

ASLACTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES – Parish Council Meeting 9th January 2024

Venue: St Michael's Church, Aslacton

Commencement: 7.30 p.m.

Clerk: Peter Robinson, The Old Rectory, Aslacton

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Present:	Louise Thurgar (LT), Andrew Tempest (AT), Janine Jarrett (JJ), Sue Bancroft (SB), Keith Broomhall (KB), Sally Wilkinson (SW), Charlotte Bennett (CB) the Clerk and 9 members of the public
1. Apologies for absence	There were no apologies for absence
2. Approval of the Minutes of the meeting of 7th November 2023	The minutes of the meeting of 7 th November 2023 were proposed as correct by JJ and seconded by AT. The minutes were approved by the Members.
3. Matters arising from the minutes of 7th November 2023	The following matters arising were discussed
3a. Village Sign – update	JJ had previously circulated line drawings of two designs for the village sign prepared by the preferred sign making company. The Councillors agreed a preference for the second design which JJ would ask the sign company to draft up as a colour version in order that the final sign design was available for fund raising events
3b. Defibrillator project - update	JJ reported that the current cost situation for installing a defibrillator on the Sneath Road/Station Road corner as being estimated at £7,000 which did not compare well with the originally estimated £2-3,000 and asked whether the PC should revisit an installation in the Church porch or in the churchyard. The councillors expressed the opinion that, despite having to seek a faculty from the Church, this should be pursued and asked the Clerk to write to the PCC to obtain permission to approach the diocese for permission.
3c. Land next to 3, Church Road	<p>Before a report could be given, JJ expressed the view that, due to the problems which have occurred along The Street, any further plans for residential development should include arrangements for the disposal of sewage and surface water such that the Parish Council could comment on their suitability. This was generally agreed by the Councillors.</p> <p>The Clerk reported that the Planning Department have given an extension until 24th January for revised plans for the Church Road house to be submitted in order that the Nutrient Neutrality issues could be addressed.</p>
3d. Churchyard maintenance	<p>SW reported that the Probation Service Team had recently been at the churchyard for three Saturdays and had done an excellent job of clearing and cutting such that most of the work planned for the forthcoming 'clean-up day' had been accomplished. There was however, still work to be done and it was decided to continue with the event on Saturday 12th January. SW said that a thank you was due to Gary Read who had dealt with the rubbish which had been generated by the clearance exercise.</p> <p>For future consideration, JJ reported that grants are available from 'Branching Out' and the National Churches Trust for the planting of replacement trees and hedging.</p>

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3e. Coopers Close footpaths	The Clerk said that he was currently confused as to the current council position with the footpaths and it was reported that the expected work had not yet been started. JJ volunteered to pursue the Planning Department in respect of the matter						
3f. 20mph speed limit proposal	AT had previously sent out proposed plans for extended 30 mph speed limits on Wash Lane and Woodrow Lane with the current 30mph in the central area being reduced to 20mph. It was unanimously agreed that these limits should be pursued and AT was asked to continue with the parishioner's project.						
3g Western Farm planning amendments	The Clerk reported that he had not received an update on enforcement action. JJ offered to speak to the Enforcement Officer.						
3h. River blockage, Bunwell Road	LT reported that this had been cleared.						
3i. Handrail to steps on Western end of footpath FP11	JJ reported that, following a conversation with the Countryside Access Officer, this had been completed.						
3j. South village notice board	JJ reported that previous worries had been expressed about condensation obscuring the windows of Perspex glazed notice boards and had found that special condensation boots can be bought. The Clerk said that his worry was about Perspex being affected by scratching such as had been experienced on the footpath board near the school, which was now unreadable. The Clerk was asked to contact the makers of the current notice board to explore the possibility of glazing the reverse for use by the Parish Council, leaving the front for use as a general parish notice board.						
4. Consideration of precept for 2024/25	The precept was discussed and it was agreed (by 6 votes to one) that this should be left at the current rate of £12.50 per property.						
5. New planning matters	The following new planning matters were discussed:						
5a. Land next to Claylans, Sneath Road	JJ said that the plans were unclear as to the disposal of sewage with both the main sewer and a packaged plant being claimed in the application. It also seemed difficult to install a surface water soakaway in the small space available within the plot. The Clerk was asked to write an appropriate letter asking for further details and expressing the view that it was not acceptable to keep adding sewage to a sewer system which was not fit for purpose – as discussed earlier in the evening						
5b. Development of O'Sullivan's Butchery, Great Moulton	The Chairman reported on the recent meeting of the Great Moulton Parish Council where the residential development of the O'Sullivan's Butchery site was discussed. Although LT had proposed that there should be an alternative on-site sewage disposal system via a packaged plant and reed beds, the plans were approved by the Parish Council. The Clerk was asked to write an appropriate letter expressing concern at 8 new houses being added to a sewer which was not fit for purpose.						
6. Clerks Report							
6a. Payments & receipts	<p>The Clerk reported there had not been any receipts but that he had made the following payments</p> <p>Payments made</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 80%;">Emptying of dog bins 2022/23 & 2023/24</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£ 378.96</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Invoices to be paid:</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Part finance of Aslacton News for 2022 & 2023</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£ 339.92</td> </tr> </table> <p>LT and JJ declared an interest as they are responsible for the Aslacton News.</p>	Emptying of dog bins 2022/23 & 2023/24	£ 378.96	Invoices to be paid:		Part finance of Aslacton News for 2022 & 2023	£ 339.92
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	The other members unanimously approved the payment of the requested amount.
7. Report from Footpath Warden	The Clerk reported that the footpath warden had reported that the rail had been added to the steps at the bottom of FP11 and that she would be writing to any farmers whose land was crossed by footpaths informing them of their responsibilities to keep paths passable throughout the year.
8. Any Other Business	
8a. The Paddocks, Wash Lane	JJ reported that an agreed time extension until the end of January had been granted to allow for consideration of the nutrient neutrality issues.
8b. Aslacton Charities	AT reported that he was discussing Parish Council representation on the Aslacton Charities board of trustees with one of the trustees. LT said that she thought this unlikely to happen as the current Charities Chairman had expressed a wish that they remain separate to the Parish Council.
8c. The parish land footpath (FP 3)	It was noted that, despite the attentions of AT who maintained an adjoining section of path, this footpath had not been kept in an acceptable state for walkers during the last year with a lack of grasscutting and with water laying at one end which made walking difficult. The Clerk was asked to write to the Footpath Warden requesting that they determine the intentions of Aslacton Charities – the land owners concerned - in respect of the maintenance of the footpath during 2024.
8d. Contribution to the Aslacton News	JJ asked what the intentions of the Parish Council were towards the continuation of the £200 annual contribution currently being made. LT and JJ declared an interest as they are responsible for the Aslacton News and were excluded from any vote. KB proposed that the Parish Council continue with the £200 annual contribution. This was seconded by AT and agreed unanimously by the remaining Councillors. .
8e. Village flooding.	JJ asked whether the Parish Council should contact Natural England and the Environment Agency in respect of the sewage problems experienced on The Street. The Clerk was asked to prepare an appropriate letter. It was noted that Tony Tunmore had recently been cleaning out the culvert feeding into the river at the bottom of Steeple Lane/Bunwell Road and that he should be thanked. It was reported by a parishioner that the recurring problem of water laying at the Church Road/Muir Lane crossroads had been partly dealt with but that work had been held up as it was necessary for Muir Lane to be closed to complete the work.
9. Date of next meeting	The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Tuesday 5 th March 2024
	There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 8.45 pm.