



**AUDLEM**  
PARISH COUNCIL

## **AUDLEM PARISH COUNCIL**

c/o Cheshire Association of Local Councils  
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Minutes of meeting of Audlem Parish Council  
held in the Methodist Church, Shropshire St. Audlem  
**on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2023 at 7.00pm.**

**Present:** Kate Down [KD], Paul Cawood [PC], Steve Elliott [SE], Tim Lawton [TL] (Vice Chair), Chris May [CM], Adriana Roscoe [AR] and Jean Stainthorpe [JS].

**In attendance:** Ward Cllr Rachel Bailey and Katrina Chalk (Clerk to APC)

### **PART A**

**Members of the public in attendance: 11**

#### **22/160 Apologies for absence:**

Geoff Seddon – in the absence of the Chair, TL (Vice Chair) Chaired the meeting.

#### **22/161 Public participation**

- A resident requested the wording used in minute 22/154 *The Canal Area* was altered to reflect the true condition of the canal. Members agreed to amend the wording from *the poor state of the canal to improve the canal area*.
- A resident stated an email sent to APC on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 had not been acknowledged by the Clerk. The Chair advised an acknowledgement had been sent today prior to the meeting. He advised that due to a confidentiality notice in the correspondent's email, it had not been circulated to Members. The resident gave permission for the email to be circulated and was advised a response would be received within 20 working days (28<sup>th</sup> April). The resident also mentioned a message had been left on the APC mobile and no response had been received – **Action: The Clerk will check the mobile.**
- A resident raised a concern in relation to the recent Newsletter issued by APC asking residents to vote on registering Turnpike Field with Fields in Trust to ensure the field remains as a community space. They stated APC was in breach of purdah due to the local elections in May and any vote during this time appears to be designed to affect public support for a political party. The Chair advised the resident this would be followed up, but Members felt it was an informative newsletter, not a political publication.  
**Action: The resident will be updated after advice is sourced.**

#### **22/162 Declarations of Interest**

To receive disclosures of personal and prejudicial interests from Councillors on matters to be considered at the meeting.

SE – agenda item 22/165 planning application 22/0919N - friend of the applicant

KD – agenda item 22/165 planning application 22/0919N - friend of the applicant

**22/163 Requests for Dispensation** – none received.

**22/164 Confirmation of Minutes**

TL proposed, CM seconded, Council **RESOLVED** to approve the Minutes of the meeting held on **13<sup>th</sup> March 2023**. Signed as accurate minutes of meeting by APC Vice Chair – Tim Lawton.

**22/165 Planning Matters**

Members to **CONSIDER** and **RESOLVE** the following Planning Applications and Planning Appeal

Application	Address	Details	Decision
<b>22/0919N</b> – Appeal – refused by Cheshire East on 4 <sup>th</sup> April 2022	Hilltop, Green Lane, Audlem, CW3 0ES.	Erection of a single dwelling and a garage on the garden land	Objections – see below
<b>A23/1111N</b>	Field to the east of Audlem Road.	The development of 25 no. residential units, including 7 no. affordable dwellings, with associated infrastructure and landscaping	Request for additional time

**22/0919N** Members **RESOLVED** to object referencing the Neighbourhood Plan - that the proposed development does not comply with the following -

H1 Outside the settlement boundary residential permission will not be permitted except in circumstances specified in this plan. Development of isolated dwelling houses in rural areas will be resisted except where these accord in national policy.

H2 permission will be granted for residential developments that are outside the settlement boundary and

A) fill a small restricted gap in the continuity of existing frontage buildings, where the site is closely surrounded by buildings, normally within an existing dwellings, curtilage or

B) are located on Brownfield land

D1. Design of all new buildings shall be in character with existing buildings within the village; and will respect and enhance the natural, build, and historic environment of the village.

**Proposed by CM and seconded by AR – 3 In favour, 2 abstentions.**

**A23/1111N** Members **RESOLVED** to request a time extension for comments and that **NOTED**, when a similar application on this piece of land was put forward, it was refused as it is outside the settlement boundary.

**22/166 Financial Matters**

1. Request for a review of the Asset Register

**Action: TL will review the Asset Register and report back to Members at the next meeting.**

2. Members **NOTED** the report on:

The claim actioned to Santander Bank

On 22 March, all the required forms were completed to change the signatories and address, these were sent by post and email to Santander. Document pack contained all required identification documents for three new signatories to be added to the account. January and February APC meeting minutes were included evidencing retirement of two councillors (previous signatories),

resolutions to add three new signatories and change of registered address. On 30 March, Santander confirmed that previous signatories have been removed, the three new signatories have been added. APC new registered postal address has been changed to ChALC office as requested. Santander have confirmed they are currently not undertaking any further investigation into 'alleged fraud' are now waiting on the conclusion of the police investigation. As a result, they are not progressing APC claim for 'lack of duty of care' or 'due diligence' in allowing 'apparently fraudulent transactions' to be enacted on APC Santander account. Police suggested APC demand Santander carry out their own investigation. However, locum Clerk believes APC has already requested this in previous correspondence sent since August 2022. The locum Clerk has requested permission from the Chair of APC, to share any correspondence to Santander with the debt recovery consultant (acting pro bono) for their opinion, this has not been received to date, so no action has been taken.

- The claim actioned to Financial Services Ombudsman Ombudsman Claim cannot be finalised until Santander confirm their position regarding the claim APC have made against them.

A member of the public suggested a contract should be agreed between APC and the pro bono consultant who is supporting Kate Howe whilst working with the Police to release or share confidential information with them and to always ensure discretion.

3. Council **APPROVED** the payment schedule 8<sup>th</sup> March to 31<sup>st</sup> March. The Chair confirmed CM had checked the payment schedule against the invoices and they matched – see page 4.

**Proposed by TL and Seconded by CM – All in favour.**

4. Member's retrospectively **APPROVED** the Clerk's delegated authority to print the newsletter at a cost of up to **£265** (Fin Regs 4.1).  
**Proposed by SE and Seconded by JS – All in favour.**
5. Members **APPROVED** the engagement of Lakes Internal Auditing Services (Charlene Iredale) for year-end 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 on the basis of the areas covered within the Internal Audit and physical inspection.
  - John Morris - Afford Bond - **£1,150**
  - Charlene Iredale - Lakes Internal Auditing Services - **£400**
  - Rachel Pearson – Account-ant - **£275** for up to 4 hours and then **£40** per hour after this point.

**Proposed by SE and Seconded by AR – All in favour.**

6. For information only:

- EDF Contract has been renewed for 12 months – Standing Charge 60p per day and 38.4p kWh  
– The Chair advised the Smart Meter was installed today (as per February Minute 22/136).

Payment schedule 8<sup>th</sup> March to 31<sup>st</sup> March *Item 3 on page 2*

Filing Number	Date	Supplier	Invoice NO.	Item	Net cost	VAT	Total	ChALC confirmed payment
1	26/02/2023	ICO	0019a2e50902	Renewal of data protection fee - Paid by Clerk and reclaimed under expenses - item 6.				Paid and reclaimed by Clerk see item 6
2	07/03/2023	Audlem Methodist Church	27	Room booking 07/03/2023 Finance Meeting	£ 25.00	£ -	£ 25.00	16.03.23
3	13/03/2023	Audlem Methodist Church	24	Room booking 13/03/2023 Full Council Meeting	£ 40.00	£ -	£ 40.00	16.03.23
4	20/03/2023	M Dolan - Lenghtsman wages	44986	Wages for March	£ 416.00		£ 416.00	31.03.23
5	20/03/2023	Clerks wages and expenses	<u>February and March 2023</u>	Expenses - £130.93 Wages - £1,614.10	£ 1,738.47	£ 6.56	£ 1,745.03	31.03.23
6	23/03/2023	Screwfix - to be reimbursed to N Mottershead	A11291681012	Burg-Wachter Brass Keyed Alike Long Shackle Padlock 40mm 4 Pack	£ 24.99	£ 5.00	£ 29.99	28.03.23
7	06/03/2023	Audlem Methodist Church	23	Room booking 6/03/2023 for TFWG Meeting	£25.00	£ -	£ 25.00	31.03.23
8	09/02/2023	Ralph Warburton	V02076372800	Locum Clerk's mobile phone charges for 9th Feb to 8th March 2023	£ 23.76	£ 5.94	£ 29.70	31.03.23
9	24/02/2023	HMRC	475 P M 00207073	PAYE	£ 328.66	£ -	£ 328.66	31.03.23
10	28/03/2023	LCC	513	Locum Clerk - February 2023 invoice	£ 3,781.27	£ 756.25	£ 4,537.52	31.03.23
11	27/03/2023	Audlem Printers	S14906	Printing of APC newsletter	£ 265.00	£ -	£ 265.00	31.03.23
						<b>Total Amount</b>	<b>£ 7,441.90</b>	

APPROVED

## **22/167 Communication Group**

Due to the current Chair of the group standing down. SE was proposed as the new Chair of the Communication Group.

**Proposed by JS and Seconded by AR – All in favour.**

## **22/168 Turnpike Field**

- 1) Members **APPROVED** the purchase of plants/saplings to be planted in Turnpike Field –In various places, as per the Maintenance Plan approved at TFWG on 6 March. The quote for the purchase is £80.

**Proposed by JS and Seconded by TL – All in favour.**

- 2) Members **APPROVED** the re-siting of the gateway on Green Lane approximately 8 metres into the field and the associated works. This work is being carried out on highways safety grounds. The Parish Council will not incur any costs for this work. Members approved the payment of £1,500 for new MOT stone if required, although a village organisation may pay for it.

**Proposed by JS and Seconded by TL– All in favour.**

A member of the public asked if CE Planning Department had been contacted regarding the re-siting of the gateway.

**Action: This would be verified as part of the associated works.**

- 3) Members **NOTED** updates on:
- FIT
  - Noticeboard – noticeboard installed, and padlock purchased.
  - Wildlife leaflets,
  - Pond dipping platform,
  - Bookings to be approved (if any) None received.

A member of the public asked if a previous question regarding the 'sleepers' used in Turnpike Field could be addressed. The question was, are the sleepers chemically treated? The Clerk asked the resident to supply photos of the sleepers for reference.

**Action: This will be checked and reported back at the next APC meeting.**

## **22/169 Village Management (VMG)**

- a) Members **APPROVED** the request from ADAS to book the Butter Market for Saturday 22 April from 1000 to 12noon to hold an event to let residents know 'what they do'.  
**Proposed by CM and Seconded by SE – All in favour.**
- b) Cheshire East have acknowledged receipt of correspondence regarding the condition of the highways. CM advised the meeting the response from CE had been received at 4pm today. The correspondence will be read, and feedback given to Members at the next meeting.
- c) Members to **NOTE**
- Cheshire East have not responded to correspondence (dated 30th January 2023) regarding leniency on parking during the medical centre alterations and we understand some parking tickets are still being issued – **this is being followed up.**
  - **Coronation**  
VMG are pursuing a number of options for celebrating the Coronation in collaboration with other village groups.
  - **Crime**  
It was noted that we have asked that the PCSO to provide us with a monthly update on the crime statistics, which hasn't been supplied. This will be followed up.

## **22/170 Report by Ward Councillor**

Ward Cllr Bailey updated the meeting on the following:

1. Green Lane: - work carried out on approximately 60% of Green Lane, with new road markings, studs, new road signs and posts. Vegetation clearance will also be undertaken, and the Vehicle Activation Sign will be installed below a new junction warning sign (Bagley Lane). Cheshire East advised this work is due to be completed within the financial year.

Installation of a protective barrier was considered, and quotes obtained the estimates provided have escalated due to availability and the increase in inflation. Therefore, Cheshire East are currently in discussion with Shropshire CC regarding ownership of a section of the protective barrier on the A529 and the availability for them to replace it.

2. Cheshire East have issued its allocation of works under the Highway Improvement Programme and the following relate to Audlem Parish:
  - Works to Green Lane Embankment
  - Drainage Hardys Lane, Cox Bank
  - Patching Whitchurch Road between Numbers 1-9 and Green Lane junctions.

Please note that this decision is issued by the Chair of Highways – Cllr Craig Browne.

- Responsibility in relation to the Old Railway Bridge Swanbach now sites with:
  - The Flood Risk Team
  - The Bridges Team
  - Highways – I believe purely in relation to the regular attendance for jetting.
3. CE have issued its policy in relation to Speed management including the opportunity of applying for Speed Indicator Devices.

The assumption is that application will be made in relation to Speed Manage and funded locally.

During the February APC Meeting the Chair indicated that the Council were considering the Tourist & Traders Group proposal to improve the 'Welcome to Audlem Signage,' please can an update be provided?

**Action:** This item will be added to the May agenda.

Members **NOTED** the additional amendments to the February Full Council Minutes requested by Cllr Bailey.

**22/139 Village Management – Potential Transfer of Assets (b):**

Whilst I raised that the policy had changed and CE assets were invariably transferred on a 'long lease' rather than, I do not recall saying that the matter should be relooked at, more that there were previous minutes which I believed reflected the change of policy in CE and any decision should therefore align with this.

**22/140 Report by Ward Councillor – 'Paddock Lane – looking to address sink holes – where cyclist was badly injured'.** The disrepair of Paddock Lane, particularly at the junction of Wood Orchard Lane is a separate matter to the sink hole. The sink hole referenced is the one on the square where a cyclist was badly injured.

**22/171 Office Matters**

Members **NOTED** there was no update on the new Lloyds Bank Account to date.

**22/172 Date of Next Meeting (Annual Meeting) and Items for Future Agenda**

The next meeting (**Annual Meeting**) will be held on **Monday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2023** at 7pm in the **Methodist Church, Shropshire St, Audlem, Crewe CW3 0AE.**

Agenda Items for the next meeting:

- Village Meeting
- Signage
- Update Standing Orders

Meeting closed at 8.45pm. The Chair thanked everyone for attending.

**Exclusion of Public**

At this point the Council will ask 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.

APPROVED

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**PART B**

**22/173** The Chair read out a statement from Kate Howe following the meeting with the Police regarding the ongoing investigation.

‘A suspect has been formally interviewed and was released under investigation. The police investigation is ongoing into this case.’

Police have promised to keep Kate Howe updated on the progress of the investigation on a regular basis.

The Chair closed the meeting at 21.30pm. He passed on his thanks to Paul Cawood for all his support and hard work as a Parish Councillor.

APPROVED