

Awre Parish Council & Burial Authority

Minutes of the virtual Parish Council Meeting held on 17th November, 2020
at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Cllrs. Fellows (Chairman), Allen, Bullock, Cotton, Johnson, Smith and Ware.

IN ATTENDANCE: County/District Cllr. Boyles, District Cllr. Packer and the Clerk.

107. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence received from Cllrs. Greening and Muldrew were accepted.

108. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

109. DISPENSATIONS

None requested.

110. PUBLIC FORUM

No members of the public had requested to attend the meeting.

111. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was resolved to adopt, as a true record, the minutes for the Parish Council meeting held on 20th October, 2020.

112. MATTERS ARISING

The Clerk's report circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting was noted, in particular:

112.1 De-icing Salt – a delivery of 10 bags of salt from Highways had been received and was currently stored at the Clerk's place of work. It was agreed that this should be moved and stored in the front of the toilet block, along with the spreader once the area has been tidied. It was suggested that a coded lock be installed on the front door. The Clerk was asked to investigate the cost of this as well as replacing all the locks as the Council no longer had an original set of keys which meant that copies were being made from copies.

112.2 Gravestones – Cllr. Allen and the Clerk carried out a visual inspection of the gravestones on 22nd October and tested any that showed cause for concern. Two gravestones were identified as loose, but not in danger of toppling, and would be kept under observation. Only one – a memorial cross, one of the older memorials – was laid down to make it safe.

113. REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR

The report from Cllr. Boyles had been circulated prior to the meeting and was noted. The following points were discussed further:

113.1 New Road Closure – Cllr. Fellows noted that the ground investigation works had started.

- 113.2 Parking Issues** – Cllr. Fellows reported that following a complaint by a resident regarding parking adjacent to the shop and Post Office, the Clerk would be forwarding this message to Brian Watkins, with a copy to Cllr. Boyles.
- 113.3 Footway Clearance** – Cllr. Boyles confirmed that this was on the list of proposed community maintenance work as well as brook clearance work later in the year. He said that he would see whether it was possible to move these works closer to the top of the schedule.
- 113.4 New Road Pathways** – Cllr. Cotton raised the issue of the state of the pavements at the Nibley end near the automotive business. Cllr. Boyles said that this would be surveyed once the cleaning work had been carried out.
- 113.5 Highways – Funding for Regular Maintenance** – Cllr. Ware expressed concern that there seemed to be insufficient funds for this type of work. Cllr. Boyles explained that the new Council had inherited £120m of road repairs following 6 years of neglect. GCC had to prioritise spending to care for people in need. In addition to repairing the County’s major road network, the Council was trying to put funding in place each year to repair minor roads. Cllr. Bullock agreed to provide the Cllr. Boyles, via the Clerk, with details of the works the Parish Council needed to be actioned.

114. REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

A report from District Councillor Packer, which had been circulated prior to the meeting, **was noted**. The Chairman thanked Cllr. Packer for contributing to the ‘conversation’ on Blakeney Residents Facebook page regarding the Housing Needs Survey being undertaken by GRCC.

115. PLANNING – FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

The following planning applications were considered:

115.1 P1304/20/FUL & P1305/20/LBC – Field House, Branches Road, Awre

N.B. Deferred from last meeting. As there was still no new information/clarification regarding this application for listed building consent for mixed use development comprising of residential and holiday accommodation including the conversion of outbuilding, it was agreed to defer consideration once again.

115.2 P1633/20/FUL – The Coach House, Newnham Road, Blakeney

Change of use of touring caravan and camping site from 25 units to holiday park for 11 lodges.

During consideration, the following points were made:

- a) That the introduction of the permanent lodges is a much more significant intrusion into open countryside than the facility that is currently consented and therefore presents a concern aesthetically. It will certainly impact on the landscape and distant views, particularly from Bradley Hill and Blakeney Hill.
- b) Tourism will be negatively affected by the reduction of units/pitches and the increased cost of the lodges thereby potentially limiting the availability to families to visit the Forest of Dean.
- c) Concern was also expressed regarding noise pollution to the immediate neighbours and additional light pollution which will almost certainly increase should a series of permanent structures be erected.

d) The Council questioned how the occupancy of these units would be legally restricted to holiday use and how this would be monitored in the longer term?

On balance, the Council concluded that it would prefer this site to remain as a campsite as it is not considered a sustainable site for permanent lodges or dwellings.

115.3 P1578/20/COU – Rose Cottage, Upper Etloe, Blakeney

Change of use from agricultural land to residential.

Following consideration, the Council did not raise any objections to this application but suggested that a field hedge be planted to the boundary between the house and the open countryside.

115.4 P1784/20/FUL – Crookham Cottages, Brains Green, Blakeney

Proposed first floor extension, conservatory and internal changes to create a four-bedroom house.

No observations made or objections raised.

115.5 P0300/20/OUT – Land South of New Road, Blakeney

Outline application for the erection of a detached bungalow. (Some matters reserved.) (Revised scheme.) **It was noted** that an appeal had been made for the above site following a refusal of planning permission and **it was agreed** that the Council should make a representation to the Inspectorate based on comments made at the planning stage.

116. CORRESPONDENCE REQUIRING ACTION

116.1 Climate Action Day for Parish and Town Councils Report

Correspondence received regarding this was considered. No action to be taken.

116.2 Letter of Complaint from Parishioner regarding a Property in Blakeney.

Following discussion, **it was agreed** that the Clerk should write to the complainant to explain that this was not a matter with the Parish Council could get involved.

116.3 Entrance to Butts Lane

A complaint received regarding parking outside the village shop and at the entrance to Butts Lane had been mentioned earlier in the meeting. The Clerk would pass the complaint to Brian Watkins, copy to Cllr. Boyles. On a positive note the resident commented that “the new tub on the bridge looks lovely!”

116.4 Ground Maintenance Works – Councillors had received a number of e-mails from a resident regarding the unkempt nature of Blakeney, most notably the weeds growing alongside the pathway into and out of the village. The Clerk confirmed that she had been in contact with the Clerk of Aylburton several weeks ago and had also researched what other Parish Councils did regarding maintenance. The issue of clearing pathways had been discussed earlier in the meeting and it was expected that Highways would be taking care of this shortly. Whatever, the Parish Council decided to do would have budgetary implications; to be considered later in the meeting. It was noted that much of the problem could be due to the cessation of the use of weedkillers.

117. FINANCE

117.1 It was resolved to approve the following accounts for payment.

Proposed: Cllr. Allen; seconded by Cllr. Cotton and supported unanimously.

| Inv. Ref. | Chq. No./ BACS | Payee | Purpose | Auth | Amount |
|-----------|----------------|----------------------|---|----------------|----------------|
| 20/42 | BACS | Ursula Deighton | Clerk's Pay October | LGA 1972 s.112 | £497.62 |
| 20/43 | BACS | Ursula Deighton | Zoom Subscription | LGA 1972 s.112 | £14.39 |
| 20/44 | BACS | Cllr. Johnson | Plants & bulbs for oak barrel | LGA 1972 s.214 | £44.95 |
| 20/45 | BACS | Farm & Country Store | 8 x small plants and 3 x 60L compost for oak barrel £21.20 minus £1.00 * | LGA 1972 s.214 | £20.20 |
| | | | | TOTAL: | £577.16 |

Councillors noted the adjustment to invoice 20/45 as follows - invoice 20/37 was recorded on the agenda as being for £75.34 and this amount was paid, but the actual invoice amount was £74.34.

117.2 Invoice – Electricity Supply to the Public Conveniences, High Street

The Clerk provided an update regarding the supply of electricity by npower Business. **It was resolved** to pay the invoice totalling £3,419.92 which must be paid by 19th November, 2020. Proposed: Cllr. Allen; seconded: Cllr. Cotton and supported unanimously.

117.3 GAPTC Training

It was resolved to approve the cost of attending the Being a Better Councillor training sessions, via Zoom, in January and February for Cllr. Johnson at a total cost of £50 for both sessions.

117.4 Budget –2021/2022

Councillors considered the financial position to date, the predicted outcome at year end together with a draft budget for 2021/2022. The following were identified as having budgetary implications:

i) Installation of dog waste bins and collection contract.

Outline costs are between £224.00 - £232.00/bin including delivery plus VAT, depending on whether they are pedal operated or not. Ongoing cost of £3.95/bin/empty (weekly) - £205.40 p.a./bin.

It was noted that two residents had volunteered to donate bins. Number and siting to be agreed.

ii) Street Works along the A48 through Blakeney.

The Clerk's research had revealed that some Parish Councils employed staff to carry out weeding/general maintenance etc. In one Parish weedkiller was administered to keep weeds under control. It was acknowledged that GCC's lengthsmen teams may only be able to clear weeds once a year or not at all.

Following discussion, **it was agreed** to increase the general maintenance budget to enable street works to be carried out during the year as was felt necessary and as identified by a working group (to be created). Clerk to

check whether contractors should obtain a Street Works Licence and ensure that public liability insurance is held.

118. LEAD COUNCILLOR REPORTS

118.1 Highways – Cllr. Bullock – as discussed earlier in the meeting, details to be sent to Brian Watkins regarding areas in the Parish needing attention.

118.2 Cemetery & Grass Cutting – Cllr. Allen said that he would revise the information that was provided to contractors when the grass cutting contract last went out to tender.

118.3 Replacement Bench – Cllr. Cotton reported that the bench on Mill Lane would need replacing. It was suggested that it had been damaged by Western Power. Cllr. Bullock said that he would see if he could find out some more information.

118.4 Amenities – Cllr. Allen reported that he would monitor the use of the defibrillator and in the event of continued inappropriate access, the cabinet code could be changed.

118.5 Planning – Cllr. Fellows said that he would keep a lookout for the application from Plusterwine Farm, due in shortly, particularly as the movement of digestate in large tractors and trailers impacted on both villages.

119. MINOR MATTERS INCLUDING ITEMS RECEIVED BY THE CLERK

119.1 Posters for Display on Council Notice Boards – it was agreed that the Clerk could display a poster received from Defra regarding Avian Flu and one from the Cinnamon Trust seeking volunteers to help with dog walking etc.

119.2 Parish Council Facebook Page – Cllr. Fellows said that he had been trying to reset the password unsuccessfully but would try again and pass the information to Cllr. Johnson.

120. ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

December

- Draft Budget – 2020/2021.
- Grass cutting contract – timetable of actions.
- Donation to Royal British Legion.
- Quote for replacement of locks for toilet block.

121. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

| Dates 2020/2021 | Meeting | Venue Time: 7.00 p.m. | Agenda items & Dispensation requests by: |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| 14 th December | Parish Council | via Zoom | 11 th December |
| 18 th January | Parish Council | t.b.a. | 8 th January |
| 15 th February | Parish Council | t.b.a. | 5 th February |
| 15 th March | Parish Council | t.b.a. | 5 th March |
| 19 th April | Parish Council | t.b.a. | 9 th April |
| 17 th May | Annual Parish Council | t.b.a. | 7 th May |

Meeting closed at 8.50 p.m.