



AUDLEM
PARISH COUNCIL

AUDLEM PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Carol Bell

Foxes Field

Sheppenhall Lane

Aston

CW5 8DT

Phone: 07783580406

e-mail: parishcouncil@audlemc.co.uk

Minutes of meeting of Audlem Parish Council held in the Methodist Church, Shropshire St. Audlem on Monday 3rd June at 7.00pm.

Present: Councillors Geoff Seddon (GS) (Chair), Stephen Hopkins (SH), Lynette Hopkins (LH) Steve Elliott (SE), Kate Down (KD), George McLaren-Brown (GMB), Nick Brennan (NB), Carl Dovey (CD), Ryan Jones (RJ)

In attendance: Carol Bell (Clerk to APC)

Part A

GS opened the meeting at 7 pm and advised that the meeting was being recorded.

Members of public in attendance: 10

24/27 Apologies for absence

Councillor Keith Nord, Ward Councillor Rachel Bailey

24/28 Signing of Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Cllrs Ryan Jones, Carl Dovey and Nick Brennan co-opted in the May meeting, signed their Declaration of Acceptance and then joined the Council at the top table. GS welcomed the three new Councillors to the Parish Council.

24/29 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest

24/30 Requests for Dispensation

No requests for dispensations

24/31 Co-option of Councillor

One application for the position of Councillor was considered. The applicant was not present in the public forum. All Councillors agreed to defer the application until the next meeting in order for Councillors to ask the applicant questions in relation to their application.

Action: Clerk to contact applicant and ask if they can attend the next APC meeting

24/32 Public participation

A MOP asked for an update on the police investigation into the missing APC funds. The Clerk read out an e-mail sent to her by DI Lees which was in response to a complaint letter he had received from APC in relation to the length of time the investigation was taking. The Clerk advised she was awaiting dates of availability from DI Lees so that they could meet in person to discuss the progress of the investigation further.

A MOP asked why the Council were obtaining a valuation of Turnpike Field.

GS replied that as the Council are currently seeking legal advice regarding some aspects of the contract, they are unable to answer any questions until the legal enquiry has been completed. Once done, then the Council would be happy to relay to the public what the enquiry entailed and the outcome.

Cllr Dovey asked if Turnpike Field could be used on a temporary basis for parking to ascertain what need there was if any, for additional parking in the village. GS and LH advised that nothing can happen on the field at the moment whilst the Council is in legal negotiations.

24/33 Confirmation of Minutes

Councillors **RESOLVED** to approve the Minutes of the meetings held on **13th May 2024** and **30th May 2024**. Proposed GMB, seconded SH, 3 abstentions

24/34 Councillors **REVIEWED and **AGREED** membership of the following Council committees and working groups**

24/34 (i) Turnpike Field Working Group – Cllrs Steve Elliott, Kate Down, Geoff Seddon, Ryan Jones
Proposed GS, seconded LH, all in favour

- 24/34 (ii) Village Management Committee – Cllrs Lynnette Hopkins, Stephen Hopkins, George McLaren-Brown, Kate Down and Steve Elliott
Proposed GS, seconded KD, all in favour
- 24/34 (iii) Finance Committee – Cllrs Stephen Hopkins, George McLaren-Brown, Steve Elliott, Ryan Jones
Proposed LH, seconded GS, all in favour
- 24/34 (iv) Staffing Committee – Cllrs Geoff Seddon, Lynette Hopkins, Nick Brennan, Kate Down
Proposed GS, seconded SH, all in favour
- 24/34 (v) Planning Group – Cllrs Kate Down, Geoff Seddon, Lynette Hopkins, Stephen Hopkins, Keith Nord
Proposed CD, seconded GS, all in favour
- 24/34 (vi) Communications Group – Cllr Steve Elliott, George McLaren-Brown, Geoff Seddon, Carol Bell (Clerk)
Proposed NB, seconded CD, all in favour
- 24/35** Councillor Lynette Hopkins was elected as Chair for the Village Management Committee
Proposed GMB, seconded KD, all in favour
- 24/36** Councillor Stephen Hopkins was elected as Chair for the Finance Committee
Proposed SE, seconded GS, all in favour
- 24/37** Councillors **REVIEWED** and appointed representatives for the following external bodies
- Burial Board – Cllrs Geoff Seddon, Steve Elliott and Ryan Jones
Proposed GS, seconded CD, all in favour
- Public Hall – Cllr Kate Down
Proposed GS, seconded SE, all in favour
- ADAPT – Vacancy
- ADAS – Cllr Carl Dovey
Proposed GS, seconded KD, all in favour
- AWEG – Vacancy
- ADCA – Cllr George McLaren-Brown
Proposed GS, seconded KD, all in favour
- Audlem Traders – Cllrs Carl Dovey, Lynette Hopkins
Proposed GS, seconded KD, all in favour
- ChALC – Chair and Vice Chair
- Canal and River Trust – Cllr Nick Brennan
Proposed GS, seconded KD, all in favour
- 24/38** The Councillors **REVIEWED** and **ADOPTED** the latest version of the financial regulations
Proposed SH, seconded Se, all in favour
- 24/39** The Councillors **AGREED** to the timeframes below for the review of the terms of reference and policies
Proposed KD, seconded CD, all in favour
- 24/39 (i) Terms of reference Communications Group – July 2024
24/39 (ii) Terms of reference Staffing Committee – September 2024
24/39 (iii) Terms of reference Planning Group – October 2024
24/39 (iv) Terms of reference – Finance Committee – November 2024
24/39 (v) Communications Policy (2020) – July 2024
24/39 (vi) Code of Conduct (2019) – July 2024
24/39 (vii) Buttermarket Usage Policy (2023) – September 2024
24/39 (viii) Health & Safety Policy (2020) – September 2024
24/39 (ix) Grant Application (2019) – October 2024
24/39 (x) Discipline & Grievance Policy (2019) – November 2024
24/39 (xi) Staff Sickness Policy (2019) – December 2024
24/39 (xii) CCTV Policy (2020) – December 2024
24/39 (xiii) Equal Opportunities Policy (2020) – January 2025
24/39 (xiii) Complaints Policy (2020) - February 2025
24/39 (xiv) Risk Assessment Policy (2019) – March 2025

24/40 Planning Matters

No new planning applications.

Councillors **NOTED** the following planning decisions.

24/40 (i) **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. – **CE have approved with conditions**

24/40 (ii) **24/1293T – 38 Salford, Audlem - T1 - Cypress - Fell.** Tree is a large concern for both the owners and the neighbours due to size and proximity to buildings and boundary wall. Deadwood debris, continual bird fouling and occasional branch drop means that the drive directly underneath becomes a hazard in both wet and windy weather. Customers are happy to replant with broadleaf more suited to the location and area available. – **6 week date for CE response has expired. KD advised that although the work could now go ahead, the Council would recommend that the applicant speak to the case manager for the planning application before any work is started**

24/41 Financial Matters

24/41 (i) Councillors **NOTED** the income and expenditure statement as of the 31st May 2024

24/41 (ii) Councillors **NOTED** the budget statement as of 31st May 2024

24/41 (iii) Councillors **APPROVED** the payment agenda below

Proposed SH seconded SE, all in favour

Invoice Date	Invoice No.	Supplier	Goods	Amount (£)
08.04.2024	SHI – 2041	Shires Accountants	Payroll processing 06.04.24 – 06.10.24	156.00 + VAT
09.05.2024	APC/020	IA-ODonoghue	Internal audit	350.00
20.05.2024	095	Audlem Methodist Church	Room hire 14.05 APC Room hire 20.05 TFWG	50.00
31.05.2024		Parish Clerk/RFO	Clerk duties (inc. 27 hrs O/T)	1491.20
31.05.2024		Lengthsman	Lengthsman duties	521.20
03.06.2024	097	Audlem Methodist Church	Room hire 29.05.24 VMC Room hire 29.05.24 APC Room hire 03.06.24 APC	90.00

24/41 (iv) Councillors **APPROVED** the retrospective payments below

Proposed SH, seconded SE, all in favour

Invoice Date	Invoice No.	Supplier	Goods	Amount (£)
03.05.2024	E19473423032	EDF Energy	Electricity supply public toilets 02.04 – 02.05	67.08
08.05.2024	05622881	WaterPlus	Water supply to public toilets	107.93
13.05.2024	GB204513- LA6001127	Cartridge People	2 black, 2 colour print cartridges	49.12 + VAT
16.05.2024	767	3 Counties Cleaning	Cleaning of public toilets	390.00
22.05.2024		Storage King	Shredding of APC documentation	20.00
22.05.2024		Sainsburys	Refreshments for Annual Village Meeting	31.40
22.05.2024		Argos	2 x £10 vouchers for children's art competition	20.00
23.05.2024		Screwfix	5 x lightbulbs	52.87 + VAT
26.05.2024	UK2021840	Medisave	Toilet Rolls (24)	79.98 + VAT

24/41 (v) Councillors **NOTED** payment made by into bank by resident for memorial bench which will be purchased and sited by Audlem Parish Council

Payment Date	Amount
28.05.2024	1287.43

24/42 Correspondence

24/42 (i) Councillors **NOTED** the recent response from DI Lees to the complaint letter sent by Audlem Parish Council as per item 24/32 above

24/42 (ii) GS spoke about the Cheshire East bus consultation and advised that the proposal was to remove the 72 and 73 bus service from Lightwood Green which would isolate the residents there. GS and LH asked residents to log on and complete the consultation which ends on Wednesday 3rd July. Details of the consultation can be found at <https://surveys.cheshireeast.gov.uk/s/BusServiceReview2024> and takes about 10 mins to complete.

24/43 Turnpike Field

24/43(i) SE gave an update from the Turnpike Field working Group meeting

- SE advised that a new working group was to be set up to look at the logistics and costings for a green parking area on Turnpike Field
- Congratulations were given to the organisers of the Music Festival for a well organised and highly enjoyable weekend.
- SE advised that there are still large areas of Himalayan Balsam on the field particularly near the waterways. SE requested to trim the areas where the shorter shoots of balsam were.
- SE advised that there was a large amount of ragwort in the top field that needed containing. SE asked the Council if they would agree for it to be cut and bailed and then left on the field to rot. The cost for this would be £100. LH asked for it to be made clear the bales were to be left on the field and not removed as had happened previously. Proposed SE, seconded SH, all in favour.
- SE asked if the Clerk could contact Benbow Brothers tree surgeons and ask them if they could cut and leave a couple of sections of tree trunk when they chopped down the Oak Tree near the gate to the field, to use for a bug hotel.
- LH asked what the Council planned to replace the chopped down tree with. GS advised this had not yet been discussed. Clerk to put on July agenda.
- The Clerk was asked to write to the Music Festival Committee to thank them for their efforts.

24/43 (ii) SE asked for approval for funding to replace and extend fencing on the bridge. LH asked for further information such as a drawn plan of where the fencing was to be replaced and extended to. LH also reminded the Council that it was agreed in the May APC meeting that a full risk assessment must be done by the contractor prior to any machinery been driven onto the field and over the bridge. SE to provide. The quote from Hales for £254 for wood was approved subject to a plan being provided and agreed by council.
Proposed SE, seconded CD, all in favour.

24/43 (iii) SE asked the Council to consider setting up a separate bank account for a Go Fund Me page for Turnpike Field. Councillors asked what the fund would be for and advised Terms of Reference would have to be set for the spending of the money. SE to gather more information to present to Council.

24/43 (iv) Councillors **APPROVED** the grant application for £500 to the organisers of the Music Festival.
Proposed SE, seconded GS, all in favour

24/44 Village Management (VMG)

24/44 (i) LH provided an update from VMC meeting held on Wednesday 29th May

- LH thanked the Clerk and her husband for doing some maintenance work on the toilets prior to the Music Festival to ensure they were in good working order for the weekend.
- LH advised that the hedge on the footpath to the entrance to Turnpike Field off Green Lane needed cutting back as it was currently a danger to pedestrians and motorists.
- LH advised that the Clerk had written to CE for an update on the next steps for transfer of assets talks relating to the public car park in Audlem.
- LH advised that GMB had had additional keys cut for the CCTV camera box in the public car park for both himself and the Clerk. The village PCSO holds a key but having additional keys would enable police to access the box if needed, should the PCSO not be available.
- LH discussed the electricity consumption for the public toilets. It is thought that the lights for the public car park may also be connected to the electricity meter at the toilets. The Clerk has written to CE to ask them to provide evidence of their bills for the lighting for the car park.
- LH advised that the Council are still unable to locate the water meter for the toilets. The Clerk has written and phoned WaterPlus but has had not satisfactory response. GS advised writing to the Chief Executive of the Water Company. Clerk to action
- LH advised that the discussion of additional cycle racks had taken place at the VMC meeting but at present there was lack of funding and space to provide more in the village.

- LH advised that the VMC thought the best use of the CIL money would be to put it toward speed indicator devices for the village. The Clerk to price up devices and report back in the next APC meeting.
- LH advised that the Lengthsman was on annual leave this week so the bins would be emptied by members of the Council.
- Payment for this year's tenancy of Longhill Moss was still outstanding. Clerk to send the tenant a reminder.

24/44 (ii) The burial board have asked that the parish bins be removed from their current place at the cemetery. GS advised he has tried some areas of the village and has had no luck but has one more area to try. If not successful it was suggested that the bins be moved to the small wall area at the side of the public toilets in the car park.

24/44 (iii) LH advised that a youth of the village had contacted the Council to advise that CE had cut down trees and left them in the cycle scramble area that the youths cycle on at the rear of the playing field complex rendering the area unusable. The Council to look into whether the cut tree logs could be removed

24/45 Report by Ward Councillor

No update received from Cheshire East Councillor Rachel Bailey

24/46 Office Matters

24/46 (i) Councillors **NOTED** the electricity contract with EDF for the public toilets came to an end on March 31st. The price for electricity had reverted back to 1.50 per day standing charge and 30p per kw unit. The Clerk has spoken to EDF and negotiated a new 1 year deal @ 60p per day standing charge and 27.9 per kw unit.

24/47 Date of Next Meeting and Items for Future Agenda

The next meeting will be held on **Monday 1st July** in the **Methodist Church, Shropshire St, Audlem, Crewe CW3 0AE**.

The meeting ended at 20.38. Cllr Geoff Seddon thanked everyone for attending.

Part B – no items