

AUDLEY RURAL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE **FULL COUNCIL MEETING** held at Audley Pensioners Hall, on
Thursday 17th November 2016 at 7.00pm

Present: Chairman: Rev J Taylor
Councillors: Mrs V Pearson, Mr P Breuer, Mrs C Richardson, Mr D Butler, Mr C Cooper,
Mr M Whitmore, Mr R Kinnersley

Clerk – Mrs C. Withington
There was one member of public present.

Ref.	Item	Action
1.	To receive apologies – Mr T Sproston, Cllr Proctor, Cllr Frankish, Cllr Beech, Mr R Moody, Mr R Garlick	
2.	To consider approving and signing minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council on 20 th October 2016 RESOLVED that the minutes be signed as a true and accurate record.	
3.	Declaration of interest in any item Mr Whitmore declared a pecuniary interest in item 13.	
4.	Public Participation: No items were raised, although it was agreed that the member of public could ask a question at the relevant point on the agenda.	
5.	Planning - To consider any planning applications received, including:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>16/00930/FUL</u> - 188 & 190 Old Road Bignall End Stoke On Trent Staffordshire ST7 8QH Retention of conversion of single dwelling to 2 no. dwellings – Green Belt/Delegated RESOLVED that this be supported. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Part single storey, part two storey rear link extension from main dwelling to existing outbuilding 31 Nantwich Road Audley Stoke On Trent Staffordshire ST7 8DH Ref.16/00774/FUL</u> – Conservation area/Village Envelope/Delegated RESOLVED that this be supported.	
6.	To note any further progression with regards to Halmer End Working Men's Club The Clerk updated the meeting to say that Cllr Proctor had spoken with Guy Benson at the Borough Council, who would ask building control to revisit the site to ensure it was made safe. The Clerk was asked to also report the concerns to the rights of way officer at the County, as there is a footpath next to the site.	Clerk
7.	To consider requesting the Borough Council to compulsory purchase Church Street (private land/dedicated Highway) in front of the shops – Mr Chris Cooper Mr Cooper suggested that it was probably not financially possible to compulsory purchase the land in front of the shops. The County Council legal services had confirmed the status of the land in front of the most of the shops as being dedicated Highway. This has priority status over any owned or unowned land and any vehicle etc causing an obstruction (i.e. stopping pedestrians etc from passing along) on the highway is committing a criminal offence, of which the police can ticket. This was noted and PC Moore is to be asked to pay attention to this and where	Clerk

	<p>possible issue tickets to vehicles parked illegally, and to inform the local shops of this fact. Additionally, it was RESOLVED that the Clerk would seek further legal advice regarding the options available to the Parish Council to pursue and the costs.</p> <p>With regards to the car park by the Co-op and Tesco it was noted that this remains the responsibility of Newcastle Borough Council.</p> <p>Clerk to chase up the removal of the white stones by 27 Church Street, as it was a hazard to pedestrians, especially visually impaired.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
8.	<p>To consider creating a permitted right of way across Halmer End play area to Bateswood and request that the County/Borough make a permitted right of way to Bateswood over the football ground – Mr Chris Cooper</p> <p>It was confirmed that the footpath would not be crossing the football pitch, it was in relation to the existing footpath to allow the Institute to apply for funding to improve it. It was RESOLVED that a permitted right of way would be allowed across the Parish land as requested, and in addition to ask the Borough and County to allow the same to join the stile that used to be in existence – in accordance with the map produced by Mr Cooper. The Clerk was asked to seek legal advice on how to implement this.</p>	Clerk
9.	<p>To consider further action with regards to Westfield Avenue - damage to verges by buses and the ongoing diverted bus route</p> <p>It was noted that the buses did now seem to be using the original route, although this had not been confirmed. PMT had stated they would only reinstate the verges if there were asked by Highways. The Clerk to request that Highways instruct the reinstatement.</p>	Clerk
10.	<p>To respond to the consultation regarding the proposed removal of BT phone boxes outside Tesco's Church Street Audley, Harrison Close Halmer End and Greasley Arms Alsagers Bank (deadline 16th December)</p> <p>It was RESOLVED that the phone boxes were there for emergencies, especially since there were to be more defibrillators installed in the village which require a call to 999 to be able to use. There were also parts of the parish that suffered poor mobile phone signals and the high levels of income deprivation in the area, in accordance with the latest Index of Multiple Deprivation. It was also noted that phone box in Church Street services a busy village centre, and that the other 2 are near to social housing estates. RESOLVED that the Clerk object on this basis.</p>	Clerk
11.	<p>To agree a tree for the Mothers' Union Parish Council Christmas Tree entry (to be displayed on Thursday 8th December until Friday 6th January 2017)</p> <p>It was RESOLVED that a real potted tree would be purchased for this event and decorations to the total value of £100.</p>	Clerk
12.	<p>To note the final arrangements for the Christmas decorations for Church Street</p> <p>The Clerk circulated the final scheme which included several full decorations where allowed, and braids wrapped around the posts which</p>	

	<p>were not allowed full decorations due to the existing illuminated signs. Final Highways approval was awaited, but it was intended that the decorations would be installed over the next few weeks. The electricians were now in place. It was suggested that the timing of the lights going live be on the same night as the rotary tree of light switch on. The Clerk was to find out if this is possible, as the lighting is on pre-set timers. Additionally, it was RESOLVED that the Clerk approach St James the Great Church to see if they would allow the Parish Council to wrap one of their trees with lights.</p>	<p>Clerk Clerk</p>
13.	<p>To consider quotes for the tree pruning at Margaret's Garden Mr Whitmore left the room while this item was discussed due to a pecuniary interest. The additional two quotes, risk assessment and insurance policies were considered, alongside the first quote received at the last meeting. There were several concerns raised about the procurement practices and the Clerk noted that the Borough's Tree officer had recommended appointing a tree surgeon who was a member of the Arboricultural Association. One of the quotes was a member of the Association but it was not clear if the other two were. The Parish Council RESOLVED to appoint the lowest priced contractor on the condition that this would be acceptable practice legally and in accordance with fair procurement, in view of the sensitive circumstances. It was agreed that the Clerk would obtain the advice from the SPCA prior to any further appointment and all contractors are to be notified in due course. Mr Whitmore returned to the room.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
14.	<p>To consider a quote for the annual maintenance of the area where the former Pensioners Shelter was located It was RESOLVED that some additional bulbs and ivy be planted to avoid a maintenance liability in the future, which is also borough council land. Mr Hough to speak to Mrs Pearson about the ivy. It was also RESOLVED that Mr Hough be asked to fix the plaques removed from the shelter to the back wall of the land as a tribute to those who erected the shelter.</p>	<p>Clerk Clerk</p>
15.	<p>Grants – Community Chest (uncommitted balance £250 – max £400) None received</p>	
16.	<p>To agree a response for the Electoral Review of Newcastle-Under-Lyme: Warding Arrangements - http://www.lgbce.org.uk/current-reviews/west-midlands/staffs/newcastle-under-lyme – Mr Chris Cooper Mr Cooper had circulated a paper which was considered at the meeting. In summary to retain 3 of the 5 borough councillors which cover the Borough wards within the parish, Mr Cooper suggested Betley would be best placed to be within the Madeley Ward and Scot Hay could be linked in with Silverdale and Parkside ward. Full details of the proposal are appended at Appendix A. RESOLVED that the Clerk submits the proposed changes as above as the response from the Parish Council.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
17.	<p>Playing Fields/Wildlife Areas inc:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To note Play Area Monthly Inspection for November and approval of any action required or taken under Delegated Authority – hole at Rileys Field, glass and ASB issues Albert Street and Bignall End Road (police meeting) <p>The play inspection report was noted. The Clerk had instructed contractors to deal with the mole issue on Albert Street and to treat the moss on the rubber crumb surfaces. The Clerk was also asked to</p>	<p>Clerk</p>

	<p>request a new bin lid at Alsager Road from Newcastle Borough Council. The above actions were also approved and noted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider the outcome of the consultation with regards to the play area improvements at Alsager Road and approve the next steps <p>The Clerk had forwarded the information regarding the boggy areas of the playing field to the Landscape Architect. A further site visit had been undertaken to determine where the best area is located for the equipment. An area had been left at the front of the playing field for any future proposals. The tender spec and final draft scheme layout will be brought to the next meeting for agreement, before the tender process starts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To agree a scheme for the reinstatement of the land at Rileys Field Wood Lane, following works to the retaining wall at No 1 Country Park View <p>It was RESOLVED that the reinstatement scheme would consist of mulch/bark and bulbs and wildflowers.</p>	<p>Next agenda</p> <p>Clerk</p>
18.	<p>Correspondence and circulars -To review other items received and consider for next agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parish Council Forum – request for clerks to take minutes, letter from Chief Executive - The Clerk stated that in view of the shortage of personnel at the Borough, that she would be willing to be on a rota basis along with the other clerks to take the minutes. Clerk to respond on that basis. SPCA AGM Monday 5th December 2016 – Mr Kinnersley noted that he would be attending. Audley Millennium Green Trust – Mr Whitmore attended, there was nothing to report. Sir Thomas Boughy High School awards – Unfortunately the invitation did not reach the Clerk until the day before the meeting – due to the old address being used. 	<p>Clerk</p>
19.	<p>Accounts</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To approve payments/orders, receipts and transfers – Appendix A <p>RESOLVED that this be paid in accordance with the attached schedule.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To consider any further action with regards to the potential cut in Section 136 Concurrent funding to the parish from the Borough Council <p>Mr Cooper suggested that the Borough Council should reconsider whether the LAPS are required where there are already Parish Councils, and felt that the running costs of the LAP would be a better saving to make than the Section 136 funding. RESOLVED that the Clerk sends in representations with regards to the potential loss of the funding from the Parish, and suggests that the LAP is disbanded to achieve the savings.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To consider a donation to the Royal British Legion for £34 for Remembrance Sunday <p>RESOLVED that that a total of £70 be paid to the Royal British Legion for the wreaths.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
20.	<p>To receive an update from Audley LAP and Police / Parish Liaison Committee – Cllr Beech/Frankish/Proctor</p>	

	<p>There was nothing to report. It was however agreed that if the police were no longer planning to attend the surgeries, then it would be best to stop advertising them to avoid any inconvenience to parishioners. Clerk to confirm if they are still to be held or not.</p>	Clerk
21.	<p>Clerks Update – (Appendix D)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To approve the purchase of Office furniture – printer table and file storage <p>RESOLVED that this be approved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To approve a request to join Bike2work scheme (a lease hire agreement of a purchased bike which is paid by the employee monthly through salary sacrifice) <p>The Clerk requested approval to join the above scheme, which would require the Parish Council to make the initial purchase (up to £1000) of a bike and equipment, which is then repaid each month by the employee through a salary sacrifice until the full amount is recovered. The scheme is free of charge and costs nothing to run, and employers typically save 13.8% of the total value of the salary sacrifice on Employer NI contributions. RESOLVED that this be approved.</p>	
22.	<p>Councillor Reports (for information only/further actions and decisions must be included on next agenda)</p> <p>Mr Cooper asked that the police be asked to attend the crossing point for the children at Alsagers Bank, due to a near miss earlier this week. The Clerk is to find out when the replacement lollipop lady is likely to be filled.</p> <p>Mr Kinnnersley asked if the bus shelter to be removed at Church Street could be reused by Halmer End Bowling Club. It was noted that the Borough Council did not think it would be possible to reuse, however the Clerk is to ask the Borough Council if there are any other unused shelters which the Bowling Club could use.</p> <p>Mrs Richardson asked for a car which had been abandoned at the top of Hougherwall Road to be reported.</p> <p>Mr Whitmore stated that he had been informed by one of the PCSOs that there had been an increase in trailer theft and one attempted theft of a HGV at Eardley End Road.</p> <p>Revd Taylor to speak to Cllr Beech regarding the timing of refuse vehicles which are generally at same time as school drop off time around Ravensmead School.</p>	<p>Clerk Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>JT</p>

Meeting closed at 8.55 pm

Approved Payments schedule – November 2016

Chq/Bacs	TO WHOM PAID	DETAILS	TOTAL INVOICE INC VAT
bacs 80	Audley Brass Band	Donation towards remembrance day playing 2016	100.00
bacs 81	Eon	Xmas lights/sockets	5280.00
bacs 82	PME	Installation of lights	1000.00
bacs 83	Blachere Illuminations	Lights	2155.20
bacs 84	Alliance Technical Services Limited	Work to Halmer End War Memorial	4034.40
bacs 85	Mrs C Withington	Salary Nov total	771.63
bacs 85a	Mrs C Withington	Expenses Nov inc mileage	128.30
bacs 86	Staffordshire Pension scheme	Pension Nov	318.28
bacs 87	H M Revenues and Customs	Tax and NI Nov	111.05
bacs 88	Computershare	Nov child care voucher (243 sacrifice)	282.07
bacs 89	Mrs C Withington	Reimbursement for Office Furniture (1/2 share)	212.00
bacs 90	Steve Hough	AM - Grass cutting 14 and 15, Play inspection, grass cut at Als	1542.00
bacs 90	Steve Hough	ON 6 - clearing off weeds off Grit bin by Butchers Arms	20.00
bacs 90	Steve Hough	ON 8 - Removal of glass bottles (x 3 bins) Bignall End Road A\$	30.00
bacs 90	Steve Hough	ON 2 - Cutting away trees on verge Bignall End Road play area	30.00
966	Royal British Legion	Donation and wreaths	70.00
bacs 91	Evansign	Signs for no alcohol and Leddys Field	262.00
bacs 92	Eurooffice	Chair and new hole punch	254.14
		Monthly Total	16601.07

Total transfer required to current account: £16600

Appendix A**APPROVED RESPONSE BY MR COOPER
REGARDING THE ELECTORAL REVIEW**

THE Boundary Commission wish to reduce the No of seats in the Newcastle borough from 60 to 44, currently there are 60 seats with a voting population of 96150 this gives an average voting population per current councillor of 1603.

It is proposed that the number of Councillors is reduced to 44 giving a voting population to each councillor of 2185. 2185 is the average I am unaware of what the Boundary Commissions voting electorate per Councillor is?

In Audley Parish Area we have a voting population of 7782 giving currently a voting population of 1556 per Councillor within the Parish we have 5 Borough Councillors, 2 in Halmerend/ Alsagers Bank/ Betley and 3 in Audley/ Bignall End/ Wood Lane.

The figure of 7782 voting population will give the Parish a return on the proposed model of 44 Councillors a representative model of 3.6 Councillors, which in real terms must equate to a loss of 2 Councillors to logically accrue an achievable outcome on the target of 44 representative Borough Councillors for Newcastle Borough Council.

To achieve an equitable number of electorate to Councillor number it would be better if it was acceptable to maintain the equity of Councillors in Madeley and Silverdale Parkside by losing them from the Electoral District of Alsagers Bank and Halmerend, that is to transfer Betley to Madeley which would assist in retaining 2 seats there and to remove Scot Hay to Silverdale and Parkside again assisting in keeping 2 seats there.

We would be left with 3 councillors in Audley Parish with an estimated population of 2200 voting electorate per Councillor, minimally over the Average that is required to satisfy the Boundary Commission.

This would leave to 3 wards having to be created within the parish, that the Parish Boundaries would not be changed at all, that Scot Hay would retain its Parish Boundary and would be represented at the Borough by Silverdale and Parkside.

There would be a requirement to rename the Wards to distinctly define the new wards better to their representative areas as an inclusion exercise for example Wood Lane in the title of say Bignall End and Wood Lane, Audley and Miles Green, Alsagers Bank and Halmer End.

In terms of representation I would also suggest that the Commission look at County representation in terms of there being a separation of Borough Councillors and County Councillors so as not to have Borough Councillors sat on both Authorities as it was practised in Stoke on Trent. It guarantees Scrutiny in the integrity of duplicity as a potential conflict in Governance.