



AUSTREY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held at Austrey Village Hall on
Wednesday 8th January 2020 at 7.30pm

1 – Present: Tony Treadwell (TT) chair, Mick Beeson (MB), Sam Goldney (SG), Tristan Fraser (TF), Anne Wilde (AW), Heather Hadley (HH) and parish clerk Lynsey Treadwell (LT) plus 2 members of the public. Apologies received from Debbie Jenkins (DJ).

2 – Declarations of interest: AW & MB declared a conflict of interest relating to the Lengthsman Scheme, having personal relationships with one of the candidates.

3 - Minutes: the minutes of last parish council meeting which took place on 11th December 2019 were approved as a true record & signed by the chair.

4 – Open Forum: A consultation has been launched by 3 local NHS commissioning groups regarding the future of local stroke services at 3 Midlands hospitals. The details are to be posted on Facebook (Austrey Updates) and on our website should residents wish to respond. *HS2 are holding a community event in Coleshill on 21st January from 11am – 3pm regarding the latest designs & proposals. * There is also a current consultation regarding how the police precept in Warwickshire is spent – more details are on Facebook/ Austrey Updates. *Work on The Homestead has been very slow and now appears to have stopped. Residents and the Parish Council are concerned as it looks very unsightly but despite several attempts to discuss the matter with NWBC they have failed to respond to us. TT is to attempt to contact Erica Levy again.

5 - Discussions & updates on recent or regular items:

- **Lengthsman Scheme:** 2 candidates were interviewed by SG & TT earlier this week, but no decision has been made as it proved to be a difficult decision. PC to discuss and appoint after the public have left the meeting. **
- **Playing Fields:** New bark has still not been laid on the play area due to delivery issues and wet weather. Fencing off the play area was discussed but as half term is only weeks away the PC decided to vote on whether to use the bark which was previously rejected for being unsuitable. AW voted in favour of purchasing new bark, but all other members present voted in favour of laying the bark waiting at the playing fields. SG to co-ordinate times & dates for this to be actioned.
- **Precept 2020:** As with last year's precept, it was decided that there is no reason to increase the amount beyond a small rise in line with inflation. Therefore, Austrey PC will request £15575 for 2020-21: 2019-20's precept (£15345) plus inflation at 1.5%.
- **Village Maintenance:** The natural culvert which runs through the village has been flooding in parts over recent months so NWBC sent an expert out to inspect it. It is not blocked per se and it is flowing, so the heavy volume of rain is the likely cause. However, there are breeze blocks in the stream behind one of the houses on St. Nicholas Close which could potentially restrict the flow, so the chair is to write to all residents with a house backing onto the culvert to ensure it is kept clear. When a Lengthsman is appointed, one of the scheduled jobs will be to weed the culvert to make the chances of flooding as unlikely as is possible.

6 – Planning: 2 applications as per the appendix. PAP/2019/0600 is listed as The Homestead but the PC believe the application to be for one of the new houses on the site behind it. TT to speak to NWBC.

7 - Correspondence: as per the appendix. The PC has also received an email enquiry from residents on Warton Lane by the bus shelter regarding the plausibility of removing the shelter and replacing it with a pole. The planning application to replace their front garden with a driveway has been declined due to visibility issues with the proximity of the shelter to the drive entrance/exit. The PC are to discuss this, and the item will be added to February's agenda to be voted on.

8 – Financial & insurance matters: 8 payments as per the appendix. The chair has been liaising with Richard, the village litter picker, who will now log the areas he has been clearing & the levels of litter collected so that we can monitor the problem areas.

9 – Councillors matters & items for the next agenda: TF has been looking into a new grant opportunity through the STWA Community Grant Scheme with a view to improving drainage at the playing field. In November, Kevin Pearson of Morris Homes attended our meeting & promised to address the many issues that were presented to him by the PC re the development taking place opposite Glebe Rise. HH reported that she has had no response from Kevin or Morris Homes, so she will chase this up. HH would also like the matter of the community car park at the same site put on the next agenda. AW reported that some areas of the website need updating, so the sub-committee are to meet over the coming month to action this. *AW also reported that a Neighbourhood Plan sub-committee review meeting is required. *Re the HS2 access re-licencing form request recently received from HS2, (allowing HS2 access to the playing field), the clerk contacted Savills for legal advice & was advised to complete & return it, which she has.

10 –Next meeting scheduled for Wednesday 12th February 2020.

11- Members of the public are asked to leave for this section:

a- The clerk is currently on NALC's salary scale at level 21 and has been since starting the role in 2011. Cost of living pay increases have been awarded by NALC on several occasions. Band 21 is in the substantive benchmark range (meaning that the clerk was achieving the required criteria and that she received a positive review each year) but for the wrong size council (LC1). Austrey is an LC2 council, so it was agreed that the clerk should be on a significantly higher banding. It was agreed unanimously to raise the clerk's banding to 24 on the new SCP, bringing her back into line with what she should be paid in recognition of the good work that she does for the council and the village. (SG)

b- Outstanding rents have been received from Discover Outdoors (DO) today. Councillors discussed the situation and would like to start the New Year by moving on from past misunderstandings. The clerk is to email DO and if they are happy to meet with representatives to get the lease signed and pay future rents in advance then the Parish Council would like to invite DO to continue utilising the area at Austrey Playing Fields.

**Moving back to appointing a Lengthman, SG & TT reported that they were impressed with both candidates and that each had different strengths and qualities to bring to the role. After some discussion, the idea of a 'job share' was suggested whereby each applicant would complete 10 hours work a month each for a probation period of 4 months. The idea was put to a vote and eligible members voted unanimously on this decision. This is a self-employed position. The PC will compile a list of maintenance jobs around the village to be completed & we will be invoiced monthly. To be reviewed in the summer.

Meeting closed at 8.55pm

Signed _____ Date _____

Produced by Lynsey Treadwell – Clerk to the Parish Council – January 2020