

NETHER ALDERLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 15th August 2023 6.30pm via ZOOM.

In the Chair Cllr. Angela Farrell

Parish Councillors present: Cllrs: Lesley Gleave, Geoff Linnell, Sue Joseph, Jackie Wilkinson, and Dave Clarke.

Also present: David Naylor Parish Council Clerk

Members of the Public: There were no members of the public present.

1. To receive apologies for absence. All members were present.

2. To receive Declarations of Interests

1.1 To declare disclosable pecuniary interests (Councillors with disclosable pecuniary interest(s) must leave the room for the relevant items). There were none.

1.2 To declare interests conflicting with the Nolan principles/non-pecuniary interests. There were none.

1.3 To allow Councillors to consider amendments required to their Declaration of Pecuniary Interest forms. There were none.

3. To consider and approve Applications for Dispensations. There were none.

4. 6.35 pm Public Presentation

No members of the public were present.

5. Resumption of the Meeting. The meeting was resumed.

6. Parish Hall Renovation Progress. The Clerk had provided members with a link to a recording of the discussions on all the following items at the Council meeting held on 8th August. particularly for two members who could not be present at that meeting.

6.1 Results of the tender process, this ended at noon on 15th August when the tenders were opened by the Architect and the Quantity Surveyor. The Clerk forwarded the results to Councillors that afternoon and they are repeated below in order of cost.

Tenderer	Tender Price	Build Period
Tender A	£577,784.00	24 weeks
Tender B	£684,107.03	30 weeks
Tender C	£711,844.00	48 weeks
Tender D	£772,544.61	20 weeks

The Architect and Quantity Surveyor will be analysing these submissions in detail to ensure they fully address the tender specification, and the pricing and contingencies are sufficient to protect the Parish Council against cost overruns etc. They had all carried out site visits and they were only invited to tender because there was confidence from the Architect that they all could carry out this work.

The Chairman advised that the range of prices was significant, and the Parish Council would need to borrow from the Public Works Loans Board anything beyond the Parish Council's

assembled funding which currently stood at £400,000. Depending on the tender evaluations this could mean phasing or reducing the range of the proposed work.

There was concern that the cheaper tenderers may not have made suitable provision for contingencies, however, that should be picked up in the evaluation process.

Cllr Linnell advised that certain issues were pertinent, namely are we happy to go out for a loan and what is an affordable loan for the Parish Council. Also, the professionals need to go through the tenders in detail to explain the variations in pricing and advise which of them we should adopt as our preferred supplier. Also, to confirm that the person who will project manage the work is confident that the chosen tenderer can bring the project in on budget, particularly because it contains suitable and adequate contingencies and provisional sums for work that can only be estimated and not accurately priced.

The Chairman responded that we had no other choice than having a loan of some proportion otherwise, to use our current resources we would need to dramatically scale back the work, or phase it over future years. Even the cheapest would probably need a loan of £250,000 to carry out all the work. We also needed to break ground by early December otherwise the planning consent would lapse.

Cllr Gleave felt we should trust in the Architect and Quantity Surveyor to provide professional advice given they are doing this all the time.

Cllr Clarke quoted Grand Designs on TV which hardly ever came in on budget and with an old, listed building that could be even worse.

Cllr Clarke advised that most residents do not use the Hall and its facilities.

Cllr Clarke was also concerned that the Council was currently canvassing for two new members who may not want to be part of a Council with debt. Cllr Wilkinson agreed.

Cllr Linnell would like to know the phasing of the various stages of construction so that if issues arose which required more cost, we could then remove one or more of a later phase from the project to keep within budget. It had been pointed out that the toilet extension could be such an item.

Cllr Wilkinson was concerned that we would be passing on a debt to the precept payers for the next 30 years. The response was that we have a duty to maintain the Hall and the Public Works loans board has been set up for Councils to spread capital projects over a long term.

A question was raised about what would be possible if we kept the project cost down to our £400,000 current resources. It was suggested that this would be Yes to the hall heating, possibly NO to lowering the Hall floor and its underfloor heating and instead providing radiators under the benches, Possibly Yes to providing wheelchair lifts or ramps to address the floor level changes. Possibly YES to providing the toilet block but NO to renovating the upstairs rooms. The above are only suggestions and the Architect would need to be asked. We may also need to resubmit or amend the planning application.

Cllr Joseph proposed the following: That in principle we are happy to apply for a loan of up to £300,000 over 30 years subject to the outcome of the tenders, confidence against cost overruns and subject to a community consultation on this matter.

After further debate it was decided **not to vote** on the above proposal, but **See Agenda Item 7 below**, that we intend to seek a loan of between £250,000 and £300,000 over 30 years. Also, to have further discussions with the Architects and Quantity Surveyor regarding their level of confidence in managing the project within the Council's budget and the potential for penalty clauses. Overall, the aim is to ensure its affordability for the Parish Council.

7. Draft Community Consultation. Consultation Document Attached

It was **RESOLVED** to advise residents in the community consultation that we intend to seek a loan of between £250,000 and £300,000 over 30 years.

Proposed Cllr Gleave and **Seconded** Cllr Farrell

The Council will also have further discussions with the Architects and Quantity Surveyor regarding their level of confidence in managing the project within the Council's budget and the potential for penalty clauses. Overall, the aim is to ensure its affordability for the Parish Council.

8. VAT Options for the Parish Council - summary from Steve Parkinson. Enclosure 2 in the Agenda Documents Pack.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council had no other option than to become VAT Registered

Proposed Cllr Geave and **Seconded** Cllr Farrell

9. Progress with the Heads of Terms and Faculty Application. The Clerk had already sent documents to the PCC to help with the Faculty Application - [Link to the Faculty Application Documents](#) (after clicking on the highlighted link you can click on the photos and documents to view them in full definition)

It was agreed that we should proceed with the Heads of Agreement as a Contract with the PCC and apply for Land Registry in due course. The Clerk has written to the current lord Stanley in Oxford. **Copy of the letter attached.**

10 Section 106 communication from Judith Cosgrove CEC Section 106 Officer and promised Zoom meeting.

The Clerk had now written to Judith **a copy of the letter is attached.** He has also escalated this to the Head of Planning and Cllr Anthony Harrison.

11 To confirm the next Council meeting is:

Tuesday 12th September 2023

6.30pm at Nether Alderley Parish Hall