

Awre Parish Council & Burial Authority

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 16th December, 2024
at Blakeney Youth Centre at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Cllrs. Cotton (Chairman), Bullock, Fellows, Greening and Hoyland.

IN ATTENDANCE: District Cllr. Moore and the Clerk.

145. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence received from Cllr. Scott and District Cllr. Burton.
were accepted.

146. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

A declaration of interest was made by Cllr. Hoyland in relation to the item 155.2/Hedge laying quotes.

147. DISPENSATIONS

Not requested.

148. PUBLIC FORUM

No members of the public present.

149. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was resolved to adopt the minutes of the meeting held on 18th November 2024 as an accurate record.

150. MATTERS ARISING

Information from the Clerk relating to matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting and other items **was noted.**

151. REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR

County Cllr. Hoyland's report circulated before the meeting **was noted,** in particular:

- a) that there had been a large number of e-mails regarding roadworks planned before the year end.
- b) details have been released regarding the County Council's spending plans for 2025/26.
- c) Cllr. Fellows expressed concern that despite a weather warning for rain and freezing temperatures, the A48 had not been gritted leading to a number of accidents.
- d) Cllr. Bullock reported that the road by Netherhall Farm, Awre Road was dangerous in frosty weather and had been reported several times.

152. DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT

District Cllr. Burton's report which was circulated prior to the meeting **was noted.** Access to the toilet block was discussed further and it was concluded that since this was not unencumbered, it would not be possible to reach an agreement with the landowners. Furthermore, as the Lessee, it was not for the Parish Council to negotiate in this matter. It was the responsibility of the Forest of Dean District Council. It is the opinion of the District Council that the toilets' access is unimpeded as observed a number of years ago. The Parish Council dispute this and offer to visit

the site with a member of the District Council Estates Team to see the current situation.

153. PLANNING – FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

153.1 P1333/24/FUL - Old Church Rooms, Church Way, Blakeney

Variation of Condition 1 (installation of screens within 3 months of permission) relating to planning permission P0938/24/NONMAT to extend the timescale for the implementation of the privacy screens by an additional 5 months. No observations or objections.

153.2 P1477/24/FUL - The Old Inn, Two Bridges, Blakeney

Erection of two storey side extension, single storey side extension and replacement garage, demolition of existing garage and associated work. No observations or objections.

154. CORRESPONDENCE REQUIRING ACTION

154.1 FoDDC Car Park - Proposed Car Charger Installations –correspondence regarding the installation of 4 electric vehicle charging stations in the Butlers Mead car park was considered. The following points were made:

- a) Who are these trickle charging points aimed at?
- b) The car park is busy and well used and so to remove 4 parking spaces would cause major problems for local residents.
- c) A proper plan is required.
- d) It is important that this installation does not clash with that of the bike shelter.
- e) 1 x rapid charging point would be far better than the 4 proposed.

154.2 WWT to Restore Saltmarsh on Awre Peninsula – the press release received and its tone was noted. Further discussions would need to take place regarding the Severn Way footpath, a transportation plan for the earthworks materials together with car parking and access for the public.

155. FINANCE

155.1 The following accounts were approved for payment: Proposed: Cllr. Greening; seconded: Cllr. Fellows and supported unanimously.

Inv. Ref.	Chq. No./ BACS	Payee	Purpose	Auth	Amount
24/47	BACS	Merlin Waste	Fortnightly collection from dog waste bins.	Litter Act 1983, ss. 5,6	£45.50
24/48	BACS	Ursula Deighton	Clerk’s pay for November	LGA 1972 s.112	£602.96
24/49	BACS	Highbury Garden Services	Grass cutting etc.	LGA 1972 s.214	£470.00
24/50	BACS	Waterplus	Water supply 14/11 – 14/12	Public Health Act 1963 s.73 s.142	£14.63
24/51	BACS	Square One Services	Grounds maintenance around Blakeney	LGA 1972 s.214	£274.80
				TOTAL:	£1,407.89

155.2 DRAFT BUDGET – 2025/2026

The financial position to date, the predicted outcome at year end and the draft budget for 2025/2026 were received. Following consideration, it was agreed that the Clerk should re-work the budget to include an increase in precept of 10%. This would be the first increase for 10 years but was necessary owing to the increase in cemetery and general maintenance costs. The revised budget to be presented to the January meeting to approve the precept.

156. AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Cllr. Fellows reported that GRCC had contacted a number of Housing Associations and Wydean Housing were interested. He had asked GRCC for an update and an indication of timescales.

157. GRASS CUTTING CONTRACT 2025 - 2027

It was agreed, that apart from dates, the current tender specification was correct. The Clerk outlined the key dates for advertising the contract as follows:

- a) 9th January - advert to be placed in The Review and The Forester.
- b) 30th January - deadline for replies.
- c) w/c 3rd February - tenders to be opened.
- d) February meeting - decision.

158. LEAD COUNCILLOR REPORTS

158.1 Highways & Parish Council Land

- a) A question was raised regarding a road closure, and what it was for, starting on 24th March for 5 days between the A48 and the junction with Branches Road, Awre? Cllr. Hoyland confirmed that it was to do with drainage and had the backing of the local farmer.
- b) Blakeney Hill – Hedge cutting. Yet again, nothing has been done and in addition to inconveniencing pedestrians and drivers, delivery companies including oil and gas are refusing to enter the area. Cllr. Hoyland said that she would arrange a meeting with Nathan Choat and Cllr. Fellows to walk the lanes to emphasise the long overdue, urgent work needed.
- c) It was suggested that perhaps the Parish Council could organise a contractor with a flail hedgecutter to carry out the work.

158.2 Footpaths/Public Rights of Way (PROW)

- a) Cllr. Hoyland said that she would contact Jeff Wheeler regarding the footpath sign, near the New Road junction with the A48, which had been hit and damaged by a truck.
- b) Also, the stile on Hitchings was mentioned as being in need of repair or replacement with a kissing gate.

158.3 Cemetery & Grass Cutting – noted that the pre-Winter but had been carried out and invoiced. A quotation was awaited for the additional work detailed at the last meeting.

158.4 Eel Pass – Clerk to contact the contractor to arrange the cleaning of the eel pass before the end of February. It was suggested that a 'before' photograph is taken and that the Council is informed when the cleaning is to take place.

159. MINOR MATTERS INCLUDING INFORMATION RECEIVED BY THE CLERK

None received.

160. ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

First Aid/Defibrillator training – awaiting dates for venue.

Proposal to improve the appearance of the area around the war memorial at Awre.

Tree inspections and maintenance.

Rubble left on Awre Village Green.

Christmas Tree payments.

161. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Dates 2025	Meeting	Venue Time: 7.00 p.m.	Agenda items & Dispensation requests by:
20 th January	Parish Council	Awre Village Hall	10 th January
17 th February	Parish Council	Awre Village Hall	7 th February
17 th March	Parish Council	Blakeney Youth Centre	7 th March
14 th April	Parish Council	Awre Village Hall	4 th April
T.B.C.	Annual Parish	Awre Village Hall	
19 th May	Annual PC	Awre Village Hall	9 th May
16 th June	Parish Council	To be confirmed	6 th June
21 st July	Parish Council	Awre Village Hall	11 th July
18 th August	Parish Council	Awre Village Hall	8 th August
15 th September	Parish Council	To be confirmed	5 th September
20 th October	Parish Council	Awre Village Hall	10 th October
17 th November	Parish Council	Awre Village Hall	7 th November
15 th December	Parish Council	To be confirmed	5 th December

Meeting closed at 9.05 p.m.