

ALCONBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 27th April 2010 in the Memorial Hall

Present:

Mr Senior, Mrs Aylott, Mr Hardy, Mrs Hathaway, Mr Lay, Mr Pickering, Mr Watson and Mrs Williams. Mrs Sharp - Clerk. 4 Members of the Public.

Public Forum

Mr Senior advised that Standing Orders would be relaxed under item 207 and therefore there was nothing to report in the public forum

202. Apologies for Absence

Apologies received from Mrs Adams, Mrs Elphick, Mr Sale and District Councillor Keith Baker.

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

Mr Senior expressed a personal interest in item 212 (c) as a resident of Bramble End. He also expressed a personal interest in item 213 as a personal acquaintance Antony Abbs.

Mr Lay expressed a prejudicial interest in item 207 as an allotment holder.

204. To sign and approve minutes of previous meeting held on 30th March 2010

Minutes for meeting on 30th March 2010 proposed by Mrs Williams, seconded by Mr Lay.

205. Elections and New Councillors - Mr Senior

Mr Senior advised that Mrs Hathaway and Mr Sale were not standing as councillors again and thanked them for their time and efforts on the Parish Council. He advised that 2 new councillors, Mr Gordon Barnes and Mr Tom Boyce had been co-opted and therefore no election was required. The Clerk advised that she has forms to register financial interests and also forms for acceptance of office that would be signed at the May meeting.

206. Alconbury Sports and Social Club - Mr Watson

Mr Watson advised that he had attended the last committee meeting at the ASSC as a representative of the Parish Council. He reported on concerns raised by the ASSC committee and the Trustees regarding the costs associated with maintenance of the sports fields and grounds.

It had been advised at the ASSC meeting that costs and field maintenance expenses were in the region of £23,00 per year. Rental income was generating around £10,000 per year and even with bar takings and memberships there was still a shortfall. Mr Senior requested that further investigation be done into the maintenance costs in order to see if these could be reduced. Mr Watson agreed to request at next ASSC meeting.

207. Allotments/Fencing-Mrs Aylott/Mr Lay

Mr Senior relaxed standing orders for this item and some lively discussion took place.

Mrs Aylott advised that she had met with Mr and Mrs Ayres to discuss the diversion of the public footpath. There had been a pre-consultation map sent to Mr and Mrs Ayres and they had decided that they did not want the new gate to be placed on the southern boundary. Instead, this would be placed on the Western boundary once the footpath had been re-routed. Mrs Aylott advised that there is no suggested timescale in which the diversion

should be completed, however she would be meeting with the rights of way officer and Mr and Mrs Ayres in the coming weeks.

Mrs Aylott advised that she had received some quotes for temporary fencing, however most were extremely over priced. She advised that Andy Hose had provided a quote of around £600 for the materials and would be in contact to quote for labour costs.

Mr Lay advised that he was applying for a grant for the Borehole from Woodford's in Warboys, however, this was not likely to be received until November. He then left the meeting as he had a prejudicial interest.

Mrs Lee from AAGA advised that the AAGA committee had held talks and agreed that they would prefer any funding or money available was preferably to go towards the borehole as lack of water at the allotments was causing a lot of problems. Mr Vanbergen, an allotment holder, also agreed that some people were unable to transport their own water in the quantities needed to their allotment and plants and vegetable were dying because of this.

Mrs Aylott advised that the cost for the basic borehole would be approximately £4295. From this would be a deduction of approximately £500, paid out for the survey leaving a balance of £3795. AAGA members suggested that the Parish Council pay for this using the £2000 remaining from the precept allowance for the allotments for 2010/2011 plus the £500 surplus from the initial rent money. AAGA offered to contribute £500 from their fundraising. This would leave an outstanding shortfall of approximately £1200. They suggested that this could be 'advanced' to AAGA to pay for the borehole, and repaid in November when the next rental income is received from allotment holders. After much discussion the Council agreed this as the best option to ensure a water supply is quickly obtained.

Mr Senior pointed out that there would be no further funds available to AAGA during this financial year, so there would be nothing available to 'match fund' any grants for secure fencing. The council could not guarantee at this stage that there would be further monies made available to them in next year, the precept. The AAGA "threatened to disband to handover all responsibility for the allotments to the Parish Council should no further funds be forthcoming"

208. Great Ouse Catchment Flood Management Plan-Mr Pickering

Mr Pickering advised that the Great Ouse Catchment Flood Management planning document is now out for consultation and would be available to view at a drop in day on 14th May 2010 at the Environment Agency in Brampton.

He advised that the plan was in place in order to try to manage flood risks in the area for the next 100 years, however, this would be reviewed every 5-6 years. Mr Pickering also advised that the plan for Alconbury was to continue with existing actions, however, there was a DEFRA grant of around £400,000 that would be used to provide individual flood protection measures to the most vulnerable properties in the area.

209. Churchyard - Clerk

Clerk advised that an email had been received from Richard Scott at Alconbury Church advising of a proposed plan of works from 2010-2015. All councillors present had a look at the plan and agreed that at the current time the Parish Council would continue to precept £1500 per year in order to help with the maintenance, however could not offer any more. It

was also raised that the Parish Council pays for the grass cutting in their precept which is a large expenditure. Clerk to contact Richard Scott in order to get an idea of which tasks are priority and ensure none are causing a hazard or danger.

210. Digital Switchover - Mr Senior

Mr Senior advised that he had received an email from a company called EAGA advising that Alconbury will be switching to digital TV only in 2011. This would mean that analogue aerials would no longer work in the area.

EAGA had advised that they can help with the process of switching over for older or vulnerable people such as disabled, elderly and partially sighted individuals. It was advised that the Clerk contact the doctor's surgery and over 60's club to advise them of this and also try and obtain information from EAGA that could be distributed among those affected.

211. Alconbury Fete - Clerk

Clerk reported that Neighbourhood Watch had asked if the Parish Council wished to man a stand at this year's Village Affair. All agreed that the Parish Council does not want one this year as nothing to promote.

212. Committee Reports

(a) Clerk's Infrastructure Report

Churchyard: As per item 209

Village Green: Mrs Aylott advised that the footbridge next to the Heritage Bridge was in very poor condition. Clerk to arrange cleaning. Mr Senior advised that the footbridge at the opposite end of the green still requires new kickboards. Clerk to investigate.

General: Clerk advised that a post had been knocked over in Maypole Square and was awaiting repair. Mrs Williams requested that the Clerk chase up work to be carried out on the footbridges at Polecat Lane and also works on Heritage Bridge. Clerk to action.

(b) Planning Applications Received:

NONE

Applications determined by Huntingdonshire District Council/Appeal:

NONE

(c) Bramble End

Monthly Inspection Report - Nothing to report

Development of the Play Area - Mrs Williams reported that the new playground was complete and all that was needed was the signing off paperwork from Creative Play. Mrs Aylott expressed the thanks of the Parish Council to Mr Watson and Mrs Williams for their hard work in ensuring the playground went ahead.

Mr Senior suggested that a 'grand opening' be arranged for May 9th or 16th. Clerk to contact press and also WREN in order to establish if they would be happy to send the Project Manager to open the playground officially.

213. Grass Cutting - Mr Senior

Mr Senior advised that the existing grass cutter had cancelled his agreement to cut the grass this year at the time of the first cut. The Clerk contacted the 2 companies that had initially quoted when going out to tender and found that 4 Seasons were most competitive, matching the price of the previous contractor. As the cut was so desperately needed, the

first cut was carried out just before the PC meeting.

Mrs Aylott advised that the Parish Council should draw up a 3 year contract with a notice clause of 3 months in order to try to ensure that the same problem would not reoccur.
Clerk to action.

214. Duck Poster Competition

Clerk advised that the Parish Council had only received 1 entry for this so all agreed that this should be the winning entry and awarded the prize of a £10 book token. The poster would be copied, laminated and erected throughout the village.

Mrs Aylott left the meeting at that point due to commitments to another meeting.

215. Correspondence

- Letter of Thanks from Church thanking the Parish Council for their donation to the Flower Festival
- Letter from Mr Archer apologising for the problems encountered and also enquiring as to whether or not he should hold the land lease deeds. All agreed that these should be kept with the bank deeds. Clerk to action.

216. Responsible Finance Officer's Report

Cheques for signature:

- Demon - Web Hosting March 10 (paid by D/D) - £11.50
- Jo Sharp - Clerk Salary for April - £417.20
- Sue Lancey - Salary for April - £92.39
- Grafton Projects - Toner Cartridge - £155.53
- HMRC - £16.69
- Speedi Signs - Allotment Sign - £45.83
- HDC - Trees for Orchard - £546.48

Cleared Balances

- Deposit Account - £50741.23
- Current Account - £3040.02
- Ball Park Fund - £1810.96
- Youth Group Account - £634.91

Date of next meeting

Annual Parish Meeting and AGM - Tuesday 25th May at 7.00pm in the Memorial Hall