

ASTON-CUM-AUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY 9 JANUARY 2024 IN THE
PARISH HALL ROSEGARTH AVENUE AT 6.30 PM**

PRESENT Cllr M Elliott (Chairperson)
Cllrs B Bartholomew G Davis P Davis S Forster D Gee
W Mawson J Peech H Ratcliffe S Smith R Taylor

K A Butler (Clerk) M Haigh (Assistant Clerk)

IN ATTENDANCE 7 Members of the Public
Matt Reynolds (RMBC Head of Transportation
Infrastructure Service)

24/01 APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE

It was **RESOLVED** that apologies for absence from Cllrs P Amrith
D Knowles and L Pitchley be accepted.

24/02 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS ORDINARY MEETING

It was **RESOLVED** that the Chairperson be authorised to sign the minutes
of the Ordinary Parish Council meeting held on 12 December 2023 as being
a true record of the business transacted.

24/03 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Taylor declared an interest in respect of Agenda item number 15.

**24/04 CONSIDERATION OF ITEMS FOLLOWING THE EXCLUSION OF
MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Agenda items 16 and 19.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Members of the public raised various items which included:-

- *Minute number 23/239* – the resident was in attendance to advise that she has had no response from either the RMBC drainage engineer or the Aston and Todwick Ward Member. The Clerk advised that she will make contact on her behalf with the RMBC Head of Drainage regarding the flooding issue and if this proves unsuccessful she will contact the RMBC Head of Highways to see if they are able to offer any assistance. The Clerk will keep all parties updated of any progress.
- A resident from Church Lane, Aston asked if anything could be done to stop the nuisance of off-road motorbikes and vehicles gaining access to land behind his property. He advised that the area is a public footpath leading to Aston Fish Ponds however the gate and styre have been in a state of disrepair for

many months and there is also an access point through the hedgerow on the A57 bypass. He has contacted the property developers and has been informed that they no longer have control over that area of land. The Clerk agreed to make further investigations on his behalf and let him know the outcome in due course.

- A direction sign for Aston Hall Hotel pointing towards Church Lane was misleading to road traffic. The Clerk agreed to look into the matter.
- Following a road traffic accident in December a lamppost on Worksop Road has been left damaged. RMBC have informed the resident that they are awaiting permission from Northern Powergrid before they can come out to repair. The Clerk confirmed that RMBC will have no special privileges from Northern Powergrid but that she will contact RMBC Street Lighting to check on progress.
- When Christ Church in Swallownest wound up they had funds remaining in their accounts. It was agreed that monies be spent to benefit the local community by purchasing a defibrillator to be sited at either Townend Shopping Precinct or the new Asda Petrol Station on Worksop Road. The Parish Council will be required to arrange for the installation and future maintenance of the defibrillator. The Clerk advised that she will speak to the landlords at both locations in order to progress the matter further.

It was further agreed that the funds from Christ Church be used to purchase a bench for the benefit of elderly residents to be sited on Main Street, Swallownest. RMBC have approved the installation and discussed product specifications. The Clerk agreed to contact the officer concerned to clarify whether the bench is to be installed on green space land or highways and to see who will take responsibility for future maintenance.

END OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

24/05 UPDATE ON THE PEDESTRIAN CROSSING ON THE A57, NEAR ELMWOOD FARM PUBLIC HOUSE

The Chair introduced Matt Reynolds, RMBC Head of Transportation Infrastructure Service and invited him to update members on the progress for installing a new pedestrian crossing on the A57, near Elmwood Farm Public House.

Mr Reynolds advised that preliminary investigations have already taken place to assess prime location for the crossing; taking into consideration traffic make-up/flow, deliverability, utility provider requirements, and that all analysis to date has been favourable. The programme for delivering the project has been prioritised, with funding agreed from the 2023/24 budget.

The next phase of the project will concentrate on the more detailed design specifications for the crossing, with the aim of starting construction by July/August 2024. If feasible work will be carried out overnight in order to cause minimal disruption to local businesses and the target for completion will be the end of the summer holiday period. Parishioners will soon see work starting to be carried out cutting back the vegetation in the area.

RMBC have budgeted £450,000 for the pedestrian crossing, not taking into account the £50,000 committed funds from the Parish Council, although Mr Reynolds advised that this money may still be required dependent upon how much road traffic management is needed.

Members' comments and questions to Mr Reynolds included:-

- What impact is the new crossing likely to have on traffic when it is fully functional?

The response given was that there are likely to be fewer pedestrians during the rush-hour period therefore it is hoped it will not have too much of an impact on the traffic flow.

- What traffic calming measures will be put in place on the approach to the new crossing?

New signage will be installed advising of a new road layout ahead.

- Cllr Taylor, in his capacity of RMBC Ward Member, thanked Mr Reynolds for the work that has already been undertaken to bring this project to fruition, which will lead to improved road safety for local residents visiting the area.

The Clerk agreed to work closely with RMBC and update parishioners via her social media platform. Mr Reynolds thanked members for inviting him to provide an update and left the meeting.

24/06 ONGOING ISSUES

- The Clerk advised members that the funding bid for £100,000 for Lodge Lane Recreation Ground has been successful and that she will now start obtaining quotes for the work to be undertaken and subsequently presenting the information to the funders. Thanks were conveyed to the Clerk for her hard work in securing the funding.
- She also confirmed that she is in the process of applying for £20,000 for Old Aughton Recreation Ground and that she will keep members informed of progress.

24/07 FINANCE REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS

- The Clerk presented a paper detailing the Bank – Cash and Investment Reconciliation as at 30 November 2023. She will present a paper detailing the December figures at the next meeting. Following consideration it was agreed that the report be noted.
- It was **RESOLVED** that the accounts at Appendix I amounting to £29,337.39 be approved.

- The Clerk will collate all outstanding payments she has made on behalf of the Parish Council to date and she will bring this forward to the next meeting for approval.

24/08 PARISH COUNCIL TRUCK

The Clerk advised members that the Parish Council truck is currently off-road due to a number of faults brought to her attention in December at the yearly MOT. The attendants are currently using a truck on loan from Hobsons Nurseries so that they are able to fulfil outstanding duties from the Christmas period.

24/09 PARISH COUNCIL VOLUNTEER

In December the Clerk was approached by a gentleman who has recently moved into the area offering his services as a volunteer. He has been provided with an Aston-cum-Aughton Parish Council hi-vis vest and litter picking equipment and has already started work tidying around the village.

24/10 TUCKERS FAIRS

A request has been received from Tuckers Fairs for the Parish Council to consider them holding a small funfair on one of the parish recreation grounds during April 2024.

Following consideration it was **RESOVED** that the request be declined.

24/11 YOUTH PROVISION AND DETACH WORK

Prior to discussion of this agenda item the Clerk informed members of her previous involvement with the company quoting for youth provision and detach work for the parish.

The proposal is to provide a youth club for children up to 13 years of age at the Parish Hall for 1.5 hours each week over a 40 week period. This will involve 2 youth workers and 1 support worker at a cost of £5,740.00. The youth work company will also carry out detach work around the parish over a 12 week period and provide a full report to the Parish Council of their findings.

Following discussion it was **RESOVED** that Youth Work Works be employed to provide the youth provision and detach work required for the local community. The Clerk will promote the youth clubs on social media and notices will be put on parish noticeboards.

24/12 EVENTS AND RECREATION/FINANCE AND EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE MEETINGS

It was agreed that the next meetings of the Events and Recreation Committee and the Finance and Employment Committee be changed to Monday, 22 January 2024 and not 30 January 2024 as previously agreed.

24/13 MATTERS REQUESTED BY COUNCILLORS

There were no matters requested by Councillors.

24/14 POLICING INFORMATION/REPORTS

There were no police officers present and no reports received. Cllr Mawson was able to provide an update as reported in the Rotherham Advertiser:-

- Operation Sceptre – A police initiative to reduce knife crime in South Yorkshire. One of the warrants issued was in Swallownest for a haul of over 20 dangerous weapons.
- Stop checks in Aston and Swallownest took place in December 2023 with 78 vehicles being stopped. Officers reported a motorist driving whilst using a mobile phone as well as several speed related offences.

The Clerk advised that the Neighbourhood Policing Team may not have been aware of the above initiatives but that she will contact them to see if they have any updates.

24/15 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Consideration was given to planning applications contained within **lists 50 – 1 (2023/24)**.

At the time there were no comments to record on the applications listed.

24/16 GRAVE DIGGING IN ASTON & SWALLOWNEST CEMETERIES

The proposal for the Parish Council to take the burial system in-house from April 2023 (Minute No: 23/07) was not fulfilled at the time due to family illness at Elliott's Grave Digging Services. The Clerk has now been in contact with another company who are willing to take on the grave digging role in Aston and Swallownest Cemeteries at a lower price than what is currently being paid to Rotherham Crematorium & Cemeteries.

Following consideration it was **RESOLVED** that action be taken to bring the burial system in-house as soon as possible and that the Clerk advise local funeral directors of the new procedures being put in place.

24/17 CLERK UPDATE

- The Clerk advised that there will be an Extra Ordinary Meeting to discuss the budget/precept later in January. She will email members with the details as soon as she has them.
- She will be away from the office at the Practitioners Conference from Tuesday, 30 January to Friday, 2 February 2024.

24/18 FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The Clerk requested that any suggestions for future Agenda items be received in the Parish Council office no later than the Monday of the week prior to the next Parish Council meeting.

24/19 STAFFING ISSUES

The Clerk presented a report updating members on the current staffing issues with the attendants. She has spoken to Attendant 1 and it is unlikely that he will be fit for work any time soon therefore she has contacted ACAS (Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service) to seek their advice.

Following discussion it was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk terminate the employment of Attendant 1 on ill health grounds and that he be paid as per Clause 16.2 of his Contract of Employment.

It was further agreed that Attendant 2 be offered a permanent position with the Parish Council with immediate effect and that the Clerk be authorised to advertise the other vacancies soon after so that there is continuity in the role when other staff members retire later in 2024.

24/20 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was **RESOLVED** that the next Ordinary Parish Council meeting be held on Tuesday, 13 February 2024 at 6.30 pm.

MEETING CLOSED AT 8.00 PM

M S Elliott

13 February 2024

SIGNED DATED