

St Michael Parish Council

Minutes of the **Meeting of St Michael Parish Council**

held on Tuesday 7th March 2023

at the School Room, rear of St Mary's Church, Childwick Green, St Albans

Present: Councillor D Meachin
Councillor E Rolfe (from Residents' Forum)
Councillor R Woodward
Councillor S Lopes-Dias

The quorum of 3 was met throughout the Meeting

J Reading Parish Clerk

19/2023 OPENING OF MEETING

The Chairman welcomed all to the Meeting.

20/2023 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Clerk had received apologies for absence from Cllrs Rose and Slaughter, and it RESOLVED to approve their reasons.

21/2023 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

None proffered.

22/2023 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10 JANUARY 2023

It was RESOLVED to approve the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 10th January 2023, which were signed by the Chairman

23/2023 RESIDENTS' FORUM

Cllr Rolfe joined the Meeting during this item, offering apologies for her late arrival, which were accepted by the Chairman.

No members of the public were present. One private matter had been raised with the Clerk by a local resident, which would be dealt with outside of the Meeting.

24/2023 POLICY DOCUMENTS REVIEW

In the Parish Council's rolling schedule of documents review, the following policies were considered and it was unanimously RESOLVED that they be re-approved:

- i. Complaints procedure (*no amendments suggested*)
- ii. Reserves Policy (*updated data*)
- iii. Risk Assessment & Continuity Planning (*updated data and minor amendments*)

25/2023 POLICY FOR GRANTS AND DONATIONS

Further to Minute 09/2023, Members considered the latest draft for this policy, which, with the addition of a contact telephone number, was unanimously approved. It was RESOLVED that the new Grants and Donations Policy be adopted with immediate effect.

26/2023 LOCAL ELECTIONS IN MAY 2023

The new parish boundary arrangements for St Michael require four Parish Councillors for the South Ward, and three Parish Councillors for the North Ward.

The Clerk had nomination packs, with full instructions, to distribute to all current parish

councillors. Each must decide whether to stand at the parish council election due to be held on 4th May 2023, and if so, in which ward. It was noted that nominations must be supported by two electors listed in the full register of voters for the correct parish ward.

It was noted that if at the close of nominations on 4th April there was an excess of candidates in one, or both, of the North and South Wards, a poll would be required on 4th May, even if the total number of candidates across the whole parish did not exceed seven.

Difficulties would arise if insufficient parish councillors were returned or elected in May to form a quorum of three. In those circumstances SADC would be responsible for appointing suitable persons to the vacancies.

The Clerk reminded Members of their personal responsibility to submit their nominations during the statutory period between Monday 20th March to 4.00 pm on 4th April 2023. However she did offer to collect completed nominations and deliver them all together to SADC by the deadline.

27/2023 FINANCE MATTERS

- i. It was RESOLVED to approve the schedule of cheque payments as below

Date	Cheque	£	Payee	Covering
7/3/2023	000582		J Reading	Q4 Expenses to 7 March
20/3/2023	000583		J Reading	Salary Q4 ending 31 March 2023
7/3/2023	000584		I Graham	Tree planting accessories for Townsend School

- ii. It was noted that a previously approved direct debit payment of £35.00 had been made on 1st March to the Office of the Data Commissioner (annual re-registration fee).
- iii. It was noted that the Chairman had signed a bank reconciliation that the Clerk had prepared, as at 30 January 2023. The next reconciliation would be the final one for the financial year, at 31 March 2023.

28/2023 REVIEW OF BANK ACCOUNT SIGNATORIES

The Clerk advised that all six current Members were listed as signatories for the accounts held with Nat West Bank.

Any signatory who (for whatever reason) was not returned at the parish council election in May would need to be removed from the signing instructions. Any new Member(s) taking office after the election would have to apply to Nat West to be added as signatory(ies) in due course. Members were alerted to the possibility of insufficient signatories being available at future meetings, and it was agreed that in order to meet obligations, the Clerk would, in extremis, obtain signatures outside of meetings.

29/2023 PLANNING MATTERS

- i. No new planning applications had been received by SADC since the previous Meeting.
- ii. It was noted that a number of applications recorded in past Minutes were still awaiting a decision at this Meeting date.
- iii. The following new decisions were NOTED without comment:

SADC Reference	Application	Decision and date
TP/2022/0639 - Valid From 07/12/2022	St Marys Church Childwick Green Childwickbury, AL3 6JJ Purple Beech in the Church frontage - clear roof by 4m, raise crown periphery to 4m	Tree Works in Conservation Area - Deemed Consent, 17th January 2023
5/2022/1517 - Valid From 16/06/2022	Land Between 84-108 Ragged Hall Lane Chiswell Green Construction of seven detached dwellings with new access, boundary treatments and associated works	DC4 Refusal 27th January 2023
5/2022/3002 Valid From 21/12/2022	The Prae Wood Arms Garden House Lane AL3 6PY Discharge of Condition 3 (submission of further details - plastering) of 5/2022/2136 dated 17/11/2022 for Listed Building consent - Partial repair and replacement of existing lath and plaster ceiling within dining room area	Discharge of Condition - Approved 2 nd March 2023

- iv. The Chairman observed that a local agricultural building near Childwickbury appeared to have had the addition of a very visible new roof, and suggested that SADC's Planning Department be approached for verification that it was a permitted development. The Clerk would follow this up and report back as necessary.

30/2023 CORONATION OF KING CHARLES III

At the previous meeting (Minute 14/2023), the Chairman had invited Members to consider ways to mark the King's Coronation on Saturday 6th May 2023. After discussion, it was agreed and RESOLVED that:

- i. A message of congratulation would be composed for display on the Parish Council website, to be organised by the Chair and the Clerk.
- ii. Funds up to £75.00 were unanimously authorised for a planting project volunteered by Cllr Woodward. He suggested a display of primroses or similar, to be in flower in early May.
- iii. The Clerk would approach Townsend School with a proposal that the Parish Council sponsor an art competition for pupils, "What the Coronation means to me". Funds of £50.00 were unanimously authorised for prizes, suggested at £25, £15 and £10. Winning entries would be displayed on the Parish Council's website in time for the Coronation.

31/2023 LITTERING

Cllr Woodward opened discussion about littering along sections of the footway and verges of the Harpenden Road.

The practical issues, as well as the health and safety aspects of organising a party of volunteers were considered onerous, and it was reluctantly agreed not to pursue a litter pick event at this location.

It was agreed that more thought could be given to sponsoring a litter pick in other parts of the Parish. Members would be prepared to authorise funds for the supply of tabards, pickers and bags, for example.

The installation of a dog waste bin at Childwick Green was discussed. It was noted that past reactions from the area's residents had been firmly against such a scheme.

32/2023 MEMBERS' DISCUSSION TIME

A small number of matters of interest were discussed, with the Clerk noting that:

- i. Further to Minutes 54/2022 and 15/2023 regarding the alleged misconduct of a St Michael Parish Councillor, it was reported that the Monitoring Officer at SADC had written to the complainants and the Councillor concerned. The finding was that the complaints did not warrant any further investigation.
- ii. The Clerk confirmed that further to Minute 15/2023, the caretaker at Townsend School had now obtained the accessories needed to plant the saplings previously delivered. The expenses were covered in Minute 27/2023 i. above.
- iii. Cllr Rolfe informed the Meeting that Mr Peter Limebear, a Councillor and Chairman of St Michael Parish Council until 2022, had had to be admitted to hospital and he awaited the fitting of a pacemaker. Mr Limebear was remembered fondly by Members and the Clerk, who all expressed every good wish for his forthcoming operation and then his recuperation.
- iv. Similarly, Members and the Clerk hoped very much that Cllr Rose would soon feel more comfortable after her recent surgery, and they wanted to send their best regards to her for a speedy recovery.
- v. The next meeting of SADALC was due to be hosted by St Michael Parish Council, at St Mary's School Room, at 7.30 pm on Monday 3rd April. Cllrs Slaughter and Rolfe had agreed to attend, along with the Clerk.

33/2023 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

34/2023 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

A date for the next Meeting had previously been agreed a Tuesday 16th May, which would include both the Annual Parish Meeting and the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.

18/2023 CLOSURE

The Meeting closed at 8.10 pm and the Chairman thanked all for attending.

Chairman Date