

## ALCONBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting held on Tuesday 30th March 2004 in the New Memorial Hall

### Present

Mrs. Watkin (Chair), Mrs Adams, Mr Dawson, Mrs Dix, Mrs Dyer, Mr. Lane and Mrs Turner.  
District Councillor Mrs Sarah Vanbergen. Mrs. Lancey (Clerk), 3 members of the public.

### Open Forum:

Clerk reported that the signs that had finally been delivered for Lordsway Park were quite inappropriate in that they were road signs as opposed to directional signs. They had immediately been removed. It appeared that there had been a complete misunderstanding from the outset as to what type of signs were required and HDC had not inspected the site. The Clerk had contacted the correct department for directional signs, but had subsequently been told that these could not be provided as they considered Lordsway Park to be the same as any other housing complex - which would not have directional signs. Clerk to contact residents of Lordsway Park accordingly.

Mr. Deller, on behalf of the British Legion, passed a quotation to the Parish Council for the refurbishment of the calligraphic Roll of Honour which had been hanging in the Church. The quotation was for £485. Mrs Adams had brought the Roll of Honour along in order that it could be inspected by the Parish Council. It was decided to discuss this matter later on during the meeting under "Correspondence".

Mr Deller reported that the "Property Plus" sign was still in Manor Lane, in spite of the Clerk asking on several occasions for it to be removed. Clerk to action.

It was also remarked upon that the police presence in the village was reassuring.

### 1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Mrs Elphick, Mr. Vanbergen and Councillor Peter Downes

### 2. Minutes

The Minutes of the last meeting held on 24th February 2004 were approved and signed.

### 3. Committee Reports

#### i. Infrastructure Report

Churchyard: Nothing to report.

ii. Village Green: A fallen tree was across the brook near Frumetty Lane. Clerk to report.

iii. General: Logs had been thrown into the Brook near the Sports & Social Club. Mrs. Dix to inspect. Clerk reported that Peter Rowlings the Tree Warden had been pruning trees in and around the village. Letter of thanks to be sent. Clerk reported that when replacing a lamp post on the village green, the contractors had also removed the planters that were on the post. These would be returned. Clerk reminded Councillors that they had agreed to inspect areas of the village on a regular basis – Frumetty Lane to Maple End (VJD), Beech End to Rusts Lane (RVB), Bell Lane to Rusts Lane (RL). The laurel hedge was still overhanging the footpath from Bell Lane to Rusts Lane. Clerk to chase. The hedge behind Coulson Way was again overhanging the footpath to Rusts Lane. Clerk to contact HDC to see if they could put pressure on residents of Coulson Way. There was a crack in the tarmac at the bottom of The Paddocks near the surgery. Clerk to report. It was agreed that

benches in the village needed to be either cleaned or repaired. Clerk to organise.

iv. Planning:

There had been no new applications or applications determined.

iv. Bramble End Playground: Nothing to report.

4. Matters Arising

i. New Memorial Hall – Application for Funding: Clerk reported that the completed application form requesting funding towards the construction of the footpath in front of the surgery had been received from the New Memorial Hall. There was agreement in principle to granting the application but there were minor problems with the completion of the form, and it was felt that these should be rectified prior to releasing the cheque for £1,742.79. Clerk to organise.

ii. Council Matters Sub Committee: Two draft documents prepared by the Sub Committee had been circulated to Councillors. The Sub Committee had considered three main topics: (a) Remuneration for Councillors and Chairs, (b) Adopting a Code of Conduct and (c) Quality Parish Council Status. These were discussed at some length. The recommendation for (a) was against remuneration for Chairs but was in favour of ensuring that Councillors were aware that they could apply for reimbursement of appropriate expenses. The recommendation for (b) was that the Council should formally adopt the Standard Code Of Conduct but that the Chair should be elected for no more than 3 years. After a lapse of one year, a Chair could stand for re-election if appropriate. Item (c) - The Sub Committee had recommended that the Parish Council should aim to achieve Quality Parish Council Status. The first step towards this was for the Clerk to obtain the AQA certificate. These recommendations of the Sub Committee were unanimously accepted. The second draft document was a Job Specification for Parish Councillors. This was also accepted. Final documents to be produced.

iii. Bench – Play Area - ASSC: The Clerk enquired whether the bench, promised by the Parish Council, was still required by the ASSC. Provision had been delayed due to the temporary closure of Spectrum the suppliers of the bench. Mrs Adams to check and Mrs. Dix to enquire whether Spectrum were now able to produce the bench.

iv. Traffic Calming – The Great North Road: Clerk reported that Alconbury's bid to be included in the traffic calming measures granted to Alconbury Weston had not been successful but that this year's application forms were to be issued May/June.

iv. Jackie Barnard: Clerk reported that Jackie Barnard, Street Warden would be happy to come along to the next Parish Council meeting on 27th April. Clerk to organise.

v. Sandbags: Clerk reported that 18 requests for sandbags had been passed to HDC.

vi. Neighbourhood Watch Fete: The idea of the Parish Council having a display at the fete was considered worthwhile. Mrs. Dix to investigate source of display boards. Mr. Lane suggested a village quiz might also be organised for the event. Clerk to book space with Neighbourhood Watch.

vii. Increase in Council Membership: Clerk reported that the Order had now been received from HDC authorising the increase in membership so the notices advertising these vacancies would now go onto the notice board. Should an election be necessary it would

be held in June along with other local elections.

viii. Salt/Grit Bins: After some discussion it was agreed that salt/grit bins should be provided in two locations – the old Rusts Lane and adjacent to the footbridge on the village green. Bins to be provided later on in the year.

ix. Community Safety Partnership Presentation: Mrs. Watkin and Mrs. Adams had attended – Mrs. Watkin joining the workshop on underage drinking and Mrs Adams the workshop of youths wandering around the community. They both agreed the presentation had been very worthwhile and would be useful when working with the Youth Group. Young people from Brampton had given very worthy presentations.

x. Flood Forum: Mrs. Watkin had attended the recent Flood Forum. She reported that Alconbury Weston had raised complaints concerning the late timing of the flood warning system. The Environment Agency had replied that the calls had been delayed as a result of the previous system being changed after many complaints had been received when people had been contacted too early and the waters had not risen as expected. Mrs. Watkin was concerned that the Environment Agency thought that Alconbury suffered from rising water as quickly as Alconbury Weston when this was not in fact the case. Clerk to clarify with EA. Clerk also to obtain a copy of the Self Help Leaflet issued by the EA.

xi. "Twenty 16": This publication had now been circulated to all Councillors. The only comment made was surprise at the potential sale of land by the Church Commissioners at the top of Rusts Lane, but it was appreciated that this proposal was not included in any immediate plans. The document was passed to Mr. Dawson for consideration with the Parish Plan.

xii. The Parish Plan: The Clerk gave the completed Grant Application Form to the Chair for signature. Clerk to return completed forms to the Countryside Agency. Mr Dawson reported that at their next meeting the Steering Group would be considering their Draft Constitution together with a flyer/questionnaire which would be distributed by using strategically placed "pick up points" in the village. They also proposed putting up notices to make the general public aware that the Parish Plan needed their support. Four new people were to be seconded onto the Steering Group. He requested liaison with the Youth Group in order that efforts in this area were not duplicated.

xiii. Youth Group: Mrs Watkin and Mrs. Adams reported on the recent meeting of the youth group, which unfortunately had not been attended by Sharon McCrorie of the Huntingdon Youth Centre. She had subsequently sent her apologies. As a result of her absence, the application for funding might be delayed. It was agreed that, if necessary, the £4,000 in the 2004/2005 Precept should be made immediately available for the employment of youth workers. Nigel Murphy had been seconded onto the group and would act as Chair, supported by Mrs. Adams. Mrs. Whitehead and Mrs. Hose would jointly fill the post of Secretary and the Clerk would act as the Treasurer. The Treasurer would not necessarily have to attend Group meetings. The Group would be working on questionnaires to be distributed through the various schools in order to gain the views of young people in the villages. Mrs. Watkin had arranged another meeting with Sharon McCrorie to get the funding application underway without further delay. It was generally felt that this Group needed more support.

5. Correspondence (A list of all correspondence had been circulated)

- i. Quality Parish and Town Status Conference: CALC will be holding a conference on 28th April. Mrs. Watkin to attend.
- ii Huntingdonshire Domestic Violence Forum: Mrs. Watkin had responded to this group giving information of facilities within the village where leaflets could possibly be displayed.
- iii Pilot Liaison Meetings with HDC: It was agreed that Alconbury would wish to be represented at any such Pilot Meetings. Clerk to respond accordingly. Mrs. Dyer to attend.
- iv. Changes to Local Bus Services: Clerk reported minor changes made to late afternoon service between Alconbury and Huntingdon.
- v. Standards Committee: Agenda for next meeting and minutes of December meeting had been received.
- vi. Standard Board: Information on Local Investigations of Allegations of Misconduct had been circulated to Councillors.
- vii Code of Conduct: Advice in respect of planning issues had been circulated to Planning Committee.
- viii. Draft Recommendations of the Boundary Committee: This had been circulated. No comments had been made by Councillors.
- ix. Flood Alleviation Scheme: Clerk reported that the EA had secured additional Grant in Aid funding which would allow the scheme in Alconbury to commence earlier than expected – in 2005/2006. The Schemes for Alconbury and Alconbury Weston would now be treated separately.
- x. Calligraphic Roll of Honour: The quotation submitted by Mr. Deller on behalf of the Royal British Legion was considered. It was agreed to donate £300 towards this work. Clerk to copy correspondence to The Friends and Alconbury Weston Parish Council to seek further contributions. It was agreed the Roll of Honour should remain in the Church after refurbishment.
- xi. Scout Litter Pick: Mrs Vanbergen reported that the Scouts had been advised, due to health and safety issues, not to carry out their annual litter pick in the village. In view of this she would contact HDC to see if they could arrange to tidy up the village.

#### 6. Responsible Finance Officer's Report

Clerk reported that a VAT Return had been completed and submitted for reimbursement. Work would shortly commence on the year end accounts. Any surplus funds remaining from the financial year 2003/2004 would be transferred to the Deposit Account.

- i. Payment of Accounts: The following accounts were passed for Payment:

Grafton Projects – Photocopying £20.97

Realtime Distribution – New Computer - £509.00

Clerk's Salary – 32 hours (March) £241.60

Rent – Church Commissioners – New Memorial Hall - £58.75

Petty Cash - £8.59

ADCHC - £1,742.79 – footpath construction.

Payments were proposed by Mr Dawson and seconded by Mrs Dyer.

ii. Free Balances: Clerk reported free balances at Deposit Acct. £21,343.93 (no statement available for end of March) and Current Acct. £1021.76.

## 7. Representative Reports

### i. New Memorial Hall

The AGM had taken place on 26th March 2004 when most of the Management Committee had stood down. Mr. Trevor Cross had been elected as the new Chair. Mr. Alan Robertson had agreed to continue as Secretary until the matters with the Charities Commission and the further request for lottery funding had been brought to conclusion. It was explained that this request for lottery funding was for laying tarmac in the car park. Several members of the Parish Council thought this would not be a suitable finish for the car park and that gravel would be a better alternative. The Hall would be closed for a short period while the floor was re-sealed. It also needed redecorating. Mrs. Watkin paid tribute to the hard work carried out by the retiring Management Committee and was hopeful that more contribution would be made by the various user groups towards the newly appointed Committee.

### ii CALC

Mrs. Dyer reported on the latest CALC meeting, when a very informative talk had been given by Shirley Simpson of the Crime and Prevention Distraction Burglary Unit

### iii RAF Molesworth

Mrs Dyer reported that she was making progress with her letter aimed at diverting American traffic away from the centre of the village. She would be having further discussions with the Base Commander to raise the profile of this problem at the next liaison meeting on 28th April.

## 8. Date of Next Meeting:

The next meeting is to be held on Tuesday 27th April at 7.45pm in the New Memorial Hall. Clerk reminded the Council that there would be a short presentation from Jackie Barnard before the meeting.