

ALCONBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 25th March 2008 in the Memorial Hall

Present:

Mr Senior (Chair), Mrs Aylott (Vice Chair), Mr Brown, Mrs Dyer, Mrs Elphick, Mr Hardy, Mrs Hathaway, Mrs Watkin, Mr Watson and Mrs Williams. District Councillor Keith Baker. Mrs Lancey (Clerk) 5 members of the public.

Mr Paul Foice from Huntingdonshire District Council Housing Services attended the meeting in order to discuss Rural Exception Sites. He explained that this procedure was, as the name suggested, an exception to normal planning policy and provided affordable housing for local people. The way the system worked was that should the Parish Council feel there was a need for this type of housing within Alconbury, they could arrange for a survey to be carried out to substantiate their concerns. He explained that under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 a legally binding agreement would be entered into between the developer and HDC that any housing which might be built would remain in perpetuity as affordable housing for local people. Any tenant could have shared ownership with the housing association but could not buy a property outright. Any obligations would be transferred to subsequent owners of the site. After some discussion it was agreed that the Parish Council would put this as an agenda item for their April meeting. Mr Senior thanked Mr Foice for attending the meeting.

Public Forum

Mr Scott enquired whether there were any plans for the old Truckstop site. Councillor Baker confirmed that no planning application had been submitted to HDC. He would keep the Parish Council informed.

The height of containers stored on the airbase was also discussed. It was agreed this was most unsightly and the Clerk would write to HDC accordingly. Members of the public should also be encouraged to complain.

The poor state of the paths in School Lane were discussed. It was agreed that should the County Council not have sufficient funds to carry out all necessary work, the bottom section leading from Manor Lane was in most need of attention.

200. Apologies for Absence

Apologies received from Mrs Adams.

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

None declared.

202. To sign and approve minutes of previous meeting held on 26th February and 11th March 2008.

Proposed by Mrs Aylott and seconded by Mr Watson. Minutes duly approved and signed.

203. Proposed Work in the Churchyard

Mr Scott outlined the proposed work in the Churchyard which entailed re-siting 4 memorials creating space for further burials in the existing churchyard whilst also allowing access to any further plot that may be considered as a future burial ground. He had obtained a quotation for £520 for the work involved and was asking the Parish Council to consider meeting this cost. The PCC had also approached Alconbury Weston Parish Council. Mrs Baker from Alconbury Weston Parish Council confirmed that this would be discussed at their next meeting. After some discussion it was agreed to pay £400 towards

this work.

204. Lordsway Park

Mr Baker and Mrs Horsley, residents of Lordsway Park, attended the meeting to express their concerns about this part of the village. The main problem was the amount of water which drained in pipes down the concrete supports of the flyover, spilling directly onto the road underneath the flyover causing localised flooding. This in turn did not help the general condition of the road leading to Lordsway Park, the surface of which was in a very poor state. As there was no path along this part of the High Street residents had no choice other than to walk in the road. There also seemed to be a spring at the bottom of Frumetty Lane which added to the water on the road's surface. Clerk to contact Highways with a view to meeting with them and residents to try and resolve these problems. Mr Senior also informed the meeting of a recent incident during the floods when some residents of Lordsway Park had been helped back to their homes with the help of Mr Roger Read. He took this opportunity to express his thanks to Mr Read for his assistance.

205. Truckstop Site

Clerk had requested that HDC clean up the area where lorries were illegally parking overnight. There was no further news on the installation of bollards in this area. Both the Highways Agency and CCC had begun to remove directional signs to the site. The sign on the slip road from the A1 near Brooklands Farm was still in situ and had been reported.

206. Field Close

HDC's Estates and Property Manager had been in discussion with the Land Registry and advised the Parish Council that the best way to proceed would be for the Parish Council to fence off the land in question and then to maintain it. When the requisite period under the Limitation Act (12 years) had been reached, the Parish Council could apply to acquire title to the land based on evidence of a statutory declaration that the land had been exclusively used by the Parish Council for that period of time. After some discussion it was decided that the residents in the area should receive a flyer explaining the situation to them together with the suggestion of a boundary fence being erected, and that the Scouts who wished to clear this area as a community project should be approached to see if a fence, if acceptable to all, could be incorporated into their plan. Clerk to research types and cost of fencing and also to see if the USAF might be asked to help with its erection.

207. Land for Allotments

Clerk had received notification from Alexanders (the agent dealing with the land adjacent to the bottom of Polecat Lane), that they continued to pursue their client reminding them that the Parish Council's request for the use of this land as allotments was still outstanding. Clerk had now received 7 applications from residents requiring allotments.

208. Request for Funding – 1st Alconbury Brownies

Request received for donation of £150 to go towards their running costs which were increasing due to the purchase of new craft materials and games equipment and an increase in external trips and events. It was also noted that it was planned to involve the Brownies in more village events than in the past. After some discussion it was agreed to donate £100 under Section 137. Alconbury Weston Parish Council had also been asked to contribute. 16 members of the Brownies came from Alconbury.

209. The Sports & Social Club – report from Mr Brown

A Project Manager had been appointed to oversee the planned extension of facilities.

There was still a significant shortfall in funding between available funds and the projected project cost, which the committee was working to raise. The current planning permission for new changing rooms expired in May and work would have to commence before this in order to avoid re-application. The planning application for change of use was due back from HDC on 28th March. As the entire project had to be committed to in order to obtain Football Foundation funding, the timescales were tight. The committee had thanked the Parish Council and in particular Mr Watson for his recent help with the project. Mr Senior offered the Parish Council's help with any outstanding issues. Due to the work load caused by the expansion programme, there would be no Charity Cricket Match this year.

210. The Youth Group – report from Mrs Aylott

The Youth Group continued to be very successful and extremely well attended, with a full list of events planned until August. It had been suggested that a few of the older members would initiate activities and maybe assist the leaders with the younger children. With Nigel Murphy working away it was increasingly difficult for him to attend meetings and it had been suggested that the committee should only meet on a quarterly basis. Keith Baker had stood down from the committee. The proposal for charging the children had still to be addressed. The group was still very keen to recruit any new adult helpers.

211. The Memorial Hall – report from Mrs Hathaway

A “deep clean” of the hall would take place on 11/12/13 April. Any volunteers would be welcome. More fund raising events were being planned. Mrs Hathaway would enquire again as to the status of the soundproofing for the lounge area.

212. Neighbourhood Watch – update from Mrs Aylott

The new seat on the village green had been dedicated to Derek Cox. Neighbourhood Watch requested the permission of the Parish Council to hold the village fete on the green on 12th July. This was agreed. Clerk to confirm. It was decided that due to lack of manpower the Parish Council would not have a stand at the fete this year, but perhaps would consider one in 2009.

213. Website Policy – report from Mrs Watkin

Mrs Watkin proposed the Parish Council should accept links on its website as follows:

- Any charitable or community organisation working within Alconbury village.
- Any commercial organisation operating in Alconbury and providing a service to residents
- Any commercial organisation from outside the village offering a specific service to Alconbury residents

Acceptance of a link did not imply any endorsement or knowledge of the organisation or charity. Mr Paul Tait would monitor all requests to ensure they conformed with the above. Policy document was agreed.

214. Signs for the Village Green

After some discussion it was decided not to proceed with the provision of signs requesting horses not to ride on the village green.

215. The Bi-monthly Newsletter and Annual Report

Mrs Williams went through topics for the next Newsletter. The results of the Duck Poster competition would be published. It was agreed that Mr Paul Tait should be asked to judge the entries. Mr Senior to contact Ray Carlson to ask for help with erection of the finished signs. A request had been received for a breakdown of the 2008/2009 Precept. It was agreed the Clerk should reply directly to the resident concerned rather than put an article

in the next Newsletter.

Format of the Chairman's Annual Report was discussed. It was agreed that this should be distributed as part of a "bumper" Newsletter in July.

216. Committee Reports

a) Clerk's infrastructure Report

Churchyard: No observations.

Village Green: Overflowing manhole cover had again been reported to Environmental Health.

General: Recent flooding was discussed. It was agreed that when the village was flooded an additional "closed" sign should be put along the High Street just below the shop/post office.

CCC had reported that they still awaited the results of the EA Flood Relief Study which would determine whether the current bridges at the bottom of Polecat Lane were to be replaced, and they were reluctant to spend money to alleviate slippery surfaces of the bridges until the outcome was known. Clerk to make further enquiries as to whether this Study was linked with the main Scheme which was not going ahead.

A kissing gate would be placed at the entrance to The Browse on the Great North Road.

b) Planning

New Applications

0800802FUL – Extensions to form living areas, bedrooms and swimming pool – Weybridge Farm – no observations.

Applications determined by HDC: None.

c) Bramble End Playground

Monthly inspections carried out with nothing specific to report.

Mr Watson and Mrs Williams had begun to gather plans and prices from suppliers. The ROSPA inspection was due in April.

217. Correspondence

Letter of thanks from Over 60s for recent donation.

Registered Trader Scheme - this is a list of responsible trusted traders available to residents over 60. Displayed on noticeboard and in shop.

Complaint re. parking in School Lane – Clerk had responded and also asked PCSO to visit.

DVD and leaflets from NATS concerning the new plans for aircraft activity over Cambridgeshire – circulated to all.

1APP - Letter from HDC explaining how they will deal with new planning applications from 6th May.

218. Responsible Finance Officer's Report

Clerk reported that these minutes would act as a declaration that specified councillors had authority to act on behalf of the Parish Council as signatories on the new bank account.

Cheques for signature:

Alconbury C of E Primary School – donation - £500 (Section 137)

Pipex Internet (Mar 08) - £14.99

Grafton Projects – Newsletter - £111.90
Paul Tait – website maintenance plus enhancements - £423
ADCHC – Craft Sessions Hall Bookings - £48
Clerk’s Salary March 2008 - £367.86
Provision of Youth Worker and Resources – CCC – Youth Group £625.70
ADCHC – Hall bookings Nov 07-Mar 08 – Youth Group - £50
Payments were proposed by Mr Senior and seconded by Mrs Aylott

Cleared Balances:

Current Account: £9,443.31 Deposit Account £13,738.72

Youth Group Account: £1,872.54

These balances would change when up to date statements had been received for the year end.

David Armstrong had agreed to continue to act as the Parish Council’s Internal Auditor.

219. Date of Next Meeting

29th April 2008 - 7.45 in the Memorial Hall.