Arlesey Town Council



ANNUAL REPORT 2023/2024

Published May 2024

TOWN COUNCIL FACTFILE

Members of the Council 2023/2024

Council membership – Total of 7 seats

Cllr P Arkle - Chairman
Cllr N Stevenson- Vice Chairman

Cllr T Pang
Cllr S Hamilton
Cllr S Spoor
Cllr D Page

Cllr I Dalgarno (resigned July 2023)
Cllr J Hooker (Co-opted 17th October 2023)

Town Council Staff

Mrs J Bailey	Town Clerk and RFO to the Council
Mrs C Winwood	Assistant Clerk to the Council
Mrs L Brown	Administrative Support/ Resource Centre Assistant/ Site Agent (shared role)
Mr J Brett	Grounds Maintenance / Handy person
Ms P Hector	Site Agent (shared role)
Mr J Savory	Litter Picking Operative

Resource Centre Staff

Ms P Hector	Resource Centre Assistant

Council Address:	Arlesey Community Centre High Street Arlesey Bedfordshire SG15 6SN
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Website:	www.arlesey-tc.gov.uk

2023/2024 Precept: £258,669.

Arlesey Town Council
Chairman Report
2023/2024

After the local elections 4th May 2023, I was elected as Chairman and Mayor at the Annual Meeting of Arlesey Town Council 16th May 2023.

Council has faced challenges with the cost-of-living crisis, with council costs increasing as has been the case for residents. Whilst financial prudence and monitoring expenses to achieve highest interest return on cash balances and lower charges on services the Precept (the Town Council element of council tax) regretfully had to be increased this year following 4 consecutive years of reductions/no increase.

This year council has several projects planned for delivery, to increase the visual appeal of Arlesey and our facilities for residents, people employed here and visitors.

Filled flower baskets will be affixed to some of the parish lampposts over the coming weeks. This project will start with a modest number of displays with the intention to expand the display over coming years through forging partnerships through engagement with developers, local businesses and organisations via sponsorship of pots or contributions to the display.

4 large water butts incorporating floral displays to help our pollinators and enhance site aesthetics, have been installed at the cemetery and 2 at the MUGA pavilion. It is hoped that the cemetery water butts will facilitate sustainable use of rainwater for attending to loved one's graves and the MUGA will assist with watering the lamp post displays. The flagpole flower bed undergone improvement works, the visual impact benefits of which will be seen when planting establishes.

The 2 allotment sites within Arlesey have planned improvement works to provide suitable composting bays, for allotment holders to self-generate compost to be returned to the ground to help with crop cultivation. Biodiversity has featured highly being a consistent theme throughout council's project list and it is hoped that through community engagement and collaboration with schools and Arlesey organisations that over the coming year(s) bird boxes, bug hotels and hedgehog houses will be made and installed at suitable areas within the parish to sustain our wildlife.

2023 marked the 100th anniversary of the war memorial which was commemorated with the steps of the memorial covered in floral tributes replicating the original photographs from its installation. Arlesey Remembers you arranged a small service and each and every name on the memorial was read out.

Council has committed to extend the Christmas light display this year as it is well received and valued by the community and are considering options available for this year.

Bench availability throughout Arlesey has been identified as an area which could be improved upon, and several suitable areas have been identified, although on highways land owned by Central Bedfordshire Council, which requires permission and agreement for ongoing maintenance to be sought. As this idea is explored, council will consult with residents to gain feedback and gauge support for this.

The current council appreciate the value and necessity of community engagement to enhance facilities and provisions for Arlesey residents and is striving to improve communications and engagement opportunities. Volume of resident input is crucial to delivering projects and facilities that you want. Whilst not everyone can be pleased with every project, your input is vital to help shape Arlesey and what it has to offer. Council encourages each and every resident to take every opportunity extended to participate and share your opinions to help achieve the best for our parish. Recent improvements have been made to our social media posting and notice boards are still widely used in conjunction with entries into the Arlesey News magazine delivered to every household within Arlesey.

Last summer saw the first extended Summer Youth Activity programme in Arlesey. Stotfold, Fairfield and Arlesey councils partnered with Grand Union Housing Group to deliver an action-packed programme offering free activities within each parish. Council is pleased to announce that the financial contribution to this project will continue and increase for Summer 2024.

Council members represent Arlesey through membership of outside bodies, I, myself, am on various committees including the Bedfordshire Police Liaison, Bus User Group and the Larksfield and Arlesey Patient Participation Group.

This participation is intended to help improve services for Arlesey and facilities for our residents. December 2024 marks the celebration of the 130year milestone of the creation of Arlesey Parish Council and 45 years of the Town Council and it's first inaugural meeting.

As Mayor, I have raised the profile of Arlesey within Central Bedfordshire by attending many functions to represent our parish, opening networks of communication with the mindset to form partnership and collaboration opportunities locally for Arlesey.

Before I finish, I would like to say how proud the council is of our Town Clerk Mrs Janet Bailey, who keeps all councillors on track, working within the legal realms. In the midst of running our busy office and ensuring legal obligations/duties deadlines are met, she found time to study for her Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) Community Governance Level 4 qualification awarded by DeMontford University, Leicester to become an Advanced Qualified Clerk. Passing the course at distinction grade she also received an award for achieving the highest grades of the Level 4 cohort.

Well done Janet!

Cllr Pauline Arkle
Chairman 2023-2024

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

2023/2024

May 2024

Arlesey Town Council Financial Summary 2023/24

	31st March 2024	31st March 2023
Current Assets		
UTB-Deposit A/c	29	28
Barclays tracker Account	73,430	7,437
UTB - Current A/c	37,165	69,600
Resource Centre Petty Cash A/c	30	30
Hampshire Trust 90 day NEW	0	0
Nationwide 35day saver account	89,134	86,530
Cambridge Building Society	41,285	40,404
Teachers Building Society	61,290	60,312
Redwood Bank	87,447	85,000
Hampshire Trust 1yr fixed bond	0	87,037
2024/25 Hampshire bond	85,000	0
Total Cash Held	**474,810**	**436,378**
Trade Debtors	275	1,191
VAT Control	4,039	9,355
VAT Repayment	15,476	15,476
Prepayments	35	0
Accrued Income	51	0
Total Current Assets	**19,876**	**26,022**
Current Liabilities		
Trade Creditors	**98,634**	90,190
Accruals	14,075	11,557
PAYE/NIC Due	2,141	1,698
Pension Due	2,570	2,208
Income in advance	116	135
Hall Deposit control	880	830
Allotment Key deposits	30	39
MUGA Key deposits	330	270
Allotment Tenancy deposits	1,200	840
	119,976	**107,767**
Balances at 31st March		
Precept during year:	258,669	253,576
Other Income during year:	43,884	33,599
Total Expenditure:	282,477	282,988
Transfers to/(from) EMRs	-6,158	-42,756
General Fund	**164,924**	**138,689**
Ear Marked Reserves:		
EMR- Skatepark	36,000	36,000
EMR - Extra CCTV	236	236
EMR - Vehicle Replacement	7,101	6,101
EMR - Bus Shelter Refurb	316	316
EMR - Elections	5,269	9,540
EMR- Streetlighting	600	600
EMR - Funday	309	1,580
EMR - Archive Group	467	467
EMR - Resource Centre	6,899	6,899
EMR - Professional Fees	5,000	3,100
EMR - Equipment Repairs	500	500
EMR - St Johns Play Area	19,846	19,846
EMR - Community Project	11,475	21,108
EMR - Christmas Lights	-	0
EMR - Website	1,000	1,000
EMR - Apportionment Recharges	-	0
EMR – Community development	71,855	71,855
EMR – HR Allotment clearance	4,000	4,000
EMR – Office H&S project	3,048	3,106
EMR – Coronation Fund	867	2,692
EMR – Community Centre Roof	35,000	27,000
Total Ear Marked Reserves	**209,788**	**215,946**
Closing Balance at 31st March	**374,710**	**354,634**

(The above figures are subject to amendment prior to audit. All figures rounded to nearest pound)