**Minutes**

Astley Parish Council

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| **Date** | Thursday 21st November 2024 |
| **Time** | 19:00 |
| **Meeting called to order by** | Chairperson: Councillor Spicer |
| **Meeting closed** | 20:31 |

**In Attendance**

Councillor Spicer, Councillor Orton, Councillor Webber, Councillor Hunter, Helen Billington (Clerk)

**Apologies**

none

**Visitors**

Anthony Proctor, Jeanette Sutton, Adam Weaver

**Absent**

None

**Approval of minutes**

The minutes of the previous meeting (19th September 2024) were approved by the meeting and signed by the chairperson.

**Matters Arising**

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| **No.** | **Minute details** | **Action** |
| 76-24 | **Cabling and lighting issues-**  Cllr Spicer thanked Cllr Webber for resolving Outreach/BT issues regarding the broadband outage which had caused significant inconvenience to parts of the village.  Cllr Huntley reported concerns about intermittent street lighting- agreement was made to keep an eye on the situation in case it was becoming worse | all |
| 46-23 | **Dog bin** –  Clerk reported NWBC would empty new bin if placed on Castle wall, assuming access is possible from the road.  Letter and plan to be sent to Arbury estate for approval when installation cost approved (clerk to confirm costs with NWBC and installer). | Clerk/Cllr Spicer |
| 73-22 | **Duke of Suffolk Monument** –  discussion around the current state of the monument (tilted/possibly unstable).  Adam Weaver, Estate Manager, reported potential work planned by Severn Trent and possibility of restoration funding from ST.  Although it is Estate property, it is also an important piece of heritage for the local area.  Cllr Spicer will propose some fundraising ideas (e.g. linked with Heritage Days events), and the topic will be discussed again in March. | Cllr Spicer |
| 61-24 | **Parking at the Nursery –**  Cllr Webber has discussed the issues with the manager at the nursery. As the manager is open to further discussion, it was suggested it might be helpful if Adam Weaver could have a conversation with the manager to see if there is a way to resolve this- Cllr Webber to pass on contact details to Adam. | Cllr Webber |
| 75-24 | **Parish Events-**  Councillors expressed their intention to assist with future events (June/September) where possible (manpower, publicity, general assistance).  Previous events have involved huge amounts of work, up to 100 hours per event.  Anthony Proctor and Jeanette Sutton invest huge amounts into these events, which are now unsustainable without extra support.  Cllr Spicer and the other Councillors expressed their thanks to Anthony and Jeanette for their dedication and hard work.  It may be necessary to consider paying individuals to provide future services/support for these events.  Cllr Spicer suggested we set up an events subcommittee.  Storage of event equipment will need to be reviewed if Anthony’s current storage facilities become unavailable. Suitability of the buildings near the Castle was discussed, but these would need improvements regarding damp and woodworm.  Landmark Trust dates yet TBC for 2025 (possibly 12th/21st September).  Event planning to be discussed again in January, including whether Anthony can run the June event (with extra support). |  |
| **76-24** | **Communications-**  The possibility of publicising Astley activities/events in neighbouring village newsletters was discussed.  The Clerk confirmed Fillongley and Corley editor is happy to receive Astley updates in its bi-monthly publication. | Clerk |

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| 74-24 | **Parish Councillor vacancy-**  Anthony Proctor agreed to be co-opted back onto the Council, in the absence of any other interested residents.  If there should be another parishioner expressing interest in joining the Parish Council, Anthony would step down in favour of having a local resident in his place.  Cllr Spicer thanked Anthony for his ongoing commitment and support and rejoining the Council. |  |
| 36-21 | **Solar Farms**  Adam Weaver was able to provide an update on the Astley Gorse extension application. This is due to be submitted for approval by Christmas.  Innova, the developer for Sole End Solar Farm, intends to start construction work spring 2025.  Cllr Spicer read out a letter which referenced the Community benefit fund, and how this should be received. It was confirmed an annual payment was preferred.  Clerk will confirm this with Innova.  This payment of £5000 per year could help support village initiatives, possibly including some event costs.  Although the original Astley Gorse Solar Farm is already approved, Cllr Spicer suggested we could apply to the developer for a similar Community benefit fund now the extension plan is due for submission.  There will be a hearing in Atherstone on Tuesday 10th December at 10am related to the Fillongley Solar Farm. The developers are appealing planning refusal by NWBC.  Fillongley PC will be present with residents to support NWBC’s decision, and any interested parties would be welcome to attend. | Clerk  Cllr Spicer |
| 64-24 | **Finance**  The Clerk calculates that the current bank balance is £1415.91 on 16th September 2024 (including next precept of £1,000 received on 19th September).  Barclays are in the process of approving the mandate change to include the Clerk for online banking.  **The council were happy to approve payments for:**   * Clerk for November 2024 - £120.00 * WALC- clerk training - £42 |  |

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| 65-24  77-24  78-24  79-24  80-24 | **Councillors report and items for future agenda**  Updates on this month’s minutes  **Any Other Business (AOB)**  Councillors completed up to date Declaration of Interest forms, as requested by NWBC.  It has been reported that product displays from a local business were potentially creating a hazard for traffic joining the main road.  It was suggested Adam might have a word with the business owner and the Clerk will investigate if Highways authority can help.  There is also an issue with a damaged pavement in the area, which was caused by a heavy truck earlier in the year. This was reported by a visitor to the church.  The Clerk flagged that there are some upcoming WALC training sessions which would be of help in her role. She will investigate which of the 3 recommended sessions would be most beneficial and let the Councillors know before committing. | Clerk  Clerk |

**Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 16th January 2025 at 19:00

**Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Dated: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**