



AUDLEM PARISH COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF MEETING OF AUDLEM PARISH COUNCIL (APC)

held Monday 8th February 2021 at 7.00pm virtual on-line meeting

PRESENT - Cllr S Boyes (Chairman), Cllrs R Warburton, G McLaren-Brown, P Salt, A Bicknell, M Duys, C Gresty and J Sansom.

In attendance: Interim Parish Clerk – Paul Barton. CEC Cllr Bailey and two Members of the Public

Public speaking open forum and Public participation

The Chair welcomed two Members of the public who introduced themselves to the meeting and having expressed an interest in the Parish Council provided some background.

161/20 Apologies:

Apologies were received from Cllr Bower due to IT problems.

162/20 Request for dispensation

There were no requests for dispensation.

163/20 Declarations of Interest

Cllr McLaren Brown declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 179/20.

164/20 Councillor vacancies and Co-option

The Parish Council currently has three Councillor vacancies. There being no further applications, the three casual vacancies will be re advertised. It should be noted that in the event that more than three applications are received, there will be a call for a by election to be held at the earliest permissible date advised by, and subject to CEC Governance directives. Vacancies will be advertised for by-election request (see above) before moving to inviting co-options (pending the outcome of the by-election request period). It was **resolved** that the Interim Clerk arrange an advertisement. Clerk and Chair to arrange an update for the AOL website.

165/20 Minutes

It was **resolved** to approve the minutes of the last meeting held 4 January 2021 which were notionally signed by the Chair as a true record having agreed to a text error to the draft Minutes item 149/20.

166/20 Matters arising

The Chair confirmed that APC had responded to the recent CEC Transport and Parking consultation expressing the Council's views. There were no other matters arising from the Minutes of the last meeting held 4 January 2021

167/20 Planning Reports

Planning Decisions:

There were no new planning decisions.

Planning Withdrawals:

There were no planning withdrawals

Planning Applications:

21/0302N Proposed single storey extension to replace existing conservatory. THE APIARY, MONKS LANE, AUDLEM, CW3 0HP. No objections

21/0105D Discharge of Conditions 3,4,5,7 & 8 on approval 20/0810N. GREY HOUSE, AUDLEM ROAD, HANKELOW, CW3 0JE. No observations

168/20 Group reports

As Chair of the Finance Sub Committee, Cllr McLaren Brown reported on the FSC meeting held on 4 February confirming that the Bank reconciliation and schedule of payments which were now embedded in the Scribe accounts were approved. However, he also advised that the Committee Members were not sufficiently versed with the way that the 3rd quarter review of the accounts from the Scribe software presented information, in particular the 'variances' against budget figures which not being wrong overall, could not be proven. The committee advised that they would be closely monitoring this moving forward. Cllr McLaren Brown also confirmed that the FSC had carried out a briefing overview on the Longhill Moss, Churchfields and its background and where there is a need for a maintenance plan), a review of Parish Insurance levels, the Public Conveniences budget, including the Utility suppliers, all of which will be monitored and reported on in the future. It was reported that the Asset register also needs revisiting and updating. This Committee will have a follow up meeting on 24 February 2021.

The Chair provided an update on the TWFG who are due to meet on Wednesday 10 February 2021. There were no other no group reports with some matters being discussed under separate headings. The Chair agreed to circulate his Groups template showing membership of, and number of different groups that ran in 2020.

169/20 Report from Ward Councillor

CEC Cllr Bailey provided a lengthy verbal update on local matters including.

- The recent adverse publicity generated by the exposure of matters at Handforth Parish Council.
- Cllr Bailey re iterated her ongoing concerns pertaining to the Transport and Parking consultations from CEC of a possible 'levelling up' revenue on car parking fees and her intention to sit in on the forthcoming TFWG meeting where she planned to observe the ongoing plans for the Turnpike Field Car Park. Cllr Bicknell asked if this meant that CEC Highways were looking to raise revenue from Local Councils as a form of double taxation
- Cllr Bailey raised concerns on the progress that the Council had made with the Playing Field, Cheshire Street Car Park and the Playground, none of which have been able to be considered because they are all put into abeyance due to Covid and/or the financial considerations when the Council is already committed to the major financial development of the green car park. The Council advised that it is having to reconsider some very serious financial implications that come with each, which the Council is having to re assess before moving forward.
- Cllr Gresty responded to this by advising that the Council ambition is now to look at how to keep the community up to date with the many activities that it is involved in, which should become easier now that the long awaited new Parish Council website is due within the coming weeks which has been held back for many months through circumstances outside of the Council's control.

170/20 Financial Matters

Following approval by the FSC meeting on 4 February 2021 Members **resolved** to approve the Bank reconciliation to 6 January 2021 and the schedule of payments. See also Item 173/20

171/20 Members to consider the next stage of the process to appoint a new Clerk

It was agreed that the Clerk would circulate a draft of a new recruitment and job description to all for their comments and approval. Any suggested amendments to the advert or job description to be circulated to Members after which the job advert to be advertised with the local Associations of Local Councils and also locally on the village Notice Board (lockdown permitting) and AOL and possibly the Coop. Advert to be placed on Monday 15 February with a closing date for applications 5 March 2021 and ideally a short list selected by 22 March 2021.

172/20 Clerks report

- The Clerk reported that he has received notification confirming Full Access Delegate to the NEST account for administrative purposes. The Clerks pension scheme are being deducted from the pay and documentation is being processed by AJ Bell who manage the scheme who will deduct payments by DD in due course.
- The Clerk provided a brief update on the revised supply contract from PHS for the supply of new lockable soap dispensers and hand sanitiser liquid for the Public conveniences.

173/20 Turnpike Field

Members were brought up to date on the last meeting of the TFWG held 9 December. Cllr Warburton advised Members of the Maintenance Plan which had been agreed which had been costed at approximately £930 per annum to cover the cost of regular grass and hedge cutting. Members were advised that the plan going forward was to eventually plant new hedging, with a flower meadow in due course with other works needing to take place before this could be achieved. Clerk is requested to circulate the meeting notes of the TFWG meeting to all Members as available. It was noted that the Parish representation on this working group was now below the agreed level and that Cllr J Sansom would join Cllr G McLaren Brown on the Group.

174/20 Buttermarket

Having now received authorisation from the Heritage Officer to carry out the upgrade to the lighting and the upgrade to the electrical supply in the Buttermarket, Cllr Warburton confirmed that he would instruct the trade suppliers to carry out the work.

175/20 Longhill Moss

Cllr McLaren Brown provided a detailed report on the problems that have led to some serious flooding on and around the Longhill Moss. Whilst it is not the legal responsibility of APC to carry out any the remedial work, APC has carried out work to ease the problems which have affected three different properties. In order to prevent a repeat of this, the FSC recommend that a Maintenance Plan be drawn up to stop a repeat of problem. One local resident has complained to the Council even though the cause and responsibility are not the responsibility or liability of the Council, but of actions of others. The final costs are as yet unknown but Members should note that any previously held ring fenced funds from the Longhill Moss will be completely exhausted by the associated costs attached to these ongoing problems.

176/20 Parish Council Matters

Having attended a recent online NALC promoted seminar, Cllr Duys provided a detailed synopsis of the Local Council Award Scheme (LCAS) which is an accreditation scheme for Local Councils specifically focused on Governance, Community and Development and advising that there is already a framework in place aimed at improving APC's performance across a spectrum of the Council activities. The scheme which would take several months of planning ultimately results in successful Councils receiving a tiered reward based on performance. Members agreed to consider this as part of the Council's commitment to improving the Council and its communications with the community. The Chair thanked Cllr Duys for attending the seminar and in presenting the scheme.

Following on from this Cllr Duys gave an example in that the recent local flooding with water coming off the fields and overwhelming gullies and drainage systems highlighted that there was no emergency plan in place for just such an occurrence with the residents of Mt Pleasant for example having nowhere to go. Cllr Bicknell put himself forward to assist in the process of forming an emergency plan with this matter to be formally discussed at the next full PC meeting in March. Members again agreed that it was not possible to make decisions concerning the Annual Parish Meeting in the current Covid climate.

177/20 Correspondence

- Members considered an item of correspondence from the ADAPT Transport Group concerning the 20 is plenty campaign which it was felt that was a Highways matter who had already been informed
- Members had been circulated with an HS2 consultation for which there was no specific Council view but which Members may wish to respond individually.
- Query raised by a resident concerning Planning Ref 14/0428N which related to a splay on a planning application dating back to 2014. Members deemed that this was a matter for Highways to consider.
- Members noted the various communications received regarding recent flooding issues which have all been referred to CEC Highways.

178/20 Areas of responsibility

It was agreed that this item will remain as an ongoing agenda item with consideration to be given to the structure of, and membership of all committees, working groups and representatives to outside bodies and the delegated or allocated authority is given in accordance with Standing Orders once the budget and Parish Council meetings in December are completed. See also item 168/20

179/20 Items for future agenda

Cllr McLaren Brown raised a public concern on the Heathfield Estate where there is no dog litter fouling bin. Cllr Bailey offered to look into the matter with CEC to see what could be provided. Concern was raised over some hedging on Cheshire Street that was limiting visibility. Cllr Warburton offered to follow this up and report back.

Cllr Duys raised the item that the Clerk had circularised concerning the Police Commissioner offering some grant funding. This matter to be considered and reviewed at the next PC meeting.

180/20 There were no confidential items so there was no need to exclude the public.

PART 2 – CONFIDENTIAL

181/20 There were no confidential matters to consider.

182/20 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting of the Parish Council currently set as being held at 7.00pm on MONDAY 8th March 2021 via an online meeting facility (subject to prevailing Covid guidance).

N.B. The Chair explained that due to the fact that he would be relocating in the next few weeks this would be his last meeting as Chair and as a Parish Councillor

Members thanked him for his contribution to the Parish Council and wished him well for the future.

Future planned dates 12 April 2021, 10 May 2021 noting that this is scheduled to be the AGM, 14 June 2021, 12 July 2021. NO meeting in August 2021, 13 September 2021, 11 October 2021, 8 November 2021, 13 December 2021.

It should be noted that meeting dates are subject to change and in view of the ongoing Covid situation will continue to be 'virtual' meetings until guidelines permit otherwise.

The meeting closed at approximately 8.55pm

It was **resolved** to approve the minutes of the last meeting held 8 February 2021 which were notionally signed by the Chair as a true record.

Cllr C Gresty

Paul A I Barton
Interim Clerk