

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 13th November 2024 at 7.00 pm.

PRESENT: Cllr Mulligan – Chair, Cllr Slater, Cllr Bendall. Cllr Hamilton, Cllr Hetterley, Cllr Parsons,

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: - Mrs S Baker (Clerk),

VISITORS:- 1 Member of the public - Deborah Blackie was in attendance to observe the Parish Council with a view to apply for the vacancy of Parish Councillor.

150/24 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME –

151/24 APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE – Cllr King, Cllr Hirst – GCC,

152/24 CODE OF CONDUCT

166.1.18 Declaration of Interest in Items on the Agenda

166.2.18 Updates to Members Register of Interests

None

153/24 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 9th October 2024

The minutes of the meeting held 9th October 2024 were signed as a true record.

154/24 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 9th October 24

Cllr Hetterley said that the Knead Bakery had visited the village and that it appeared to be very popular. They were in attended outside the Memorial hall for 35 minutes and had a continuous queue. They have rebooked two further Saturdays. 30th November and 28th December 9.45 – 10.30. It was agreed that although this is a private business it was a useful service for the village and the information shared via the Villager.

155/24 COMMUNITY ISSUES AND PROJECTS

Community Issues

Playing Fields Update

There is more damage in the children's area of the playground. Cllr Mulligan will attend site and make repairs. The volunteer group have agreed to repair the fence, and the items needed to make the repair have been purchased. Cllr Mulligan will speak to Cllr Mills to arrange the repairs. Cllr Slater remarked that the volunteers have done a good job repairing the area of the goal post. He has spoken to the volunteers and suggested that the posts are moved on a regular basis to protect the surface.

The Clerk was asked to speak to the contractor to find out when the hedge was scheduled to be cut.

There are issues again with dog fouling. Cllr Hamilton said that this is a problem throughout the village, and that the Church is also experiencing the issue in the Churchyard.

The Clerk will put another reminder in her report.

Biodiversity Policy

The Clerk said that Cllr King had forwarded a quote to conduct a biodiversity plan. Cllr King recommends budgeting £2,000 for this to proceed. The Clerk said that it is a legal obligation that all Parish Councils produce a plan and begin to act on it. The Parish Council are behind in this process. The Clerk was asked to find out the scope of plan required as £2,000 appeared to be quite a high cost for a small Parish.

The Clerk will make enquiries and report at the next meeting.

Memorial Hall

Cllr Mulligan said he had made some progress on the lease and that it requires an urgent Trustee meeting. This was organised for the 18th of November at 7pm. The Clerk will issue the agenda as a matter of priority.

Cllr Hetterley said following attendance at the GRCC Village Hall information course, he felt the Trustees may need to purchase a music licence. The Clerk will put this on the agenda for the Trustee meeting.

The Clerk said she had received an email from the cleaners stating that they are using far more consumables since the soap dispensers and toilet roll holders were installed. The cleaners have been funding the cost of the consumables but feel the usage now makes it untenable. The Council asked the Clerk to bulk purchase soap and toilet rolls.

The Clerk also reported that the PAT testing needs to be carried out. Cllr Mulligan has identified someone in the village that may be qualified to do it. Cllr Mulligan will ask if he is willing to do the PAT testing, if not he will engage an electrician.

Defibrillator

Cllr Mulligan will request that the contractors who worked on the hall to install the defibrillator in the phone box.

Phone Box Refurbishment

Cllr Mulligan suggested that the refurbishment be put on hold until the issue of the Memorial Hall roof is resolved.

156/24 TRAFFIC & HIGHWAYS

The Clerk confirmed that she had reported the wall on the corner of Nags Head and Old Hill to Highways. She has since chased Highways to be informed it has been passed on to CDC for review. The Highways manager has agreed to follow up. Cllr Mulligan reported that he had delivered a number of letters to the Riparian Owners with a helpful leaflet informing them of their responsibilities.

The Clerk confirmed that she had produced letters for the Riparian Owners with an accompanying leaflet on Riparian responsibilities. Cllr Mulligan has delivered the letters.

The wall beyond the Bell is looking unsafe. This wall is the responsibility of Highways. The Clerk will report it.

The trees at Sandford House are overgrown and interfering with people using the footpath. The Clerk said she wrote to the residents requesting the trees are cut back. She will follow this up.

There is a damaged road sign on the junction of New Inn Lane and Point Road. The Clerk will report it.

Cllr Hamilton asked the Clerk if she could also report the missing High Street sign as delivery drivers get confused. The Clerk said this had been reported before, but there has since been a change of Highways Manager so may have been missed.

Cllr Parsons said that Greenway Head is very overgrown and full of potholes. The Clerk will report it.

The Village gates on Tetbury Hill have rotted. The Clerk will ask for them to be replaced.

157/24 FINANCE

- I. Cllr Hetterley reported that there is currently £82K in the bank of which £35K is ringfenced, There has been an overspend on projects. This is due to the refurbishment of the hall.
- II. Cllr Mulligan proposed approving the Clerks Pay increase and back pay as per NALC guidelines. This was unanimously agreed.
- III. The Parish Council approved bills for payment
- IV. The draft budget was distributed prior to the meeting. It was agreed to postpone any decision until after the Memorial Hall Trustee meeting by which the financial

position of the hall may be clearer. The Clerk confirmed that the precept submission is not due until the end of January. SDC have yet to distribute the tax base which will enable the Parish Council to assess the percentage increase on band D properties.

V. Grant Applications:

- Avening PCC – Church Yard Maintenance - £1250 – Approved
- Avening PCC – Villager Magazine - £1200 – Approved.
- Avening Playgroup – Building upkeep, Playground shade, Picnic Benches, Wage shortfall. - £3,500 – The Parish Council discussed this application in depth. Although it was agreed that the Council should support the Playgroup, it was felt that the sum requested was high for a small council.

The Councillors voted on the amount they felt appropriate. The Council voted 4 to 2 in favour of donating £2,500. Cllr Hamilton requested the Clerk note that the vote was not unanimous. Further discussion was held, and it was agreed to donate the agreed £2,500, which will be paid in May 2025, but should they Playgroup need further help due to low numbers they can approach the Council again.

158/24 VACANCY FOR PARISH COUNCILLOR – Cllr Mulligan thanked Deborah Blackie for attending the meeting and showing an interest in becoming a Parish Councillor and asked if she could submit a short resume.

Since the last meeting, another resident had expressed an interest. Once the resumes are received the Parish Council will meet to decide on the candidate.

159/24 POLICE REPORT – Unavailable.

160/24 DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORT – Appendix 1

161/24 COUNCTY COUNCILLOR REPORT – Unavailable

162 /24 PLANNING AND TREE WORKS

New Planning Applications

24/03045/FUL12 Star Lane - Erection of two storey side extension and first floor extension to rear – No Comment

24/03056/FUL - 11 High Street - Replace ancillary residential garage door - Support

24/03131/CONBGP - Land At Grid Reference 388941 197571 Star Lane - Compliance with Biodiversity Gain Plan of permission 24/01818/FUL - Erection of an extension to an agricultural building – No Comment

24/03130/COMPLY - Land At Grid Reference 388941 197571 Star Lane - Compliance with condition 4 (Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP)) of permission 24/01818/FUL - Erection of an extension to an agricultural building. – No Comment

24/03142/TCONR - 16 Star Lane - Willow (T1): re-pollard back to previous pruning points. – Support.

163/24 Planning Correspondence and Decisions

24/02439/TCONR - Bannut Tree New Inn Lane Yew trees x 5 (G1) - fell to allow repair work 24/01818/FUL- Land At Grid Reference 388941 197571 Star Lane Erection of an extension to an agricultural building - Application Permit

24/02126/FUL - Land Parcel Easting 387079 Northing 197991 West End Erection of agricultural barn - Application Permit

24/02380/FUL1 - Spinners Cottages Longfords Mill - New entrance Porch (Retrospective)- Application Permit

24/02552/COMPLY - Longtree Barn Tetbury Road - Compliance with conditions 3 (Sample materials), 4 (Door and window finishes), 5 (Landscaping scheme - prior to first use) 8 (Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP)), 9 (External lighting), 10 (EV charging), 11 (Cycle parking) and 12 (Parking details) of permission 22/00926/FUL - Conversion of a Dutch barn into 1 no. dwelling - Application Permit 24/02726/TCONR - Church Farm Point Road - Sycamore (T1) - Pollard to 10m above ground level following a recent failure of a major limb onto a popular footpath below. This was despite the limb having been reduced less than two years ago - No objection.

24/02755/FUL- Winterfold 23 West End - Erection of a two-storey extension and addition of garden wall. – Application Permit

24/02980/TCONR - 7 Old Hill - T1- Yew tree to be reduced by 3m in height in Lateral reduction of 2.5m back to previous - No Objection

24/00122/FUL6 Old Hill - Replacement of six wooden windows and front doors - Application Permit

164/24 CORRESPONDENCE

Formal notification that Jean Chatelain wishes to stand down as Archivist and has requested the Parish Council find someone to replace her ASAP.

NALC – announced the Government is committed to allowing Councils to hold remote meetings – A consultation is taking place.

HRH - Christmas Tree - Confirmation

Enquiry - if there are any Christmas Lunch scheme to persons who maybe alone at Christmas?

Project Officer at Better Housing Better Health, a fuel poverty service run by the National Energy Foundation.

165/24 COUNCILLORS

The Clerk said she attended a GAPTC Course introducing the new GAPTC Hub. This in theory should have all the information and advice instantly available.

166/24 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 11th December 2024 at 7.00 pm.

The meeting closed at 9.00 pm.

Actions

138/24	Organise Work Party to repair fence and surface.	Cllr Mills
155/ 24	Remind Contractor to Cut hedge	Clerk
156/24	Report Highways Issues	Clerk
157/24	Make Payments	Clerk
162/24	Planning Response	Clerk

Appendix 1

Cotswold District Council: There was no full council meeting this month but at Overview and Scrutiny we reviewed the waste collection implementation (see below) and the draft budget with the medium-term financial strategy. The latter caused me great concern as it shows CDC reserves running out in 2025/26 and a significant budget gap with an associated borrowing requirement in 2026/27. The Chief Financial Officer highlighted this was a worst-case scenario and is dependent on any new settlement from the government, but it may

need the administration to take drastic action to avoid issues. Presently they are forecasting around £4m to cover the capital cost of replacement bin lorry fleet but are working to mitigate this by spreading the need for a wholesale replacement in one hit. However, 5 years ago the reserves stood at £13.4m with a further £7m in property, and they are forecast to be completely depleted in the next few years.

While there have certainly been issues created by the previous government's sporadic settlement, much of the over spend is self-inflicted – this includes the costs for breaking up and the in-sourcing of Publica service company resources (enduring impact of c£400k per year plus project costs), and they have just announced the arrival of two new communications roles costing a combined £250,000pa.

Bins: At Overview and Scrutiny Cllr Evamy gave a verbal update, with the Ubico management contributing. When the new rounds were introduced the Ubico management failed to inform their employees that instead of finishing work mid-afternoon, they would be required complete a full day. This obviously caused individuals urgent issues with childcare and other commitments, but management were shocked that a significant number of staff suddenly went off 'sick'! The management also failed to tell workers that they had fitted tracking technology in the trucks. It has taken many weeks to rectify these issues that could so easily have been avoided with sensible advance dialogue with the crews. Both Cllr Evamy and Ubico have offered unreserved apologies for the inconvenience caused to residents.

The good news is that most issues have been resolved, and the new rounds will save £500k per year for a modest outlay of £91k (including the £75k they forgot to put in the budget!). *Please continue to report missed collections to me as well as the official route at CDC - if I hear nothing, I will be delighted!*

Roads: My attempt to get recompense for a damaged tyre appears to be over. The local magistrates court has 'set aside' my claim on a technicality and I do not have the knowledge on how to overcome the required information. I have tried to get some legal representation but have been unable to get a law firm to help. So, GCC's expensive lawyers have once again been successful in fending off a perfectly valid claim for modest recompense. I do wonder how much more it has cost the taxpayer in legal fees versus refunding my burst tyre! Pothole season is now in full swing, and I reported several holes the area, including a huge, repeat offender near Cherington lake – another example of wasting taxpayer's money by dropping blobs of cold tarmac rather than fixing the cause, which in this case is spring water constantly flowing across the road. It was quickly fixed, with... more blobs of cold tar!

Family Farm Tax: Whatever your feelings on the recent budget, the 'APR' change means that inheritance tax of 20% will effectively apply on the full value of farms and rural estates above £1m. In my rural, agricultural ward, farming food for the nation does not pay the bills. Most farmers have to find creative ways to stay afloat, by doing two or more jobs or starting up a sideline business as they make stupidly little income from farming, even though they work long, lonely hours. Farmers tend to be asset-rich and cash poor. Farming is not a popular vocation due to the low pay, difficult work and increasing risk of having crops ruined by extreme weather. Farming is like nursing, it is a vocation, often handed down from father to child. If they cannot afford to pass their business down to relatives, the family farm as we know it will die out, along with all the localised knowledge - every farm is unique having different topography, soils, weather exposure etc. and food security will decline. Family farmers are caretakers of our landscapes, the countryside would look completely different without them. Or perhaps we could build houses!

Councillor Tony Slater

Cotswold District Council, Representing Grumbolds Ash with Avening.

email: Tony.slater@cotswold.gov.uk Tel: 07793669930

Other updates and information for Parish Councils:

HOW TO REPORT POTHOLES

I recommend using this link, especially if you have a smartphone and can take a photograph of the pothole and identify the exact position. It is more efficient than emailing the council as officers get a daily schedule of these alerts.

Gloucestershire County Council, report a pothole:

<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/highways/roads/your-highways-report-it/>

FIX MY STREET

Report, view, or discuss local problems like graffiti, fly tipping, broken paving slabs, or street lighting. This reports back to the appropriate Council: [LINK](#)

REPORT IT

<https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/report-it/>

New forms for reporting graffiti, overflowing bins, dog fouling and street cleaning are now live on the Cotswold District Council Website.

A map pin drop allowing for what3words location submissions can be used.

PLEASE! NEVER PUT BATTERIES IN YOUR GENERAL WASTE

Recycling operators and vehicles could be put in real danger. A 2021 study claims that Li-ion batteries cause about 48% of all UK waste fires per year, resulting in millions in damage to waste operators, fire services and the environment.

Recycling centres are full of combustible materials and too many 'zombie' batteries are going into either recycling bins or black rubbish bags, even small lithium-ion batteries explode "with a rocket flame" if punctured. The ESA has launched a campaign called Take Charge which encourages people to dispose of batteries properly.

How can you help fight the zombies?

- ✳ Never put a battery in the bin
- ✳ Take batteries out of electricals (phones, vapes, cameras etc.) before recycling.
- ✳ Always use the right recycling facilities for batteries. Check waste wizard if you are not sure.