

Nether Alderley Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 11th February 2025 1.00pm at The Oak Meeting Room Mereside Alderley Park

In the Chair Cllr. Lesley Gleave .

Parish Councillors present: Geoff Linnell Sue Joseph, Angela Farrell, Melanie Connor.

Also present: David Naylor Parish Council Clerk and Cheshire East Councillor for the Chelford Ward which includes Nether Alderley - Anthony Harrison.

Members of the Public: One prospective Parish Councillor.

1. To receive apologies for absence. Cllr. Mandy Kirk.

2. To receive Declarations of Interests

- To declare disclosable pecuniary interests (Councillors with disclosable pecuniary interest(s) must leave the room for the relevant items). There were None.
- The Clerk asked all members to review their declarations of interest forms and if necessary update them and send a copy to him. He would forward them to Cheshire East's monitoring Officer.
- To declare interests conflicting with the Nolan principles/non-pecuniary interests. There were none.
- 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. To approve the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 14th January 2025 as a true and accurate record. Cllr. Farrell asked for a correction to the draft minutes. She had voted against a £14 increase in the precept, which was properly recorded in the minutes, but she had not said that she would have accepted a £10.12 increase which had been the figure in the 20th December Working Group Agenda. Her position was that she wanted to minimise all costs to the precept payers.

After the meeting the Clerk checked the January 14th recording of the meeting and it showed that Cllr. Farrell was correct. The January 14th Draft Minutes would be amended accordingly and approved at March 25th Council meeting.

5. Public Presentation

To adjourn the meeting to receive representations from members of the Nether Alderley Parish.

A prospective Parish Councillor was present and she was welcomed and introduced to the members. The Casual Vacancy notice was still awaiting the end of the 14 day period in which any 10 electors of the Parish could request an election rather than a co-option. Following this on Tuesday 17th of this month the Parish Council would have that answer and would proceed accordingly.

6. The meeting was continued.

7. Village Hall Renovation Progress. The Parish Hall would now be referred to as the Village Hall so as to identify it as community building.

Matters brought up at the Site Progress Meeting held on the morning of this Council meeting were discussed. The key issue was a potential increase in the final outturn of the Contract from

£653,401.17 to £667,665.32 reported by the QS or £671,950 reported by the contractor B & Boyes. Any increase would be very disappointing because the previous month the £653,401 figure had been confirmed. Some of the additional items had been completed earlier in the contract and were thought by the Council to have been included in the outturn cost. It was felt that others should have been included in the contract such as the sanding and polishing of the Hall floor which appeared to be a self-evident need after being exposed to so much dust and dirt from the renovation work. Also self-evident should have been the ground levels at the exit from side door of the Main Hall which required an expensive flagged path, balustrade and steps instead of a graded slope. Also the front entrance path shown in the photo below did not need the obtrusive sandstone kerbs, which in any case were not aligned with the doorway. It was felt that the Parish Council had been left with the bill for these items and others.



The Contractor and QS were asked to review and align their figures and provide a significant reduction.

The 24th of February was the agree handover date including sessions to show how the Hall's systems worked. It had been intended to carry out a snagging exercise but it was decided to do that the following week on the 21st February..

Cllr. Linnell advised that he had managed to source a £6,000 grant from Alderley Park for provision of furniture. It would help to fund the orders already placed for the main hall's furniture and allow furniture for the upstairs room including a meeting table. He was thanked for this. Representatives from Alderley Park would be invited to the Hall Opening Event.

The Clerk would arrange a fire extinguisher inspection by Fire Queen. It was due earlier but the renovation work prevented that.

The debate moved on to ensuring that Hall equipment that needed to be fitted was available before the contractor had left site (the site manager has promised to fit it). The equipment was particularly that in the ground floor toilets such as a baby changing wall mounted unit and paper towel holders. The walls had been tiled and needed a proficient person to do the work to avoid damage. This equipment needed to be ordered within the few next days. Also a contract was needed for provision and emptying of toilet sanitary bins (including in the gent's), a larger one in the baby changing area for nappies, and a trade waste bin. With regard to the latter this would depend on its emptying frequency and be related Hall use. Positioning of the bin would need careful thought to enable ready access for emptying and be unobtrusive and not detract from the scenic ambience of the Hall and the Church.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the ordering of appropriate washroom equipment and the quotes for the waste contracts mentioned above. The acceptance of the latter would be delegated to the Clerk and Chair in consultation with the members and reported to the March Council meeting.

Proposed: Cllr. Linnell

Seconded: Cllr. Gleave

8. **Village Hall Cost and Resources Report. Enclosure 1 in the Agenda Documents Pack.** This Report had continued to show a moderate surplus, a large part of which can be used to populate the 2025/26 earmarked reserves for community improvements. £20,000 of this will be carried over into the 2025/26 general reserves to meet unforeseen emergency spending needs. However, any increase in the outturn cost as mentioned in Minute 7 above would significantly eat into the surplus and the earmarked reserves for 2025/26.

9. **Forecast 2024/25 Budget Outturn and Draft Budget for 2025/26 Enclosure 2 in the Agenda Documents Pack.** The Clerk showed Enclosure 2 on the meeting room’s AV system and went through it line by line. Budget line items could still be adjusted and confirmed at the March Council meeting.

This forecast was based on actual figures up the end of January and projected cost to the end of March. The report had a last column for the draft budget for 2025/26 which had been populated with the knowledge of the 2024/25 projected outturn and spending suggestions raised at the 20th December Budget meeting and the January Council meeting. The earmarked reserves for 2025/26 had also been populated from issues raised at the budget meeting and the January Council meeting funded from the Village Hall Renovation surplus as referred to in Minute 8 above. However, any increase in the outturn cost would significantly eat into the surplus and the earmarked reserves for 2025/26.

10. **Potential Broadband Supply Company.** Below is a quote from gpstelecom. The Clerk had also sourced a quote from Talk Talk. However, Sky had offered the best solution at £52 per month. Openreach had confirmed access to the community full fibre scheme completed in 2021. The Clerk would be meeting Openreach on site on 12th February. There will be no cost for Openreach to provide a fibre connection to the Hall. St Mary’s PCC has enquired if they too could connect into this scheme. The Clerk has checked with Openreach and they can and he has provided the PCC with the necessary contact details at Openreach.

FTTP Proposal

FTTP Connection	Per Month
1GB/115 FTTP Connection	£59.99
Technicolor Router	Inclusive
Installation (subject to survey)	Inclusive
Total	£59.99

The Parish Council has also been awarded a digital grant from Cheshire East Council’s Digital Fund to equip the building with AV equipment which will aid the Hall’s attractiveness for business and social events. The equipment is now being specified and ordered. It will involve video conferencing for the upstairs front meeting room and audio visual equipment for the main Hall.

11. Finance Schedule (Appendix A)

11.1 **To note receipt of income, as listed in schedule (A1)**

Proposed: Cllr. Gleave **Seconded:** Cllr. Joseph

11.2 **To approve items for payments as listed in schedule (A2)**

Proposed: Cllr. Linnell **Seconded:** Cllr. Joseph

11.3 **To approve direct debit/standing order as listed in schedule (A3)**

Proposed: Cllr. Joseph **Seconded:** Cllr. Connor

11.4 To consider and approve the Clerk's expenses as listed in schedule (A4)

Proposed: Cllr. Linnell **Seconded:** Cllr Gleave

12. Broadband Supply Provider. Sky had been appointed to supply the Parish Council with Broadband following quotes presented to the January Meeting. Openreach has confirmed access to the adjacent full fibre community scheme completed in 2021. The Clerk is meeting Openreach at the Hall on the 12th February 1pm – 5pm. Sky will then follow with the necessary internal equipment. The wi-fi will be high strength to reach all parts of the building and will have a guest provision. Two external phone “lines” will use the fibre connection and we need to consider if and how we used this function for hirers. Positioning of the router will potentially be in the Store Room.

13. Neighbourhood Planning (NP) Cllr Gleave had sourced a planning consultant who will help the Parish Council with the outstanding Basic Conditions and Consultation Statements. This follows a number of approaches to other companies without success. The Company is Kirkwells Ltd Planning Consultants. They will charge 4 days at £578.00 per day £2,312.00. Cllr. Gleave has applied for a Locality grant to cover this which is looking very positive. This action needs retrospective approval of the Council because the closing date for grant application was 31st January. Work to be completed by 31st of March. The Clerk has sent a full chronology of Neighbourhood Plan events and documents between 2019 and 2024 to help Kirkwells to deliver the Consultation Statement.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve retrospectively the actions of the Chairman in consultation with the Clerk and other members in securing the services of Kirkwells and submitting a grant to Locality which had a closing date before this Council meeting. The Grant application also had to be submitted with a cost quotation i.e. that obtained from Kirkwells.

Proposed: Cllr. Linnell **Seconded:** Cllr. Farrell

14. Further update from the Parish Hall Marketing Group. Cllr. Gleave had amended the Hall's hiring terms and condition following a consultation with members and circulated them that morning. She asked for early confirmation after all members had read them. Also a feedback form was needed. The Clerk had contacted the Council's insurance company to add hirer's liability cover for individual hirers who would not have public liability insurance. The Clerk had added funds to the 2024/25 and 2025/26 budgets for marketing. An opening event to say thanks to invited guests was being scheduled for the evening of Friday 21st March for helpers and donors etc., with finger food and drinks. Plus open days 11am – 3pm on Saturday 22nd and Sunday 23rd with tea, coffee and biscuits. The Clerk added that he needed to send out VAT invoices in the proper HMRC format as soon as possible for all paid for Hall hire. The Newsletter was due out which would include details of the open days.

15. Flooding of Welsh Row There had been severe flooding following the recent heavy rain and again it seemed to be related to water crossing into Welsh Row from Artists Lane and National Trust ponds and land. Also the drainage ditch on Welsh Row had become overgrown and volunteers had dug it out following the flooding. Road gulleys were blocked and presumably discharged into this overgrown ditch. In some respects the ditch could now present a hazard. Cheshire East had been contacted on their website application notifying them of the flooding and the potential cause. Councillors wished to visit National Trust land to assess the ponds and the condition of the overflow streams. A meeting with the National Trust was being arranged, this would include a representative from Welsh Row .

16. Bollington Lane Danger to Pedestrians. Snow covered deep ditches had become a hazard because the ditches on the west side were in some cases shallow and then had a large step change in depth. When covered with snow they were invisible. It was propose at the January Council meeting to fund poles to delineate the ditches and notices to identify deep stretches of

ditch. The question was asked if Bollington Lane was adopted. Former Cllr. Jenny Shufflebottom has advised “[the single tracked Bollington Lane is adopted by Cheshire East from the top down to and including the frontage - where the first house on the left hand side is - Mere Farm. After that the lane is private](#)”. In this case Cheshire East should provide the necessary protection for these ditches but we could be waiting a while and may wish to action it ourselves.

17. St Mary’s Church Website. Their website will be important to help to increase the Hall hiring income but needs updated photographs and correct Parish Council contact details rather than the Church. After the handover and when the chairs and tables and AV equipment had been provided the Clerk and/or David Fairbottom could take photos and the Clerk could also produce a walk-around video.

18. Members were asked to adopt specific roles to lead and progress items - Cllr. Gleave as Chair would have an overview of all roles. The following roles were confirmed:

- Cllr. Connor Socia Media
- Cllr. Gleave Garden Space – she felt that she could perhaps host a competition about the “Triangle of land” – Reaseheath College would be contacted.
- Cllr. Linnell Noticeboards and Council Signage - replacement, design and content

It was **RESOLVED** to approve these roles and the associated member.

Proposed: Cllr. Joseph **Seconded:** Cllr. Farrell

Other to volunteer please to the next meeting.

19. Progress in adopting .gov.uk suffixes to our emails and our website URL.

The Parish Council Domains Helper Service Team have offered support in this process. The following are links to: The quote from Axon in the minutes was quite expensive. The Clerk had asked for a reduced cost quote where not everyone would have a business 365 account and others would have web access into the system. The updated quote was awaited.

20. The procedure to advertise a casual vacancy for two councillors. The Clerk has arrange a date with Cheshire East Council for the display of the 14 working-day notice allowing electors of the Parish to request an election rather than a co-option. The closing date is the 17th February. There was already had one firm expression of interest which has been circulated to all members. There was a need to fill these vacancies quickly without waiting for the March Council meeting on the 25th March.

It was, therefore, **RESOLVED** that if ten electors had not requested an election to Cheshire East in accordance with the published Casual Vacancy notice, which would expire on 17th February, delegated authority would be provided to Cllr. Gleave, Cllr. Farrell and Cllr. Joseph to interview candidates and co-opt to fill the two vacancies.

21. The Clerk’s vacancy from the end of April. ChALC will help with this in contacting Cheshire Town and Parish Councils and the Parish Council would advertised as widely as possible on social media and noticeboards. We need a well written promotion for the Job, Updated Job Specification and Job Contract. The end of February/ beginning of March would be an appropriate time to advertise. One of our existing Councillors expressed an interested in applying for this role. In that event he would step down as a councillor and this would create another casual vacancy.

22. Planning Applications Cheshire East Council (CEC) has launched a new On- Line Planning System (click on this [link](#) to access it. CEC is avoiding emailing the weekly planning list because they can now be searched via the above link and planning consultations can also be posted against each application.

Application No.	25/0151/PRIOR-6
Proposal	Prior Approval: Agricultural and Forestry Development Prior approval of Agricultural produce and machinery store
Location	Bradford Lane Farm Bradford Lane, Nether Alderley, Macclesfield, Cheshire East, SK10 4TR
Response Deadline	13 th February 2024
Napc Response	No Objection

Application No.	25/0129/TP
Proposal	Oak Tree - reduce four lower limbs by 50% and to a suitable point to encourage fresh growth, all upper limbs over hanging the garden proposed to be reduced by 2 metres.
Location	2 Serpentine Square, Nether Alderley, Macclesfield, Cheshire East, SK10 4HQ
Response Deadline	None published for Tree Works
Napc Response	No Objection

Application No.	25/0368/FU
Proposal	Change of use to food and drink provision for sale and consumption on and off the premises (Use Class E) including provision of car parking spaces.
Location	Alderley Park Conference Centre Congleton Road, Macclesfield, Cheshire East, SK10 4TG
Response Deadline	3 rd March 2025
Napc Response	Full support for this proposal

23. To consider any other Planning matters including decisions on Planning Applications:

These were noted.

[24/4988/PRIOR-1A](#) Prior Approval Not Required

Decision Date 20-01-2025

Prior Approval: Prior Approval: Larger householder extension

Prior Approval of a single storey side and rear extension to the south which projects 8m rearwards of the original dwelling and accommodates a guest bedroom suite. A single storey side and rear extension to the north, which projects 8m rearwards of the original dwelling and accommodates an open-plan kitchen/dining space Extending 8.00m beyond the rear wall, maximum height of 4.00m and eaves height of 2.70m

Beacon Lodge Macclesfield Road, Nether Alderley, Macclesfield, Cheshire East, SK10 4UB

[24/4932/DSC](#) Approved

Decision Date 22-01-2025

Discharge of condition 4 on approval [24/1426M](#)

Heathfield House Bollington Lane, Nether Alderley, Macclesfield, Cheshire East, SK10 4TB

24. Strengthening of Standards Framework Consultation **Enclosure 3 in the Agenda**

Documents Pack. Members would review this and the Clerk would submit a responses to meet the deadline of 26th February 2025:

The government proposes to legislate for the introduction of a mandatory minimum code of conduct which would seek to ensure a higher minimum standard of consistency in setting out the behaviours expected of elected members. The government will likely set out the mandatory code in regulations to allow flexibility to review and amend in future, this will also provide the opportunity for further consultation on the detail.

Codes of conduct play an important role in prescribing and maintaining high standards of public service, integrity, transparency, and accountability. At their best, they establish clear guidelines for behaviour and expectations that members always act ethically in the public's best interest. Currently, there is significant variation between adopted codes, ranging from those who choose to adopt the LGA's full model code to those who simply conform with the minimum requirement of restating the Nolan principles.

A prescribed model code which covers important issues such as discrimination, bullying, and harassment, social media use, public conduct when claiming to represent the council, and use of authority resources could help to uphold consistently high standards of public service in councils across the country and convey the privileged position of public office. It could also provide clarity for the public on the consistent baseline of ethical behaviour they have a right to expect.

There is interest in understanding whether councils consider there should be flexibility to add to the prescribed code to reflect individual authorities' circumstances. They would not be able to amend the mandatory provisions.

25. **Report from Cllr. Anthony Harrison** Cheshire East Chelford Ward Councillor which includes Nether Alderley.

He reported:

- Cheshire East Council Tax increase capped at £4.99%
- The White Paper on devolution which may see Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Warrington combined and named Cheshire and Warrington Council with an elected Mayor. There was the potential to add an extra layer of taxation and be more remote for its residents.
- Corporate Policy meeting at Cheshire East concerning the above devolution it was early days but likely to mean a greater financial burden for town and parish councils as services are devolved to them. Potential for double taxation.
- Reported to Highways attention needed to preventing flooding on Welsh Row in terms of regular cleaning of gulleys etc.
- Reported to Highways attention needed to Bollington Lane's neglected ditches
- Nether Alderley Primary School Flashing Warning Lights – needed excavation to rectify them.
- Pre planning application in Chelford fo 125 homes site.
- VE day in May. He was working on events. Also a General Patten event at Peover Hall 8th June - 14th. He commanded the Seventh Army in France and was regular visitor to Peover Hall with Churchill in the planning for D Day.
- Cllr. Harrison is likely to be put forward for the role of Cheshire East's Armed forces champion linking with and supporting all army, air and sea cadet forces in the area.

26. **Items Raised at the Last Meeting**

Councillors had been asked to adopt specific roles – on this Agenda see item 18.

- The clearing of overgrown footpaths continues to be a problem.

27. Councillor items for the March Meeting:

- The potential for a Nether Alderley in bloom or something similar to engage the local community suggestions to the next meeting
- Welcoming new Elected Members
- The Village Hall Handover, Completion and snagging.
- Confirmation of 2025/26 Budget Lines

28. Date of the Next Meeting:

**Tuesday 25th March 2025
1.30 pm at the Village Hall**

APPENDIX A

Nether Alderley Parish Council Meeting Tuesday 11th February 2025

Schedule of Receipts and Payments

A1. Receipt of Income - Month of January

Current Account:

Alderley Edge Institute Grant (second £50%) £23,887.50

December HMR VAT Reclaim £26,028.26

Reserve Account £0.58 Interest Payment 31st January

Skipton BS Interest is annual at the end of March

Unity Trust Bank (Quarterly) next installment at the end of March

A2. Invoices for payment

Ch.	Provider	Total Cost	Net of VAT	Service Provided	VAT	Power
1825	Rosehill Furniture	1,665.12	£1,387.60	New Tables for the Village Hall	£277.52	E
1826	David Naylor	£706.81	£700.15	Salary & Expenses	£6.66	H
1827	HMRC	£439.95	£439.95	TAX & NI	£0.00	H
1828	WML Consulting	£1,911.60	£1,593.00	Set up and print Winter Newsletter 520 Copies	£318.60	E
1829	KPS Architects	£666.73	£555.61	RIBA Work Fee based on contract sum increase of £16,708 @ 9.75% plus reasonable expenses plus VAT & contract extension of three months. 2 nd Installment of three	£111.12	E
1830	Currie & Brown	£353.56	£294.63	Site Progress Meeting & carry out Valuation 10	£58.93	E
1831	Greensplash Designs Ltd	£85.00	£85	SSL Website Certificate Renewal	£00.00	H

CHAPS	B&E Boys	£83,071.61 + £23 Nat West CHAPS Fee	£69,226.34	Hall Contract Renovation Valuation 10	£13,845.27	E
CHAPS	Alpha Furnishing	£1,164.15. + £23 Nat West CHAPS Fee	£970.12 No VAT	Deposit - New Chairs for Village Hall	£194.03	E

A3. Direct Debits/Standing Orders for approval

Provider	Total Cost	Net of VAT	Service Provided	VAT	Power
Current Account Bank Charges	£5.25	£5.25	November to January. We have now exceeded the turnover limit for free banking.	£0,00	H

A4. Approval of the Clerk's expenses/salary: Power H

Travel 131 Miles @ 45 pence per mile = £58.95
 Phone Sim monthly £9.17 plus £1.83 VAT = £11.00
 Cartridge Discount £9.98 + £2.00 VAT = £11.98
 Rymans Paper £6.66 plus £1.33 VAT = £7.99
 Amazon P.Touch Tape Labeling Cassettes £7.49 plus £1.50 VAT = £8.99
Total £92.25 plus £6.66 VAT = £98.91
 Plus, Salary - Contracted 65 hours @ 15.58 per hour £1,012.70 = £1,111.61 Gross
 Less £404.80 Tax = £706.81

Signed.....
Chairman of Meeting

Signed.....
Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

Parish Council Powers for Expenditure and Activity

Note that the Parish Council has adopted the Power of Competence

Audit

[Audit Regulations 1996]

I

Benches

Power to provide and maintain roadside seats and shelters [Parish Councils Act 1957, s.1]

K

Burial Grounds, Cemeteries and Crematoria

Power to acquire, provide and maintain [Open Spaces Act 1906, ss9 and 10]

A

Power to agree to maintain monuments and memorials

Parish Councils and Burial Authorities (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1970, s.1

B

Power to provide and maintain and Power to contribute towards expenses of cemeteries

Local Government Act 1972, s.214

Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977 (no 204) C1 Memorials (16 (1) (a) and 16 2 (b))

C

Bus Shelters

Power to provide and maintain shelters

Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1953, s.4

Parish Councils Act 1957, s.1

D

Crime prevention

Local Government and Rating Act 1997 s31, Crime and Disorder Act 2000

Q

Community Centres

Power to provide and equip community buildings [Local Government Act 1972, s.133]

E

Power to provide buildings for clubs having athletic, social or educational objectives

Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 s.19

F

Power to provide a range of recreational facilities [Local Government (Misc Provisions) Act 1975 s19]

G

General Administration/Running Costs

Subsidiary powers of local authorities – to facilitate, or conducive or incidental to, the discharge of functions LGA 1972 s111

H

Parish Hall – public meetings

K

1. LGA 1972 s 142 “ arrange for the delivery of lectures and addresses and the holding of discussions on such matters - provision of information etc relating to matters affecting local government
2. s133 ‘Power to provide buildings for public meetings and assemblies or contribute towards the expenses of providing such buildings’
3. LGA 1972 S111

Litter bins Provision of litter bins [Litter Act 1983, ss 5, 6]

L

Neighbourhood Plans [Localism Act 2011 Sch 9]

R

Research and collection of information

Power to carry out research [LGA 1972 S 141]

M

Parish Plans [LGA 1972 S 141]

J

Section 137

N

Local Government Act 1972. Power of Local Authorities to incur expenditure for certain purposes not otherwise authorised. Power to do something that will benefit the community where there is no other specific power covering the action; Set at £8.12 per elector in 2019/20. Expenditure must be commensurate with the benefit.

Websites Local Government Act 1972 s142

P

Life-saving appliances – Power to provide life-saving appliances (e.g. life belts, defibrillators) [Public Health Act 1936, s234]

S