

ALCONBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 25th August 2009 in the Memorial Hall

Present:

Mr Senior (Chair), Mrs Aylott , Mrs Adams, Mrs Elphick, Mr Hardy, Mrs Hathaway, Mr Lay, Mr Pickering and Mr Sale, Mr Watson and Mrs Williams. County Councillors Peter Brown and Laine Kadic, District Councillor Keith Baker. Mrs Lancey (Clerk). 1 member of the public.

Public Forum

Mr Hodgson reminded the Parish Council that there was only 1 year left before the temporary planning application on the airbase was due for renewal and he felt that Alconbury, together with other neighbouring Parish Councils should start to lobby HDC to ensure that any future application ensured proper development of the site. He considered that at the present time it was not being used for the purpose outlined in the current application and that the stacked containers continued to be an eyesore. Mr Senior pointed out that businesses on the airbase were providing many jobs that were vital in the current economic climate, and that the Parish Council was powerless to take any action until such time as the planning application was due for renewal. He assured Mr Hodgson that the Parish Council would take all steps to ensure that any renewal was correctly administered and adhered to.

Mr Hodgson complained that notices he had placed on noticeboards in the village had been removed. Mr Senior replied that it was not within the remit of the Parish Council to control what residents placed on or removed from these public noticeboards.

In reply to Mr Hodgson's recent query concerning traffic calming in Little Stukeley, Councillor Baker confirmed that there were no further measures planned.

60. Apologies for Absence
None recorded.

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

Mrs Williams declared a prejudicial interest in agenda item 63 as the letter had been written by her children. Mr Lay declared a prejudicial interest in item 67 as he was a resident of Coulson Way. Mrs Williams and Mrs Elphick declared a personal interest in item 67, living in close proximity to the path in question. Mrs Williams also had relatives living close by. Mr Senior declared a personal interest in item 74c being a resident of Bramble End.

62. To sign and approve minutes of previous meeting held on 28th July 2009.
Minutes proposed by Mr Watson and seconded by Mr Sale. Minutes duly approved and signed.

63. Replacement of the Horse Chestnut Tree (Mrs Williams left the meeting for this agenda item)

A letter had been received from Bethan and Daisy Williams requesting that they might plant a tree on the village green replacing the recently felled horse chestnut, together with a small plaque, in memory of their grandfather. A replacement plane tree had already been arranged (FOC) between the District Council and the Tree Warden, so various other alternatives were discussed. It was decided that it might be more appropriate to have a

commemorative tree in the planned community orchard. It was also felt that a plaque on the village green might not withstand regular grass cutting. Clerk to respond to Bethan and Daisy accordingly.

64. Jointly Funded Minor Improvement Scheme - 2010/11 Bidding Round

As planned, this had been submitted to the County Council for a kerbed footpath between the junctions of Coulson Way and Rusts Lane to replace painted lines. Mr Senior thanked Mr Lay for his work on this submission.

65. Flood Matters - Mr Pickering /Clerk

A reply had been received from the Environment Agency in response to the Parish Council's letter of 14th July when concerns had been expressed about flood warnings in the village. No further action to be taken. The banks of the brook had been cleared by the Environment Agency, but the stretch at the bottom of Polecat Lane remained in a poor state. Clerk to pursue.

66. A Community Orchard - for discussion

Mr Watson reported that the ASSC were still in principle in favour of the Parish Council establishing a small community orchard at the bottom of the playing field on the area which had been recently cleared. Clerk to arrange a site visit with Peter Rowlings, Bridgit Halford (HDC), a member of the Parish Council and Laurence Rickard to ascertain how much land might be available. If possible, this should be done before the next ASSC committee meeting on 14th September so details could be provided of exactly what would be involved. Clerk to also ascertain the minimum number of trees that might be considered for a community orchard.

67. Public Footpath - Bell Lane to Rusts Lane (Mr Lay left the meeting for this agenda item.)

The clerk outlined the continuing problem with the stretch of the footpath leading from Bell Lane to Rusts Lane which runs behind Coulson Way where there was a dispute about the boundary hedge. This was now with CCC's legal team to resolve. Laine Kadic to assist.

68. Provision of Allotments - Mr Sale/Mrs Aylott

Mrs Aylott reported that the Association had held another meeting and that their official title was to be known as the Alconbury Allotment and Gardners' Association. They were arranging for their own bank account to be set up, liaising with other associations and finalising their tenancy agreement. The Clerk reported that she had met with CCC's Definitive Map Officer and was making progress with the re-routing of the footpath. All parties concerned had been contacted. Mr & Mrs Ayres had confirmed that they had no objection to this path diversion and the Parish Council had in principle accepted their lease offer and engaged a solicitor. A draft lease had been sent to the solicitor. A detailed map of the area was required for the lease document and the Land Registry. Clerk to confirm with solicitor what scale map was required. It would then be decided what source to use for the map provision.

69. The Scout Store

The Letter of Consent had now been received from Smiths Gore, details of which had been copied to the Memorial Hall Committee. Nigel Murphy would now go ahead with applying for planning permission.

70. Broadband Provision in Rural Areas - Mr Senior/Mr Pickering

Concern had been expressed about the very slow broadband speeds in the village, which were a problem to users (especially those with businesses or working from home). Mr Senior had been advised that the Woolley exchange needed upgrading in order to achieve any improvement in performance. He had been advised to contact BT Wholesale about this problem. The Parish Council agreed that this should be pursued. It was suggested that Jonathan Djanogly MP might also be able to help. Peter Brown asked to be copied on all correspondence. This could also be a topic for the next Newsletter. The position with government funding for broadband in rural areas should be monitored.

71. The Position of Clerk

It was with much regret that Mr Senior had received notification from the Clerk that she would be retiring from the post within the next few months. Steps were being taken to organise an advertisement for her replacement. It was agreed this should go into the 9th September edition of The Hunts Post and also be sent to the local Job Centre. It would also be advertised on notice boards in the village and in locations such as the school and the surgery and also on the CPALC website. It was agreed that Mr Senior, Mrs Aylott, Mrs Adams and the Clerk should sit on the interview panel.

72. Emergency Planning/Swine Flu Arrangements

The Emergency Planning Committee had met on 18th August and had been assisted by a very knowledgeable student working with Mr Pickering. It would be a joint plan with Alconbury Weston so sharing knowledge and local resources. Identification of vulnerable people in an emergency had been discussed and the production and distribution of relevant questionnaires. It would be imperative to keep the plan up to date once it had been completed and to also hold 'table top' exercises. CCC had requested a suitable venue for possible mass vaccination of the community in the event of a flu outbreak. Clerk confirmed that details of the Memorial Hall had been passed on.

73. Christmas Tree

Mr Senior had been approached by several residents suggesting a Christmas Tree in the village, possibly on the village green or Maypole Square. Various possibilities were discussed. Clerk to research. Mrs Aylott to inform Neighbourhood Watch.

74. Committee Reports

(a) Clerk's Infrastructure Report
Churchyard: nothing to report

Village Green: The lack of 'kick boards' on the bottom of the footbridge at the ford end of the village had been reported and would be actioned. Rattee and Kett were drawing up plans for repairs to the heritage bridge for approval by English Heritage. The Parish Council would be kept informed.

General: Ditch along the Great North Road was overflowing and had been reported. Clerk to monitor. Dog fouling had been reported in the Field Close/Manor Lane area. This could be the subject of another article in the next Newsletter. The Maltings Footbridge South had a twist and was being monitored over the next three months. Evidence of solvent abuse had also been found at this location which was being monitored by PCSO Gemma Clark. The hedge along the High Street opposite the bus shelter would be dealt with. There was a defective street light in Spinney Lane opposite Willow End.

(b) Planning Applications Received:

0701868S73 - renewal for continuation of use of former classroom as domestic storage - Alconbury House - No observations.

Planning Applications Determined by HDC Planning:

0900682FUL - demolition of extension and erection of two storey extension and replacement of flat roof with pitched roof - Weybridge Lodge - refused

0900484FUL - erection of single storey extension - 20 Maple End - granted.

Application Ref. 0803277FUL - erection of dwelling, land adjacent The Vicarage, Church Way - gone to appeal

(c) Bramble End - Monthly inspection: Carried out by Mrs Williams. One swing had been damaged and was being repaired immediately. It was agreed to monitor the gaps around the edges of the wet pour surface.

Bramble End - Re-development:

As suggested by WREN, further consultation would be carried out with children at the next youth group meeting and the Family Fun Day on 30th August. The Clerk had applied to HDC for a small grant to go towards the project.

75. Correspondence

- Consultation - Ageing Well in Huntingdonshire - questionnaire to be completed by the Clerk and Mrs Aylott.

- Complaint from resident of speeding in the village - Clerk to inform resident of forthcoming Speedwatch and to suggest that representation should be made to other bodies.

76. Responsible Finance Officer's Report

Cheques for signature:

- Pipex Internet July 09 (paid by D/D) - £14.67

- Demon Webhosting August 09 (paid by D/D) - £11.50

- Grafton Projects - stationery - £44.65

- Global Tree Solutions - felling of horse chestnut - £1,150.00

- Clerk, A's Salary August 09 - £495.14

Payments were proposed by Mr Sale and seconded by Mrs Hathaway.

Cleared Balances:

C/A - £4553.46 D/A - £32,438.36 Youth Group C/A - £846.19 (a further £44 door money to be banked this week)

77. Date of Next Meeting

29th September 2009 at 7.30pm in the Memorial Hall