



AUDLEM
PARISH COUNCIL

AUDLEM PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Owen Hembry
88 Mckelvey Way
Audlem, Crewe CW3 0FJ
e-mail: audlempc@gmail.com

Turnpike Field & Playing Field Recreation Areas Working Group

Thursday 3rd June 2021

Venue: Youth Club Room of the Annexe, Audlem Public Hall, 7.00pm

Present: Cllr Catherine Gresty, Cllr Ralph Warburton, Cllr Joy Sansom, Cllr Margaret Duys, Michael Cookson, Steve Elliott, Judy Evans, Adrian Leighton, Neil Goodyear, Chris Lewis, Clerk Owen Hembry, Interim Clerk Paul Barton. In attendance Cllr Derek Winskill and CEC Cllr Rachel Bailey contributing as members of the public.

Apologies

Cllr Andy Bicknell, Cllr James McGregor.

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Election of Chair

Having previously confirmed that he was prepared to stand, Cllr James McGregor was elected as chairman in his absence.

Election of Vice Chair

Michael Cookson was elected as vice-chairman.

Review of meeting notes from previous meeting held on March 24, 2021

The Notes from the last meeting held 24 March were considered and approved as a true record.

Financial review

- Interim Clerk briefed the meeting on financial information regarding budgets, donations, grants, reserves and spending that had been circulated prior to the meeting.
- It was agreed that all the public donations received by APC can only be used for the development of the Turnpike Field and that maintenance costs are deducted from the previously set aside 'Reserves'. Capital items will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Spending on signage for the field will be deducted from the donations funds.
- The financial report and the plan for the allocating of funds was unanimously approved.
- A summary of the financial report is to be prepared for posting on the Audlem Parish Council website and Audlem Online, following approval by the Parish Council.

Signage

- Signage for the field is scheduled to be delivered week commencing June 7 and installed on Friday June 11 with oversight from a member of the Turnpike Field Working Group (TFWG).

Car Park

- Proposed next step is to get three initial quotes, which will be done at no cost.
- The design brief is to be provided to three expert companies to obtain the initial quotes.
- One company will then be selected to provide detailed opinion about how to proceed with design, planning application and the cost of the project.
- Proposal to be considered at next Parish Council meeting.

Review field bookings and enquiries

- Party on the Park.
- Gathering of Historic Boats.
- Festival of Transport (July).
- Bridge Inn Music Festival (Aug 28-Aug 30).

Booking conditions

- Consideration was given to the existing booking conditions which it was agreed need reviewing and updating. Cllr C Gresty offered to carry out a review and update of the existing terms, conditions and documentation for organisations wishing to book the field for events.
- Documentation to clearly specify the obligations and requirements for booking the field.

Ecology report

- Wet conditions have affected the regenerative pattern of the field. Lack of flowering of Spring plants has resulted in fewer insects.
- The pond in the top field has continued to mature. There appears to be less algae probably meaning nutrients are becoming less concentrated. Removing the remaining algae could help increase pond life. The process for doing this and the responsibility is not clear. Cheshire Wildlife Trust (CWT) is to be approached to see if they wish to undertake the work and if they are not then what advice they can provide.
- There has not yet been any full audit of young growing trees. A survey is to be done, which can be added to the existing Tree Map from a survey undertaken by CWT in 2019.
- There will be two wildlife safaris, one with the Guides at the end of June and another with members of AWEG in July. There may be another in August for the general public.
- The brook was surveyed in February to see if anything can be done to encourage wildlife. There is concern the brook may have been polluted in the past with sewage. The brook looks relatively dead. A water test could be done at some point to provide more information. The recommendation for now is to monitor the brook.
- An inspection was done with Canal & River Trust (CRT) of holes in the bank. Some of the wire that was put in place to stop the bank falling and animals has been broken. There are signs of badger activity. CRT representative took photographs and will get in touch with ecologist to examine. The location where water crosses the field was examined for the possibility of leakage from the canal. CRT representative felt it was not a leakage from the canal, which suggests the water is coming from a natural spring.
- Parish Council to organise a point of liaison with CRT.

Tree planting

- Offers are coming in for trees and some planting has taken place in the second field towards the area of the canal stile.
- A tree planting policy is needed before any more planting takes place. Two elements are important in the drawing up of this policy. Firstly, to examine how planting enhances the

biodiversity and enriches the ecosystem. Secondly, that it encourages use of the field as a place of recreation. These two needs could at times need compromise. Plants should be native species, not imported, placed in harmony with plant and tree life, and non-plastic shielding should be used.

- Details of expenses incurred so far in planting to be presented for consideration by the Parish Council.
- Tree planting policy to be distributed before presentation for approval by the TFWG meeting.

Maintenance report

- The grass has been cut to varying heights depending on the needs of plants. The contract runs until the end of the year, at which point it can be reviewed and put out for tender.

Footpath safety/quality

- Broken posts and barbed wire to be removed.
- Consideration was given to how to deal with the link bridge when muddy. Wood chips have been considered in the past to deal with mud. This area is not compatible with boardwalks.
- Consideration was given to boardwalks for a wet, muddy area towards the Green Lane exit. Investigation has been done using Cheshire East spec for bridge sections (without rails), sitting on top of sleeper sections, creating a floating boardwalk. The materials cost for this was approaching £10,000 as approximately nine boardwalks would be needed at a cost of about £900 each. Three quotes would be needed if this plan is approved in the future. A question was raised about the liability with regards to maintaining a public right of way. The responsibility and liability of the Parish Council to be researched.
- CEC Cllr R Bailey suggested liability needed to be checked with Cheshire East Public Rights of Way and would help find a contact. The liability risk and need to protect volunteers working in the field was also raised.

Any other business

- Interim Clerk highlighted that the Coop in Audlem was accepting application to provide money to local causes, with 10 days left to apply.
- A question was raised as to whether a sewage upgrade plan would impact Turnpike Field. CEC Cllr R Bailey confirmed that she did not believe that there would be any impact.
- Discussion was held regarding uncertainty about the details of a contracted overage charge related to use of the field. Clerk to look for details.
- Discussion was held on whether the scattering of ashes and installation of memorial benches should be allowed. Cllr M Duys volunteered to look at setting up a policy.

Set date for the next meeting

- Next meeting to be held on Thursday 15th July.