

**ALVELEY AND ROMSLEY PARISH COUNCIL
NEAR BRIDGNORTH, SHROPSHIRE
Chairman Pam Barker**

David Rawlinson

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23rd November 2020

Dear Councillor

You are hereby summoned to attend the next meeting of the Parish Council to be held on Tuesday 1st December 2020 at 7.45pm, preceded by an Open Forum at 7.30pm. This will be a 'Zoom' meeting in accordance with the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus)(Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings)(England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

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David Rawlinson

Clerk to the Council

AGENDA

1. OPEN FORUM – including presentation by Cllr. Alan Wilson, Vice-chairman of SALC, on Shropshire Carbon Action Partnership.
2. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.
3. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF ANY PECUNIARY/PREJUDICIAL INTEREST.
4. TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 3RD NOVEMBER 2020.
5. TO CONSIDER PARISH MATTERS [written reports to be provided in advance to the Clerk].
Alveley Industrial Estate – report back from meeting with Shropshire Council Officers on 24th November 2020.
Composition of Planning Committee – to determine.
6. WEBSITE ACCESSIBILITY – report attached.
7. PARISH COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING PLAN 2021/22 – report attached.
8. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND DECISIONS.
 1. Planning Applications received from Shropshire Council – to make recommendations or to note.

20/04318/FUL Application under Section 73a of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for the siting of a static caravan, Royal Oak, Alveley, WV15 6LL.

20/04334/FUL Erection of one residential dwelling for ancillary accommodation (following demolition of garage building), Paper Mill, 121 Alveley, WV15 6HE.

20/04571/TPO Works to crown reduce 1 No Ash Tree and wood to be removed back to healthy growth, protected by the Salop County Council (Alveley) TPO 1973.

2. Planning Applications received since the Agenda closed - Council to make recommendations to Shropshire Council.

3. Planning Decisions received from Shropshire Council – to note

20/04009/TPO Carry out re-pollarding works to 1No. multi-stemmed Ash tree reducing height of the tallest stems to a point in line with the current height of the shortest pollard stem. All regrowth resulting from previous pollarding works to be removed to leave as a balanced finished pollard protected by The Salop County Council (Alveley) TPO 1973, Beech Trees , The Woodlands, Alveley, WV15 6LQ.

Parish Council recommendation – none; Decision – approved.

20/01889/FUL & 20/01890/LBC Conversion of existing attached barn to extend living accommodation and associated alterations; erection of detached 3 bay carport, The Haybarn, Hall Close Farm, Alveley.

Parish Council recommendation - no strong objection on planning grounds, but concerns about scale of development and impact on neighbour's privacy.

Decision – approved, including condition that fixed windows with obscure glazing are used on one side of the building.

4. Planning Decisions received from Shropshire Council since the Agenda closed
To note.

5. Other planning matters.

9. REPORT FROM SHROPSHIRE COUNCILLOR
(Chairman to suspend Standing Orders)

10. PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER – Clerk to report.

11. TO RECEIVE A FINANCIAL REPORT – attached.

12. ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS
Parish Council Newsletter
Forward Plan 2021/22

13. TO CONFIRM THE DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS.

The next meeting of Alveley and Romsley Parish Council will be the monthly Parish Council meeting to be held on Tuesday 5th January 2021 at 7.30pm. This meeting will be a 'Zoom'

meeting in accordance with the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels
(Coronavirus)(Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings)(England
and Wales) Regulations 2020.

To: Cllr. Ms. P. M. Barker (Chairman), Cllr. Mr. K. R. Stanton (Vice Chairman),
Cllr. Ms. A. Buffey, Cllr. Mrs. J. M. Hall, Cllr. Mr. R. J. Narburgh, Cllr. Mr. C. D. Noble, Cllr.
Mrs. S. L. Potter, Cllr. Mr. B. A. Punchard, Cllr. Mr. J. R. Taylor and Cllr. Mr. F. D. Voysey

Cc. Cllr. Mrs. T. Woodward

20/21/30

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Minutes of the monthly meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 3rd November 2020, including an Open Forum, commencing at 7.30pm. This was a remote meeting using 'Zoom' software in accordance with the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus)(Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings)(England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

065. PRESENT

Cllr. Ms. P. M. Barker (Chairman), Cllr. Mr. K. R. Stanton (Vice-chairman), Cllr. Mrs. J. M. Hall, Cllr. Mr. R. J. Narburgh, Cllr. Mrs. S. L. Potter, Cllr. Mr. J. R. Taylor and Cllr. Mr. F. D. Voysey

066. IN ATTENDANCE

Mr. D. H. Rawlinson (Clerk), Cllr. Mrs. T. Woodward (Shropshire Councillor) and one member of the public.

067. OPEN FORUM

The Clerk reported that the annual general meeting of Shropshire Association of Local Councils (SALC) will take place on 20th November at 6pm using Zoom technology. He advised that any Councillor wishing to attend should contact him.

The Clerk also reported that he has been contacted by the Safer Neighbourhood Team with an offer to attend future meetings to discuss any local issues.

068. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It **was resolved** to accept an apology for absence from Cllr. Mr. B. A. Punchard (work).

069. DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY/PREJUDICIAL INTEREST

None.

070. MINUTES -

(i) MONTHLY MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 13TH OCTOBER 2020.

(ii) SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE ON TUESDAY 22ND SEPTEMBER 2020.

Both sets of minutes were **agreed** as true and accurate records.

071. URGENT PARISH MATTERS

The Clerk referred to recent discussions with Shropshire Council regarding the Alveley Industrial Estate. He confirmed that he was seeking to arrange a meeting in the near future with Shropshire Council Officers, which all Parish Councillors would be invited to attend.

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072. VACANCIES FOR PARISH COUNCILLORS

The Clerk referred to his report and requested a formal proposal to co-opt Ms. Alexa Buffey. It was pointed out that the procedure should include a period where Ms. Buffey is excluded from the meeting to give Parish Councillors an opportunity to discuss her application 'in private'. The co-option was then formally proposed by Cllr. Voysey and seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Potter.

Ms. Buffey then spoke in support of her application. She gave details of her previous work experience which covers heritage, museums and volunteer management. She has been involved in partnership working, including voluntary work with Quatt Malvern Parish Council. She has frequent contact with local voluntary organisations and community groups, and has significant experience in writing strategic plans. Her voluntary activities also include working with the Severn Valley Country Park to establish and manage ParkRun. During 'lockdown' she has worked with Bridgnorth Mutual Aid to combat rural isolation, and is keen to develop this role.

In response to questions, Ms. Buffey confirmed that she is not a member of Quatt Malvern Parish Council and that she has lived in the local area, based at Dudmaston, for three and a half years. She also suggested that an important asset for a Parish Councillor is to recognise and fairly represent different points of view.

Ms. Buffey was then excluded from the meeting.

After a brief discussion, the motion to co-opt Ms. Buffey **was carried unanimously**.

Ms. Buffey then returned to the meeting and was notified of her co-option. In response to a question, the Clerk advised that the application for co-option from Mr. B. Richards could not be progressed at this time because Mr. Richards does not have the equipment or expertise to communicate on-line or to attend Zoom meetings.

073. PARISH COUNCIL CODE OF CONDUCT

The Clerk referred to his report which set out the position following the discussion at the previous monthly meeting (minute 058 refers). Cllr. Voysey suggested that the alternative form of words he had provided was preferable, especially as it recognised that a Councillor could not be held accountable for the views of his/her partner. The possibility of removing the words 'or your partner' from the original version was briefly considered but, after further discussion, the alternative form of words **was approved**.

074. CLOSED CHURCHYARD

The Clerk explained that there was nothing to add to his report as he had not yet had a reply from Lewis Arborcare to his request for an on-site meeting. In response to a question, he advised that the cost of an annual tree survey would be between £150 and £300, depending on the surveyor and the scope of the survey. There was support for his view that an annual tree survey was now appropriate given the impact of climate change and the Parish Council's health and safety responsibilities.

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075. ALVELEY RECREATION ASSOCIATION (ARA)

The Chairman provided an update on the limited activities that have taken place recently. She advised that a face-to-face meeting had been held and that there were plans for an annual general meeting, which might now have to be postponed. She confirmed that the ARA's financial position is healthy. She noted that various COVID-secure measures had been implemented at the Pavilion to enable its use once restrictions are eased. In relation to the Recreation Ground, she reported that the cricket nets have now been removed, and that the area would either be put to another use or grassed over. It was reported by another Councillor that this had created an issue with regard to the fencing of the Boules area, which would be addressed in due course.

076. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND DECISIONS.

1. Planning Applications received from Shropshire Council –

20/04149/FUL Erection of a wooden garage, The Bungalow adjacent Lyndon, Kidderminster Road, Alveley, WV15 6LN.

After discussion, it was **agreed** to recommend approval.

20/04164/FUL Erection of first floor extension over existing ground floor rear extension, together with internal modifications to ground floor layout, Woodlands, The Woodlands, Alveley, WV15 6LQ.

After discussion, it was **agreed** to recommend approval.

2. Planning Applications received since the Agenda closed –

20/04411/TPO Removal of 1 No Ash Tree protected by Bridgnorth District Council (Church Road, Alveley) TPO 1996, West Winds, Alveley, WV15 6NG. The Clerk confirmed that there was no evidence from the planning application that the ash tree was diseased. There were a number of suggestions that alternatives, such as pollarding or diverting the electricity supply cables away from the tree might be more appropriate. After further discussion, the Vice-chairman proposed that the Parish Council should recommend rejection. This was seconded by Cllr. Noble and carried with four votes in favour and none against.

20/04334/FUL Erection of one residential dwelling for ancillary accommodation (following demolition of garage building), Paper Mill, 121 Alveley, WV15 6HE. The Clerk advised that this application has only just been published. He noted that the Parish Council had been consulted about two previous applications in respect of this property, and had recommended refusal in both cases. He advised that the first application had been withdrawn, but the second had been approved by Shropshire Council. This application sought to further extend the ancillary accommodation on site. There was a suggestion that the Parish Council should propose that any approval should include a condition that Papermill Cottage should not be sold separately from the rest of the property. After further discussion, a suggestion by one Councillor, namely to defer further

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consideration to the next monthly meeting to give all Councillors the opportunity to reach an informed view of the application, was **agreed**.

3. Planning Decisions received from Shropshire Council – to note

20/02669/FUL Retrospective Application under Section 73A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for use of land as a travellers' caravan site comprising 3 in number caravans, land adjacent to the Round House, Fenn Green, Alveley.

Parish Council recommendations – Approve, Decision – Approve (with conditions still to be specified).

4. Planning Decisions received from Shropshire Council since the Agenda closed
None.

5. Other planning matters.

The Clerk was requested to indicate which Councillors had volunteered to join the Planning Committee, along with Cllrs. Noble and Voysey. He was able to report that Cllr. Mrs. Potter has volunteered. Cllr. Taylor then indicated that he also wishes to volunteer.

077. REPORT FROM SHROPSHIRE COUNCILLOR

The Chairman suspended Standing Orders to allow Cllr. Mrs. Woodward to speak.

Cllr. Mrs. Woodward reported that she had recently toured Alveley village with the Shropshire Council Portfolio Holder with a focus on highways issues, especially the access to the Severn Valley Country Park and the Butts Caravan Site along Chapel Lane. She confirmed her previous advice that there are no cheap or speedy solutions to the substantial traffic flow issues that now exist.

She was pleased to report that the local recycling and waste centres will remain open during the forthcoming lockdown, subject to any staffing problems that might emerge, and that kerb-side collections will continue with the same caveat. She expressed her gratitude to the relevant Shropshire Council staff and, on behalf of the whole Parish Council, Cllr. Mrs. Hall echoed her remarks.

Cllr. Mrs. Woodward referred to the Shropshire Council Coronavirus helpline that is available for those in need or difficulty during the next lockdown period. She advised that the contact number, along with other relevant information, is available on the Shropshire Council website.

In relation to the Fenn Green Travellers' site, Cllr. Mrs. Woodward confirmed that the planning application had been approved by the Southern Planning Committee, but that officers had been delegated to set out the specific conditions to be attached to the approval. These were likely to include provisions regarding contamination and public protection. In response to a question from the Chairman about possible construction activity on the site, she agreed to look into the matter.

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Finally, Cllr. Mrs. Woodward advised that she has submitted an application to crown reduce an ash tree in the garden at her home.

078. PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

The Clerk reported that he had followed-up Cllr. Noble's research into the possibility of using Royal Mail to deliver the next Parish Council newsletter. He had now ascertained that the Royal Mail's Door-to-Door service could deliver newsletters to all properties in the WV15 6 postal area for £103 plus VAT. Royal Mail would require at least 4 weeks' notice and the newsletters would have to be sent to the Warrington Receiving Centre prior to despatch. He estimated that, taking account of printing/paper costs, the overall cost of publishing the newsletter in this way would be between £250 and £300.

There was then further discussion regarding the timing and subject matter of the next newsletter, after which it was **agreed** to review the situation at the next monthly meeting on 1st December. In the meantime, Cllr. Noble was thanked for continuing in his role as editor-in-chief and Councillors were invited to submit subject material to him.

079. FINANCIAL REPORT

The Clerk's report was received and:

1. The information regarding deposits/receipts to 31st October 2020 and the bank reconciliation at 31st October 2020 was **noted**.
2. The increase in the Clerk's leave entitlement from 21 to 22 days with effect from April 2020 as part of the 2020/21 National salary award was **noted**.
3. The notification that, from 1st April 2021, the fee for payroll services from the current provider will increase from £81 to £120 per year was considered. Councillors supported the Clerk's view that this service should continue to be provided externally and it was suggested that a cost of £10 per month for the service was reasonable, especially given the length of time since the previous increase. The Clerk was **instructed** to investigate alternative arrangements and to report back at the Annual Finance meeting.
4. The Council **approved** the schedule of invoices/direct payments and **noted** that the Chairman and Vice-chairman had undertaken to sign the cheques to be paid.
5. The budget monitoring report at 31st October 2020 was **noted**.

080. ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Parish Council newsletter

Footpaths and Rights of Way Officer

Closed churchyard

Climate emergency – presentation by Cllr. Alan Wilson, Vice-chairman of SALC on Shropshire Carbon Action Partnership as part of Open Forum.

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Website accessibility regulations

081. FUTURE MEETINGS.

It was **confirmed** that the next meeting of Alveley and Romsley Parish Council will be the monthly Parish Council meeting on Tuesday 1st December 2020. This will be a 'Zoom' meeting in accordance with the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus)(Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings)(England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

The meeting closed at 20.51.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance.

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REPORT BY CLERK OF COUNCIL

PARISH COUNCIL 1ST DECEMBER 2020

Agenda item 6

WEBSITE ACCESSIBILITY

1. **Purposes**

- 1.1 To explain the action that local (parish and town) councils need to take to comply with accessibility regulations relating to public sector websites.
- 1.2 To report the measures that have been taken to meet these requirements in relation to the Parish Council Website.
- 1.3 To identify further action that would improve the Website's accessibility and to consider the impact and financial implications of such action.
- 1.4 To receive a Website Accessibility Statement which has been posted on the Website to comply with the current regulations.

2. **Background/Introduction**

- 2.1 The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018 require public sector bodies, which includes local councils, to ensure reasonable adjustments are made to websites so they are accessible to people with various physical or sensory difficulties, which include:

- Impaired vision
- Motor difficulties
- Cognitive impairments or learning difficulties
- Deafness or impaired hearing

These regulations came into force on 23rd September 2020.

- 2.2 Local councils need to make reasonable adjustments to their websites and operations so people can access information. They are required to include an accessibility statement on their website setting out to what extent they meet the requirements and what alternative arrangements are available. Good practice would also see councils including a plan to narrow any accessibility gap over time.
- 2.3 The website standards that councils are expected to meet are the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1. At a first glance these standards seem highly technical and voluminous. However, the Parish Council website is already compliant in many respects.

2.4 There are a number of exemptions where online material does not need to meet the WCAG standards. In addition, the legislation does not require councils to comply with the accessibility requirement if doing so would impose a disproportionate burden.

3. **Changes to achieve compliance**

3.1 The following changes to the website have already been made:

- Accessibility Statement added to the main web site;
- Jdownloads software updated from version 3.9.6 to 3.9.7.1 (some additional WCAG fixes);
- Layout for downloads on home page amended for "URGENT COMMUNITY INFORMATION" – resulting in no WCAG alerts or errors on home page;
- Parish Council page (alerts reduced to 19 – still errors so page not compliant);
- Data Privacy downloads layout amended (long file names are an issue);
- "Data Privacy Notice for Councillors and Members of Staff" changed to "Data Privacy Notice for Councillors and Staff";
- Policies downloads amended;
- Meeting Dates and Contracts downloads amended (long file names are an issue);
- "Invitation to Tender for Maintenance of Closed Churchyard et al" changed to "Invitation to Tender (Maintenance of Churchyard)";
- "Alveley Recreation Ground and Play Area - Invitation to Tender for Grounds Maintenance" changed to "Invitation to Tender (Alveley Recreation Ground)";
- News page - Newsletter downloads layout amended;
- Information (8 alerts removed – re-check shows no WCAG errors or alerts);
- Local Charities downloads layout amended;

4. **Areas of non-compliance**

4.1 There remain a number of areas of non-compliance, as follows:

- Parish Council folder (60 errors and 3 alerts preventing compliance) -
 - 32 errors related to issue with Jdownloads tree module, will be fixed in future releases by the software provider;
 - 23 alerts (minor alerts - which will be removed with the fixes in the coming jdownloads software release);
 - 28 errors relating to the 3rd party software (Fabrik) that is used to display the timetable of Parish Council meeting and the list of Alveley & Romsley Parish Councillors.

- 4.2 For the errors related to Jdownloads the suggestion is to wait as the developers will provide fixes for issues in future software releases; these will be applied to the site when available. Components using the 3rd party software Fabrik are more troublesome, there is no available roadmap for WCAG compliance and their software has been suspended from the Joomla marketplace pending an investigation. The recommendation is to replace this with different code, however, this is a complex task and so would carry a cost.
- 4.3 The estimated cost of replacing the Fabrik code with alternative functionality is £300 (2 days of work @ £150 per day).

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

- 5.1 Thanks to the efforts of our Website Host, significant progress has been made in achieving compliance with the Website Accessibility regulations.
- 5.2 Some compliance issues will be addressed in future software releases by the relevant providers, but further work in one area would deal with a number of areas of non-compliance.
- 5.3 The Parish Council is **requested** to approve further work costing up to £300 to further improve the accessibility of the Parish Council's website.
- 5.4 The Parish Council is also **requested** to receive the attached Website Accessibility Statement. Councillors should note that the content and layout of this statement is prescribed in statutory guidelines.

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WEBSITE ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

This website is run by Alveley and Romsley Parish Council. We want as many people as possible to be able to use this website and, to this end, we are committed to making this website accessible and fully compliant, in accordance with [The Public Sector Bodies \(Websites and Mobile Applications\) \(No. 2\) Accessibility Regulations 2018](#).

Under the [Equality Act 2010](#) we must ensure we do not unlawfully discriminate in our service delivery and make reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities where necessary. We are constantly working to improve the accessibility and usability of our site, we've also made the website text as simple as possible to understand. [AbilityNet](#) has advice on making your device easier to use if you have a disability.

WEBSITE ACCESSIBILITY

We know some parts of this website are not fully accessible:

- Agendas, meeting minutes, policies and account documents are uploaded in .pdf and Microsoft Office formats (Microsoft Word .doc, .docx and Microsoft Excel, .xls). These documents cannot be read with a screen reader.
- Code controlling the display and downloading of documents under the "Official Documents" section on the Parish Council page is not yet WCAG AA compliant.
- Code controlling the display of Parish Councillors section on the Parish Council page is not yet WCAG AA compliant.

FEEDBACK AND CONTACT INFORMATION

If you need information on this website in a different format such as accessible PDF, large print, easy read, audio recording or braille:

- Email: clerk@alveleyandromsleypc.org.uk
- Phone: 07972040818

We'll consider your request and get back to you in 10 working days.

REPORTING ACCESSIBILITY PROBLEMS WITH THIS WEBSITE

We're always looking to improve the accessibility of this website. If you find any problems not listed on this page or think we're not meeting accessibility requirements, contact: clerk@alveleyandromsley.org.uk giving the page title and the nature of the problem.

ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURE

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) is responsible for enforcing the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018 (the 'accessibility regulations'). If you're not happy with how we respond to your complaint, [contact the Equality Advisory and Support Service \(EASS\)](#).

TECHNICAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE WEBSITE'S ACCESSIBILITY

Alveley and Romsley Parish Council is committed to making its website accessible, in accordance with the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018.

COMPLIANCE STATUS

This website is partially compliant with the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.1](#) AA standard, due to the non-compliances and exemptions listed below:

- Many of our older PDFs and Word documents do not meet accessibility standards. For example, they may not be structured so they're accessible to a screen reader. This does not meet WCAG 2.1 success criterion 4.1.2. The accessibility regulations do not require us to fix PDFs or other documents published before 23 September 2018 if they're not essential to providing our services. Any new PDFs or Word documents will be published inline with accessibility standards.
- Code controlling the download of software and displaying of Councillor information is not compliant. This will be addressed in future software releases.

NON-COMPLIANCE WITH THE ACCESSIBILITY REGULATIONS

Some images do not have a text alternative, so people using a screen reader cannot access the information. This fails WCAG 2.1 success criterion 1.1.1 (non-text content). We plan to add text alternatives for all images by December 2020. When we publish new content we'll make sure our use of images meets accessibility standards.

DISPROPORTIONATE BURDEN

- It's not always possible to change the device orientation from horizontal to vertical without making it more difficult to view the content.
- It's not possible for users to change text size without some of the content overlapping.

- Our forms are built and hosted through third party software. WCAG compliance for certain components is dependent on certain WCAG compliancy features being included in future software releases.
- Some of our interactive forms are difficult to navigate using a keyboard. For example, because some form controls are missing a 'label' tag.

CONTENT THAT'S NOT WITHIN THE SCOPE OF ACCESSIBILITY REGULATIONS

Some of our PDFs and Word documents are essential to providing our services. For example, we have PDFs with information on how users can access our services, and forms published as Word documents. The accessibility regulations [do not require us to fix PDFs or other documents published before 23 September 2018](#) if they're not essential to providing our services. Any new PDFs or Word documents we publish will meet accessibility standards.

The following list of items are included on the website and are not within the scope of the accessibility regulations:

- **PDFs/documents (pre-September 2018);**
- **Interactive maps** unless they provide core information;
- Content that's under someone else's control that we haven't paid for or developed how we test the site.

WHAT WE'RE DOING TO IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY

Work is underway to address the remaining areas of non-compliance, the majority will be addressed by future software releases.

PREPARATION OF THIS ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

This statement was prepared on 10th November 2020. It was last reviewed on 23rd November 2020.

This website is tested regularly, it was last tested on 22nd October 2020 by ALV Consultancy Limited.

ALVELEY AND ROMSLEY PARISH COUNCIL
REPORT BY CLERK OF COUNCIL

PARISH COUNCIL 1ST DECEMBER 2020

Agenda item 7

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR 2021/22

1. **Purpose**

- 1.1 To agree a training and development plan for the period April 2021 to March 2022

2. **Background**

- 2.1 The Parish Council approved a Training and Development Policy document on 3rd December 2019. The Policy document is at Appendix 1.
- 2.2 A draft Development and Training Plan for 2020/21 was received on 7th January 2020, but it was agreed not to finalise the detail until the publication of Shropshire Association of Local Council's (SALC's) Training Programme for 2020. The draft plan is at Appendix 2. The approved budget for 202/21 was based on this Plan.
- 2.3 As a result of the Coronavirus pandemic virtually no training has yet been commissioned in the 2020/21 financial year.

3. **2021/22 Financial Year**

- 3.1 The recommended priorities for the next financial year are:
- (a) To review the 2020/21 plan, and to reprogramme as much outstanding training activity as continues to be necessary;
 - (b) To provide appropriate training for new Councillors who join the Parish Council in or before May 2021.
 - (c) To improve the Parish Council's capacity to contribute to the campaign to combat the climate emergency, and to devise a neighbourhood/parish plan.
- 3.2 The Clerk has already made a provisional booking for a SALC Training event on 3rd June 2020 for new Parish Council Chairpersons.

- 3.3 Individual Councillors continue to express the wish to improve their planning expertise. Planning Committee members will be given priority, and any training will relate to the existing legislative framework. In the medium term, the Parish Council may have to deal with a completely new planning framework, and further training will then be required.
- 3.4 Once COVID-19 restrictions are eased permanently, the climate emergency will return to the top of the agenda. It is possible that a significant amount of information/awareness raising will be available for little or no financial cost.
- 3.5 The two Councillors who undertook neighbourhood planning training in 2019 have now left the Parish Council, so new expertise will need to be developed.
- 3.6 All Councillors who take up office in May 2021 will require induction training. Depending on the number it may be appropriate to organise a joint in-house session.
- 3.7 The draft Training and Development Plan at Appendix 3 reflects the above points. It assumes that face-to-face training will be possible for most of the new financial year. However, it may still be appropriate to consider virtual training sessions in some cases, on the basis of cost and convenience.
- 3.8 No provision has been made in the draft plan for –
- Attendance at conferences;
 - Zoom training;
 - Specialist training which may be required by any new appointees to the Staffing Committee.
- 3.9 It may be appropriate to approve the Plan in principle and as a basis for budget planning, but to postpone further consideration until present uncertainties are resolved.

4. **Recommendation**

- 4.1 The Parish Council is **requested** to consider the proposed training and development plan for 2021/22 at Appendix 3.

ALVELEY AND ROMSLEY PARISH COUNCIL

PARISH COUNCIL TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

1. Alveley and Romsley Parish Council operates in a challenging and dynamic environment. It is therefore essential that the Council has a learning culture and a strong commitment to training and development for Councillors and staff. This policy provides a framework for delivering effective training and development in the context of a small rural parish council.
2. The policy is intended to enable the Parish Council to:
 - a. Meet its strategic objectives;
 - b. Respond to new or changing legislative requirements;
 - c. Contribute to measures that help to address key environmental and social issues e.g. sustainability, rural crime, social isolation;
 - d. Sustain and further enhance its engagement with the local community;
 - e. Work effectively on behalf of its residents with other agencies, national, regional and local;
 - f. Be alert to new opportunities and challenges.
3. The Parish Council recognises the value of the information, guidance and training opportunities provided by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC), the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) and the Shropshire Association of Local Councils (SALC). The Council therefore subscribes to these organisations.
4. There are significant benefits in Councillors being trained together, rather than individually, and this approach will be employed where the training need is important and/or urgent, and cost-effective arrangements can be made.
5. Given its limited resources and rural situation, the Parish Council will, where appropriate, utilise on-line information, printed guides/publications and the Council's own documents e.g. Code of Conduct, to meet the needs of induction, awareness raising and refresher training.
6. The Parish Council will endeavour to create a small library of information/briefing notes on key topics which will be kept up-to-date and will be available on request to Councillors and members of the public.

7. Responsibilities for Training and Development

- 7.1 The overall responsibility for training and development lies with the full Council. The Council will approve an initial training plan for the next financial year by 31st January, based on a review by the Clerk of the current year's training programme, specific needs/requests identified by the Clerk or individual councillors, and imminent legislation or changes in national or local policies and practices. This will be used to determine the training budget for the forward year.
- 7.2 Progress against the initial budget will be reviewed quarterly by the Clerk with any requests or recommendations being included in his regular report to the Parish Council.

8. Training and Development Budget

The training and development budget will be set at the annual finance meeting based on the initial training plan that has been agreed for the forward year. If possible, the budget will include a contingency to cover unforeseen events or future commitments which cannot easily be quantified.

9. Induction of New Councillors

Newly elected or appointed councillors will in future receive the induction pack set out at the Annex.

10. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed formally within three years of its initial adoption.

ANNEX – INDUCTION PACK FOR NEW COUNCILLORS

1. The Good Councillor's Guide – NALC.
2. Timetable of future meetings and other events.
3. Parish Council Code of Conduct.
4. Parish Council Standing Orders.
5. Parish Council Financial Regulations.
6. Parish Council External and Internal Contact Lists.
7. Parish Council's Model Publication Scheme.
8. Full list of Parish Council Policies.

ALVELEY AND ROMSLEY PARISH COUNCIL
21ST JANUARY 2020

PARISH COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING PLAN 2020/21 FINANCIAL YEAR

PURPOSE	PERSON	DATE	DESCRIPTION	EST/ACTUAL COST
Subscriptions NALC/SALC/SLCC	N/A	Annual	Subscriptions	£1,025
General power of competence	Parish Council	By October 2020	In-house joint session for all Councillors	£400
Planning	Parish Council	By March 2021	Basics of Planning legislation – in house joint session for all Councillors	£400
Climate emergency	Parish Council	By October 2020	Presentation to all Councillors	£100
Neighbourhood Planning	Two Councillors	By March 2021	SALC's Neighbourhood Planning Course	£150 + £30 travel
Data Privacy (GDPR)	Clerk	By May 2020	SALC Seminar	£60 + £30 travel
Clerk Refresher	Clerk	ASAP	Clerks' Training Day	£20 + £30 travel
			TOTAL	Subs £1,025 Training £1,130 Travel £90

ALVELEY AND ROMSLEY PARISH COUNCIL 1ST DECEMBER 2020**PARISH COUNCIL DRAFT DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING PLAN 2021/22**

PURPOSE	PERSON	DATE	DESCRIPTION	EST/ACTUAL COST
Subscriptions NALC/SALC/SLCC	N/A	Annual	Subscriptions	£1,040
Training for new Council Chairman	Chairman	3 rd June 2020	SALC Training Session	£60+£30 travel
Planning	Parish Council	By March 2022	Basics of Planning legislation – SALC training sessions and/or in-house joint session for all Councillors	£400 inc travel
Climate emergency	Parish Council	By October 2021	Local/regional seminars and presentations to all Councillors	£300 inc travel
Neighbourhood Planning	Two Councillors	By October 2021	SALC's Neighbourhood Planning Course	£150 + £30 travel
Introductory Training for New Councillors	All new Councillors	By July 2021	SALC Training Sessions – Fundamentals for Councillors and/or joint in-house session	£500 inc travel
Clerk – Refresher +Data Privacy+ Year end/audit	Clerk	ASAP	SALC Training Sessions	£120 + £60 travel
			TOTAL	Subs £1,040 Training £1,530 Travel £120

PARISH COUNCIL 1ST DECEMBER 2020
FINANCIAL REPORT

Agenda item 11

1. **Purposes**

To deal with the following matters:

- (a) Bank reconciliation at 23rd November 2020;
- (b) Invoices for approval and cheques for signature;
- (c) Internal audit arrangements for 2021/22;
- (d) Street Lighting.

2. **Bank Reconciliation at 23rd November 2020**

Balances as at 23.11.20 -

Bank	£
Business Money Manager Account	19,244.57
Community Account	14,495.78
CCLA Public Sector Deposit Account	65,000.00
	<u>98,740.35</u>

Less unrepresented cheques -

202244 1,350.00

97,390.35

Cash Book

		£
Opening balances as at	01/04/2020	61,348.70
Add receipts to	23/11/2020	62,576.08
		-
Less payments to	23/11/2020	26,534.43
		<u>97,390.35</u>

2.1 The Parish Council is **requested** to note this information.

3. **Invoices for Approval and Cheques for Signature**

3.1 A schedule of invoices/direct payments is attached.

Recommendation: The Council is **requested** to approve the schedule of invoices/direct payments and to instruct two Councillors to sign the cheques to be paid.

4. **Internal Audit Arrangements for 2021/22**

4.1 The Clerk has received a letter from Mrs. Hackett of SDH Accountancy & Audit Services regarding internal audit for 2020/21. Mrs. Hackett is available to carry out this work. She anticipates that COVID-19 restrictions may still be

ALVELEY AND ROMSLEY PARISH COUNCIL
REPORT BY CLERK OF COUNCIL

in place well into the new year and advises that she will be seeking to minimise the amount of work that she does away from home. Neither of these issues should pose a problem for this Council. Mrs Hackett has quoted £250 for the work; her bill for 2019/20 was £280.

- 4.2 The Parish Council is **recommended** to appoint SDH Accounting as the Council's internal auditor for 2020/21

5. **Street Lighting**

- 5.1 The Parish Council's electricity supply contract for street lighting expires on 31st January 2021. The contract is currently with SSE Business Energy. Previously, the Clerk has been supported by LSI Energy Ltd. (consultants) in reletting the contract. However, LSI Energy have been slow in responding to emails and phone calls. At this stage, the Clerk is seeking to obtain quotations direct from SSE and EoN, who were the only suppliers to offer quotations for the current contract period. Approaches are also being made to other suppliers, especially those which generate a high proportion of renewable energy. The Clerk may be able to provide further information at this meeting, and there will be a further written report to the next Parish Council meeting on 5th January 2021.
- 5.2 The Parish Council is **requested** to note the position.

ALVELEY AND ROMSLEY PARISH COUNCIL
1ST DECEMBER 2020

SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS AND CHEQUES TO BE APPROVED AND SIGNED

CHEQUE	PAYEE	NET	VAT	TOTAL	ITEM	COUNCIL POWER
D.D.	Southern Electricity	300.91	57.02	357.93	Street Lighting electriciy October 2020	Parish Councils Act 1957 s.3
S.O.	Payroll	645.70		645.70	November payroll	L.G.A. 1972 s. 112
	HMRC	171.76		171.76	PAYE and National Insurance	
	ALVC Ltd	59.99	11.99	71.98	Hosting of PC Website	Local Audit & Acctblty. Act 2014
	Richard T. Jones	65.00	13.00	78.00	Repairs to Play Area furniture	L.G. (Misc.Prov.) Act 1976 s.19
	DM Payroll Services Ltd	40.50		40.50	Payroll administration 2020/21 2nd 1/2 year	L.G.A. 1972 s.111
TOTALS		1,283.86	82.01	1,365.87		

Signed

D Rawlinson

D.H. RAWLINSON
Clerk/R.F.O.

Chairman