

Aylesford Parish Council

Policy & Resources Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held in the Aylesford Parish Council Office, Aylesford on Tuesday 5 December 2023

Present: Councillors Sullivan (Chairman), Balcombe, Beadle, Chapman, Craig, Mrs Eves, Fuller, Gledhill, Mrs Ogun, Rillie, Sharp, Shelley, Smith and Walker.

In Attendance: Melanie Randall (Clerk)

Apologies: Councillors Mrs Birkbeck, Ms Dorrington, Mrs Gadd and Ms Oyewusi.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies of Absence from Councillors Mrs Birkbeck, Ms Dorrington, Mrs Gadd and Ms Oyewusi, were received, and the reasons for absence agreed.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest additional to those contained in the Register of Members Interests; except Councillor Fuller declared an interest in item 13.2 as he is the Chairman of Aylesford Football Club. He took no part in the discussion or decision.

3. Minutes of the last meeting held on 7 November 2023

It was **Agreed** that the Minutes from the meeting held on 7 November 2023 be approved as a correct record and be signed. It was noted that the minute for items 6 and 7 are round the wrong way.

4. Accounts for Payment

The Council considered the Payment Schedule attached to the Agenda and Councillor Balcombe proposed and Councillor Mrs Gadd Seconded and it was **Resolved** that 25 payments totalling £16,528.67 be made.

5. Finance Advisory Sub Committee

It was **Agreed** to note the minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2023.

Noted

6. KALC

It was **Agreed** to Note the notes from the KALC Annual General Meeting held on 18 November 2023. **Noted**

7. TMBC/Parish Partnership Panel Meeting

No update received. The next meeting is due to take place in early 2024. **Noted**

8. Council Vacancies

There is one vacancy for Eccles Ward.

An application was received and discussed. A vote took place, and the results were.

For = 4 Against = 6 Abstained = 3

It was **Resolved** not to accept the applicant. **Noted**

9. Adoption of Aylesford Station

There has not been any further progress.

The Clerk will speak to TMBC to see if there is any S106 money for the River Path repairs and improvements to Aylesford Station. She will also contact Panattoni with the same enquiry. **Ongoing**

10. To Consider Purchasing a New Mower

The Chairman informed the committee that the Council's smaller grass cutting machine (John Deere Ride on) is a domestic machine, is 7 years old and needs replacing, which should be with a commercial grade machine.

The company the council uses to purchase its equipment recommended a Kubota G261-RD 48" with Rear Discharge cutting deck.

The John Deere Ride on will be part-exchanged at £1,500.

The Clerk informed members of the current offers available on the Kubota.

The Council will get 5-year warranty, instead of the usual 2 years.

A free £750.00 voucher for the Council to spend in either the parts or service departments with no minimum spend required. A new strimmer is needed at a cost of £738.99 so the voucher would be used to make this purchase.

The RRP of the Kubota is £16,023.39 (net) the Clerk negotiated a discount of £5,238.39, LED lights will be put on the front and back of the machine at an additional cost of £210.00. Making a total outlay of £11,946.00 including vat.

It was **Agreed** this would initially be funded from the Cemetery Extension Reserve.

It was **Resolved** to purchase the new Kubota G261-RD. **Closed**

11. Aylesford Christmas Market

The Christmas Market took place on Saturday 2nd December 2023 and was yet again another successful event. The Christmas Market committee have a debrief meeting on the 18th December 2023 so the Clerk will report back more fully in due course.

12. Request received from St Peter's School, Aylesford

The school PTA have asked for the Council's permission to use Coronation Gardens for a 'Winter Warmer' event, a small Christmas Market on Wednesday 13 December 2023 to raise funds for the school. It would only be for their students and parents/carers from 3pm to 5pm.

It was **Resolved** to permit the use as requested. Should any damage be caused to the land it will be the responsibility of the school to fully rectify. **Closed**

13. Fees and Charges 2024/25

The Committee considered the suggested level of fees and charges as set out by the Clerk. She explained that the allotment expenditure far exceeds the income even with the suggested increase.

13.1 Cemetery Fees 2024/25 – Agreed

13.2 Tariff of Charges 2024/25 – Agreed

13.3 Allotment Fees 2025/26 – Refused, the Clerk will prepare some revised fees and report back to the next meeting of this committee. (note, the Council is required by Law to give allotment holders one year's notice of fees). **Ongoing**

14. To consider changing Finance Software

The Chairman reported that there are issues with the current system, Advantedge which runs the Finance, Allotments, Cemetery and Playgrounds. It appears old and staff feel that there are things it could do but cannot. The Clerk informed members that staff have had a demonstration of the new system, Rialtas for which there is a lot of positive feedback. As with purchasing any new software there is an initial outlay to buy that software which in this case is approximately £6,000. Ongoing annual costs thereafter are almost the same as what the Council currently pays. The Council is still in contract with Advantedge until March 2025, so there will be an early termination fee.

After discussion it was agreed the Council must keep up to date with technology, so it was therefore **Resolved** to proceed with the change. **Closed**

15. SLCC Membership Renewal

It was **Resolved** to renew the annual membership for 2024 at a cost of £298.

Closed

16. Membership Renewal for the Campaign to Protect Rural England

It was **Resolved** to renew the annual membership at a cost of £60.00. **Closed**

17. Any Other Correspondence

There was no Other Correspondence

18. Duration of Meeting

7.42pm to 9.05pm