



**AUDLEM**  
PARISH COUNCIL

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**Clerk: Carol Bell**

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### **Minutes of meeting of Audlem Parish Council held in the Methodist Church, Shropshire St. Audlem on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January at 7.00pm.**

Present: Councillors Geoff Seddon (GS), Lynette Hopkins (LH), Stephen Hopkins (SH), George McLaren-Brown (GMB), Kate Down (KD), Keith Nord (KN), Jean Stainthorpe (JS)

In attendance: Cllr Rachel Bailey (Ward Councillor), Carol Bell (Clerk to APC)

#### **Part A**

GS opened the meeting at 7 pm. He welcomed the public and wished everyone a Happy New Year and advised that the meeting was being recorded.

Members of public in attendance: 11

#### **23/127 Apologies for absence**

Cllr Steve Elliott, Cllr Adriana Roscoe

#### **23/128 Public participation**

A member of the public (MOP) asked for an update on the missing parish council funds.

The clerk advised that she was in contact with the police and that the enquiry was ongoing but she was not at liberty to disclose any further information that could jeopardise the investigation.

A MOP asked what APC is doing to put pressure on Cheshire East regarding the proposed car parking charges.

LH responded – APC wrote to CE at the beginning of the consultation process. APC is waiting for the consultation to come out from CE next week. Until this happens, we cannot do anything further as we do not know what is in their consultation papers. CE will not enter into talks with APC until they have finished their consultations. Once APC knows what CE's recommendations are then we as a council can decide on our next steps for action.

A MOP asked if there could be a budget set aside for repairs to the church flag.

The clerk advised that she had put this request forward to the Village Management Group to add to their next agenda. GS advised that, subject to agreement tonight, in the 24/25 budget there would be a grant provision that would cover this request.

A MOP advised that the SAFE (Save Audlem's Future Existence) group had been told that APC felt that SAFE was hampering the council's work on protesting against the proposed parking charges. The MOP asked is this correct?

LH advised that is definitely not correct and SAFE have the full support of the parish council.

A MOP raised the topic of a GDPR breach of his data on the 9<sup>th</sup> October 2023. The MOP addressed the Chair and stated that although the chair was privy to the breach the MOP was not informed until he made enquiries. Based on the fact that the Chair chose not to disclose to the MOP that his data had been shared with a third party the MOP stated that he felt the Chair's position on Audlem Parish Council was untenable and advised if GS did not resign from his

position as Chair then legal proceedings would be brought against APC. GS advised MOP that his comments had been noted.

**23/129 Declarations of Interest**

None given.

**23/130 Requests for Dispensation**

None received.

**23/131 Confirmation of Minutes**

Due to late circulation of the December minutes it was **AGREED** to defer them until the February meeting.

**23/132 Planning Matters**

23/132 (i) Councillors **RESOLVED** the following planning applications -

- **23/4696N** 14 Stafford Street Audlem. Single detached garage, creation of en-suite to first floor bedroom and improvements to cellar access – Council **has no objection**
- **23/4586N** The Shroppie Fly, Audlem Wharf, Shropshire Street, Audlem. Formation of extension to rear of premises to create a larger beer cellar and glass wash area - Proposed structure is to be built within the footprint of the existing Beer Cellar yard area - is single storey and to be built off the dwarf wall which forms the perimeter of the yard. Replacement external staircase. Alterations to services to suit new arrangement. – Council **has no objection**
- **23/4271N** Peace and Quiet, Daisy Bank Crescent, Audlem. New detached dwelling with detached garage. Council **OBJECTED**. The development does not comply with the neighbourhood plan under policy H1 and H4, Should the application be approved then it will be susceptible to payment of community infrastructure levy
- **23/4829N** 85 McKelvey Way, Audlem. Single storey glass roofs located on the rear and side elevation of the property – Council **has no objection**

Proposed by SH, seconded by KN, all in favour

KD discussed a further application that was not on the agenda

- **23/3318T** Public area to the rear of 10 Sycamore Close, Audlem  
The Conservation area requires trimming of various trees, shrubs and bushes that are overgrowing the area and the nearby pavement. . On the loaded sketch plan the following trees were identified: C1 - Large Cherry - large split trunk, so potential danger of falling onto adjacent private property - needs cutting below the split section (2m above ground) S1 - Sycamore - 150mm trunk needs felling to allow more light S2 - Sycamore - Tree on Cheshire East land - needs trimming S3 - Sycamore - 400mm diameter twin trunk - very close to public footpath and potentially dangerous- should be felled to create more light O1 - Oak - 100mm diameter but 8m high due to lack of light - needs felling to allow more light SB1 - Silver Birch - 200mm diameter very tall - 15m - very scrawny - needs felling to create light SB2 - Silver Birch - 300mm diameter - 12m and split trunk - needs felling SB3 - Silver Birch - 300mm diameter - 12m and very scrawny - needs felling. CE have advised that the 6-week period for determination has expired and therefore the above work may proceed.

The Clerk advised that the work was scheduled for the 22<sup>nd</sup> January and a risk assessment had been requested from the tree surgeon appointed to do the work by ADAS before work begins.

**23/132 (ii)** GS advised that there had been no further correspondence received on retrospective planning application for Turnpike Field. The Clerk advised she had tried to contact the planning team over the past 2 days by phone but the line was constantly engaged and cut the caller off after 10 minutes. The clerk advised she had now e-mailed

CE and advised if no response or acknowledgement received then an official complaint would be made.

23/132 (iii) Councillors **NOTED** the following decision:

- **23/4039H** Land adjacent to Woore Road, Buerton. Removal of no.3 two-meter sections of hedgerow required to facilitate the installation of a wastewater pipeline. Sections of hedgerow to be replanted with a similar species mix in the first available planting season following completion of work. - withdrawn

### **23/133 Financial Matters**

23/133 (i) Councillors resolved to **APPROVE** the draft budget for the remaining financial year.

23/133 (ii) Councillors resolved to **APPROVE** the draft budget 2024/5

23/133 (iii) SH requested an increase of £5,000 to the estimated precept to cover potential payments for the restoration of the Bellyse monument and fencing at Longhill Moss. The increase would set the precept at £78,160 giving a Band D Council Tax figure of £75.51.

SH proposed, KN seconded, all in favour.

23/133 (iv) Councillors resolved to **APPROVE** the following payments.

<b>Invoice Date</b>	<b>Supplier</b>	<b>Goods/Service</b>	<b>Amount (£)</b>
01.12.2023	Then Media	Website Hosting	45.00 + VAT (54.00)
04.12.2023	Audlem Methodist Church	Room hire for APC meeting 04.12	40.00
16.12.2023	phs group	Sanitary waste disposal	299.77 + VAT (359.72)
19.12.2023	Giff Gaff	Clerk Mobile Phone	10.00
19.12.2023	Shields Arboricultural Consultancy	Tree condition assessment – Turnpike Field	600.00
01.01.2024	Then Media	Website Hosting	45.00 + VAT (54.00)
02.01.2024	ChALC	Online training – Code of Conduct	25.00
02.01.2024	3 Counties Cleaning	Toilet cleaning – December	390.00
19.01.2023	HMRC	Clerk NI and Tax	1084.74

23/133 (v) Councillors resolved to **APPROVE** the retrospective payments below.

<b>Invoice Date</b>	<b>Supplier</b>	<b>Goods/Service</b>	<b>Amount (£)</b>
30.11.2023	edf	Electricity – toilets	54.61
05.12.2023	Waterplus	Water – toilets	70.16
05.12.2023	3 Counties Cleaning	Toilet cleaning – November	405.00
31.12.2023	Lengthsman	Lengthsman duties	521.40
31.12.2023	Parish Clerk/RFO	Clerk duties	1647.00 (gross)

Proposed by KN, Seconded by KD. All in favour

### **23/134 Communications**

23/134 (i) Councillors were asked to **NOTE** that 6 monthly water meter readings would be taken by WaterPlus. LH asked if it was possible for a member of the council to meet with the meter reader so that the council are aware of the location of the meter.

23/134(ii) Councillors were asked to **NOTE** that the clerk was in talks with phs about not fulfilling their contractual obligations and if not resolved would ask the council to consider termination of the contract and to go out to tender for a new supplier.

23/134 (iii) ADCA have requested a representative from APC to attend their meetings. LH volunteered to take on this role. Clerk will inform ADCA and send next meeting details to LH.

23/134 (iv) Councillors were asked to **NOTE** that the clerk has posted a backdated invoice to the tenant of Longhill Moss for the period 2022 and 2023.

### **23/135 Turnpike Field**

23/135 (i) JS advised that there was no update to give apart from the siting of a Palestinian flag on the field in December which was removed after a couple of days and the finding of a set of ladders last week. JS advised that a policy stating what cannot be sited on the field was to be drawn up and placed on the notice board.

LH raised concerns about allowing the public access to the field and bridge at this present time due to the flooding and floating boardwalk. KN advised that regardless of what parts of the field belonged to who e.g. public right of way, etc APC had a duty to walker safety and recommended a barrier be put across the bridge to prevent entry and CE to be notified of what action had been taken.

23/135 (ii) Councillors **NOTED** report received from Shields Arboricultural Consultancy.

23/135 (iii) JS asked for clerk to obtain 3 quotes for the tree work on Turnpike Field now the report had been received. JS advised that the work would need to be done before the nesting season in March. GS advised that a planning application would need to be submitted to Cheshire East for any work that needed undertaking to trees with a TPO. GS to find previous report which shows which trees have a TPO in case a planning application needs to be submitted.

### **23/136 Village Management (VMG)**

23/1236 (i) The chair GS allowed a MOP to raise questions on proposed village car park charges.

MOP asked the question were the APC going to raise a question at the CE meeting in Macclesfield on the 25<sup>th</sup> January. GS advised yes APC would but it would be a statement rather than a question.

MOP asked what preparations APC are going to make for the consultation. LH advised until APC see the report from CE, they cannot answer that question. APC's actions will be based on the information in the report.

MOP asked for the minutes of the Public Hall Meetings that took place earlier in the year at the start of the consultation process.

23/136 (ii) The clerk had provided two quotes for a Road Safety Survey. One quote was for a desk top survey for £1050.00 + VAT. One quote was for a physical survey for £3,500 + VAT. The purpose of the survey is to counteract the Jacobs report that was produced to support the proposed car parking charges. LH's opinion was that the physical survey and traffic count would be the most appropriate survey to use which could also potentially be used in the future for other traffic enquiries. LH asked councillors for their opinions. All agreed that the physical report should go ahead provided the report was back with the council before the consultation date of 25<sup>th</sup> January.

Proposed LH. Seconded KN All in favour

23/136 (iii) LH advised that CE had informed that shuttering works would be starting on Green Lane on the 9<sup>th</sup> January.

23/136 (iv) A MOP had recently written to APC detailing their concerns about the safety of the public walking along the road in the area of Salford Street and Mount Pleasant. LH advised she had not had chance to read the letter but would review it and put on the next Village Management Group meeting agenda.

23/136 (v) Council **NOTED** December crime statistics.

### **23/137 Report by Ward councillor**

- (i) Cllr Bailey advised she had not received a response from CE on the Green Lane works but assumed works would still go ahead on the 9<sup>th</sup> January.
- (ii) Future works to go ahead in March – Coole Lane will be closed for work to be undertaken by the CRT on the canal bridge. Works are to start on the bridge that was hit by the milk tanker on Whitchurch Road.

### **23/138 Office Matters**

23/138 (i) The clerk raised her concerns about the current portal( IONIS) used to host APC's e-mail addresses and website. The clerk advised that having both e-mail addresses and website hosted by the same provider was not safe should the provider cease trading and also did not allow the clerk administration rights to councillor e-mail addresses which hampered her work for Freedom of Information requests. The clerk also advised that the annual cost for hosting was far higher than other providers she had looked into.

The clerk stated that councillors currently have a .co.uk e-mail address which is a company e-mail and should have a .gov e-mail address which shows that they are a tier of government. The clerk also recommended that the current APC website should be rebuilt to make it more user friendly and to comply with website accessibility standards. GS asked the clerk to provide a full report on alternative providers to the council.

23/138 (ii) The council **APPROVED** for the clerk to undertake the ILCA course.

Proposed by GS, seconded by SH. All in favour.

### **23/139 Date of Next Meeting and Items for Future Agenda**

The next meeting will take place on **Monday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2024** at 7.00 pm in the **Methodist Church, Shropshire Street, Audlem, CW3 0AE.**

#### **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.

The Chair closed the meeting at 8.59 pm, thanking everyone for their attendance.

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### **PART B**

**23/140** Council **AGREED** to right of erasure at LH request. GS asked LH to supply dates of correspondence.

**23/141** Councillors to **NOTE** update regarding ongoing police investigation.