
ASTON LE WALLS PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the MEETING of ASTON LE WALLS PARISH COUNCIL held on Thursday 7th March 2024 at 7:30pm in the Village Hall.

Attendees: Cllr. Matt Hawkins **(MH)** Chair, Cllr. Rhiannon Harris **(RH)** Vice Chair, Cllr. Grahame Barnes **(GB)**, Cllr. Tom Boston **(TB)**, Cllr. Richard Burgess **(RB)**, Cllr. Lee Lewis **(LL)**, Debra Kirton **(DK)** Clerk

Others: Mr. Simon Davis EKFB

The meeting opened at 7.30 pm.

- 1) Apologies – Cllr. John Funnell (JF)
- 2) Declaration of Interest – None
- 3) The minutes of the previous meeting held on Thursday 8th February 2024 have been approved as a true record and signed by Cllr. (MH) Chair.

a) There are no matters arising from the previous meeting held on Thursday 8th February 2024.

Action Points from the previous meeting held on Thursday 8th February 2024

I.	Website: NCalc discounts available with Cuttlefish & Parish Online	Completed
II.	Website: Renewal cost for both Cuttlefish & Parish Online	Completed
III.	Website: Migration timescale for Parish Online	Completed
IV.	Pocket Park: Communicate with Nigel Taylor and Tree Officer	Completed
V.	Pavement in Butlers Close – report to WN Council	Cancelled
VI.	Cherry Tree – remove the ivy	Pending

4) Correspondence to include Website and IT

Cllr. (RH) Vice Chair reviewed the responses to our enquiries from Cuttlefish and Parish Online. Although both providers offered identical terms of business, Cllr (RH) believed Parish Online presented themselves more professionally. If the Council decides to migrate to Parish Online, they have a requirement of an 8-week lead time for data migration. Cllr. (RH) proposed a Teams meeting with Parish Online along with Cllr. (MH) chair, and the Clerk.

Cllr. (MH) Chair, suggested scheduling this meeting within the next 4 weeks to ensure a timely decision, especially considering the forthcoming meetings and the summer break.

5) Financial Matters

- a) Balances & Invoices for approval of payment. The Clerk read out the financial matters, bank balances, invoices paid, and invoice for approval.

Balances @ 7th March 2024

Business Instant Account	£13,766.99
Treasurers Account	£145.49
TOTAL	£13,912.48
War Memorial Account	£465.10

Receipts / Payments / Invoices Approved from 8th February 2024 – 7th March 2024

Receipt/Payment	Details	Amount (Inc VAT)	Date Paid/received
Receipt	Interest (Gross) Business Bank Account	15.75	09.02.24
Receipt	Interest (Gross) War Memorial Account	0.51	09.02.24
Payment BACS	Mr. Grahame Barnes – printing costs	10.32	15.02.24
Payment BACS	Clerk PAYE – Month 11	267.44	29.02.24
Microsoft 365	Automatic Renewal from Debit Card	59.99	17.03.24

6) West Northamptonshire Local Plan

Cllr. (MH) Chair distributed the ALW confines map (defined borders) to all attending Councillors. The Parish Council have been asked to complete a questionnaire by West Northants Council concerning our views on the rural settlement hierarchy criteria for the forthcoming West Northamptonshire Local Plan. Currently Daventry and South Northamptonshire hold individual plans and criteria, and the proposal is to hold a joint plan. ALW is classed as a small village with no shops or direct transport links. The confines map is an image of the boundary area, this also identifies area for re-development and planning permission within or outside the established boundary area. It was agreed by all Councillors present that Cllr. (MH) Chair will complete the questionnaire on behalf of the Council.

7) Public Consultation for a Pre-school entry at St. Mary's RC Primary School ALW

The Parish Council received a consultation paper from St. Mary's inviting comments on the forthcoming pre-school entry in September 2024. All Councillors were briefed. There were no concerns noted.

8) Planning Application 2024/0644/FULL Aston Farmhouse, Main Street, ALW NN11 6UF

All Councillors have seen the above planning documents. No comments or objections noted. Clerk to respond to the Planning department.

9) Village Maintenance

- a. Pocket Park – Cllr. (RB) updated his fellow Councillors on the current situation regarding the swing beam. Wicksteed will replace the beam at no cost. Once we have received the correct beam the team will reassemble the swing. The fall mats have been laid in the swing area and grass seeds have been spread. The bottom meadow also had a good covering of grass seed added.

Cllr. (TB) said he has spoken with Mr. Nigel Taylor regarding the tree overhanging his property and advised him to move any vehicles that may be in danger. Cllr. (TB) continued to say he has been in contact with a specialist tree company for a quote to fell the Willow Tree overhanging Nigel Taylors property.

Shire Forestry & Fencing Ltd: To remove the large poplar £1,500 +VAT.

Cllr. (MH) Chair proposed to go ahead with the quotation from Shire Forestry & Fencing Ltd, this was seconded by Cllr. (RB).

- b. Millennium Gardens – No concerns at present.
- c. Street Lighting – Cllr. (LL) reported that there are no concerns, all streetlights are in working order.
- d. Defibrillator – Cllr (GB) All in working order. Nothing to report.
- e. Public Footpaths & Rights of Way – Cllr. (GB) Nothing to report.
- f. Trees and General Parish Environment – Cllr. (TB) will do a walk-around check.
- g. Winter Maintenance – Grit bins are full.

9) General Updates

- a. Welsh Road – Nothing to report.
- b. HS2 Liaison, Highways and Road Safety Update

Cllr. (MH) Chair introduced Simon Davis and thanked him for attending the meeting to update the Council on the status of the HS2 construction project. Mr. Davis duly thanked the Chair for his introduction.

HS2 phase 2 has been cancelled by the Prime Minister. The decision has had implications for the overall scope of the project, and funding affecting the Euston Station section. Despite this change to the project, on-going plans continue with work on the tunnel, laying of the track, and establishing communication infrastructure as planned. In the peak period of last summer over a dozen areas were being constructed at one time, which is an indication of the extensive scale of the HS2 operation.

Mr. Davis is aware of the impact this large-scale operation has had on residents, particularly the road closures. Every effort has been made to address these concerns by coordinating with local authorities and Highways and ensuring residents are informed about upcoming road closures and construction activities.

There will be a 4-week road closure at Wormleighton to make possible the connection of the new bridge, and residents should already have been informed. Once completed the bridge and Banbury road will re-open.

Progress on the relief road over the tunnel and excavation work is going well. Waterproofing of the tunnel exterior is underway in readiness for backfilling in due course. Discussions are ongoing regarding the introduction of double shifts (8-6 and 2-10) to expedite the construction process.

Appletree Lane is expected to remain closed for a further 3 years.

A road closure is planned for the 24th March to accommodate the delivery of extra-large pre-cast segments to the construction compound. Notably, the decision for large lorries to come from Daventry was instructed by Highways and the police, rather than HS2.

Cllr. (MH) Chair thanked Mr. Davis for his concise report.

Cllr. (MH) Chair explained to Mr. Davis the problem the Parish Council has with the dense growth of trees in Pocket Park. The Chair explained the history of taking on the lease to provide a green space for the village, however over many years the trees are now in need

of urgent attention. The Chair asked Mr. Davis if HS2 could offer any Community support in the form of expert advice and funding for the felling of certain trees. Mr. Davis said he would speak to his colleagues in this field and let us know. Cllr. (MH) said he would write formally and thanked him for his support.

b) Neighbourhood Watch – Nothing to report.

13) Any Other Business - None

Action Points:

Action Item	
Schedule a Teams meeting with Parish Online	Clerk
Confirm acceptance of the quote from Shire Forestry to go ahead with felling the tree in Pocket Park	TB

14) Dates of the Next Meetings to be held in the Village Hall: 11th April Open Meeting, 9th May AGM, 13th June & 11th July, no meeting in August.

Meeting Closed at 8:55 PM