

ALCONBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 27th May 2008 in the New Memorial Hall

Present:

Mr Senior (Chair), Mrs Aylott, Mrs Adams, Mr Brown, Mrs Dyer, Mr Hardy, Mrs Hathaway, Mrs Watkin, Mr Watson and Mrs Williams. Mrs Lancey (Clerk). 4 members of the public.

Public Forum

Mr Oldfield complained that the conversion of the Methodist Chapel into a dwelling had been carried out prior to planning permission being granted and he felt that this made a complete mockery of the planning system. It was explained that HDC Planning had already been approached on this matter, and they had stated that planning permission was not required for maintenance of the building, and it was considered that the work carried out prior to planning consent could be construed as maintenance. As planning consent had now been given there was little else that could be done.

18. Apologies for Absence

Apologies received from Mrs Elphick.

19. Councillors' Declaration of Interest for items on the Agenda

Mrs Williams declared a prejudicial interest in Planning Application 0801295FUL being a neighbour of the property in question. Mrs Dyer declared a personal interest in the request for a donation from Alconbury Cricket Club as her husband was its President.

20. To sign and approve minutes of previous meeting held on 27th May 2008.

Proposed by Mrs Watkin and seconded by Mrs Aylott. Minutes duly approved and signed.

21. Village Noticeboards (brought forward from item 26)

Clerk confirmed that paperwork had been completed for installation of the two new noticeboards. A small payment to HDC for consideration and costs were to be made. Mrs Aylott informed the meeting that Neighbourhood Watch wished their board to be erected on the corner of Field Close and Manor Lane, leaving the Bramble End/Spinney Lane site for Mr. Carlson's board. As Mr. Carlson was present at the meeting he confirmed that this would not be a problem. He also confirmed that his fund raising was almost complete and that he anticipated erecting the board the middle week in August. He also confirmed that as part of the project he would erect the board being donated by Neighbourhood Watch

22. Proposed Community Orchard

The Clerk had contacted the owners of the land on Mill Road with a view to providing a community orchard. The owners had replied asking for any proposals to be put in writing and also stating their original purchase price of the land in question. They also asked for support from the Parish Council for planning permission for two houses on the land adjacent to 3 Mill Road. It was agreed that the Clerk should reply that all planning applications were judged on their own merit. It was also agreed that general enquiries as to the availability of the land should continue.

23. Jointly Funded Minor Improvement Scheme 09/10 Bidding Round

Forms for the 09/10 Bidding Round needed to be completed by 1st August. Clerk reminded Councillors that the 08/09 Bid for speed restrictions in Rusts Lane had been unsuccessful as the cost would have exceeded the JFMI budget. It was agreed that a

further bid should be made for the same proposal but making clear that the scheme could be flexible in financial terms.

24. Neighbourhood Panel Meeting – report by Mr Hardy

At the meeting Mr Hardy had stressed the problems being encountered at Truck Stop requesting that the Road Traffic Act should be enforced for any illegal parking in the area. He had also asked that the parking issues at Globe Lane cross roads should be monitored together with the area under the flyover. These issues would be reported on at the next meeting. He also mentioned the training of residents in the use of speed guns which would be covered at the forthcoming meeting in Little Stukeley on 7th July.

25. Field Close – update from Clerk

As agreed a low level fence along the land in question had been erected. This had been carried out by CCC Highways. One resident had also contacted the Land Registry with a view to obtaining adverse possession of the piece of land behind her house and had subsequently been informed that the land was registered to The Highways Agency. This was in spite of the fact that the Clerk held a certificate saying the land in question was not registered to anyone. Clerk had written to the Land Registry, copied to both HDC Legal Dept., the Highways Agency and the resident concerned to try and resolve this issue. In light of this, the work planned for the area (quotation for £200) had been cancelled. If it transpired that the land did indeed belong to The Highways Agency, all possible pressure would be brought to bear on them to maintain the area in a suitable manner.

26. Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

Information on flooding from sources other than main rivers had been requested on behalf of HDC in order to produce a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. This was discussed. Clerk to respond accordingly.

27. Request for donation from Alconbury Cricket Club

Donation requested for a replacement artificial cricket pitch. After some discussion it was agreed to donate £500 – this would come from Section 137 funds. Letter of appreciation for the hard work of all the volunteers at the Cricket Club should also be sent.

28. The Youth Group – report from Mrs. Aylott.

Club membership now averaged 90 young people, with a fairly even split between the age groups. Various fund raising events for the Ball Park had been organised – a recycling project, a car wash and a quiz night. Nigel Murphy would now start applying for various grants. No decision had been reached on the issue of charging. A straw poll had been suggested. The funds set aside by the Parish Council had been clarified

29. The Sports & Social Club – report from Mr Watson

The area along the Brook at the bottom of the sports field would be cleared this year. Work on the main project of extending facilities had begun and the new changing rooms had been built. Groundwork had started on the newly purchased land. Project should be completed by Sept/Oct of this year. An article on the new facilities would go into the next issue of the Parish Pump. It was agreed that the Clerk should also mention the scheme in her article for the magazine, reminding readers that the money donated by the Parish Council had come from 106 funds and not the Parish Precept.

It was agreed that a letter of congratulations should be sent to the Trustees of the Club on their success with this major project. Updates on the progress of the scheme might go into the next Parish Council Newsletter.

30. Neighbourhood Watch – report from Mrs Aylott

Young people had again been gathering under the flyover and the Police had been called. A bench in memory of Barry Stock has been selected and would be positioned in front of the Memorial Hall. Neighbourhood Watch had agreed to provide planters for Maypole Square, but planting and maintenance would rest with the Parish Council. Cars speeding throughout the village had been reported. It was stressed that if possible registration numbers should be taken in order for the Police to take any action. (The provision of a new noticeboard - covered in item 21 above).

31. Alconbury Airfield – May Newsletter – Response from HDC

Following the article about the containers stacked on the airfield in the Parish Council Newsletter, HDC had responded saying that although they had no objection to dealing directly with the public, they would have preferred to put a quote from themselves into the Newsletter. They had also requested that should such a circumstance arise again, they were notified prior to publicising an officer's correspondence details in order that they might prepare for the work generation.

As the planning application for renewal of facilities on the airbase had now been received, it was suggested that someone from HDC Planning might be invited to attend the July meeting in order that they might hear views from the public. Neighbouring parishes should also be invited.

32. The Annual Report

The Report was at the printers. Thanks to be sent to Lodge Printers for their help. Mr Senior expressed his thanks to Mrs Aylott and the Clerk for their work on the report.

33. Committee Reports

a) Clerk's infrastructure Report

Churchyard: No observations.

Village Green: Part of a lime tree along Brookside had blown down in recent high winds. Clerk had obtained quotation for £346.62 for removal of the damaged trunk and work on the remaining tree. Quote accepted.

Mrs Aylott had donated an oak sapling for planting on the green.

Peter Rowlings had identified further tree work to be done on the village green towards the winter. Clerk to obtain quotation.

The recent accidental damage to the green along Brookside would be repaired by those responsible.

General: Complaints had been received about overgrown trees belonging to the property on the corner of The Maltings and Chapel Street obstructing visibility. These had duly been cut back by the resident concerned.

Dogs were being allowed to foul on the play area at Bramble End. It was decided that a leaflet drop should be carried out to houses surrounding Bramble End. Clerk to also pursue dog fouling signs from HDC.

The electricity supply company had complained about trees overhanging their cables along the Great North Road towards the ASSC. Clerk had organised trimming with CCC Highways Dept.

The path between Bell Lane and Hawthorn End was overgrown by shrubs from a property in Hawthorn End. Clerk to contact resident accordingly.

The Bridleway between Alconbury and Alconbury Weston was totally overgrown in places. Clerk to pursue.

Further complaints had been received about the footpath in School Lane. Clerk to contact Highways.

b) Planning

New Applications

0800572FUL – Erection of dwelling and garage – Land Adjacent 1 Globe Lane – amended plans – no further observations

0801295FUL – Demolition of annex and conversion of chapel into a dwelling and erection of porch – Alconbury Methodist Church, Chapel Street – amended plans. Councillors queried the use of orange ridge tiles on the slate roof.

0801618LBC – Repairs to boundary wall, Manor Farm Church Way – no observations.

Applications determined by HDC:

0801221FUL – Erection of 2 storey extension, 51 Manor Lane - permission granted.

0801295FUL – Demolition of annex and conversion of Chapel into a dwelling – Alconbury Methodist Church, Chapel Street -permission granted

It was noted that the old McDonalds restaurant had been demolished. Clerk confirmed that no planning application for the site had been received.

c) Bramble End Playground – Report from Mrs Williams

The edges of the wetpour surfaces needed some attention. Clerk to contact contractor. Shackles on swings still needed to be lubricated.

A resident in the area was regularly clearing debris, including broken glass from the play equipment. Letter of thanks to be sent. Youths had also been seen climbing over the fence from Bramble End into the school grounds. PCSO's to be alerted and the school and neighbouring properties to be advised of the problem. Clerk to investigate the possibility of a further litter bin in the area.

34. Correspondence

Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report – circulated to all.

Thanks from the PCC for recent donation to work in the Churchyard. – the PCC were also involved with repairs and replacement of part of the Church roof timbers.

Meeting on Speeding Issues – 7th July – to be attended by Mrs Aylott and Mrs Watkin.

Post Office Closures Meeting – 17th July – to be attended by Mrs Dyer

Notification that Natalie Culver (Community Relations) has left RAF Alconbury.

Councillors' Code of Conduct and Declaration of Interest Flowchart – distributed to all.

New Rivercare Handbook – passed to Mrs Dyer. It was decided not to carry out another brook clearance this year. A second one could possibly be arranged for next year.

35. Responsible Finance Officer's Report

New Bank Account. This had now been opened. Transfer cheques for new account as below.

Arrangements for Insurance Premium Renewal

As agreed at the last meeting the cheque had already been raised for the revised insurance premium in order to include the changes in asset values listed on the Annual Return and to meet the renewal date. Cheque listed below.

Cheques for signature:

Stuart & Co – Insurance renewal - £658.71

Pipex Internet (June 08) - £14.99

Grafton Projects – stationery - £4.70

Grafton Projects – stationery - £27.00
Norton Anti-virus Renewal - £50.82
Clerk's Salary June 2008 - £365.78
H M Revenue & Customs – PAYE/NI Contributions - £280.99
Alconbury Parish Council – Transfer Cheque C/A - £22,782.00
Alconbury Parish Council – Transfer Cheque D/A - £13,936.69
Payments were proposed by Mrs Aylott and seconded by Mrs Williams

Cleared Balances: C/A £22,782.00D/A £13,936.69 Y/G £1895.14

36. Date of Next Meeting

29th July 2008 at the earlier time of 7.30pm in the Memorial Hall.