

ALCONBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 28th November 2006 in the New Memorial Hall

Present:

Mr. Brown (Chairman), Mr Senior, Mrs Adams, Mrs Aylott, Mrs Dyer, Mrs Elphick, Mrs Hathaway, Mr Watson and Mrs Williams. District Councillor Keith Baker. Mrs Lancey (Clerk). 7 members of the public.

Public Forum

Mr Wade enquired about progress on the planned speed restrictions along the Great North Road. Clerk had chased HDC and had been informed that confirmation from the street lighting department was awaited to ensure that the existing lighting in the area was adequate for the proposed measures. Other areas such as Alconbury Weston and Abbots Ripton were discussed where speed restrictions were in place with very little or no lighting at all. Clerk to contact HDC to make further enquiries.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Mrs Watkin, and County Councillors Sir Peter Brown and Elaine Kadic.

2. Councillors' Interests

None recorded.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meetings held on 31st October, 13th November and 20th November 2006

Proposed by Mr Senior and Mrs Adams and seconded by Mr Watson and were duly approved and signed.

4. Matters Arising

Small Scale Environmental Improvement Scheme 2007/08 This had been submitted for enhancement to the pump/Maypole Square area. The plan was to delineate some of the area as pedestrian and if practical, include a planting scheme in order to emphasise the central position in the village. It was also intended that the enhancement would make the road appear to be more narrow at this point and hence reduce the speeding traffic from High Street through to Chapel Street. It was acknowledged that enough space needed to be left for both the library van and the fish and chip van.

Hinchingbrooke Hospital In response to the Parish Council's letter concerning proposed cuts/closures, the East of England Strategic Health Authority (SHA) had stated that no plans had been set out to close the hospital, but that a review was being carried out to ensure the best balance between clinical safety, good local access, sensible use of clinical staff and affordability. A copy of the official response to the SHA made by the District Council had also been received which stated their outrage at any cuts in service at Hinchingbrooke. It was agreed that the clerk should reply to the SHA emphasising that closures to any part of the hospital would be unacceptable to local residents.

Land at Field Close - The clerk had again contacted HDC who had originally owned the land in question. It had been sold to the Ministry of Transport in 2 parcels in 1964 and 1968, but unfortunately no records existed showing the extent of the land sold. Both the Ministry of Transport and RMS the Managing Agents for the A1 had been contacted but

neither organisation would take any responsibility. The Estates and Property Manager at HDC had suggested that the Parish Council should write to any residents in Field Close who were concerned about this strip of land saying that if they wished to go ahead and carry out maintenance on the land they were at liberty to do so, but that the Parish Council were not in a position to give them permission to carry out any work as they were not the land owners, and that any such work was done entirely at the risk of the residents concerned. Clerk to action accordingly.

Quality Council Status Clerk had received dates for the training course for a Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) which was to start in January 2007. She had sent off registration forms and applied for the Clerk's Bursary to claim £200 towards the costs of the course and registration. A Lunchtime Quality Workshop was to be held on 11th December and would be attended by the Clerk and Mrs Watkin.

Speed Restrictions – Great North Road – Discussed under Public Forum.

'Flood Relief Road' – Public Access – Smiths Gore on behalf of the Church Commissioners had confirmed that the bottom part of this road, where the gate leads onto School Lane, was acquired by the Secretary of State for Transport. They were not optimistic that the Parish Council would be able to get a satisfactory response from the Dept. of Transport. Clerk to pursue.

A14 Ellington to Fen Ditton Improvement – A presentation on the further public consultation would be attended by Mr Watson on 30th November. Clerk had contacted Robert Roweth (HCV Route Manager) with the Parish Council's concerns about increased traffic using the slip road leading to Truckstop as a result of the A14 improvements. He advised that the Head of Transport Asset Management in Cambridge should be contacted. Clerk to action. As to the general problem of large commercial vehicles entering the village by mistake, he had advised that an in-cab route map would be installed by summer 2007 which might help the situation. A recent audit of signs in the village had not shown the signage to be inadequate. It was suggested that an "Alconbury sign" when entering the village from the slip road under the flyover might be of some use. Mrs Aylott agreed to contact Neighbourhood Watch to get their views on this together with possible funding.

5. Committee Reports

a) Clerk's infrastructure Report

Churchyard: Nothing to report.

Village Green: Horses had again been galloping on the green. Clerk to contact local stables.

General: Highways had cut back a bush overhanging the approach to the bridge.

A swing had been vandalised in Bramble End and would be replaced. Quote for fitting of £20 was agreed.

Contamination in the brook stream at the first bridge along Globe Lane had been reported to the Environment Agency and dealt with.

The Clerk had obtained a quotation for cutting back hedges along the path behind Coulson Way and removing the debris of £80. This was accepted.

Councillors complained about the surface of Spinney Lane which was in an appalling state. Clerk to contact Highways.

Mrs. Adams enquired whether something could be done to stop the bridges over the brook at the bottom of Polecat Lane becoming so slippery. It was suggested that chicken wire

might help. Clerk to pursue with CCC.

b) Planning

New Applications: None

Applications Determined by Huntingdonshire District Council:

0602943FUL – Conversion of barn to dwelling and erection of four dwellings – The Maltings - granted.

Mrs Dyer queried why reference had been made to support for secondary schools in the area and not Alconbury primary school, which was full to capacity. Clerk to make enquiries.

0602944CAC – Demolition of barn – The Maltings - withdrawn.

0603175FUL – Change of use of agricultural to car parking – land rear of Steves Car Sales - withdrawn.

0602652FUL – Erection of dwelling and garage – land NW of 6 the Maltings – withdrawn

0603290FUL – Change of use – agricultural building to use as car repairs and agricultural contractors with associated parking – Woolley Leys Farm – granted.

0603475FUL – Erection of conservatory – 14 Sharps Lane - granted

c) Bramble End Playground

Monthly inspection carried out. Damaged swing to be replaced as reported above. Clerk pursuing quotation for building up soil around helicopter edges.

6. Correspondence

Donation Request – Over 60s Club

Donation agreed of £200 to go towards annual outing. Should the club fall short of funds nearer the outing date they should approach the Parish Council again.

Donation Request Cambs. Police Shrievally Trust towards the “Bobby Scheme”

This scheme provides practical help for older people who are either victims of burglary or who are worried about their security. Over the past 6 years the Scheme has spent £1748 in Alconbury area. Donation of £200 agreed.

Letter of Complaint – Residents of Bramble End

Residents in Bramble End had been experiencing harassment from teenagers and one incident of arson had recently been reported to the Police. The playing of ball games against their house wall was also causing great concern. The residents had asked the Parish Council to consider both fencing in the area and street lighting alongside the play area. Considerable discussion took place and it was agreed that the residents should supply the Clerk with a log of when problems occurred which would be passed to the Community Safety Team. Enquiries would also be made concerning lighting and fencing. It was acknowledged that in view of the damaged swing as reported above, this was an area for concern in the village.

Cambs. and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Consultation

Mr Brown reported that the site adjacent to the A1 and Alconbury Airfield were both preferred options for waste management. Weybridge Farm was not a preferred option for sand and gravel.

Parish Path Partnership

To be deferred until the January meeting.

CALC/HDA Liaison Meeting – Jan 10th 2007

Topics for discussion the Boundary Review and Communications. Mrs. Dyer to attend.

Website Link with National Childbirth Trust

Link to be deferred until other changes made to the Parish Council website.

Royal Mail 1st People Award

No nominations put forward.

7. Responsible Finance Officer's Report

After some discussion, the draft Precept Budget which showed an increase from £19,500 for 06/07 to £24,000 for 07/08 was agreed. It was reiterated that two areas of increase had been unavoidable – grass cutting which had to be increased by £2877 from the previous year and the additional costs incurred for the Parish Council to obtain Quality Status of approx. £1000. The Parish Council had therefore no alternative other than to request this increase from the District Council. Clerk to submit request by 15th Dec. 06

Cheques for signature:

Caresco – Donation - £150

Alan Summerfield – Grass Cutting - £3066.75

Pipex Broadband - £14.99

Clerk's Salary – November - £331.32

Clerk's Salary – December (no meeting in Dec.) - £331.53

Demon – Web Hosting - £11.75

Church Commissioners – Memorial Hall rental - £58.75

Wicksteed Leisure – replacement swing - £101.64

Petty Cash top up - £19.10

There were three additional cheques for signature for the Youth Group which had been notified to Councillors as follows:

Nigel Murphy – portable outside lighting for the Youth Group - £83.84

Camb. County Council – payment for youth worker - £680

Nigel Murphy – petty cash - £200

Payments were proposed by Mr Watson and seconded by Mrs Aylott.

Cleared Balances:

Current Account: £10,187.83 Deposit Account £26,686.55

Youth Group Account: £4329.60

8. The Parish Plan

Clerk reported that Stan Rees of Cambridgeshire ACRE had met with the working party and would be presenting the Action Plan to the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership Executive on 25th January 2007. The Plan would then go to the full board about 2-3 weeks later. When Stan Rees had completed his report he would forward a copy to the Parish Council.

9. The Memorial Hall

Mrs Adams reported that Mr Vanbergen had resigned from the Hall Committee. Work was being carried out on a new publicity brochure for the Hall. The lounge was to be re-named the Derek Cox Room in his memory and some other memorial such as a bench was also being considered by the Committee. Mr Murphy had presented plans for the proposed play area and had marked out its rough size (12m x 22m) on the far side of grassed area the

greatest distance from the Hall. Although concerns had been expressed over how the area would be managed and what impact it might have on functions taking place in the Hall, the Committee had been supportive of the idea and agreed to it in principle. An Abba Night was arranged for 9th December.

10. The Youth Group

The junior club continued to be very successful and the aim was now to split the club into younger and older sessions. The detached youth team continued to provide excellent support to the club once a month.

Mrs Adams reported on the proposed play area as outlined to the Memorial Hall Committee. Plans and designs were shown to the Parish Council. Two quotes had been received in the region of £50K - £70K for a 2-3 mtr. high metal fenced, double gated tarmac facility, with football, basket ball and cricket play options. Floodlights would also be included. In addition, some external seating/shelter was also being considered. Funds would have to be raised for the vast majority of the facility. It was considered that some kind of hedge along the side facing the hall would be an advantage.

The Parish Council were in support of the plan, but appreciated that many issues needed to be considered such as the requirement for planning permission any leasing or tenancy requirements and how best to achieve a consultation with the public. It was agreed that as a first step the Clerk would clarify with HDC any planning requirements.

The Clerk confirmed that she would be meeting with Nigel Murphy to discuss expenditure to date of the Grant.

11. The Sports & Social Club

It was reported that the Committee were still in negotiation with the Football Foundation but that a grant offer had been made for 72% of the total project costs. More funding was required from the ASSC who were in contact with WREN. The question of whether VAT would be payable on the project costs was a major concern. Clerk to write a letter of congratulations to the Committee.

The fireworks night had been very successful.

12. CALC

Mrs Dyer reported that special interest groups would be set up to report concisely on items such as transport, health etc. and any such reports would be available on CALC's website. There are to be a new guidelines on the Code of Conduct concerning personal and prejudicial interests for councillors serving on different committees.

At the next Liaison Meeting the closure of the St. Neots Registry Office is to be raised.

13. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on 30th January 2007 in the Memorial Hall, starting at 7.45pm.

The AGM of the Neighbourhood Watch is to be held on Wednesday 6th December 2006.