

Naunton Parish Council

Clerk's Report for

Tuesday 13th July to Thursday 11th September 2024**Supporting documents for meeting on 16th September 2024**

Agenda item 3	July Minutes for approval and signing	2 - 4
Agenda item 4	Matters arising	5
Agenda item 8	Website and emails	6 - 7
Agenda item 10 (b)	Bench for Baptist burial ground	8
Agenda item 10 (c)	NALC rates, relevant sections of the contract	9

Agenda item 3 July Minutes for approval and signing

MINUTES: of the Annual Naunton Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 15th July 2024 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Parish Councillors: Charles Hanks, Keith Russell, David Pickup, Nicki Gibberson.
CDC Cllr Wilkins GCC Cllr MacKenzie-Charrington

APOLOGIES Received in advance from Holly Barnes.

IN ATTENDANCE: Maxi Freeman, Clerk

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: Two

1. **To receive Declarations of Interest in items on the Agenda (Localism Act 2011)** None.
2. **To hear representations from the public** regarding items on the agenda. None.
3. **Approval of minutes of the previous meeting (May 2024)** The meeting approved the minutes, and the Chairman signed them. **Action: Clerk to post to website.**
4. **Matters Arising** (Clerk's Report and Report from Chairman). The Chairman reported that the new bench had been installed and that it was much appreciated in the village. Councillors thanked Douglas Hanks, who cleared the space and helped to install the new bench. Councillors decided to fix a plaque on the bench in memory of long-term local resident Arthur Mitchell. **Action: Clerk to price the plaque.**
The Chairman reported that Councillor Holly Barnes had resigned due to other commitments and thanked her for her contributions during her time on the Council.
The Clerk drew Councillors' attention to the contents of the Clerk's Report which would be discussed at items 5 and 8.
The Chairman asked GCC Cllr MacKenzie-Charrington to speak. The Councillor announced that, in addition to the items in his report available on the Naunton PC website, GCC is investing £35m in new family support centres. The first two, in Cirencester and Stroud, will open in July and are intended as drop in centres for adults and children. A copy of Cllr MacKenzie-Charrington's report is available on the Naunton PC website in the 'Meetings' section. **Action: Cllr MacKenzie-Charrington to provide a flyer for the noticeboard.**
The Chairman then asked CDC Cllr Wilkins to speak. Due to the general election many CDC meetings had been cancelled. However, CDC would be running the free activities programme for children over the summer school holidays, with a very wide range of activities available to all children from age 4 to 16, regardless of free school meal eligibility. Activities can be booked via the Gloucestershire HAF website. A copy of Cllr Wilkins' report is available on the Naunton PC website in the 'Meetings' section

5. Planning applications

To comment:

[24/01784/FUL](#) Change of use of the first floor of existing equine welfare barn to provide grooms' accommodation. Ben Pauling Racing Naunton Downs Estate Naunton Cheltenham Gloucestershire GL54 3AE

The Chairman read the draft comments in the Clerk's Report. The main points were:

*One resident is permitted but the application requests permission to create 10 rooms in the Hay & Welfare barn. There is no explanation as to why the yard would need this accommodation or how many residents would be living there.

* Failure to comply with NPPF and CDC Local Plan regulations in particular NPPF par 79 and CDC Local Plan policies H5 and possibly DS3.

* Failure to carry out a Biodiversity Gain Assessment properly. This should be completed correctly.

* Reliance on the use of the race yard to support the golf club in previous applications, but significant removal of golf facilities since permission granted means that the permissions were granted on the basis of false information and should be reviewed.

* Consistent breaches of planning conditions which CDC is currently investigating, should be resolved before any further applications are considered.

Councillors resolved unanimously to object to the application. Cllr Len Wilkins suggested that the application could be presented to the Planning Committee due to the nature and extent of the objections. **Action: Clerk to post objections to the CDC planning portal.**

The Chairman noted that the planners for the Ben Pauling race yard had complained to the clerk about the behaviour of the council, although the exact nature of the complaint was unclear. The planners claim that the PC is ‘persecuting’ their client. The Clerk has asked for clarification.

[24/01948/TCONR](#) Stonegate, Naunton, GL54 3AF Significant maintenance to three mature trees. Councillors agreed not to object to this application.

6. Assets and Risk Assessment

Recreation field (including dog waste) & benches	Nothing to report .
Play area (including dog waste)	Cllr Hanks to carry out small works to some play equipment..
Flood Monitoring	Cllr Russell reported that foliage and trees have grown considerably due to the weather, making the annual October clearance a bigger job than usual. Professional help may be needed. Cllr Russell thanked Lawrence Houlden for all the work he had done to keep the river flowing. The riparian owners are responsible for keeping the river clear. Naunton PC has previously sent letters on several occasions but the owners had not responded or acted. Action: Clerk to send a further letter by recorded delivery to the current owners. Also to contact CDC re: any other action that could be taken, including how best to ensure that the new owners are aware of their duties. If the situation does not improve, Cllr Russell will arrange a specification of the required work and quotes from professional tree surgeons.
Village Hall	Nothing to report.

7. FROG – Flood monitoring group and equipment

The Clerk informed the meeting that Jonathan Noble, who had been part of the FROG team since its inception, had retired from the group. Councillors noted that the equipment was not working well and that fewer residents were subscribing to the flood warning service. Cllr

Russell noted that the Environmental Agency had a free flood-warning service which sends out alerts by text, phone or email. Residents can sign up via the gov.uk website. Risk is assessed by postcode, rather than by building. Councillors agreed to wait for villagers to request any future investment in new equipment and would consider at that point whether it was needed and affordable. **Action: Clerk to research any grants for new equipment.**

- 8. Steps to the Boules Pitch** A resident had noted that the steps to the boules pitch could be dangerous for some residents. Councillors agreed unanimously to buy a handrail for the right hand side of the steps and assigned a budget of £200. The Clerk’s report contained some sample styles and prices. Councillors chose a plain rail with three uprights. Cllr Hanks offered to install the handrail. **Action: Clerk to obtain quote for chosen handrail and research possible grant contributions. Cllr Gibberson to check with Village Hall Trustees whether the handrail was acceptable to them.**
- 9. Audit.** Councillors accepted the recommendations in the Auditor’s report, including:
 - * Review and update the Code of Conduct (current version dated 2019) No changes required to Code. **Action: Clerk to update and post new version to the website.**
 - * Declaration of Interest forms to be checked as no information re land ownership/rental in the village. **Action: Clerk to send Councillors new Declaration of Interest Forms and notes.**
 - * Precept demand to be a separate agenda item. It was item 14 (b). **Action: Clerk to implement next year.**
 - * Remove AOB from the agenda. **Action: Clerk to remove from future agendas and replace with ‘Items for the next meeting’s agenda’.**

10. Finances

- a) Councillors noted the current balances and the reconciliation, which the Chairman signed.
- b) Councillors approved the following payment:

877	M Freeman	Clerk’s salary June/July 2024 @ £235.17 p m	LGA 1972 s.112 (2)	470.34
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Due to issues with the electronic payment system, the PC had not been able to make the payments agreed at the previous meeting. Councillors signed and countersigned the following cheques approved at the May meeting:

879	ROSPA	Annual playground inspection	LGA 1892 s.8 (1) (i)	122.40
882	GPFA	Annual subscription to Glos Playing Fields Assoc	LGA 1972 x. 143	50.00
883	Lyster Contracts	Replace gate and gate post on Recreation field	LGA 1892 s.8 (1) (i)	256.10
880	Community First.	Annual Insurance Premium	LGA 1972 s.111	434.94
878	M Freeman	Clerk’s salary April/May 2024 @ £235.17 p m	LGA 1972 s.112 (2)	470.34

Councillors noted that annual payments had been received from the village associations.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 18.35. The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Monday 16th September at 7.00 p.m. in the village hall.

Signed
Chairman

Date 16th September 2024

Agenda item 4 Matters arising from the July Minutes

Item 4, Plaque for Bench. Clerk ordered plaque following discussions with the Chairman.

Item 6, Riparian owners at Manor House. Clerk sent a further letter by recorded delivery (see receipts). CDC pointed the clerk to the leaflet for riparian owners which has already been sent to those in Naunton.

Item 7, Flood warning equipment. Clerk searched for grants specifically for environmental equipment but did not find any.

Item 8, Handrail for the steps to the boules pitch. Clerk ordered the handrail agreed at the meeting. A grant might be possible from GCC as the rail makes the pitch more accessible. The deadline is 13th October.

**Grants of up to £7,500 now available:
"Thriving Communities"**



Gloucestershire
COUNTY COUNCIL

This fund is managed by Gloucestershire County Council and applicable to projects within the county of Gloucestershire.

Up to £7,500 is now available for projects that meet at least one of the below criteria:

- **Helping adults to stay well and supporting them to live independently**
- **Developing community connections/social networks and building resilience**
- **Promoting inclusive independence and wellbeing in adults**
- **Providing place-based activities (activities in residential communities) e.g. community hubs**

That are conducted by one of the following types of organisation:

- Parish and town councils
- Community or voluntary groups
- Registered charities
- Community Interest Companies (CICs)
- Art, music, performance, nature-based and sports groups

The grant cannot be used for:

- Building and planning works
- Consultancy costs
- Activities that focus on children and young people
- Schools and academies
- Activities outside of Gloucestershire

What to know more? The Thriving Communities team will be running some online webinars via MS teams for organisations to hear more about the scheme and ask any questions:

- **Wednesday 11 September 12:00-13:00**
- **Tuesday 17 September 16:00-17:00**
- **Tuesday 1 October 12.30-13:30**

Please email thrivingcommunities@gloucestershire.gov.uk for an MS Teams invitation for your preferred session.

Deadline for applications: 13th October

[Click here to find out more and to apply](#)

[Click here to see grants awarded in 2024](#)

Agenda item 8 Website and emails

GAPTC circulated the following email saying that the accessibility regulations have changed and that all PC websites need to check what they need to do to remain compliant. The email also raises the issue of all PCs having a .gov.uk email and web address. However, this does not seem to be mandatory:

Dear Member Councils,

We wish to update you on some critical matters regarding **website accessibility and the adoption of [.gov.uk](#) domain** names.

As you may be aware, the [SLCC has issued information](#) regarding **new [WCAG 2.2AA accessibility standards](#) will come into effect next month**. We strongly recommend that councils update their websites to meet these new standards. Our web partner, Parish Online, has already ensured that all their customers are compliant with these standards as of February. They offer a complete website and

email service specifically designed for local councils, ensuring high-quality, accessibility-compliant websites that align with Government policies. Moreover, Parish Online's service includes a [.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) domain name at no extra cost, which is strongly encouraged to present your council as a professional tier of Government.

Additionally, **there is government funding available** for councils to transition to [.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) domain names, but please note that this funding is only available for the current financial year. We encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity promptly. If you need assistance in transitioning to a [.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) domain, please contact Sandra and Tim from the Parish Council Domains Helper Service at parish-helper@domains.gov.uk.

For those who missed it, we previously hosted a networking session with clerks to discuss this service. You can view the recording of that session here: [Networking Session Recording](#).

Parish Online is also hosting introductory sessions for their website and email services on the following dates:

- **Website Service:** 15th October [Join the session](#)
- **Email Service:** 24th September [Join the session](#)

We understand that these changes might seem pressing, but we want to assure you that there is no immediate threat of sanctions if your council is not fully compliant with the WCAG 2.2AA standards by next month. The Government Digital Service has indicated that enforcement will not be strict from the outset, allowing councils some leeway to make necessary adjustments. While it is important to work towards compliance to ensure accessibility for all users, we advise you to approach this as a priority rather than an emergency. Upgrading your website is a significant step forward, but there is no need to panic about meeting the deadline in the next three weeks.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you need further assistance or clarification.

Kerrin Wilkinson **Strategic Support Officer**

Parish Online charges £355 +VAT p.a. (it's a subscription service) to include email addresses, website set up and transfer of current content.

Parish Online is not the only provider of parish council-specific websites. The largest provider is Aubergine. <https://www.aubergine262.com/parish-town-council-websites/> The price is higher (£455 + VAT p.a. plus £100 for a gov.uk domain) and they are targeting councils with a precept of £100,000 or more so may be less appropriate.

Naunton PC currently pays £181.86 + VAT p.a. for website hosting and domain name renewal. The above services also offer a wider range of services than Naunton PC currently uses e.g. bookings, email addresses, diary etc.

Agenda item 10 (b) Bench for Baptist burial ground

The Chairman received a copy of the following email from a visitor to the burial ground:

...Dear Jenny (Baptist Union)

I live in Cheltenham but (until 1965) lived in Naunton and attended the Baptist Chapel there during my formative years.

I run a Facebook page called **Naunton-upon-Cotswold** where you see that my latest post refers to the ex-chapel's memorial garden. <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064636064568>

This page is to try and preserve a bit Naunton's history as it doesn't have any kind of museum.

Visiting the chapel a couple of days ago to take a photograph of the memorial plaques on the wall there my wife (80 with poor knees) went to sit down on the bench which we found to be rickety and potentially dangerous, both being on their last legs 🙊

Talking to Alasdair and Moira who now live in the chapel on the phone today I enquired who I/we should contact with a view to replacing the bench with a newer and more durable outdoor model, this one having the appearance of an old chapel pew.

I don't know if the Baptist Union might be able to assist us in this matter but Alasdair suggested I start by contacting you.

It's a lovely spot for people to sit and remember their loved ones and many of my early ancestors are buried in the graveyard here. <https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/2732783/naunton-baptist-chapel>

I look forward to hearing from you.

Agenda item 10 (c) NLC rates, relevant sections of the contract

My current rate is £12.06 and the new NALC rate for 2024-25 is £13.05 per hour.

- 9.2 You have been appointed to a single salary point and the Council will review your salary annually on the anniversary of your appointment.

12. APPRAISAL

- 12.1 You will receive an annual appraisal.