

Audlem Parish Newsletter Autumn 2018

Turnpike Field

The Parish Council is delighted to confirm that their bid to purchase the field was successful. At the recently held Open Meeting an update on the purchase of, and next steps for, the 11.5 acre field was given.

The clear feedback from residents at the two meetings held in April and the questionnaires submitted was to ensure that the field was not sold to a developer, thereby losing this important green space for ever.

The main points mentioned at the meeting are noted below.

- Before submitting its bid, Councillors had been advised by two professionals that the likely amount to be successful would be considerably above £200,000.
- The successful bid was £227,500, but also having to pay land charges, the vendor's costs and its own minimal legal fees, meant that the total cost was £237,939.32.
- A loan from the Public Works Loan Board of £250,000 over 40 years had been secured at a fixed interest rate of 2.82%, meaning £10,463.66 will be repaid each year.
- The Parish Council's element of Council Tax will increase by approximately 25%. For a Band D property this equates to between £10 and £12 per year, depending on how quickly the new houses currently being built are occupied.
- The Parish Council is not going to rush into doing things with the field.

The plans for the next 12 months are to:

- set up a Working Group of Councillors and volunteers who are Michael Cookson, Steve Elliott, Judy Evans, Neil Goodyear and Ralph Warburton;
- create a temporary access to the field from Shropshire Street. Unfortunately this will not be wheelchair friendly due to the height of the field above the pavement;
- draw up plans to create a permanent pedestrian access from Shropshire Street and green car park by improving the current access on Green Lane;
- hold another Open Meeting in February next year to report on progress.