

AUST PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Held on Tuesday 14th May 2024 @ 7:30pm at Elberton Village Hall

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

In attendance: Ward Councillors Matthew Riddle (SGC), no members of the public

Clerk: Emma Pattullo

Please note that these minutes are draft until approved at the subsequent meeting, and may be subject to change until that time.

1 Election of Chairman and Vice Chair

1.1 To elect a Chairman and receive signed Declaration of Acceptance of Office

It was RESOLVED that Steve Meredith should be elected as Chairman for the coming year. Cllr Meredith signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

1.2 To elect a Vice Chairman

It was RESOLVED that Ian Jenkins should be elected as Vice Chairman for the coming year.

2 To receive apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr. Ian Jenkins .

3 To receive declarations of Interest and requests for dispensations

There were no declarations of interest or dispensation requests.

4 Public Forum

No members of the public were present.

5 To approve the minutes of the last meeting held on 9th April 2024

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 9th April 2024 be approved as a correct record. The minutes were signed by the Chairman.

6 To review ongoing matters and agree action required, if any:

6.1 Woodwell Meadows – to agree formation of volunteer group

The Clerk and Cllr. Bayston presented a report the practicalities of forming a volunteer group to carry out improvement works at Woodwell Meadows. The report covered proposed work plans, practical arrangements, equipment and funding. It was RESOLVED that the group should be formed, with work sessions once a month at first.

Action: Cllr. Bayston to lead on arranging the first session. Cllrs Warren and Cooper will gather volunteers within Littleton.

Kirsty Newberry (Volunteer group support officer, SGC) has provided draft risk assessments and has offered places on Emergency First Aid training sessions. Cllr Warren holds a current First Aid certificate and Cllr Bayston will attend one of the first aid sessions once there is one planned on a convenient date.

Volunteers will be asked to bring their own basic equipment at first, e.g. spades, forks and secateurs. Caroline Gaze (SGC) has suggested that purchase of a “tree popper” could help with removal of the scrub. The main UK supplier of these devices is based in Stroud and has offered a site demonstration to see if the equipment will be worth purchasing. The clerk will arrange a demo session.

Initial funding for supplies (gloves, first aid kit, refreshments) can be met from council funds. It was RESOLVED that the excess of £24 from the insurance budget underspend will be vired to the maintenance budget line to assist with these costs.

The tree popper, if purchased, will cost around £285 depending on the size selected. This has not been included in the current budget. It was RESOLVED that, should purchase of the device be agreed, the SGC ward councillors will be asked whether they can award some of their Member Funding towards the cost.

6.2 Streetcare parish works team – to finalise list of tasks

Possible tasks have been identified in Elberton and Littleton. The Aust councillors will try to draw up a list of jobs in Aust for the team. The clerk will collate the lists and send details to the Streetcare team manager at SGC.

7 Planning

7.1 To note applications received and resolve response

The following applications were noted and responses resolved as recorded:

- i. P24/00866/F - Land at Hope Farm Village Road Littleton Upon Severn - Temporary stationing of 1no. mobile home for a 3-year period to provide rural workers accommodation (retrospective).
RESOLVED: Objection – new development in the green belt.

8 Council administration

8.1 To determine appointment of members to the Planning Committees

It was RESOLVED that each councillor should be a member of the Planning Committee for their home village, with the Chairman on all three committees. Additional members can be co-opted on an ad hoc basis if required to make a meeting quorate.

8.2 To appoint representatives to the following external bodies:

8.2.1 Town and Parish Forum

It was RESOLVED that the Clerk should represent the council.

8.2.2 Community Engagement Forum

It was RESOLVED that no permanent representative will be appointed. The Clerk will circulate details of meetings when published so that any councillor may attend if they wish.

8.2.3 Oldbury & Berkeley Joint Site Stakeholders Group

It was RESOLVED that Cllr Warren should represent the council.

8.2.4 Severnvale Flood Defence Group

The group has not met recently and it is unclear if it will continue. It was RESOLVED that, if the group should recommence meeting, Cllr Warren will represent the council.

8.3 To note issues raised at the Annual Parish Assembly held on 9th April 2024

Issues and questions raised at the Annual Parish Assembly were all aimed at Cllr Riddle / SGC and no issues were raised which the parish council needs to consider.

9 Finance

9.1 To receive the internal audit certificate and report

It was NOTED that internal audit certificate and report have been received and that no issues requiring action were raised.

9.2 To complete and approve the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) Section 1 – Annual Governance Statements

Having considered evidence presented by the clerk, it was RESOLVED that for each governance statement, the council could answer Yes. The AGAR Section was duly completed and signed by the Chairman and Clerk.

9.3 To approve the AGAR Section 2 – Accounting Statements

Having considered the Accounting Statements presented by the Clerk as Responsible Financial Officer, it was RESOLVED to approve. The Accounting Statements were duly signed by the Chairman.

9.4 To approve the Certificate of Exemption from external audit

It was NOTED that both income and expenditure for the past year were below £25k, and that last year's audit contained no significant issues. It was therefore RESOLVED that the council should declare itself exempt from external audit for the 2023/24 financial year. The Certificate of Exemption was duly signed by the Chairman and Clerk.

9.5 To note the dates for provision of public rights to inspect the accounts

It was NOTED that the dates for provision of public rights to inspect the accounts will be Monday 3rd June to Friday 12th July 2024. The notice will be displayed on the website and noticeboards.

9.6 To note receipts

The following receipts were NOTED:

Item	Amount
SGC - Precept – first instalment	£3410.00
HMRC – VAT refund for financial year 2023-24	£51.00

9.7 To note payments made under prior approval

The following payments, made under the given prior approval, were NOTED:

Item	Amount	Minute (where applicable)
Clerk's salary & home working allowance for the month to 16 th April 2024	£287.12	Nov 2023 item 9.3

9.8 To approve payments

The following payments were RESOLVED to be made. All will be paid via bank transfer, to be authorised by Cllrs Warren and Spratt. A record of authorisation will be held by the Clerk.

Item	Amount	Power to spend
Zurich Municipal - Insurance renewal	£241.00	LGA 1972 s111
MiJan Consulting – EasyPC accounts software subscription	£60.00	LGA 1972 s111

9.9 To approve the following regular payments for financial year to 31st March 2025

It was RESOLVED that the following regular payments should be approved in advance for the duration of the financial year. Payments under this approval will be reported to the meeting following the payment being made.

Item	Amount	Method	Frequency
Clerk's salary (£277.86) & home working allowance (£8)	£285.86	Standing order	Monthly on 16th
Information Commissioner's Office registration	£35.00	Direct debit	Annual, in March
South Glos. Council – localism charge (emptying of waste bin)	£47.75 + VAT	Bank transfer	Quarterly, as invoiced
Unity Trust banking charges	£18.00	Automatic charge	Quarterly

10 To review correspondence received and determine response

10.1 SGC – Confirmation of Asset of Community Value status for Littleton Village Hall

Noted.

10.2 Sustainable Thornbury – summary of community energy workshop

Noted.

10.3 Plastic Free Thornbury – invitation to become a Community Ally

It was agreed that the council could not really contribute anything to this project and thus the invitation would be declined.

11 To consider responses to consultations received

11.1 West of England Combined Authority - Local Nature Recovery Toolkit

RESOLVED – No response.

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

Cllr Cooper gave an update on recent developments at Whale Wharf. Cllr Riddle is involved in discussions with SGC planning enforcement and the Environment Agency about works on the site.

13 Meeting closure

The meeting closed at 8:58pm.

The next meeting of the Council will be held on Tuesday 11th June 2024.

Items for the agenda should be with the Clerk by 4th June.

Signed on approval:(Chairman)

DRAFT