



**Parish Council Meeting to be held at St Paul's Parish Hall, Scotforth on Wednesday, 10<sup>th</sup> January 2024, commencing at 7.00pm**

## A G E N D A

1. **Apologies.** To receive apologies
2. **Minutes.** To consider and approve Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023 (attached) and receive updates on any matters arising.
3. **Declarations of Interest.** To receive any changes to Declarations of Interest of Parish Councillors
4. **Planning Applications.**
  - a) To consider and comment on planning matters, including new planning applications and an update on decisions (report attached). New applications received since the last meeting are set out below:

Application No	Description
None received	

- b) To consider any other planning matters affecting the Parish.
5. **Parish Council Budget 2024/25.** To agree the Parish Council's budget and precept for 2024/25. Parish Clerk's report attached.
6. **Lune Estuary Management Considerations.** To consider the Parish Council's future participation and role in the Lune Estuary Stakeholder project.
7. **Public discussion and updates.** To adjourn the meeting for a period of public discussion and to provide any 'information only' updates on activities in recent weeks. (Note: Any matters needing a 'decision' will normally be considered as an agenda item at a future meeting).
  - a) Clerk's report on activities and correspondence since the last meeting
  - b) Members' updates and reports since the last meeting, including:

Highways	Amenity, incl Lengthsman
Stakeholder, incl United Utilities	Neighbourhood Development Plan
  - c) Report of District and County Councillors
  - d) Public discussion

8. **Payments.** To authorise payment of accounts. Report attached.
9. **Date of Next Meeting.** To confirm the date and time of next meeting.

**Derek Whiteway**  
**Parish Clerk**  
**4<sup>th</sup> January 2024**

**Tel: 01524 64908**  
**Email: [clerk@aldcliffewithstoddaypc.org](mailto:clerk@aldcliffewithstoddaypc.org)**

## Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023 at 7.00pm at St Paul's Parish Hall, Scotforth

**Present:** Councillor Kevan Walton (Chairman)  
Councillors Denise Parrett and Heather Ward  
Derek Whiteway, Parish Clerk  
Three members of the public attended the meeting (to the end of item 4  
(Planning Applications))

### 23/068 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Nick Webster and Tim Dant, City Councillors Abi Mills and Tim Hamilton-Cox and County Councillor Gina Dowding.

### 23/069 Minutes of the previous meeting

- 1) The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2023, were approved without further amendment.

#### Matters arising:

- 2) **23/061(3) Signage on Arna Wood Lane.** The Clerk referred to a response received from Lancashire County Highways stating that the 'passing place' was situated on private land and that they were therefore unable to erect any signage. Councillors agreed that alternative approaches should be considered.

**Action:** Alternative approaches will be considered to help alleviate traffic issues at this location.

- 3) **23/061(4) Review of Non-Designated Heritage Assets.** No progress to report.

**Action:** The Clerk will write to the owners/occupiers of Lunecliffe Lodge regarding the property being included in the NDHA list.

- 4) **23/061(5) Oaklands and Craiglands Court Pedestrian Gates.** The gates had now been painted. Councillor Dant had reported on his findings regarding loose pintles on the Oaklands Court gate, agreeing with Councillor Webster that a professional repair was required. Following discussion, Councillors agreed that the Parish Council should pursue this repair and seek quotations for the work.

**Resolved:** The Parish Council will seek quotations for repairing the damaged gatepost at Oaklands Court.

- 5) **23/061(6) Public Footpaths.** The Clerk had submitted a request to Lancashire County Council that the Snuff Mill Lane restricted byway be included in its hedgerow maintenance schedule. A response is awaited.

**6) 23/065(5) United Utilities Sewage Discharge Statistics.** No progress to report.

**Action:** The Clerk will write to the Chair of Lancaster City Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee asking for an investigation into sewage discharge into the district's rivers.

**Action:** United Utilities will be requested to provide statistics on sewage discharges from the Stodday WwTW.

**23/070 Declarations of Interest**

No further declarations or changes to existing declarations were made.

**23/071 Planning Applications**

1) **23/01271/FUL Erection of an agricultural building for the housing of livestock and storage.** Arna Wood Farm West, Arna Wood Lane, Aldcliffe.

The application was a resubmission of withdrawn application 23/00901/FUL on which the Parish Council had commented. The Parish Council had not objected to the application, but had expressed concerns over landscape impact and the character of the land, and sought clarification/assurance that the development was for the benefit of the relatively small agricultural holding only.

Councillors felt that the plans under this new application were substantively the same and resolved unanimously to respond in the same way as for application 23/00901/FUL.

**Resolved:** That a response letter be submitted, not objecting to the application, but expressing concerns over landscape impact and the character of the land, and seeking clarification/assurance that the development is for the benefit of the relatively small agricultural holding only.

2) **23/01232/FUL Demolition of existing outbuildings and external courtyard walls and erection of a two storey rear extension.** Wilson House, Ashton Road, Lancaster.

**Resolved:** That a response be submitted, not objecting to the application, but asking that the City Council gives due consideration to the Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan and Design Codes.

3) **23/01270/FUL Demolition of existing sun room, erection of a single storey side/rear extension and installation of solar panels to the rear roof slope.** Ingewood, Aldcliffe Road, Lancaster.

**Resolved:** That a response be submitted, not objecting to the application, but asking that the City Council gives due consideration to the Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan and Design Codes.

4) **23/01219/VCN** Erection of 6 dwellings with associated access and landscaping (pursuant to the variation of condition 7 on planning permission 23/00894/VCN to retain the screen fencing to 13 Aldcliffe Hall Drive on a permanent basis). Land North of Inglenook Aldcliffe Road Lancaster

**and**

**23/01304/VCN** Erection of 6 dwellings with associated access and landscaping (pursuant to the variation of condition 7 on planning permission 23/00894/VCN to retain the screen fencing to 9 Aldcliffe Hall Drive on a permanent basis). Land North of Inglenook, Aldcliffe Road, Lancaster.

The applicants for both applications were in attendance.

Councillors noted that these applications involved two of the three properties covered by a recently approved planning application (ref 23/00894/VCN) which extended the retention of the screen fencing for a further 3 years.

Councillors listened to and discussed at some length the applicants' reasoning behind their applications and their concerns regarding privacy and security. The Chairman referred to views held by other Councillors and parishioners and to several questions raised by the planning history regarding the development boundary on Aldcliffe Hall Drive.

Referring to the now approved application 23/00894/VCN, Councillors expressed their ongoing concerns regarding the relatively poor overall growth of the hedgerow to date. Both applicants assured Councillors that they would ensure that sufficient additional planting and maintenance would be undertaken to ensure the viability of the hedgerow and its effectiveness as a screen.

Following discussion, Councillors resolved to respond to the consultation, not objecting in principle to the applications, but asking that a planning condition be included to ensure that the intended hedgerow screening is fully implemented and established within an appropriate timescale. Also, that the advice of the Tree Officer or other professional horticulturist is sought on the species, mix and number of plants necessary to provide full screening.

**Resolved:** That a consultation response be submitted, not objecting in principle to the applications but asking that a planning condition be included to ensure that the intended hedgerow screening is fully implemented and established within an appropriate timescale. Also, that the advice of the Tree Officer or other professional horticulturist is sought on the species, mix and number of plants necessary to provide full screening.

#### **Update on Previous Planning Applications**

The Clerk's report on recent planning decisions made by Lancaster City Council was accepted.

### **23/072 Lune Estuary Management Considerations**

Councillors briefly discussed the recent meeting of stakeholders hosted on behalf of Natural England and agreed that the Parish Council should maintain its involvement in the process. Following questions raised by the Clerk, Councillors agreed that, if Natural England wishes the Parish Council to continue with organising and hosting meetings, they should be requested to meet the relevant costs, including the Clerk's time and meeting room hire.

Natural England had suggested a further meeting towards the end of January 2023.

**Resolved:** If Natural England wishes the Parish Council to continue with organising and hosting meetings, they will be requested to meet the relevant costs, including the Clerk's time and meeting room hire.

### **23/073 Parish Council Budget 2024/25**

The Clerk gave a verbal update on arrangements and timetable for the 2024/25 budget. The budget will be included on the January meeting agenda.

### **23/074 Public Discussion and Updates**

#### **City and County Councillors' Reports**

None received.

#### **Clerk's Report:**

Nothing further to report

#### **Members' Updates**

##### **1) Highways (Chairman)**

Stodday Lane and Lunecliffe Road hedgerows. Councillor Walton reported that some landowners had still not acted to deal with chronic and severe hedgerow overgrowth. Councillors agreed that the matter should be reported again to Lancashire County Council with a request for enforcement action.

**Resolved:** That issues of chronic and severe hedgerow overgrowth along Stodday Lane and Lunecliffe Road should be reported again to Lancashire County Council with a request for enforcement action.

##### **2) Amenity, including the Lengthsman (Chairman)**

Nothing to report.

##### **3) Stakeholder Liaison.**

Nothing further to report.

##### **4) Broadband.**

Nothing further to report.

**5) Other Matters**

None raised.

**Public Discussion:**

No further matters were raised.

**23/075 Payments**

<b>Payee &amp; Detail</b>	
<b>A. Payments approved by email and paid in November 2023. For noting.</b>	<b>£</b>
Lancaster City Council. Election expenses, May 2023	120.00
Derek Whiteway – Parish Clerk salary and expenses, October 2023	169.59
HMRC – PAYE deductions, October 2023	42.40
<b>B. Payments for approval, 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023</b>	<b>£</b>
Scotforth Parish Hall. Hire of Meeting Room for Lune Estuary meeting, 29/11/23	32.20
Scotforth Parish Hall. Hire of Meeting Room for Parish Council meeting, 6th December 2023 (see note 1)	25.20
E Plucknett – Painting of Oaklands and Craiglands Court pedestrian gates	120.00
Derek Whiteway – Parish Clerk salary and expenses, October 2023	269.35
HMRC – PAYE deductions, October 2023	67.40

Note 1. Invoices from St Paul's Parish Hall are now received at the end of each calendar month and payments are processed separately.

**Resolved:** That the above accounts be approved for payment.

**23/076 Date and venue for next meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2024 at St Paul's Parish Hall, Scotforth, commencing at 7.00pm.

The meeting closed at 9:00pm

Clerk of the Council

Chair

Date:



## Agenda Item: 4

### Planning Application Comments & Decisions

#### Update for December 2023 – January 2024

Application Number / Description	Parish Council Comment	Planning Authority Decision / Status
<b>Part A – Applications decided since the last update</b>		
<p><b>23/01271/FUL</b> Erection of an agricultural building for the housing of livestock and storage. Arna Wood Farm West, Arna Wood Lane, Aldcliffe.</p>	<p>A response was submitted, not objecting to the application, but expressing concerns over landscape impact and the character of the land, and seeking clarification/assurance that the development is for the benefit of the relatively small agricultural holding only. (Min 23/071(1))</p>	<p><b>Application Permitted</b></p>
<p><b>23/01219/VCN</b> Erection of 6 dwellings with associated access and landscaping (pursuant to the variation of condition 7 on planning permission 23/00894/VCN to retain the screen fencing to 13 Aldcliffe Hall Drive on a permanent basis). Land North of Inglenook Aldcliffe Road Lancaster</p>	<p>Consultation responses were submitted, not objecting in principle to the applications but asking that a planning condition be included to ensure that the intended hedgerow screening is fully implemented and established within an appropriate timescale. Also, that the advice of the Tree Officer or other professional horticulturist is sought on the species, mix and number of plants necessary to provide full screening.</p>	<p><b>Application Refused</b></p>
<p><b>23/01304/VCN</b> Erection of 6 dwellings with associated access and landscaping (pursuant to the variation of condition 7 on planning permission 23/00894/VCN to retain the screen fencing to 9 Aldcliffe Hall Drive on a permanent basis). Land North of Inglenook, Aldcliffe Road, Lancaster.</p>	<p>Consultation responses were submitted, not objecting in principle to the applications but asking that a planning condition be included to ensure that the intended hedgerow screening is fully implemented and established within an appropriate timescale. Also, that the advice of the Tree Officer or other professional horticulturist is sought on the species, mix and number of plants necessary to provide full screening.</p>	<p><b>Application Refused</b></p>

#### Part B – Undecided Applications

**23/00283/FUL (March 2023 – Outside the Parish)** Erection of 45 dwellings (C3) with associated infrastructure including landscaping, open space, access, highway and drainage. Land At Grid Reference 347281 459157, Ashton Road, Lancaster. **Parish Council resolved that a consultation response be submitted asking that the City Council refuses the application (Min 23/004)**



## Part B – Undecided Applications

**23/00687/FUL** Temporary change of use of agricultural land and construction of an area of hardstanding to allow for compound parking in association with proposed development at land off Ashton Road. Land at Grid Reference 347281 459157, Ashton Road, Lancaster.

Parish Council resolved that a response letter be submitted objecting to and seeking refusal of the planning application (Min 23/043).

**23/01140/FUL** Partially retrospective change of use of land to 3 no Gypsy/Traveller pitches comprising 3 touring caravans and 3 mobile homes, siting of a day room, erection of a barn, installation of a septic tank and creation of an area of hardstanding.

Parish Council resolved: That a response letter be submitted objecting to the application on the same grounds as for application 21/01581/FUL (Min 23/063(1)).

**23/01232/FUL** Demolition of existing outbuildings and external courtyard walls and erection of a two storey rear extension. Wilson House, Ashton Road, Lancaster.

Parish Council Resolved: That a response be submitted, not objecting to the application, but asking that the City Council gives due consideration to the Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan and Design Codes. (Min 23/071(2)).

**23/01270/FUL** Demolition of existing sun room, erection of a single storey side/rear extension and installation of solar panels to the rear roof slope. Inglewood, Aldcliffe Road, Lancaster.

Parish Council Resolved: That a response be submitted, not objecting to the application, but asking that the City Council gives due consideration to the Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan and Design Codes. (Min 23/071(3)).



## Agenda Item: 5

### Revised Budget 2023/24 and Budget and Precept 2024/25

#### Report of The Parish Clerk

#### 1. Background

The Parish Council is required to undertake a robust annual budget process to:

- establish the level of funds required to deliver plans for the coming year;
- determine the level of reserves that should be maintained; and
- set the Parish Council's precept for the coming year.

The City Council has recently notified that the Parish Council's Tax Base for 2024/25 (the figure which determines how much of the precept each Council Taxpayer is charged) is 147.89, a marginal increase of 1.07 on the 2023/24 level of 146.82. The Parish Council is required to notify the City Council of its precept by 9<sup>th</sup> February 2024.

#### 2. Budget Review and Estimates

Section A of the appended budget statement provides the results of a General Account budget review, setting out projected final figures for the current year 2023/24 and estimates for 2024/25.

##### Projected Outturn 2023/24

The 2023/24 Projected Outturn is for a General Account balance at 31/03/24 of £9,375. The Parish Clerk advises that a slightly increased target level of general account balances of £4,000 is appropriate. This suggests that, as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, balances in the order of £5,375 could be available for other purposes. Current calls on these funds are/might be:

- a) Covering the net spend on the Stodday Picnic Site project (£166) - mandatory
- b) Replenishing the Elections Reserve to its target level of £1,000 (£120) - recommended
- c) Meeting some or all of the estimated net payments for 2024/25 (See section 3b).

##### Estimates 2024/25

Estimates for 2024/25 have been produced on a 'continuation of services' basis, with no new or one-off budget headings included. As set out in the appended statement, General Account recurring expenses are estimated at £7,905 for 2024/25, with other receipts (i.e. excluding the precept) of £460. The estimated net payments of £7,445 represent an increase of £1,074 (17%) on the approved net budget for 2023/24, although much of this is accounted for by the assumption of non-participation in the Local Delivery Scheme and loss of £800 funding.

Given the increase in the net budget and the ongoing lack of a contracted Lengthsman, the Clerk recommends that Councillors should consider whether the currently included level of budget remains appropriate.

As well as the Parish Council's normal activities and transactions (referred to as 'General Account'), the statement also sets out in Section B the projected transactions and balances for the Council's other earmarked reserves and accounts, as follows:

- Environmental Support Reserve
- Elections Reserve
- Stodday Picnic Site

### 3. Conclusions

- a) **General Account Reserve:** Following a review of significant financial risks facing the Parish Council, it is concluded that a slightly increased target general reserve of £4,000 (previously £3,500) is appropriate to cover potential liabilities.
- b) **Precept:** Should Councillors wish to proceed with this draft budget, the options and implications for the precept are set out in the following table. Any budget deficit will need to be funded from ongoing balances.

Precept Strategy	Precept Sum	Budget Deficit	Resulting Balances	Band D Tax Rate £	Tax Rate Increase %
1. No increase	£5,800	£1,645	£7,730	£39.22	-0.7%
2. £200 increase	£6,000	£1,445	£7,930	£40.57	2.7%
3. £400 increase	£6,200	£1,245	£8,130	£41.92	6.1%
4. Balanced Budget	£7,445	£0	£9,375	£50.34	27.4%

- c) For Councillors' guidance, a £200 increase or reduction in the precept translates to a £1.35 increase or reduction in the charge for a Band D property (a 3.4% increase/decrease on all Bands).

Given the high projected budget deficit, the Clerk advises Councillors to critically review the draft budget and consider the potential for 'savings'.

The Clerk advises that, notwithstanding the projected levels of General Account balances, a strategy of meeting the budget deficit wholly or largely from balances is not sustainable in the medium to long-term.

Should Councillors wish to consider a higher precept to provide funds for any increase in services or new initiatives, the cost per £1,000 increase in the precept for a Band D property would be £6.76 per annum (a 17.1% increase on all Bands). The Clerk advises that, given the existing level of funds available in the Council's general and earmarked reserves, any such proposals would need to be clear and specific and have Councillors' full commitment.

- d) **Non-recurring expenses:** There are no non-recurring items currently included in the draft budget for 2024/25.
- e) **Earmarked Reserves.** Section B of the draft budget statement sets out the current and anticipated balances on the Council's earmarked reserves. In this draft of the budget, no projected spend for 2024/25 has been included for any of the earmarked reserves.

#### **4. Recommendations**

- a) That a target level of general reserve of £4,000 is endorsed.
- b) That Councillors review the draft budget for 2024/25 with a view to identifying potential savings and/or proposed growth.
- c) That, having determined any changes to the draft budget under b), the resulting precept is approved and notified to Lancaster City Council.

## Section A – General Account Budget Review 2023/24 and Estimates 2024/25

Receipts and payments to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 have been reviewed and estimates developed for the remainder of 2023/24 and for 2024/25. The projected outturn for 2023/24 and estimates for 2024/25 are set out in the following statement.

Heading	2023/24 Projected Outturn					2024/25 Draft Budget	Note
	Approved Budget	Actuals to 31/12/23	Jan-Mar Estimates	Projected Outturn	Variance		
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
<b>Opening Balance</b>	<b>7,580</b>	<b>7,345</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7,345</b>	<b>- 235</b>	<b>9,375</b>	
<b>Receipts</b>							
<b>Precept</b>	5,800	5,800	-	5,800	-	5,800	1
<b>Other Receipts</b>							
Local Delivery Scheme	800	-	-	-	- 800	-	2
Bank Interest	-	205	80	285	285	200	
VAT Refund	9	821	-	821	812	260	
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>6,609</b>	<b>6,825</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>6,905</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>6,260</b>	
<b>Payments</b>							
<b>Meetings &amp; Administration</b>							
Parish Clerk Salary	- 2,240	- 1,668	- 544	- 2,212	28	- 2,520	3
PAYE	- 560	- 417	- 136	- 553	7	- 630	
Parish Clerk Expenses	- 15	- 13	- 5	- 18	- 3	- 20	
Parish Clerk Training	- 40	-	-	-	40	-	
Councillors Expenses	- 50	-	-	-	50	- 50	
Meeting Room Hire	- 275	- 233	- 76	- 308	- 33	- 350	4
Subscriptions	- 60	- 47	-	- 47	13	- 60	
Insurance	- 265	- 241	-	- 241	24	- 280	
Printing & Stationery	- 65	- 9	- 30	- 39	26	- 50	
IT Services	- 175	-	- 175	- 175	-	- 200	
Data Protection Registration	- 35	- 35	-	- 35	-	- 35	
Internal Audit	- 70	- 68	-	- 68	2	- 80	
Bank Charges	- 80	- 54	- 18	- 72	8	- 80	
<b>Local Services &amp; Events</b>							
Lengthsman Services	- 3,250	- 339	- 500	- 839	2,411	- 3,550	5
<b>Miscellaneous</b>							
Recoverable VAT	-	268	-	268	- 268	-	
<b>Total Payments</b>	<b>- 7,180</b>	<b>- 3,391</b>	<b>- 1,484</b>	<b>- 4,874</b>	<b>2,306</b>	<b>- 7,905</b>	
<b>Net Receipts/Payments</b>	<b>- 571</b>	<b>3,434</b>	<b>- 1,404</b>	<b>2,031</b>	<b>2,602</b>	<b>- 1,645</b>	6
<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>7,009</b>	<b>10,779</b>	<b>- 1,404</b>	<b>9,375</b>	<b>2,366</b>	<b>7,730</b>	

Notes:

- Precept.** The estimated precept for 2024/25 is included here at the same level as 2023/24. See note 6 for the implications of this.
- Local Delivery Scheme.** The PC decided not to participate in the County Council's 2023/24 Local Delivery Scheme and Biodiversity Small Grant Scheme. The same approach has been assumed for 2024/25.
- Staff Costs.** 2024/25 estimate includes 12 months x 14 hours per month contractual hours, plus 48 hours overtime provision and 6% pay award.
- Meeting Room Hire.** 2024/25 budget is for 11 regular plus 2 extraordinary meetings.

5. **Lengthsman.** Significant underspend in 2023/24 is due to the continued lack of a contracted Lengthsman. 2024/25 budget is again based on 192 hours (48 weeks x 4 hours) x £16 per hour plus 5% inflation, plus £300 for materials.
6. **Net Receipts/Payments.** In 2023/24, net receipts of £2,031 are anticipated, giving a closing general account balance of £9,375. These net receipts are almost exclusively accounted for by the underspend on Lengthsman Services (£2,400).

For 2024/25, retaining the same level of precept is anticipated to result in annual net payments (i.e. a budget deficit) of £1,645. More details and options are set out in the covering report.

## Section B – Earmarked Reserves and Accounts

Currently anticipated activity and balances on the Council’s earmarked reserves and accounts are set out in the following table and accompanying notes.

Reserve / Account	Balance Bfwd 01/04/23	To 31/12/23	Estimated Jan-Mar 2024	Projected Balance 31/03/24	Notes
Environmental Support Reserve	2,519	-	-	2,519	1
Elections Reserve	1,000	- 120	-	880	2
Stodday Picnic Site	1,585	- 1,751	-	- 166	3
<b>Totals</b>	<b>5,104</b>	<b>- 1,871</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,233</b>	

### Notes:

1. **Environmental Support Reserve.** No payments made or scheduled from this reserve.
2. **Elections Reserve.** The election in May 2023 cost the Parish Council £120. The target for the reserve is £1,000 to cover potential costs of the four-yearly elections if a poll is required.
3. **Stodday Picnic Site.** The project is now complete. The £1,751 outlay in 2023/24 represents the purchase of an additional seat and litter bin and the installation of all the furniture. The net balance of £166 at 31/03/24 represents the Parish Council’s contribution to the project, to be met from General Account balances.

# ALDCLIFFE WITH STODDAY PARISH COUNCIL



## Parish Council Meeting, 10<sup>th</sup> January 2024

### Agenda Item 8 – Payments for Authorisation

Payee & Detail	£
Scotforth Parish Hall. Hire of Meeting Room for Parish Council meeting, 10th January 2024 (see note 1)	25.20
Derek Whiteway – Parish Clerk salary and expenses, December 2023	207.08
HMRC – PAYE deductions, December 2023	49.20

Note 1. St Paul's Parish Hall Invoices for PC meetings are now due to be received and paid at the end of each calendar month.