

AUDLEM PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING
MONDAY 8TH JUNE 2015 AT 7.30PM
METHODIST MEETING ROOMS, SHROPSHIRE STREET, AUDLEM

PRESENT:

Cllr Higham	Cllr Jones (Chair)	Cllr Christie	Cllr Down
Cllr Johnson	Cllr Hill	Cllr Tilling	Cllr Consterdine

In Attendance: K Dixon (Clerk)

Present: Mr Duncan Davenport & Mr Neville Rees (Canal & River Trust), Mr J Tilling (AOL), Mr J Thompson, Mrs L Smith, Mrs K Parkes, Ms M Hollinshead, Mrs H Lloyd, Mr P Lloyd, Mrs M Lewis, Mr D Lewis, CEC Cllr Rachel Bailey.

PUBLIC FORUM

i) Mr Davenport of CRT, introduced by Cllr Higham, spoke about the creation and aims of the Canal & River Trust and then went on to explain the volunteer schemes and opportunities for local people to get involved with maintaining their local piece of waterway. He spoke about the excellent work that is already carried out by volunteers on the Audlem stretch of the Shropshire Union Canal and the aim to get volunteer help with planned preventative maintenance work. It was noted that, although Audlem's volunteer group is very active and had, for instance, repainted all 15 locks in the last year, only one of the volunteers is a resident of Audlem. Cllr Tilling asked about CRT's plans for the Lock 15 area, and Mr Davenport replied that CRT is not entitled to authorise the allotment style cultivation of the land alongside the canal (though they would not interfere with the current crop there) but they had plans to renovate the Lock shed, and its surroundings, to turn it into a Welcome Centre, a tourist information style facility which is proving a successful venture at other points on the canal. He went on to explain how these work with the help of volunteers who might be interested in less physical tasks than those of the maintenance team. Cllr Higham asked about whether there were plans to improve the condition of the towpath which can, in some places, become very muddy and flooded in wet weather. Mr Davenport responded that there are plans to improve the towpath starting with those areas nearest the centre of the village. The repair of the first stretch of towpath near the Wharf and Whitchurch Road Bridge is scheduled to be carried out soon and Mr Davenport will liaise with Cllr Higham to ensure that this is publicised. He also suggested that the CRT team could run a volunteer taster day for residents. Cllr Jones thanked Mr Davenport and Mr Rees for attending the meeting and updating the Parish Council on CRT's work.

ii) Mrs Kate Parkes and Ms Monique Hollinshead spoke about their efforts to establish a new Audlem Youth Club, which is now affiliated to the National Youth Federation, in support of their application for a grant to help launch the Youth Club. They have already gained funding from other sources which can only be spent on resources and the Audlem Baptists have offered them free use of their hall until such time as an Annexe is built on the Public Hall.



iii) Mr Phil Lloyd spoke about the proposal to place a bench at the end of Copthorne Drive, reminding Parish Councillors of the commitment to monitor usage of a bench should one be installed.

Mr David Lewis spoke about his concerns of the proposed location of the bench at Copthorne Drive, claiming that it would be a dangerous distraction to drivers on Whitchurch Road, who are already prone to speed even though there is a narrowing of the road as it descends the hill shortly after Copthorne Drive.

Cllr Hill explained about the traffic calming initiatives that CEC have proposed, this includes extending the 30mph zone up Brown's Bank towards Lightwood Green and putting in a prioritising scheme over the river bridge. CEC Cllr Rachel Bailey reiterated that CEC were to carry out measures along the A525 from Buerton to Burleydam including the works mentioned by Cllr Hill.

15.18 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr G Seddon and Cllr P Seddon, who were on holiday, and Cllr Siddorns who had family commitments.

15.19 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS – None

15.20 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 29th April and 11th May 2015 were approved and signed as correct records.

15.21 MATTERS ARISING

i) Community Pride Plaques – the Clerk reported that she had spoken to Nikki Ball of Audlem Cyclesport who was happy for the current Community Pride Plaques to remain on the shop frontage but felt that there was no room for any more. The Clerk had accordingly written to Mrs Judy Tarrant, as a member of the St James' PCC, to request permission for future plaques to be displayed on the Churchyard wall by the Buttermarket. The PCC will take this up with the Diocese.

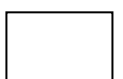
ii) 15/1964N Outline Planning Application (15.9.2) The Clerk reported that, following councillors visiting the site on Green Lane, the Parish Council had agreed to object to the planning application due to it being on the floodplain which is against neighbourhood, local and national planning policies.

iii) Coxbank Wishing Well Signpost – The Clerk reported that she had visited the Wishing Well but could not ascertain the previous location of the finger signpost. The Clerk recommended that the Council liaise with local residents about the best place to site a replacement. Costs are likely to be around £150 for the post not including installation.

15.22 PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

22.1 Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Jones reported that 2 days of the 6 week Pre-submission Consultation period remained. At the end of the Consultation, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee will review all the responses and work to draw up a final draft to be submitted to the Parish Council to be approved for submission to Cheshire East. There has been another consultation session for residents, this time held during the day on a Saturday, and Neighbourhood Plan volunteers have been working on Sustainability Assessments. Cllr Jones confirmed that the



Neighbourhood Plan will carry more weight legally once it has been submitted to CEC. Cllr Jones expressed her gratitude to both the members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee and the volunteers who have all worked so hard to produce the Plan so quickly.

22.2 Planning Applications

15/2185N Replacement of sun room at Swanbach Farm, Green Lane, Audlem, CW3 0ET

Having discussed this application, Councillors agreed to raise no objection.

15.23 **FINANCIAL MATTERS**

23.1 Final Accounts for 2014/15

The final accounts which have been produced for the audit along with the annual governance statement were presented to the Parish Council and were accepted unanimously.

23.2 Asset Register and Risk Register

The Clerk explained the amendments to the registers and it was unanimously resolved to accept these.

23.3 Finance Report: the year to date

The Clerk presented the performance against budget for the first 2 months of the year and also the accounts for the same period for the public conveniences, which showed performance close to budget in income and below budget for expenditure.

23.4 Authorisation of cheques

1108	K Dixon	Salaries	£400.90
1109	G Davies	Street Cleaning	£308.00
1110	K Dixon	Office Expenses	£30.84
1461	Audlem Methodist Church	NP Room Hire	£40.00
1462	Audlem Methodist Church	Room Hire	£40.00
463	Audlem Angels	Public Conveniences	£144.00
1464	N Huntbach	Dock Treatment	£164.92
1465	ChALC	Councillor Training	£90.00
1466	CVS	Payroll Services	£168.00
1467	K Dixon	Cleaning Supplies	£60.90
1468	H Jones	NP meeting refreshments	£10.60

Resolved: the above accounts were approved for payment.

23.5 Payments made in the last month

1106	United Utilities	Public Conveniences	£109.61
1107	Zurich Municipal	Insurance	£858.97

Resolved: the above account were approved for payment retrospectively.

23.6 Grant Application

The application from Audlem Youth Club was considered and Councillors unanimously resolved to make a grant of £300, commenting that they were pleased to see initiatives in support of the community's young people and wished the group every success.

23.7 Public Display Screens

The Parish Council has paid for the costs of running the Public Display Screen in the Post Office for almost a year now and councillors were asked to consider whether they wished to continue this financial support for another year. Councillors discussed the impact of the Public Display Screens and agreed that they had proved much more beneficial than some of



them had expected. Councillors then approved financial support for the Post Office PID for the next 12 months.

15.24 CORRESPONDENCE

- i) An update from the local CRT Volunteer taskforce had been received and circulated.
- ii) Information from the Police & Crime Commissioner had been received and Cllr Jones asked Councillors to consider whether they would be able to attend the next meeting on 30th June.
- iii) Information about NALC's Star Council Awards was circulated to councillors for consideration.

15.25 Playing Field Complex Report

Cllr Jones reported that further details had been obtained and that Councillors had now received the comprehensive business report (required by the Parish Council's financial regulations) including the financial breakdown of projected costs. The Clerk had also provided a projection of finances for the next 5 years on the basis that the Playing Field Complex would be taken over half way through the current financial year. The report was discussed including the aspect that the precept would have to rise to support the running of the Playing Field Complex. Cllr Higham queried whether it was equitable to assume that groups would benefit doubly by having free use of the Playing Field Complex and also gaining grants from the Parish Council. Cllr Jones responded that this was a valid point which could be considered in due course but was not fundamental to the transfer progressing. Cllr Jones then asked the Parish Council whether, on the basis of the report, it would resolve to submit a formal request to Cheshire East Council to undertake an asset transfer of the Playing Field Complex into the ownership of Audlem Parish Council. This was resolved unanimously. Cllr Jones stated that a report for CEC would now be compiled in accordance with their requirements.

15.26 Copthorne Drive Bench

Cllr Higham gave a synopsis of events since the original request for a bench to benefit the elderly residents living in the retirement properties at Weaver View. Cllr Johnson commented that the bench close to his home had never attracted unruly behaviour. Councillors will meet with Cllr Higham to look at the proposed site and offer this opportunity to residents as well prior to making a decision on the issue.

The traffic calming proposed along Whitchurch Road, which Cllr Hill had brought up in the Public Forum (see Public Forum (iii)) was also discussed. CEC Cllr Rachel Bailey was hopeful that there may be funding for a SID (interactive speed indication display) as part of the A525 initiative which may also benefit this stretch of road. She also added that enforcement was the best deterrent to speeding within villages and suggested that the Parish Council look at this, through the Police and also local volunteers.



15.27 PARISH COUNCIL MATTERS

27.1 FOI & H&S Policies

The Clerk reported that the Publication Scheme which forms part of the Freedom of Information Policy had been updated to reflect The Audit Commission's latest regulations of Transparency. The Council resolved to adopt both policies.

27.2 Grant Policy review

The Council resolved to adopt the new simpler form for Grant Application and minor amendments to the policy including the introduction of a project completion report form so that the Parish Council gains appropriate feedback.

27.3 Naming of the Play Area

It was unanimously agreed that, subject to her family's agreement, the Children's Playground should be dedicated to the Memory of Irene Stockton.

27.4 Long Service Award

It was unanimously agreed that recently retired Parish Councillor Richard Furber, after 25 years of service, should be presented with a long service award.

27.5 Conservation Area

It was reported that ADAS had submitted a proposed schedule of work that they wish to carry out in the Conservation Area to encourage a balanced environment for wild plants and wildlife to thrive, including thinning by coppicing to reduce the density of the canopy. The schedule also aims to enhance and develop use of the area by the village school for nature study which was one of the primary purposes of the Conservation Area. Councillors were happy to allow this to proceed but asked that ADAS always seek permission prior to any activity in the area and observe the spirit of the area when carrying out the work. The Clerk reported that whilst visiting the Conservation Area in the process of updating the Asset Register, she had noted that some of the fencing around the area was in a poor state of repair and would need attention. It was agreed to put this matter on the agenda of the next meeting.

27.6 Windmill Drive Open Space

It was reported that further to a resident's concern about the safety of trees the Clerk had asked the Tree Warden to look at a cherry tree with dead branches on the open space on Windmill Drive. Additionally, as CEC own this space, the Clerk had advised CEC about the tree and had received confirmation that the grounds maintenance team would be visiting the site.

27.7 Co-option

Two applications for co-option had been received and these had been circulated to Councillors. The Clerk informed Councillors of the correct procedure ie that co-options are to be made in a public meeting but that a secret ballot may be used. After some discussion, it was unanimously agreed to defer the item to the end of the meeting when members of the public could choose to leave if they so wished as no further business would remain.

**At the end of the meeting, after a brief discussion, Councillors agreed that both



candidates were very strong and both candidates were proposed and seconded as candidates before a secret ballot was held. The Clerk counted the votes for each candidate and reported that Mr John Thompson had the majority of the votes and would therefore be invited to join the Parish Council.

27.8 Appointment of Portfolio Holders and other reporting roles

This item was deferred to the next meeting on the grounds that only two thirds of the Councillors were present.

27.9 Appointment of Working Groups – Planning & Highways

see 27.8

27.10 Appointment of Finance Committee

see 27.8

15.28 Canal Volunteer Scheme

Talk given by Mr Duncan Davenport of CRT at the commencement of the meeting followed by discussion and comment from Councillors.

15.29 REPORTS OF WORKING GROUPS & COMMITTEES

29.1 Highways & Transportation – No further discussion was held; the A525 initiative had already been discussed earlier in the meeting (see 15.26 and Public Forum (iii)).

29.2 Community – To receive reports, and also:

(i) Community Projects Committee - No meeting

(ii) Public Hall – including APHax – APHax meeting notes have been circulated to councillors.

(iii) Audlem Burial Committee – The next meeting is scheduled for July.

29.3 Youth & Education – Nothing to report other than the Youth Club information (see Public Forum (ii) & 23.6 Grant Application).

29.4 Law & Order – No report.

29.5 Local Tourism & Business – Cllr Johnson commented on the fantastic atmosphere in the village during the Music Festival and how this had been mentioned by visitors who were very complimentary about Audlem. It was agreed that the Music Festival had been a great success again this year and the Clerk will write to the committee to that effect.

29.6 Heritage & Localism – currently covered by Neighbourhood Plan

29.7 Wildlife & Ecology – Cllr Down reported that the focus of the group was now on talks and visits. She will circulate any minutes she receives on the most recent meeting.

29.8 Health – There had been no meeting of the PPG.

29.9 Communications – The deadline for submissions for the next newsletter is 15th July.

29.10 Access & Inclusion – Cllr Christie reported that Audlem Voices had entertained the Day Club recently and it had proved to be a very jolly event. The plea for Volunteer Drivers continues particularly now the holiday season is here. The fundraising quiz scheduled for Friday as been postponed until Autumn due to poor ticket sales; refunds for tickets already purchased will be given. Cllr Jones reported that she had visited the Coffee Morning Club last Friday to talk about the Neighbourhood Plan and had been made to feel very welcome.

29.11 Devolved Services – see 15.25

(i)Public Conveniences – Cllr Consterdine reported that the new soap dispenser had been installed in the ladies toilet.

29.12 ADAPT – No report, Cllr Johnson commented that the series of talks that had been held over the first 3 months of the year had been very successful.



29.13 Commons & Greens Committee – No report. Cllr Higham reported that the footpath bridge by Green Lane was in a poor state of repair and asked whose responsibility this was. He will now report it to CEC as the appropriate authority.

29.14 Street Lighting – Cllr Tilling has identified a further buzzing street light and Cllr Consterdine had details of other lighting issues at Heathfield Road and Broadways. Cllr Tilling offered to follow up these with CEC and using an Audlem OnLine article to ask residents to report other street lighting issues direct to CEC was discussed and agreed to. The on-going issue of obtaining quotes will be pursued by the Clerk now that Cllr Langston has retired from office.

15.30 COUNCILLORS' REPORTS ON ADDITIONAL MEETINGS ATTENDED

Cllr Tilling had attended the ChALC Induction training for councillors and stated that it was well presented and really interesting.

15.31 ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION AT THE NEXT MEETING

Leader Programme – awaiting CEC project
Community Asset Register
Green Spaces Designation
Conservation Area Fencing
Footpath Bridge by Green Lane
Cophorne bench

15.32 DATE OF NEXT MEETING – MONDAY 13th July 2015

CHAIRMAN _____

Date _____

