

ASTON-CUM-AUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY 12 MARCH 2024 IN THE
PARISH HALL ROSEGARTH AVENUE AT 6.45 PM**

PRESENT Cllr M Elliott (Chairperson)
Cllrs G Davis P Davis S Forster D Gee D Knowles
W Mawson L Pitchley H Ratcliffe R Taylor

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

IN ATTENDANCE 6 Members of the Public

24/49 APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE

It was **RESOLVED** that apologies for absence from Cllrs P Amrith
B Bartholomew J Peech and S Smith be accepted.

24/50 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 13 February 2024 as being a
true record of the business transacted.

24/51 EVENTS & RECREATION COMMITTEE

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Events & Recreation Committee
held on 22 January 2024 be approved/confirmed.

24/52 FINANCE & EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Finance & Employment
Committee held on 22 January 2024 be approved/confirmed.

24/53 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Taylor declared an interest in respect of Agenda item number 16.

**24/54 CONSIDERATION OF ITEMS FOLLOWING THE EXCLUSION OF
MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Agenda item No 13.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Members of the public raised various items which included:-

- Is there any update on the pedestrian crossing on the A57, near Elmwood Farm Public House? RMBC Ward Cllr Taylor advised that construction is due to commence during the summer of 2024.

- A resident asked whether the Clerk has received any feedback from the landlords at Townend Shopping Precinct or the Asda Petrol Station about siting the new defibrillator donated by Swallownest Christ Church? The Clerk advised that she hopes to finalise this matter by the end of the month.
- The bench purchased by Swallownest Christ Church has now been installed on Main Street and Father Ian Jennings will perform a small ceremony next Wednesday, 20 March, at 11.30 am. All councillors are welcome to attend.
- Litter bins around the parish do not appear to be getting emptied as regularly as they have been in the past. The Clerk informed the resident that she will highlight the issue with RMBC and that litter pickers should also advise officers when/where litter has been deposited so that immediate action can be taken.

END OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

24/55 ONGOING ISSUES

- The Clerk advised members that detached work started in the parish last Wednesday, 6 March. 2 youth workers and 1 trainee engaged with young people at Alexandra Park, Burgoyne Park and on Rosegarth Avenue. Work will continue in the coming weeks with a report back to the Clerk on a weekly basis.
- The funding bid for Old Aughton Recreation Ground has been successful and the Clerk has requested quotes from a number of companies for proposed works to be carried out. The Clerk will keep members updated of progress.
- The ‘Post Box to Heaven’ has been installed at Swallownest Cemetery and feedback on social media platforms has been positive. A small plaque will be erected at the side of the post box together with floral displays in the next few weeks. Attendants will empty the contents of the post box on a regular basis.
- The Beacon Brazier is now being fabricated and planning permission has been applied for.
- It was approved at last month’s meeting that road planings be purchased for use on the allotment site. These have not yet been ordered but it is hoped to receive them before the end of March 2024.

24/56 FINANCE REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS

- The Clerk presented a paper detailing the Bank – Cash and Investment Reconciliation as at 29 February 2024. Following consideration it was agreed that the report be noted.
- It was **RESOLVED** that the accounts at Appendix I amounting to £43,190.10 be approved.

- There were no outstanding payments to reimburse to the Clerk requiring approval.

24/57 CLOSE DOWN OF ACCOUNTS 2023/24

The Clerk advised members that the Close Down of Accounts for 2023/24 has been scheduled with RBS for Monday, 8 April 2024. The final year-end Internal Audit is due to take place on Thursday, 25 April 2024.

24/58 SWALLOWNEST CEMETERY

The Clerk asked that consideration be given to purchasing new shrubbery and enhancements for the entrance to Swallownest Cemetery.

Following discussion it was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk be authorised to purchase appropriate shrubbery/plants to ameliorate the areas concerned.

24/59 PARISH COUNCIL FINANCIAL INVESTMENTS

- The Clerk informed members that the investment with Redwood Bank will mature on 25 March 2024 and has accrued £2,316.16 interest.
- The Clerk also presented a report detailing other investments presently available and asked that consideration be given to her recommendation in the report that £410,000 be reinvested at the earliest opportunity.

Following consideration it was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk reinvest Parish Council funds as per the Recommendation provided in the report and that 2 new signatories be sought for the new accounts. The matter will be discussed further at the next meeting.

24/60 PARISH COUNCIL STORAGE

The Clerk advised members of the lack of storage at King Street to house the attendants' equipment/everyday tools.

Following discussion it was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk purchase a new shipping container up to the value of £2,500.00 to be sited at King Street.

Consideration of RMBC Garage Sites will be deferred to a future meeting of the Parish Council.

24/61 PART-TIME CEMETERIES OPERATIVE

The Clerk advised that consideration has already been given by the General Purpose and Finance & Employment Committees to employ a part-time operative to carry out general maintenance duties at both Aston and Swallownest Cemeteries.

Following discussion it was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk advertise the position as a 12 month temporary position in the first instance working a 12 hour week with the possibility of overtime as and when required.

24/62 MATTERS REQUESTED BY COUNCILLORS

There were no matters requested by Councillors.

24/63 POLICING INFORMATION/REPORTS

There were no police officers present however the following update has been received:-

- 5 attempted burglaries - no entry gained at any of the addresses however 2 people arrested and remanded in custody following the incidents.
- 1 theft from a motor vehicle – enquiries are still ongoing.

Following discussion it was agreed the report provided be noted.

24/64 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Consideration was given to planning applications contained within **lists 7 – 10 (2023/24)**.

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

24/65 CLERK UPDATE

- The Clerk advised that the office was extremely busy at present therefore a little patience would be appreciated if matters are not being dealt with as promptly as anticipated.
- Election packs are available from the office. There is a pre-nomination briefing on Tuesday, 19 March, at 6.00 pm at Aston Joint Service Centre. Anyone wishing to attend should telephone 01709 823590.
- The Parish Council Easter Disco will take place on Thursday, 4 April, from 2.00-4.00pm. Tickets are available from Aughton Early Years Centre and the Parish Hall.

24/66 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. One item for consideration is the date for the Annual Meeting.

24/67 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was **RESOLVED** that the next Ordinary Parish Council meeting be held on Tuesday, 9 April 2024 at 6.30 pm.

MEETING CLOSED AT 7.25 PM

M S Elliott

9 April 2024

SIGNED **DATED**