

LUCKINGTON & ALDERTON PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Meeting of Luckington and Alderton Parish Council Held on Wednesday 13th November 2024 at 7.30pm in Alderton Village Hall

Present:

Chair: Richard McCraith (RMC)

Vice Chair: Nigel Neale (NN)

Councillors:

John Buckley (JB)

Councillor Martin Smith (MS)

Nic Johnson-Greening (NJG)

Parish Clerk: Carol Rogers (CR)

Members of the Public: None

2198. Apologies for absence

Sue Godwin

2199. Declaration of interests

There were none.

2200. Members of the public are invited to address the Council on agenda items

There were no members of the public in attendance.

2201. Public Question Time

There were no questions.

2202. To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 9th October 2024

The Minutes were approved by all and signed by RMC.

2203. Matters arising from the Minutes

1. Planning application [PL/2024/08145](#) Inglewood House, The Street, Luckington SN14 6NP: as agreed in the 9th October 2024 meeting, a formal LAPC comment regarding the need to minimise disruption to neighbours was registered on the planning website on 10th October 2024.
2. Extensions to planning application response deadlines: MS reviewed the rationale and confirmed best practice to accommodate Council meeting schedules. This was agreed by all present.
3. Councillor vacancies: added for discussion to 13th November meeting agenda.

2204. The following planning applications were considered:

- a. [PL/2024/09288](#): The Spinney, The Street, Alderton SN14 6NL (felling of tree in conservation area – Betula Pendula tree). **There were no objections.**
- b. [PL/2024/09108](#): Ashcombe House, The Street, Alderton SN14 6NL (felling of tree in conservation area – Eucalyptus tree). **There were no objections.**
- c. [PL/2024/04198](#): Church of St Mary & St Ethelbert, Church Road, Luckington SN14 6PH (amended plan/additional information on alterations for installation of accessible facilities). **There were no objections.**

2205. Update on financial issues

- a. Discussion to agree payments as follows:
 - Ryan Russell (grass cutting October): £380.00
 - Clerk's expenses: £215.45
 - Clerk's phone: £20.16
 - Microsoft 365 Business – annual subscription: £148.32

These were **approved** and signed off by RMC & NN.

b. **The LAPC 2025/26 budget.** RMC circulated the draft budget with 2%, 5% and 10% increases. It was agreed that it is proving difficult to remain within the current budget and that this will be further challenged by the proposed re-charge costs for the councillor elections in 2025 ([Town and Parish Council Update dated 13th November 2024](#)). RMC proposed the 10% increase: **agreed** by 3 in favour, 1 abstention.

Action: CR to complete Precept Form for approval by Council at December meeting.

Action: CR to obtain indicative cost of 2025 elections, based on latest electorate figures, and enquire about payment options.

c. The proposal to increase the Clerk's salary and homeworking allowance in line with the 2024/25 Local Government services pay agreement and HMRC homeworking regulations was put forward. The 2023/24 salary point (SCP18 £15.21 ph) increased to £15.84 ph with effect 1st April 2024 (actual effective date: contract start of 1st August 2024). Together with the £26 pcm office allowance (increased from £24), the monthly salary should now be £501.20. The payments were **approved**.

Action: RMC/NN to complete payment set-up online.

d. **Barclays change of mandate:** a further set of forms has been requested by Barclays to update clerk particulars and authorisations. These were **signed** by RMC and NN.

Action: CR to take copies and return originals to Barclays branch to complete identity checks.

Action: CR to identify Barclays procedures for changing banking signatories ahead of 2025 elections.

2206. CAWS – Battery Safety Campaign

Following the latest update on the progress of associated legislation, no action is required from LAPC. Further information is expected on the outstanding issue of battery disposal.

2207. LAPC Councillor vacancies

LAPC currently has vacancies for 2 councillors, and 2 further Councillors have indicated that they are unlikely to stand again for election at the Local Council Elections in May 2025. This could potentially leave the Parish Council with 4 Councillor vacancies. With elections in April 2025, it was agreed that there should be a continuing concerted effort to contact and encourage potential candidates, with a particular focus on improving demographic representation across the Parish. **Action:** all Councillors to pursue.

Parish Councillors are vital to local democracy and without Parish Councils, many important local tasks would simply not be done. If any parish residents are interested in becoming a Parish Councillor, please contact the Parish Clerk (Carol Rogers) on 01666 800850 or clerk@luckington.org.uk, and she will arrange for one of the current serving Councillors to discuss the role and provide more details of the role.

2208. Lime Down update

A meeting took place on 6th November 2024 with Lime Down representatives and local technical experts. Discussion topics including flooding, surface water, groundwater, drinking water contamination and access routes were flagged for inclusion in the future planning process. The next stage will include a range of Statutory local consultation events, held in parishes affected by the proposed development, and we hope that Luckington will be included as a separate event. These events are due to take place between the end of January 2025 and mid-March 2025. The detailed Planning Application documents are still estimated to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in Q3 2025.

2209. Cemetery update

- Shimwell family interment. CR confirmed that discussions concerning the allocated burial plot for the recently deceased Mrs Shimwell have been concluded and arrangements for her interment with her husband Mr Shimwell are in place.
- The Luckington Cemetery Plan has been updated and new versions are available on the LAPC website and on the cemetery notice board. All other death and burial registers and documentation have been updated accordingly.

2210. Grass cutting 2025/26

An invitation to tender has been issued for the LAPC grass cutting contract for the next two years. In accordance with the Council's 2024 Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, the invitation to tender was published on the LAPC website; in addition, direct contact was made by email with 3 potential contractors. A single response has been received. This is from the existing contractor, Ryan Russell. Given the positive feedback and overall high level of satisfaction with the work carried out to date, plus the proposal to hold costs at the existing level, the Council were pleased to accept Ryan Russell's bid.

Action: CR to draw up the new contract.

2211. Highways update

- The resurfacing of Back Lane in Alderton is now planned for the 25th, 26th and 27th November 2024.
- Some potholes are being filled on an ad hoc basis.
- Flooding in the Rathole is still being investigated (this is possibly due to tree roots but has yet to be confirmed).
- The next Operational Flood Group meeting is scheduled for 21st November.
- Reporting on issues should continue to be made to Wiltshire Highways via www.wiltshire.gov.uk/mywilts-online-reporting.

2212. Report from Outside Meetings

There were no updates.

2213. Items for next meeting Agenda and any other business, for information only

- CR reported that the Luckington notice board has a broken bolt and does not close tightly. As a result of this, water is entering and the contents are water-logged. The lock also appears to be damaged.
Action: NJG and CR to explore options for fixing or replacing the notice board and CR to add to December agenda for further review.
- NJG reported that a request has been received from a local resident for use of the land next to the Luckington Cemetery to park a trailer and temporarily store garden waste. It was agreed that this could be acceptable as the land has been rented previously; however, the arrangement would need to be subject to a formal contract and rental agreement.
Action: NJG to follow up and CR to add to December agenda for further review.
- JB commented on the emails received recently regarding a local speed survey. JB advised that a personal Google sign-in is needed to complete the survey; it was therefore agreed that LAPC would not respond. JB will address any future follow up.
- JB confirmed that the salt and grit boxes have been prepared.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm.