

ALCONBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 29th September 2009 in the Memorial Hall

Present:

Mr Senior (Chair), Mrs Aylott, Mrs Adams, Mrs Elphick, Mr Hardy, Mr Lay, Mr Pickering, Mr Sale, Mr Watson and Mrs Williams, District Councillor Keith Baker, Mrs Lancey (Clerk), no members of the public.

Public Forum

There had been evidence of youths smoking cannabis near the bottom ford in the village. PCSO Gemma Clarke to be contacted.

78. Apologies for Absence

Apologies received from County Councillors Peter Brown and Laine Kadic and Mrs Hathaway.

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

Mr Senior declared a personal interest in item 92c being a resident of Bramble End. Mr Senior, Mrs Williams and Mr Lay declared a personal interest in agenda item 92 (b) all having children at the Primary School.

80. To sign and approve minutes of previous meeting held on 25th August 2009.

Minutes proposed by Mrs Williams and seconded by Mr Hardy. Minutes duly approved and signed.

81. Recruitment of a new Clerk - update from Mr Senior

9 applications for the post of Clerk had been received. The recruitment panel consisting of Mr Senior, Mrs Aylott, Mrs Adams and the Clerk would meet to review the applications on 2nd October. It was stressed that although the Clerk would be present at interviews, she would have no vote on who would be the successful candidate. She was there in an advisory capacity only. The Council agreed that the interview panel should decide upon the salary offered to candidates.

82. Alconbury Services (formerly Truckstop) - Request for planters

The owners of Alconbury Services had erected a palisade fence along the northern highway boundary of their property and had suggested that they might provide planters on the verge to deter any further illegal parking. Any such planters would require a licence from HDC and they were asking if the Parish Council would apply for any such licence and fill and maintain the planters. It was decided that it would not be practical to maintain such planters from the village and bollards on the edge of the verge and trees planted inside the bollards might be a better solution. Clerk to action accordingly. Councillor Baker would keep the Parish Council informed of any further developments concerning ownership of the slip road beyond the entrance to the site.

83. Provision of Allotments - Mrs Aylott

Mrs Aylott updated the meeting on the work that was being carried out by the Association. A newsletter had been produced which the Council thought was very professional. There were still several issues to be resolved. HDC was supplying a map which could be used in conjunction with the lease/the Land Registry. Clerk would check to see if this might also be used by the Association to plan where individual plots might be situated. Quotes from surveyors had been received but were very expensive. A decision needed to be taken on

the individual plot fee, but it was felt that until the costs of fencing and a water supply and the availability of grants for such expenses had been investigated, it was not possible to gauge a fair rental. Mr Senior asked Mrs Aylott to contact the Association requesting that they research these details on behalf of the Parish Council. There were also questions that needed to be answered concerning tenancy matters, and it was agreed to arrange a further meeting with Karen Kenny from the National Association as soon as possible. Clerk to action.

84. Request for Skate Park in the village - Mr Senior

A request had been received from a teenager in the village for a skate park. This was discussed and Mr Watson would put the idea forward to the ASSC; however it was felt that with all the issues currently in hand, including the provision of the ball park at the Memorial Hall, there were insufficient funds or manpower to embark upon another project at the current time. Clerk to respond accordingly.

85. Broadband Provision in Rural Areas - Mr Senior

Mr Senior had been informed by BT that the Woolley exchange was due to be upgraded September/October this year which would result in faster internet speeds to the village. However, nothing had yet occurred. If there was no action, he would enquire again at the end of October. Clerk to contact Jonathan Djanogly with relevant information.

86. Speeding in the Village

Several ducks had been run over without the driver stopping, and this had provoked general concern about speeding throughout the village. Mr Hardy reported that Neighbourhood Watch were shortly to start their Speedwatch exercise, and it was agreed this would confirm whether speed limits were being broken or whether the limit of 30mph was too high for narrow roads with children and elderly people. Mr Hardy to report back. He explained how difficult it was to actually change a speed limit within any area. Possible funding for traffic calming measures was also discussed. Clerk to also contact Pytchley Parish Council who is believed to have introduced a voluntary 20mph limit in their village.

87. Neighbourhood Watch - update from Mr Hardy

Speedwatch exercise in the village was to start shortly. The Committee approved of the idea of a Christmas Tree in the village and had asked to be kept informed. They had complained about horse manure all over the roads in the village, but Mr Hardy explained that there was nothing the Parish Council could do about this problem. The Village Affair had been very successful and they were considering how to spend funds in the village. They requested more litter bins. Clerk to investigate. The grass on the village green at the bottom of Rusts Lane had sunk. Clerk to investigate.

88. Christmas Tree in the village - Mr Senior

The possibility of erecting a tree with lights on Maypole Square had been investigated. Total costs were estimated to be £500-£600. Clerk to check with Highways whether the Maypole Square site was permissible. It was suggested that Neighbourhood Watch might like to contribute towards the costs. Clerk to contact accordingly. The idea was approved and providing approval was given by Highways, it was agreed the tree should be erected at the beginning of December.

89. Sports & Social Club/Community Orchard

The Clerk reported on a recent meeting with Bridget Halford (HDC), Peter Rowlings and Laurence Rickard to look at the possibility of creating a Community Orchard at the bottom

of the playing field adjacent to the brook. It was envisaged about 20 fruit trees could be planted on the site. Mr Watson reported that the ASSC were in favour of the idea. The Parish Council would seek sponsorship from village residents to purchase the trees which would cost about £13 each. Planting would take place in January 2010. Mr Watson reported that planting of a hedge along the perimeter of the new facilities had also been discussed with Bridget Halford, and it was hoped that the two projects could be carried out on the same planting day. It was decided to form a working party to progress these projects. Mr Senior, Mr Watson, Mrs Elphick and Mr Lay, together with the Clerk would participate. It was agreed to hold a meeting on 6th October at 7.30pm in the club. Clerk to invite Bridget Halford and Laurence Rickard, and also to contact other residents and members of Alconbury Weston Parish Council. It was agreed that these projects should be publicised in the forthcoming Newsletter.

90. The Memorial Hall

Mrs Adams reported that they had a new website which they had requested be linked to the Parish Council's site. Clerk to action. New sound proof curtains had been fitted to the doors leading from the lounge into the main hall. The Committee had reported that there was no room for any more trees to be planted in the grounds.

91. The Bi-Monthly Newsletter (first draft due 12th October 09)

Ideas included the Clerk's resignation, dog fouling, the proposed Community Orchard and Hedge Planting and an update on the repairs to the Heritage Bridge.

92. Committee Reports

(a) Clerk's Infrastructure Report

Churchyard: nothing to report

Village Green: Clerk reported that repairs to the heritage bridge had been provisionally scheduled for 23rd November and would be completed by 11th December. The bridge would be closed during this time and traffic re-routed. It was agreed that permanent re-routing of the buses should be an agenda item for October. Plans of the intended repairs would be made available to the Parish Council. Neighbourhood Watch had been informed.

General: Complaints had been received concerning dog fouling in the Field Close/Manor Lane area. This would be a subject for the next Newsletter.

(b) Planning Applications Received (personal interest declared by Mr Senior, Mr Lay and Mrs Williams):

0901142FUL - Installation of canopy over courtyard and between 2 classrooms.

Replacement of 3 windows and cladding to northern block of front elevation - Alconbury C of E Primary School - No observations

Planning Applications Determined by HDC Planning:

0701868S73 - renewal for continuation of use of former classroom as domestic storage - Alconbury House - permission granted.

(c) Bramble End - Monthly inspection: Carried out by Mrs Williams. Nothing to report.

Bramble End - Re-development:

Confirmation had been received that HDC would make a contribution of £2090 towards the development, on the proviso that it would only be used to unlock the WREN funding.

Further consultation had been carried out with children at the Youth Group and the Family Fun Day. Accordingly, all quotes were being updated. Total project cost would be just over £32K. The outcome of the bid should be known in November 2009.

93. Correspondence

- East of England Plan ,Äi Consultation Event 30th September - to be attended by Mr Pickering. Agenda item for October meeting.
- Complaint from resident of unkempt garden - 26 Spinney Lane Clerk to inform Highways and to also to write to resident.
- Request for Donation - Victim Support (Section 137) - £100 agreed.
- CPALC AGM - 21st November 2009 - Clerk to request agenda.

94. Responsible Finance Officer's Report

Clerk reported that the audit for the year ending 31st March 2009 had been signed off by the external auditors and that the audit was now closed. A notice had been displayed accordingly.

Year to date actual spend compared with the Precept had been prepared and circulated to all councillors. A meeting to discuss the Precept for 2010/2011 was arranged for Tuesday 10th November at 7.30pm.

Cheques for signature:

- Pipex Internet Sept 09 (paid by D/D) - £14.67
- Demon Webhosting Sept. 09 (paid by D/D) - £11.50
- Grafton Projects - Newsletter - £117.20
- Archant Herts & Cambs - job advertisement - £197.80
- A.C. Green - work to hedge in Bramble End - £70.00
- Clerk's Salary September 09 - £494.10

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

Cleared Balances:

C/A -£3636.69 D/A £32,438.36 Youth Group C/A £846.19 Ball Park Account £1496.79

95. Date of Next Meeting

27th October 2009 at 7.30pm in the Memorial Hall.