

# Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25

Shenstone Parish Council

<https://www.shenstone-staffs.gov.uk/>

During the financial year ended 31 March 2025, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2024/25 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.			NO PETTY CASH KEPT ✓
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2023/24, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2023/24 AGAR tick "not covered")			✓
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.	✓		
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (during the 2024-25 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2023-24 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2023/24 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	✓		
<b>O. (For local councils only)</b> Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			✓

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

14/01/2025      17/04/2025      20/05/2025

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

Alan Toplis - Toplis Associates Ltd

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit



Date

28/05/2025

**\*If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).**

**\*\*Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).**

# Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2024/25

We acknowledge as the members of:

SHENSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025, that:

	Agreed		'Yes' means that this authority:
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
			✓
			has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.

**\*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.**

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

10/06/2025

and recorded as minute reference:

ITEM 25

Signed by the Chair and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chair

*[Signature]*  
SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

*[Signature]*  
SIGNATURE REQUIRED

www.shenstone-stajfs.gov.uk PAGE ADDRESS

## Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2024/25 for

SHENSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2024 £	31 March 2025 £	
1. Balances brought forward	205,617	149,783	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	182,000	187,663	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	32,743	39,145	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	61,451	75,268	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	209,126	203,644	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	149,783	97,679	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	152,136	129,972	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – <b>To agree with bank reconciliation.</b>
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	151,109	152,933	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)		✓		The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)			✓	The figures in the accounting statements above exclude any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2025 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

**Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval**

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

10/06/2025

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

10/06/2025

as recorded in minute reference:

ITEM 25

Signed by Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Scribe copy.

21 April 2025 (2024-2025)

**Shenstone Parish Council**  
**Annual Return**

---

**Accounts for Year from 01/04/2024 to 31/03/2025**

This is prepared based on information in "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils : a Practitioner's Guide"

Important note: These figures have been prepared on an INCOME and EXPENDITURE basis.

<b>Box No.</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Last Year £</b>	<b>This Year £</b>
1	Balances brought fwd	205,617.33	149,783.02
2	Annual precept	182,000.00	187,663.52
3	Total other receipts	32,743.15	39,145.83
4	Staff Costs	61,451.06	75,268.45
5	Loan interest/capital repayments	0.00	0.00
6	Total other payments	209,126.40	203,644.28
7	Balances carried forward	149,783.02	97,679.64
8	Total Cash and Short Term Investments	152,136.26	129,972.96
9	Total Fixed Assets and Long Term Investments	151,109.17	152,933.17
10	Total Borrowings	0.00	0.00

## Section 3 – External Auditor’s Report and Certificate 2024/25

In respect of

SHENSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

### 1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit**, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02 as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – <https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/> .

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2025; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

### 2 External auditor’s limited assurance opinion 2024/25

(Except for the matters reported below)\* on the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. (\*delete as appropriate).

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

### 3 External auditor certificate 2024/25

We certify/do not certify\* that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2025.

\*We do not certify completion because:

External Auditor Name

ENTER NAME OF EXTERNAL AUDITOR

External Auditor Signature

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

DD/MM/YYYY

Statement of Variances - Year ended 31 March 2025

Instructions for completing this template:

1. Enter figures per the ACRB in the cells highlighted in light blue. This will automatically calculate a percentage change between years.
2. If the variance is within 15%, no explanation is required. However, if it is outside this threshold, the percentage difference will highlight in yellow and an explanation is required. Explanations should be entered in each column, quantified to show the figures for each year. This will automatically calculate the remaining difference and the percentage unexplained.
3. Once a sufficient explanation has been given to bring the percentage within 15% between years, the percentage difference cell will highlight as 'green' in the 'adjuster' line.
4. **Please note that for fixed assets, regardless of the percentage change in the figure, an explanation is required for the movement.**

Item	2024-24	2024-25	Difference	%	Additional comments / explanations
<b>Box 2: Precept or Rates and levies</b>	192,000.00	197,663.00	5,663.00	3.1%	
<b>Box 2: Precept or Rates and levies (adjusted)</b>			5,663.00	3.1%	No further explanation needed
<b>Box 3: Total other receipts</b>	32,743.00	39,144.00	6,402.00	19.6%	
Oil levies		5,290.00	5,290.00		
<b>Box 3: Total other receipts (adjusted)</b>			1,112.00	3.4%	No further explanation needed
<b>Box 4: Staff costs</b>	61,461.00	75,268.00	13,817.00	22.6%	
Highonum Chair of Finance & Chair of Planning		1,500.00	1,500.00		
Clerk statutory salary increase		2,325.00	2,325.00		
Welfare Clerk		1,691.00	1,691.00		
<b>Box 4: Staff costs (adjusted)</b>			8,331.00	13.6%	No further explanation needed
<b>Box 5: Loan interest/capital repayments</b>	-	-	-	NDV/0	
<b>Box 5: Loan interest/capital repayments (adjusted)</b>			-	0.0%	No further explanation needed
<b>Box 6: Other payments</b>	209,128.00	203,644.00	-5,482.00	-2.6%	
<b>Box 6: Other payments (adjusted)</b>			-5,482.00	-2.6%	No further explanation needed
<b>Box 9: Fixed assets plus long-term investments</b>	151,109.00	152,933.00	1,824.00	1.2%	
<b>Box 9: Fixed assets plus long-term investments (adjusted)</b>			1,824.00	1.2%	No further explanation needed
<b>Box 10: Total borrowings</b>	-	-	-	NDV/0	
<b>Box 10: Total borrowings (adjusted)</b>			-	0.0%	No further explanation needed

**Instructions:**

Please complete the coloured boxes with figures per the AGAR and figures for earmarked reserves.

The 'Explanation Required?' box will indicate whether an explanation is required to explain reserves exceeding the tolerable threshold set by Forvis Mazars (1.15 x the higher of precept and total payments).

If explanations are required, please document these in the rows below (*insert more rows where required*).

Once a sufficient amount of explanations has been provided, this will be shown with a 'Yes' in the 'Explanation sufficient?' line.

Box 2 Precept  x 1.15 = 215,778

Box 4 Staff costs

Box 5 Loan interest / capital repayments

Box 6 Other payments

**Max level of reserves**

x 1.15 =

Box 7 Balances carried forward

Explanation required?

Explanation(s) for earmarked reserves: **NB: NOT 'general' funds/reserves**

Shenstone CIL Project  
Little Aston CIL project  
Little Aston CIL project

<input type="text" value="95,788"/>
<input type="text" value="16,500"/>
<input type="text" value="7,000"/>
<input type="text" value="17,500"/>
<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>
<input type="text" value="136,788"/>

Reserves not earmarked

Explanations sufficient?

## Shenstone Parish Council

Prepared by: SHIRLEY O'HARA, CLERK Date: 10/6/25  
*Name and Role (Clerk/RFO etc)*

Approved by: GAIL NICHOLLS, CHAIR OF FIN. Date: 10/6/25  
*Name and Role (RFO/Chair of Finance etc)*

	<b>Bank Reconciliation at 31/03/2025</b>			
	Cash in Hand 01/04/2024			152,136.26
	<b>ADD</b>			
	Receipts 01/04/2024 - 31/03/2025			241,103.46
				393,239.72
	<b>SUBTRACT</b>			
	Payments 01/04/2024 - 31/03/2025			263,266.76
<b>A</b>	<b>Cash in Hand 31/03/2025</b> (per Cash Book)			<b>129,972.96</b>
	Cash in hand per Bank Statements			
	Petty Cash	30/04/2023	0.00	
	04 Natwest Reserve	31/03/2025	8,692.88	
	05 Unity Bank	31/03/2025	6,287.22	
	06 Liquidity Manager	31/03/2025	114,088.56	
	Natwest 115	31/03/2025	904.30	
				<b>129,972.96</b>
	Less unrepresented payments			
				129,972.96
	Plus unrepresented receipts			
<b>B</b>	<b>Adjusted Bank Balance</b>			<b>129,972.96</b>
	<b>A = B Checks out OK</b>			

**Shenstone Parish Council**  
**Reconciliation between Box 7 and Box 8**

31/03/2025

This report explains the difference between the total balance in Box 7 and the cash balance in Box 8 by showing the totals for each type of adjustment, the details of which can be listed using the Adjustments report. It deducts the additional assets which have been included on the balance sheet and adds back in the liabilities to arrive at the balance for actual cash and short term investments. This only applies to Annual Returns prepared on Income and Expenditure basis

	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Amount</i>
<b>Box 7 - Balances carried forward</b>		<b>97,679.64</b>
Debtors		
Prepayments		
Stocks and Stores		
VAT Recoverable	3,292.76	
<b>TOTAL DEDUCTIONS</b>		<b>3,292.76</b>
Creditors	35,586.08	
Receipts in Advance		
Doubtful Debts		
<b>TOTAL ADDITIONS</b>		<b>35,586.08</b>
<b>Box 8 - Total cash and short term investments</b>		<b>129,972.96</b>

## CREDITORS

Land Use Consultants	£2,360.00
Land Use Consultants	£7,263.60
Land Use Consultants	£5,029.20
St Johns Cemetery	£1,840.00
Lichfield DC	£19,093.28
Total	£35,586.08

## Attachment 2

### Confirmation of contact details

Local Council Name: ..... SHENSTONE PARISH COUNCIL .....

Please confirm the contact details for the Clerk, RFO (if applicable), and Chair to assist us in ensuring that our records are kept up to date.

Clerk name:  <u>SHIRLEY O'MALA</u>	RFO name (if different to clerk):  <u>—</u>	Chair name:  <u>DAVID SALTER</u>
Clerk working hours (so we know when we can ring) <u>TUESDAY - THURSDAY</u> <u>09.00 - 17.00</u>	Clerk working hours (so we know when we can ring)  <u>—</u>	
Is this person the primary contact: <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	Is this person the primary contact: Yes/No	
Parish Council registered address: <u>25C MAIN ST</u> <u>SHENSTONE</u> <u>WS14 0LZ</u>	Parish Council registered address:  <u>—</u>	Chair contact postal and email address Email: <u>david.salter@lichfieldc.gov.uk</u> Postal address: <u>25C MAIN ST</u> <u>SHENSTONE</u> <u>WS14 0LZ</u>
Telephone: Primary contact number: <u>01543 481947</u> Mobile/alternative number: <u>—</u>	Telephone: Primary contact number: <u>—</u> Mobile/alternative number: <u>—</u>	Telephone: Primary contact number: <u>07956 142215</u> Mobile/alternative number: <u>—</u>
Email address (please do not provide a personal email unless the Clerk/RFO does not have a Council/Meeting email) <u>admin@shenstone-stajfs.gov.uk</u>		

# Attachment 3.1

Local council name: SHENSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

## Notice of appointment of date for the exercise of public rights Accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025

The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, and  
The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 (SI 234)

<p>1. Date of announcement: <u>11th JUNE 2025</u> (a)</p> <p>2. Any person interested has the right to inspect and make copies of the accounts to be audited and all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers and receipts relating to them. For the year ended 31 March 2025 these documents will be available on reasonable notice on application to:</p> <p>(b) <u>SHIRLEY O'MARA, CLERK / R.F.O.</u> <u>admin@shenstone-stajja.gov.uk</u></p> <p>commencing on (c) <u>12th JUNE 2025</u></p> <p>and ending on (d) <u>23rd July 2025</u></p> <p>3. Local Government Electors and their representatives also have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the opportunity to question the auditor about the accounts; and</li> <li>• the right to make objections to the accounts or any item in them. Written notice of an objection must first be given to the auditor and a copy sent to the Authority (f).</li> </ul> <p>The auditor can be contacted at the address in paragraph 4 below for this purpose during the inspection period at 2 above.</p> <p>4. The auditor's limited assurance review is being conducted under the provisions of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 and the National Audit Office' Code of Audit Practice. Your review is being carried out by:</p> <p>Forvis Mazars LLP, The Corner, Bank Chambers, 26 Mosley Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 1DF Email: <a href="mailto:local.councils@mazars.co.uk">local.councils@mazars.co.uk</a></p> <p>5. This announcement is made by (e) <u>SHIRLEY O'MARA, R.F.O.</u></p>	<p>(a) Insert date of placing of this notice on your website.</p> <p>(b) Insert name, position and contact details of the Clerk or other person to whom any person may apply to inspect the accounts.</p> <p>(c) And</p> <p>(d) The inspection period must be 30 working days in total and commence no later than 1 July 2025.</p> <p>(e) Insert name and position of person placing the notice</p>
---	---

### 3. Documentation you must send with Form 3

Please ensure that you submit **ALL** of the following:

- **A Bank Reconciliation** showing balances of all bank and building society accounts as at 31 March 2025 (an example is provided in Attachment 1.1);
- **A full explanation with figures of all significant variances** in your income or expenditure in 2024/25 compared to the previous financial year. (Refer to Attachment 1.2 or separate version attached);
- **A reconciliation between the closing balances in Section 2, Box 7 and Box 8, where applicable.** (Please note: a reconciliation is only applicable where the accounts in Section 2 of the Annual Return are prepared on an income and expenditure basis and the figures in Boxes 7 and 8 are different). (Refer to Attachment 1.3);
- **A breakdown of the types of reserves held between general reserves, earmarked reserves and restricted (ring-fenced),** where the general reserve is outside the guidance levels of paragraph 5.34 of the Practitioners' Guide and/or the authority is holding earmarked and other reserves (Refer to Attachment 1.4 and separate document attached);
- **A confirmation of contact details for the Clerk, RFO (where different) and Chair,** so that we can ensure our records are fully up to date. (Refer to Attachment 2);
- **A confirmation regarding the exercise of public rights,** using a signed form stating the period chosen by the authority (Return Attachment 3.1);
- Details of action taken in respect of all recommendations made by your external auditor in 2023/24; and
- If your 2024/25 internal auditor issued a separate year-end report to support the summary contained within AGAR Form 3, a copy of that report.

On the basis of information from previous years, we understand that your authority will have either income or expenditure of over £200,000 in 2024/25. If this is the case, we are required to undertake an intermediate audit, which involves additional procedures selected from a list provided by the National Audit Office.

**We select different procedures each year in order to cover all over a cycle and thus it should not be assumed that the information requested last year is needed this year.** The additional information required for the intermediate audit in 2024/25 is as follows:

Assertion	Additional evidence required in 2024/25
Assertion 5 – Risk Management <i>attached - item 13</i>	A copy of the minutes showing discussion of the risk register during 2024/25 (note these must be between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025 as annual review is mandated)
Assertion 8 – Significant Events <i>none</i>	Confirmation of any details for legal claims outstanding against the body at 31 March 2024 and any provision for any uninsured element in the 2024/25 budget.
Assertion 9 – Trust Funds <i>none</i>	A copy of the March 2025 bank statement for the trust/charity

### 4. Errors in the annual return

Please ensure that all boxes of the annual return are completed even if it means writing nil or not applicable, that all approvals are signed and dated, and the minute reference recorded. Incomplete, unsigned or undated annual returns may be returned as part of the initial checks at extra cost to the authority. If there were no numbered minutes for the meeting approving the annual return please state the date of the meeting in the minute reference



**SHENSTONE PARISH COUNCIL**

Serving Little Aston, Shenstone, Stonnall, Shenstone Wood End, Lynn,  
Parish Council Office 25C Main Street Shenstone WS14 OLZ

Tel: 01543 481947 e-mail: [admin@shenstone-staffs.gov.uk](mailto:admin@shenstone-staffs.gov.uk)

web: [www.shenstone-staffs.gov.uk](http://www.shenstone-staffs.gov.uk)

**Approved minutes of Full Council Meeting Tuesday May 7<sup>th</sup> 2024, at 7.15 at  
Shenstone Library**

item	detail
1.	<p><b>Register of members in attendance</b>            Cllr David Salter -Chair (Shenstone Woodend), Cllrs Stuart Jones, Lesley Edgely, David Thompson (Shenstone), Christopher Callow, Ruth Graham, Dino D'Ambrosio, Emma Scothern, Gail Nicholls, Mick Cox, Simon Fisher (Little Aston and Stonnall)            County Councillor David Smith,            Shirley O'Mara (Clerk) Pam Salter (Minute Clerk)            Eleven members of the public</p>
2	<p><b>Acceptance of apologies.</b>            Cllrs Phil Whitehouse, Stuart Harrison</p>
3	<p><b>Public Participation.</b>            Members of the public are invited to address Council for a maximum of 15 minutes.</p> <p>A spokesperson for 9 Shenstone residents present, explained that all were attending to gain clarification regarding issues with Shenstone Playing Fields Management Committee (SPFMC) and the Country Club. They expressed concerns about rumours that the Country Club is going to close and about the SPFMC Committee itself. They feel that residents of Shenstone should be consulted on any proposals affecting the Country Club.</p> <p>Cllr Salter referred this to Cllr Thompson, as one of two representatives for the Parish Council (PC) on the Playing Fields committee. He explained that the subject would be discussed in detail later as a confidential item with no public allowed to be present as the subject is legally sensitive.</p> <p>Cllr Thompson said that the PC understood the importance of the Country Club and were concerned regarding the present relationship. He confirmed that at least 8 weeks ago the PC asked to meet with SPFMC, and they have now agreed. The PC had that day received a letter asking for the same. He reassured the residents that the PC listens to all sides, citing the issue with UAV and protesters at Malkins Coppice as an example.</p> <p>Cllr Jones wants to see all parties including the tennis club, the dog walkers, the Country Club, the footballers and the Village Hall, working together and thriving and confirmed that the PC have resident's best interests at heart.</p> <p>Cllr Salter explained that in the role of Custodian Trustee, the PC have no Managerial rights but must ensure that everything is legal and that is what the PC are currently trying to achieve.</p> <p>Other queries included from the residents:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the appointment of the SPFC and the legitimacy of the Chair's Role</li> <li>• concerns that the Committee are not looking after the grounds with litter, broken glass, and other debris not cleared away.</li> <li>• 'Dogs must be on leads' signs appearing all round the park.</li> </ul> <p>Cllr Salter explained that due to the receipt of a confidential document, agenda item 14, which includes discussion about the SPFMC concerns, would need to be held in confidence under section 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 which excludes public and press.</p> <p>Cllr Scothern read from the recent SPFMC Annual Report to Council which listed many positive improvements and achievements made.</p> <p>In summary, the residents want the Playing Fields Committee to be accountable to residents of Shenstone.</p> <p>In drawing this discussion to a close Cllr Salter thanked the residents for their attendance and input and praised the main spokesperson for their clarity.</p> <p>Cllr Salter then invited the two representatives from SCAR to address the meeting.</p> <p>They confirmed that the speed signs report has been finalised. The report was handed to the Clerk. The report is related to Item 16, for inclusion in the next Parish newsletter.</p> <p>The Chair closed the public participation item, and 9 residents left the meeting.</p>
4	<p><b>Election of Chair and Vice Chair.</b> To receive nominations for the roles of Chair and Vice Chair and to elect to these positions.</p> <p>Cllr Edgley nominated Cllr Salter as Chair for 2024/25. Cllr D'Ambrosio nominated himself as Chair for 2024/25 following a previously received email nomination from Cllr Whitehouse.</p> <p>A vote was held and counted by the Clerk and witnessed by Mr Adrian Walters (Member of the Public). The result was six votes to five in favour of Cllr Salter. Resolution: Cllr Salter was elected as Chair of Shenstone Parish Council for the coming year.</p> <p>Cllr Salter then nominated Cllr Edgley as Vice Chair. Cllr D'Ambrosio nominated himself as Vice-Chair.</p> <p>A vote was held and counted by the Clerk and witnessed by Mr Adrian Walters. The result was six votes to five in favour of Cllr Edgley. Resolution: Cllr Edgley was elected as Vice Chair of Shenstone Parish Council for the coming year.</p>
5	<p><b>Declarations of interest.</b> Members should consider whether they should partake in any discussion or vote on matters on the agenda unless they have a dispensation: None declared.</p>
6	<p><b>To accept and confirm minutes</b> of the last Full Council meeting on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> April 2024. Minutes duly approved and signed.</p>

	<p><b>The Chair then brought forward Items 12 and 14</b> as County Cllr Smith and Cllr Thompson would need to leave the meeting for prior engagements.</p>
7	<p><b>Clerk's update on outstanding issues from last meeting:</b> Outstanding Community Grants. Three grants remain unpaid pending submission of required paperwork: Little Aston Village Hall, Friends of Shenstone Station &amp; Trinity Methodist Hall.</p> <p>Meeting with St Peter's PTA representatives with the Clerk: scheduled for Thursday 9th May to discuss potential future grant applications.</p> <p>Footherley bluebell woods: A supervised meeting with the gamekeeper approved for the 18th and 19th May. Poster prepared to advertise and already on social media.</p>
8	<p><b>To elect members to the following committees:</b> The following Members were duly elected.</p> <p><b>Neighbourhood Planning and Property:</b> Cllrs David Thompson, David Salter, Gail Nicholls, Stuart Jones, Simon Fisher</p> <p><b>Finance Legal Health and Safety:</b> Cllrs David Thompson, David Salter, Gail Nicholls, Lesley Edgley, Stuart Jones, Simon Fisher, Phil Whitehouse</p> <p><b>Employment Committee:</b> David Salter, Gail Nicholls, Stuart Jones</p>
9	<p><b>To elect members as representatives on Outside Bodies</b> The following Members were duly elected.</p> <p><b>Shenstone Village Hall:</b> Cllr Emma Scothern</p> <p><b>Shenstone playing Fields:</b> Cllrs David Thompson, Stuart Jones</p> <p><b>Lammas Land:</b> Cllrs Stuart Jones, Simon Fisher</p> <p><b>Richard Cooper Room:</b> Cllr David Salter</p> <p><b>Stonnall Village Hall:</b> Gail Nicholls</p> <p><b>Stonnall CC:</b> Cllrs Mick Cox, Phil Whitehouse. Cllr Cox will advise the Clerk if this membership is still a requirement of the Community Centres constitution.</p> <p><b>Stonnall Playing Field:</b> Gail Nicholls</p> <p><b>LARGA:</b> Charles Fordham, Cllr Simon Fisher</p> <p><b>Little Aston Village Hall:</b> Cllrs David Salter, Ruth Graham</p> <p><b>SPCA:</b> Cllr David Thompson</p> <p><b>Quarry Group:</b> Cllrs Phil Whitehouse, Gail Nicholls</p> <p><b>Traffic Partnership:</b> Cllrs David Salter, Gail Nicholls</p>
10	<p><b>Chairs Honorarium</b> Councillors agree on the continuing allowance for the Chair of the Parish Council in order to undertake official business. Resolution: Allowance approved.</p> <p>As the allowance has been held at £1,250 for several years an increase of £250.00 to £1,500 was proposed. Resolution: Increase to £1,500 approved.</p> <p>Cllr Salter suggested consideration of an honorarium to be paid to Chairs of Committees. Resolution: Agreement in principle. Clerk to research and add to next Agenda.</p>

11	<p><b>Casual vacancies</b> Two vacant positions to be advertised. Recruitment process and timescales to be decided.</p>
12	<p><b>To receive reports from District and County Councillors.</b> County Cllr Smith announced that his County Council Community Fund was live again and available for organisations to apply on the Staffordshire County website. The County Council have objected, on Highways grounds, to the Barracks Lane application which is on the edge of Stonnall ward. Recommended refusal on the grounds of insufficient evidence provided.</p> <p>Cllr Smith has a 'new pothole priority fund' available for new potholes. He is restricting this to only funding new potholes not those already in process. Cllrs Nicholls, Edgely and D'Ambrosia asked for the potholes at the bottom of St John's Hill and Lynn Lane be considered as a priority as they are very dangerous. Cllr Smith asked to be kept informed of new potholes appearing.</p> <p>He then excused himself and left the meeting.</p>
13	<p><b>Finance</b> Current Financial position and transactions for approval as of 7<sup>th</sup> May 2024 Nat West current account: £905.00 Nat West Business Account: £24,325.64 Nat West Liquidity Account ring fenced funds for ear marked projects: £111,085.10. Unity account: £177,209.19</p> <p><b>Clerk update on move to Scribe Accounts:</b> The Clerk had circulated full details to all members prior to this meeting. She asked whether all members had read the email and whether there were any questions. Cllr Edgley asked how the system was working. The Clerk explained that Scribe are completing the last three years accounts, and she will take over from April 2024 once she gets the green light. Cllr Salter requested that it be recorded that: "The reasoning and background which led to the Council needing the software and external support is in no way the fault of, or a reflection on, the ability of the Clerk" ... all members were in full agreement.</p> <p>* Review of Risk Management &amp; Risk Assessment Policies: *</p> <p><b>RESOLUTION:</b> Reviewed &amp; adopted.</p> <p><b>Recommendations from Finance Committee:</b> Set date for meeting to discuss Grant Policy review: Clerk to check availability of Members. CIL grant funding. Review and allocate ring fenced funds. Clerk to check availability of Members. St John's cemetery increase in fees. Having reviewed the increases a vote was taken. Resolution: Unanimously approved.</p>

	<p>Renewal of telephone system in Parish Office. Two providers were voted on. The BT quotation was recommended Resolution: Unanimous decision - BT.</p> <p>Next meeting of Finance, Legal, Health and Safety Committee: Resolution: TBC Clerk to check availability of Members.</p>
14	<p><b>Planning</b>          Planning applications for May Council approval.          24/00430 Lodge Farm          24/00452 Tesco Express Shenstone          No comment from Council.</p> <p>Shenstone Playing Fields          Held in camera. Remaining members of the public (SCAR members) left the meeting. The Chair read the statutory notice which must legally be read out before a Confidential item can be discussed.          Cllrs Salter asked for verification that all members had read the letter which had been received that day from the Shenstone Playing Fields Management Committee (SPFMC).          Cllrs Salter and Thompson briefed Council on meetings, communications and developments over the last month.          After a long discussion it was agreed that Council would like to move forward as quickly as possible with a meeting.          Resolution: Clerk to contact Chair of SPFMC to arrange suitable date for a meeting with Members of Council.</p> <p>The agenda returned to open discussion format.          Staffordshire Ecological Record Manager. Quote for £500.00 for the production of wildlife maps for all 3 Wards. Resolution: Vote unanimously approved</p> <p><b>The Chair announced the return to the Agenda with Item 7</b></p>
15	<p><b>Neighbourhood plan reviews: updates and next steps</b>          Shenstone: The Clerk confirmed everything is currently with Navigus preparing for the next stage of the draft.          Stonnall: a meeting is scheduled for next Wednesday 15th May 2024          Little Aston: Not directly related to the Neighbourhood Plan reviews but a public meeting hosted by Lonestar Property Developers will be held at the Village Hall next Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May.</p>
16	<p><b>Traffic meeting.</b>          Cllr Salter asked for a vote on a demonstration of the effectiveness of village CCTV cameras Resolution: eight people voted in favour of a demonstration. Cllr Salter to arrange</p>
17	<p><b>Next newsletter</b>          Preparation of a newsletter was proposed for mid-July to cover a range of summer events. Resolution: Unanimous vote for a mid-July newsletter</p>
18	<p>There being no further business the meeting was declared closed at 9.18 pm  <b>Next meeting of Full Council June 11th at Little Aston Village Hall 7.15pm.</b></p>