

AUST PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF A COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Tuesday 9th January 2024 @ 7:30pm at Elberton Village Hall

Present: Councillors Steve Meredith (chairman), Heather Bayston, Julian Cooper, Ian Jenkins, David Spratt, Jeremy Warren

In attendance: None

Clerk: Emma Pattullo

Approved at the subsequent meeting held on 13th February 2024

Signed copy held by the Clerk.

1 To receive apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Anne Wiseman, also from Ward Cllrs Tony Williams and Matthew Riddle (SGC).

2 To receive declarations of Interest and requests for dispensations

There were no declarations of interest or dispensation requests.

3 Public Forum

No members of the public were present.

4 To approve the minutes of the last meeting held on 14th November 2023

It was resolved that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 14th November 2023 be approved as a correct record subject to the following modifications:

- Item 5.1 – add to end of first sentence “and dumping of spoil in the Long Pond.”

The amended minutes were signed by the Chairman.

5 To review ongoing matters and agree action required, if any

5.1 Woodwell Meadows – possible formation of volunteer group

Cllr Bayston has discussed this with SGC officers Kirsty Newberry (volunteer group co-ordinator) and Caroline Gaze (biodiversity & commons.) They would be happy to see a volunteer group formed but it would need to be a formally constituted group. Work plans and risk assessments for all work would need to be approved by SGC beforehand. SGC would be able to loan equipment and run training sessions if required.

It was generally agreed that this approach was too formal and would put people off being involved. Councillors asked whether it would be possible for the parish council to withdraw from the management agreement with SGC and manage the site in-house. The clerk advised that this should be legally possible but that she would need to check the wording of the management agreement. She also advised that formal procedures including proper insurance and risk assessments would still be required.

The meadow habitat is being overtaken by scrub. It was also pointed out that much of the scrub is now too big to be removed by hand and that mechanical topping could reduce it to a more manageable level.

It was RESOLVED that Cllr Bayston should go back to Caroline Gaze to request permission for Cllr Meredith to carry out mechanical topping of the meadow areas. The possible formation of a volunteer group will be reconsidered in the future.

6 New items of business

No new items

7 Planning

7.1 To note applications received and resolve response

The following applications were noted and responses resolved as recorded:

- i. P23/03474/RVC - Villa Farm Main Road Aust - Variation of condition no. 2 attached to planning application P20/23877/LB to amend plans to alter log store and porch canopy. Removal of condition no. 3. External works to include alterations to the existing log store and erection of a rear porch canopy to main dwelling. *No objection.*

7.2 To note the following planning responses submitted by the Clerk under delegated powers

- i. P23/03198/F - Hope Farm Village Road Littleton Upon Severn - Installation of 1no. mobile home (retrospective). *Objection response submitted.*

7.3 To note the following SGC planning decisions

- i. P23/00268/F - Land at Western Approach Distribution Park, Severn Beach - Construction of M49 Link Road with associated works at Land Between M49 Avonmouth Junction and Goldcrest Way, Western Approach Distribution Park. *Approved with conditions.*

7.4 To agree response to the SGC Local Plan Phase 3 consultation

The Clerk had circulated a summary of the proposed Local Plan including the implications for the Aust area. The impacts are likely to be lower than in many other parts of the county. It was RESOLVED that the following comments should be submitted:

- Support the protection of Green Belt designations around Aust parish;
- Support the designation of green infrastructure corridors and Strategic Viewpoints in the parish;
- Recommend that more green infrastructure be included, particularly in new housing developments;
- Plans for transport infrastructure need to be stronger – recommend consideration of a rail access point nearer to Thornbury and provision of Park & Ride facilities on this side of Bristol, perhaps at Severn Beach railway station.

8 Council administration

8.1 To approve contract with South Glos. Council for localism services April 2024 – March 2027

It was RESOLVED that the council should enter into a three year contract commencing 1st April 2024, for provision of localism services (namely, emptying of the waste bin at Aust tunnels.) The contract was signed by the Chairman.

9 Finance

9.1 To receive the quarterly finance report

The finance report was NOTED and the bank reconciliation checked and signed by Cllrs Jenkins and Warren.

9.2 To note earmarked reserve levels as of March 2024

The predicted earmarked reserve levels at the end of the present financial year were NOTED:

Earmarked Reserve	Expected balance at 31/03/2024
Elections	£1325.00
Professional Services	£5500.00
IT and website	£200.00
CIL	Nil
Events	£424.79
<i>Total earmarked reserves</i>	<i>£7449.79</i>

9.3 To note the following receipts

The following receipt was NOTED:

Item	Amount
Bank interest Q3	£96.94

9.4 To note the following payments made under prior approval

The following payments, made under prior approval as listed, were NOTED:

Item	Amount	Minute (where applicable)
Clerk's salary & home working allowance for month to 16 th November 2023	£287.12	May 2023 item 12.9
Clerk's salary & home working allowance for month to 16 th December 2023	£311.12	Nov 2023 item 9.3
Unity bank charges Q3	£18.00	May 2023 item 12.9

9.5 To consider making donations under Local Government Act 1972 s137 to the following organisations

In accordance with the council's powers under section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 ("s.137"), it was RESOLVED that the following expenditure is in the interests of the inhabitants of the council area and will benefit them in a manner commensurate with the expenditure, and hence that the following donations should be made:

9.5.1 Severn Area Rescue Association

A donation of £50 will be made under s.137 to the Severn Area Rescue Association.

9.5.2 CPRE The Countryside Charity

A donation (membership subscription) of £40 will be made under s.137 to CPRE The Countryside Charity.

9.5.3 Any further charitable donations

A donation of £40 will be made under s.137 to Great Western Air Ambulance charity

A donation of £100 will be made towards the running of Thornbury Citizens Advice Bureau (payable to Thornbury Town Council, who have taken over running the CAB.) This expenditure under LGA1972 s.142.

The above payments will be authorised by Cllrs Spratt and Jenkins and a record of such authorisation will be held by the Clerk.

9.6 To review and adopt a budget for financial year 2024/25

The Clerk presented a proposed budget for the coming financial year.

Following discussion it was agreed that the grants to the three churches should be increased by £10 per church.

Subject to that amendment, it was RESOLVED that the proposed budget should be adopted.

9.7 To determine the precept requirement for financial year 2024/25

In accordance with the adopted budget (item 9.6) it was RESOLVED that a precept of £6,820 should be levied. This equates to £28.54 for an average (Band D) household.

9.8 To confirm that internal audit for 2023/24 will be carried out via the ALCA audit network

It was RESOLVED that the internal audit for the 2023/24 financial year should be carried out via the ALCA audit network.

10 To review correspondence received and determine response

10.1 National Highways re: maintenance of the slip road at Manor Farm tunnels

Matthew Jones of National Highways has confirmed that they are not responsible for the slip road; they believe it to be the responsibility of South Glos. Council. SGC have previously stated that it is not part of their highway network, although they have signed it as part of the Avon Cycleway long distance cycle route.

It was RESOLVED that the clerk should write to SGC to remind them of the poor state of the roadway and that, by signing it as part of the cycle route, they have an implicit responsibility to maintain it in a safe state.

10.2 Resident re: noise from model aeroplanes at Whale Wharf

A resident has reported that the flying of model planes, which caused disturbance some years ago, has resumed. Ward Cllr Tony Williams has been in contact with SGC planning enforcement staff to discuss what might be done to reduce disturbance. It is understood that such activity would be allowed under permitted development rights for up to 28 days per year. The resident will be advised to keep a log of incidents and to get back in touch if they believe the 28-day limit has been breached.

11 Any other minor matters for discussion (no decision required) or items for next agenda

Cllr Meredith reported that Elberton Hall Committee are seeking to get “concealed entrance” signs erected on the road outside the hall. They also want to reduce the size of the ramp in the entrance gateway to make access easier.

The hedge on the north side of the Main Road, Aust / A403 junction is obscuring vision for vehicles exiting Aust village. The clerk will contact SGC to request that it is cut back.

Manhole covers on Passage Road, near to the bridge access road, have been overflowing during the recent wet weather. This leads to water flowing across the A403. The clerk will report to SGC.

Cllr Spratt reported that the coastal footpath between Aust and Severn Beach has been re-opened.

12 Meeting closure

The meeting closed at 8:48pm.

The next meeting of the Council will be held on Tuesday 13th February 2024.

Items for the agenda should be with the Clerk by 6th February.

Signed (Chairman):