

## ST ALBANS PARISH COUNCIL

Email: [clerk@stalbanpc.org](mailto:clerk@stalbanpc.org)

Website: <https://stalbanpc.org>

### Minutes of St Albans Parish Council Meeting

Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2025 , Emmanuel Church, Church View Close, Nottingham. NG5 9QP

**Present:** Cllr Dave White, Cllr John Todd, Cllr Dylan Jones, Cllr Robert Gardiner, Cllr Jason King

**In Attendance:** 5 members of public

Welcome to the meeting. 7pm

No.	Agenda Item	Discussion	Action / Info	By whom	By when
607	Apologies for absence	Cllr Lari sent in his apologies			
608	Declaration of interests	None received			
609	Approve minutes of the last meeting	To Approve the minutes of the meeting held on 26 <sup>th</sup> November 2024 It was agreed by all Councillors as an accurate record of the meeting <b>Proposed by:</b> Cllr. Jones <b>Seconded by:</b> Cllr. Gardner			
610	Receive updates on actions from previous meetings	Cllr. White stated he would make some comments on the current agenda items as they arose.			
611	Electors to address the public	A resident spoke about the distribution of the poppies and said that she had followed up on what had been discussed at the meeting in November around the distribution of the poppies. It would seem that there was some discrepancy around the number of poppies that the Parish Council had and how they were distributed, she suggested that the Parish Council did a count up to check what	Action		

		<p>the stocks were and so that it could be better distributed for the next Remembrance Day.</p> <p>She then asked about the Watering Contract and said she was concerned that the quotes obtained were not from local contractors and that there should have been an opportunity for local people to quote for that work, she queried why there were only two quotes when there should be three.</p> <p>Her final comment was around the planting of the planters as it had been agreed back in April 2024 that Cllr. Jones would be given the responsibility and budget to get the planters filled, she wondered why then there had been a delay in the winter planting taking place and why it had been then linked to the watering contract.</p> <p>Cllr. White stated that the watering contract would be fully explained at that agenda item and that he would explain that this agenda item had also been a part of the earlier discussions but had not yet been sorted out and it was important that this was in place for this year before more plants were purchased.</p> <p>No further questions were raised.</p>			
612	<p>To Receive reports from:-  District Councillors,  County Councillors  Parish Councillors</p>	<p><b>District Councillor Rachel Ellis</b> was pleased to advise that the Community kitchen has started again and was well attended with over 121 meals served, the hall was full and had several young people attending from the secondary school and many families. Some deliveries are also taking place. Lots of issues with ASB and dog mess. There are also issues on Muirfield Park, and she had been pursuing with Officers the CCTV for the park, however residents were not reporting issues which made it more difficult to make the case for CCTV on the park, she suggested residents need to report much more.</p> <p>Cllr. Ellis then went on to provide an update on the new White Paper on Devolution being discussed by Councils at the moment. This will mean that all District and Borough and County Councils will be looking to merge into one/two larger Council/s by 2027/28. It was not yet known what the full details will be. This is an ongoing discussion between all Councils, and further details would be provided as it went along.</p> <p>Cllr. Ellis stated that Parish and Town Councils would become more important as the voice of residents.</p>			

		<p><b>Cllr. Gardner</b> reported that there were lots of issues with highways lighting being out and he had reported many of them, he stated he had made several reports through GBC website, and it had worked fine. This can also be reported direct to Nottinghamshire County Council.</p> <p><b>Cllr. Jones</b>, he had noticed an increase in instances of fly tipping which he had reported and had been dealt with promptly. Concerned he had noticed a lot of Dog mess in the area and had reported that also.</p> <p><b>Cllr. King</b> reported that there were issues of Dog fouling and litter, and these remained significant throughout the Parish, ASB particularly in Deer Park area and Country Park is a major concern with off road bikes and scooters adding to the problem. These issues have been reported multiple times to the Police and GBC, but the situation remains dire.</p> <p>The Japanese Gardens have not been maintained for over a year. The surrounding fencing is in disrepair, and the Green Flag is still displayed despite the park no longer having that award.</p> <p>There have been numerous instances of cars speeding around Bewcastle Road, particularly in the early morning hours around 7pm. There have been no further reports of rough sleeping in the Country Park since January suggesting that they may have been housed, but there have been no updates from GBC on this.</p> <p><b>Cllr. White</b> reported that Bestwood Lodge area had been litter picked, there were ongoing issues of litter being thrown from cars, rough sleepers had been in the area, and this had also meant an increase in litter and detritus that had been reported and cleaned up.</p> <p>An increase in nitrous oxide cannisters being left and reported for removal. He has reported an increase in ASB generally.</p> <p>He had been looking into the CCTV and had seen that CCTV could be provided for around £14,000 he had checked with GBC Officers, and they did not feel that the levels of reporting on Muirfield park warranted the provision of CCTV. Cllr. White suggested that residents reported more issues to the Police, and he has said the Parish needs greater visibility from the Police in the area at all times. He also said that cars idling around the schools were also reported as this was creating an increase in pollution around the Parish. He has replaced the defib pads as required, he manages these on a monthly basis, he had arranged for more grit to be obtained and had then replenished the grit bins, reported a loose bollard on Muirfield and Bewcastle which had now been replaced. He had also</p>			
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		highlighted some comments around a recent planning application, and this had been sent on to the Planning officers at GBC.			
613	Clerks report	<p>Cllr. White confirmed that the Clerk had circulated an update to all Councillors of activity since starting.</p> <p>The Clerk stated that as there had not been a Clerk in place to do a Handover it was taking some time to get everything up to date. The Clerk now has access to the Bank account and the Scribe application and had spent some time working on the Precept and the documents for the upcoming AGAR. The Clerk also confirmed that the date for the Parish Election was 6th February and that the Governance review consultation period had now closed, and the draft proposals would be issued by GBC on 21<sup>st</sup> February.</p>			
614	Correspondence Not within the Agenda	None reported			
615	Finance	<p>a) To receive items for payment as set out in the attached list Cllr White itemised each invoice for clarification <b>Proposed by</b> Cllr. Gardner <b>Seconded by</b> Cllr. Todd All in favour</p> <p>b) The Clerk detailed the work done on the precept and that the deadline for submission to GBC was January 24<sup>th</sup>. Councillors had stated that they did not want the precept figure to be increased and therefore working on that basis and that our tax base had reduced slightly the Band D figure was worked out and Form C was submitted to GBC on the day. <b>Proposed by:</b> Cllr. King <b>seconded by:</b> Cllr. Todd all voted in favour</p> <p>c) Cllr. White outlined that the Clerk now had full access to the Bank Account and that all previous signatories that were no longer in office had been removed. <b>Proposed by:</b> Cllr. Jones <b>Seconded by:</b> Cllr. King. All in favour</p>			
616	Planning	Cllr. White stated that as the Council do not have a neighbourhood plan the Council normally only comments on larger planning applications. So, the first two applications on the list are for noting only.	Clerk to write to GBC		

		<p>The application on the re-consultation of the tree felling was discussed Councillors asked the Clerk to write to GBC stating that they hoped that that the report on this was comprehensive and to note that the trees should be kept if possible.</p> <p><b>Proposed by:</b> Cllr. Jones <b>Seconded by:</b> Cllr. Gardner All in favour</p>			
617	Update on the Domain change	<p>The Clerk outlined that discussions had taken place with Freethought who were the contractors for this new Domain name and website hosting. There was a debate around the name that the Council will use and there were 3 options to consider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A) Stalbans-pc.gov.uk</li> <li>B) Stalbansparishcouncil.gov.uk</li> <li>C) Stalbansparish.gov.uk</li> </ul> <p>It was decided that the preferred choice would be option B The Clerk would now go back to Freethought and advise them of this.</p> <p><b>Proposed by:</b> Cllr. King <b>Seconded by:</b> Cllr. Gardner All in favour</p>			
618	Consultations as outlined	<p>The Clerk outlined the two consultations that were currently running and were for noting only</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981-schedule 14 (3)</li> <li>b) Consultation on CIL</li> </ul>	For noting		
619	Planter maintenance/watering contract	<p>Cllr. White outlined the standing orders that would apply to this agenda item so that it could be dealt with in a timely manner. Cllr. King proposed that of the three quotes he obtained for the watering contract which 1 was local and two operated locally but didn't live locally, the preferred choice was for Davids Window cleaning services who would charge £30.00 per visit with a total cost over 28 weeks April to October at £840.00 Cllr. Jones stated he had looked at getting some quotes but none of the companies he had contacted had got back to him. It was proposed that the Council agrees and awards the watering contract to Davids Window cleaning services as set out in the quote.</p> <p><b>Proposed by:</b> Cllr. King <b>Seconded by:</b> Cllr. Jones All in favour</p>			

		<p>With reference to the next round of planting Cllr. White outlined that there was a budget of £600 for the flowers for the year. So, there were two proposals to look at as follows.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Cllr. Jones proposed to use the £200 now for plants across all 6 planters and then going forward to consult with residents about what species they would like to go into these planters, they would then be ordered, delivered to a central place and distributed out to Councillors to plant up along with residents as a community event.</li> </ol> <p>Cllr. King's view was that it was now too late to do winter planting as that should have taken place in early Autumn so they could bed in properly before the winter set in.</p> <p>Cllr. White suggested that we need to look at this year's planting from spring and use half of the annual budget of £600 to start again in the spring but in a sustainable and organised way.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2) Cllr King then proposed that we allocate £100.00 per planter to cover the season Spring through to summer and Autumn through to winter, that's £50.00 per planter twice a year. The Councillors would then take on ownership of each planter and speak to residents about what they would like to see in each planter.</li> </ol> <p>Benefits include, enhanced monitoring of the planter, someone designated to look after each one, increased community engagement, year-round blooms.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3) Cllr. White then proposed an amendment to Cllr. Kings' proposal that the Parish Council buy £300.00 plants in bulk from a garden centre and that these are then distributed out to Councillors to plant up on a designated day to ensure all the planters are done together. Then the Parish Council can consider nominating a designated Cllr. To look after each one at a later date.</li> </ol> <p>Cllr. Jones has stated that he now supports proposal 2 from Cllr. King</p> <p>Proposal by Cllr. King was <b>Proposed by:</b> Cllr. King <b>seconded by:</b> Cllr. Todd  <b>Amendment to that proposal:</b> by Cllr. White and <b>seconded by:</b> Cllr. Gardner  Cllr Whites amendment to Cllr. Kings' proposal was passed.</p>			
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620	Grant Policy	<p>The Grant policy has been raised for discussion and amendments have been suggested.</p> <p>Cllr. King proposed that the current grant policy remains in its current format until after the Governance review.</p> <p>Cllr. Jones has suggested this should be increased to an amount of £2500 per grant application Cllr. Todd suggested the cap should remain as it is for the time being.</p> <p>Cllr. Gardner suggested that it be increased by 3% in line with inflation</p> <p>The proposal was for the Grant policy to remain in place in its current format.</p> <p><b>Proposed by:</b> Cllr. King <b>Seconded by:</b> Cllr. Todd. majority voted in favour of the proposal</p>			
621	An update on the benches	<p>Cllr. White gave an update on the project he had been working on for some months to install benches on the open space on Woodchurch and Pavilion road and a new display board.</p> <p>There had been previous quotes for the work and a new quote from DJB Contracts limited.</p> <p>It was agreed to contact DJB Contracts limited and to ask them to take on the work and to liaise with GBC to satisfy their requirements on the insurance etc.</p> <p><b>Proposed by:</b> Cllr. King <b>Seconded by:</b> Cllr. Jones</p>			
622	Any item that requires the press and the public to leave the room before discussion takes place.	None recorded			
		<p><b>The date of the next meeting will be 25<sup>th</sup> February 2025</b></p> <p>The meeting closed at 21.05</p>			

Approved as a correct record and signed

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