

ALVINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held Thursday 7th December 2023, 7.30 pm at Alvington Memorial Hall

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllr Richard Heys (Chairman)
Cllr Gail Thompson (Vice Chair)
Cllr Rachel Macharg
Cllr Nick Powell

ATTENDING: John Wood, Chris Shill, Alec Davis, Alex Turner, Carol Hinton, Kevin Strong, Jasmine Jones, Trini Jones, Harry Meek, Meg Humphries (Clerk).

Min. Ref	Item and details	Action
097. 23/24	<p>1. To receive apologies for absence.</p> <p>Cllr Nathan Burlton sent his apologies due to family commitments. Accepted.</p>	
098. 23/24	<p>2. To note any declarations of interest relating to the agenda.</p> <p>None.</p>	
099. 23/24	<p>3. To approve the accuracy of the draft minutes of the Full Council Meeting on 02.11.23.</p> <p>Cllr Thompson proposed that these were accepted; Cllr Powell seconded; Approved unanimously.</p>	
100. 23/24	<p>4. To formally approve the appointment of a new Clerk.</p> <p>Cllr Heys introduced Carol Hinton as the proposed new Clerk. Cllr Thompson proposed that Mrs Hinton is appointed as Clerk; Cllr Macharg seconded; Approved unanimously.</p>	
101. 23/24	<p>5. To formally approve the 24/25 budget and precept figures.</p> <p>The Clerk briefly presented the budget for 24/25, and the precept, at £10,550, which is an increase of £554 from last year.</p> <p>Cllr Thompson proposed that the budget and proposed precept was approved. This was seconded by Cllr Macharg and agreed unanimously.</p>	
102. 23/24	<p>6. To approve the proposed wording for a potential easement agreement between Alvington Memorial Hall and Flat 1, Knapp Lane, for routing sewage and internet over the hall's site (as per details circulated previously).</p> <p><i>This item was taken after item 7 to allow members of the public to leave earlier if desired.</i></p>	

	<p>Cllr Heys explained that the agreement has been drawn up between the Memorial Hall trustees, but because the parish council is the landowner, it needs to sign off on / make recommendations on key agreements.</p> <p>Cllr Powell proposed that the agreement wording was accepted; this was seconded by Cllr Thompson and agreed unanimously.</p>	
<p>103. 23/24</p>	<p>7. Public forum.</p> <p><i>This item was taken before item 6 to allow members of the public to leave earlier if desired.</i></p> <p>John Wood: Hopeful that Swan Hill will be repaired in the next few weeks, i.e. when the A48 closes overnight on 18th/19th. It is the parish council's understanding that it will be,</p> <p>Alan Haslam: Asked what was happening regarding road safety upgrades in the parish. Cllr Heys outlined the current picture: Brian Watkins (Highways area representative) has now moved on, and Chris Walsh now taken over. Recent discussions have focused on road markings and making Church Lane and Clanna turnings safer by a slight narrowing of the A48 at those points, allowing better vision for vehicles turning out of side roads. It seems GCC Highways is trying to identify funding for these works. It's likely that another traffic regulation order (TRO) will be needed.</p> <p>Chris Shill: Previously asked Cllr McFarling what FoDDC thought about a possible Chepstow bypass. Cllr McFarling had responded that currently FoDDC does not have any plans on this front. Therefore, Chris thought he would write to Mark Harper, who responded that he wanted to get Gloucestershire County Council and Monmouthshire County Council together to improve the situation in Chepstow. Chris also thanked the parish council for all the work done through the year.</p> <p>Alec Davis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resurfacing – asked for clarification on when the overnight A48 closures were taking place, as closures on 11/12 December and 18/19 December have both been mentioned. The parish council's understanding was that the closure is on the nights of 18/19 December, having been moved from 11/12. • Malthouse Close – works at this location to stop surface water buildup has not been successful and surface water is still building here. Alec has written to Highways and was promised a response in 5 days but has not heard in 2 months. Cllr Heys advised that Highways have recorded pics of pooling and consider that the contractor's work was unsatisfactory, so they have asked the contractor to rectify the issue. The contractor has not yet set a timescale for doing this. • Bloomery Court houses recently experienced flooding at the back of them, requiring sandbags. The residents have been in touch with the developers to resolve it, by adding more drainage at the back. Alec asked if as part of those works could they put more drainage at back of his house as well. Cllr Heys reported that he and Cllr Thompson and Cllr Burlton met some residents at Bloomery Court to discuss the issues on site. He confirmed that gravel land drain has been put across the backs of their plots because of attenuation pond overflow. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public rights of way: None of the required kissing gates have been installed since May; the reason given was the weather. Once again raised concerns over energy use at the FoDDC offices, where lights seemed to be on across all four floors into the night. <p>Kevin Strong: Raised concerns over a tree at the entrance to the Memorial Hall, which is overhanging the whole lane. He understands it's the hall's responsibility and wondered whether there is a plan to prune it. Mr Strong believes that if the tree fell it may knock down the wall into his field, where his animals graze. He offered to trim off the end to make it lighter. There was a brief discussion on risk/benefits of the tree. Cllr Heys advised that he will pass the matter to the chair of the Memorial Hall committee.</p>	RH
104. 23/24	<p>8. To receive/note any reports from county and district councillors for the parish.</p> <p>Cllr Heys shared Cllr McFarling's latest report, covering updates at a county, district and parish level.</p> <p>The Clerk advised that Cllr McFarling has advised he is happy for his report to be made available on the parish council website, therefore the full report can be found here.</p> <p>Cllr Heys also gave update on FoDDC biodiversity policy, circulated by Cllr McFarling, including the appointment of a dedicated biodiversity officer.</p>	
105. 23/24	<p>9. Planning</p> <p>a) To note no objection to P1495/23/TPO: 16/17 Clanna Country Park, Clanna, Alvington, Lydney. Fell Horse Chestnut tree covered by T2 of Tree Preservation Order number DFTPO 195, due to safety concerns and injuries already caused by roots and falling branches.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>b) Any other planning updates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The meeting also considered P1347/23/OUT: Land Off Knapp Lane, Oak Barn Farm, Knapp Lane, Alvington: Erection of up to 1 self build dwelling and associated works. (some matters reserved). As the hardcopy pack had not arrived by the November meeting, it was agreed to ask for a comment extension to allow time for full consideration. <p>No objections.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bloomery Court update: Cllrs Heys, Burlton and Thompson had a positive visit on 2nd December. They met with residents and discussed the site's planning and development history and identified key issues. Tony Pope (the planning officer) is working to address residents' concerns. Residents raised concerns about property positioning, access road usage, and debris affecting drains. APC emphasized shared benefits. Drainage pumping system breakdown noted. Residents proposed relocating the Bloomery 	

	<p>Court play equipment to Garlands Road play area. Councillors impressed upon them that the council is as much there for them as other residents.</p>	
<p>106. 23/24</p>	<p>10. Village.</p> <p>a) To note updates on village/parish improvement matters (see meeting pack).</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Alec Davis highlighted the seeming lack of recent progress on the sewage flooding at Tudor Cottages. He reiterated it's a health hazard, and that Severn Trent Water has promised much more than it has delivered.</p>	
<p>107. 23/24</p>	<p>11. Sports Field.</p> <p>a) Report on Quiz and Pudding Night 18th November 2023. Cllr Heys gave a brief report. He felt it went very well, was well attended, and the takings were £634, which was somewhere around £530 after expenses. It was attended by upwards of 65 people. He expressed thanks to everyone who had made puddings for the event, and everyone who took part.</p> <p>b) Pavilion project: to receive any updates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Powell reported on his continued conversation with Reecer Space on a first draft for a potential modular build, and pricing was being prepared for the total build, and for building in 2 sections. • Cllr Powell is currently waiting for the electrician to give details on what the pavilion's power requirements will be. This information is needed to get water and electricity on site. Alan Haslam offered contact details of an electrician who may be able to supply the necessary information more quickly. <p>c) To receive any other reports on the sports field.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Heys outlined how the Land Reg keen to reg all land by 2030. During the process of registering the Sports Field it transpired that technically a small corner of the Sports Field is owned by the neighbouring farm. However, the farm owners have very kindly offered to donate the land. The parish council expressed huge thanks to the farm owners for this generosity. • Given how icy Court Lane can get, the parish council has drafted a snow access agreement to give the farm owners access to their field via the Sports Field during inclement weather. Cllr Heys presented the final wording of the agreement, which was approved unanimously. • Cllr Thompson proposed a morning of maintenance for a working party at the Sports Field. She proposed Saturday 20th January at 10 am. Clerk to share on Facebook. 	<p>MH</p>
<p>108. 23/24</p>	<p>12. Churchyard.</p> <p>a) To consider quotes for priority tree works in the churchyard, and to consider awarding a 24-month call-off arrangement to a tree surgeon for tree works in the parish. (Deferred from November meeting.)</p> <p>Quotes had been circulated to all members prior to the meeting. It was agreed to award the 24-month call-off agreement to TrunkArb, for the entirety of 2024 and</p>	

	<p>2025. The day rate quoted was £900 + VAT, and £450 + VAT for a half day. Agreed unanimously.</p> <p>It was also agreed to accept TrunkArb's quote for the first phase of necessary tree works (felling dead holly, bracing beech, mulching yew £1250+VAT)</p> <p>Phase 2 consists of reduction of aforementioned beech, and a climbing survey of one of the v big cedars.</p> <p>b) To receive updates on any churchyard matters.</p> <p>None at this time.</p>																						
<p>109. 23/24</p>	<p>13. Highways.</p> <p>a) Road safety: to receive any updates including partnership work with Aylburton Parish Council.</p> <p>No updates at this time.</p> <p>b) To note any updates on Highways matters (see meeting pack).</p> <p>Noted.</p>																						
<p>110. 23/24</p>	<p>14. Finance.</p> <p>a) To ratify the November payment of £2,700 to Liddell and Associates for producing drawings for Building Regulations Application for Phase 1 (agreed at the November meeting but not included on the November agenda).</p> <p>Ratified.</p> <p>b) To note the change in PATA's monthly payroll charges from £8.60 to £10.35.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>c) To approve the payments for December.</p> <p>Approved as follows:</p> <table data-bbox="199 1601 1268 1859"> <tr> <td>M Humphries</td> <td>Clerk Pay Nov 2023 + cost-of-living backpay</td> <td>545.98</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr R Heys</td> <td>Reimbursement for parts for generator repair</td> <td>8.19</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr G Thompson</td> <td>Reimbursement for Quiz Night bar stock</td> <td>82.32</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr G Thompson</td> <td>Reimbursement for Quiz Night events licence</td> <td>21.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr G Thompson</td> <td>Reimbursement for Quiz Night beer glasses</td> <td>5.97</td> </tr> <tr> <td>GPFA</td> <td>Subs 23/24</td> <td>50.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>M Humphries</td> <td>Reimb for fuel: Glos Archives deposit visit</td> <td>24.50</td> </tr> </table> <p>d) To note the receipt of income received since the last meeting.</p> <p>Noted as follows:</p>	M Humphries	Clerk Pay Nov 2023 + cost-of-living backpay	545.98	Cllr R Heys	Reimbursement for parts for generator repair	8.19	Cllr G Thompson	Reimbursement for Quiz Night bar stock	82.32	Cllr G Thompson	Reimbursement for Quiz Night events licence	21.00	Cllr G Thompson	Reimbursement for Quiz Night beer glasses	5.97	GPFA	Subs 23/24	50.00	M Humphries	Reimb for fuel: Glos Archives deposit visit	24.50	
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	09/11/2023 Bank interest 27/11/2023 Takings from Quiz Night on 18/11 <i>the figure erroneously read 364.69</i> 27/11/2023 Takings from Quiz Night – 10 euros	40.71 634.69 (NB: On the agenda 7.84	
111. 23/24	15. To note correspondence for information. Noted.		
112. 23/24	16. Council. a) To receive the Clerk’s Report. Noted. b) To receive councillors’ reports and items for future agendas. Bin on Clanna Lane – no one is emptying it any more. It was installed by a member of the public. Clerk to ask Cllr McFarling whether there is any scope for getting it emptied by council contractors. It was noted that rubbish has been dumped next to the bin after a recent motocross event. c) To note the date of the next full council meeting: Thursday 1st February 2024 at 7.30 pm. Noted.		MH

Meeting closed: 9.02 pm.

Signed: (Chairman)

Date: