition was a huge success.

23.15 REPORT BY WARD COUNCILLOR – Rachel Bailey – no report as Cllr Bailey was unavailable.

23.16 OFFICE MATTERS

i. Freedom of Information correspondence responded to within the required timescale.

Booking of Buttermarket

- Members APPROVED the bookings of Buttermarket by ADAPT - 27th April to 21st October inclusive (apart from 20th May when ADAS will be holding ‘This is what we do’ event).

TL proposed and seconded by SE.

Approved: All in favour

23.17 AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

23.18 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held at **7.00pm** on **MONDAY 12TH JUNE 2023** in the Methodist Rooms.

Exclusion of Public

At this point the Chair asked that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of an item pursuant to Section 100 (A) 4 of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 and public interest would not be served in publishing the information. He thanked them for attending.

The Chair thanked Members for attending and closed the meeting at 9.35pm