

ALCONBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 24th April 2007 in the Memorial Hall

Present: Mr. Brown (Chairman), Mr Senior, Mrs Adams, Mrs Dyer, Mrs Elphick, Mrs Hathaway, Mrs Watkin, Mr Watson and Mrs Williams. District Councillor Keith Baker. Mrs Lancey (Clerk). 10 members of the public.

Public Forum

Complaint received that to position the replacement bus shelter on its original site raised major safety issues. The gradient of the new tarmac and the height of the new kerb were also questioned in relation to disability access. Clerk to contact HDC and Highways accordingly. Further complaints received concerning the surface of Spinney Lane, Hawthorn End and the paths in School Lane. Clerk to contact Highways Further request from residents of Bramble End for assistance with anti social behaviour in the area. Details of specific incidents passed to Mr Senior who would contact the Area Beat Manager. Damage to the fence between Bramble End and the School playing field was also reported. Mrs. Williams to contact School. Complaints received of speeding in the village, especially in relation to buses, together with complaints of noise from customers leaving pubs in the village in the early hours of the morning. Clerk to make enquiries.

1. Apologies for Absence

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

2. Approval and Appointment of New Parish Councillor

The appointment of Mr Ian Hardy as Parish Councillor was unanimously approved. Mr Hardy signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

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

Mr Watson and Mrs Elphick registered a prejudicial interest in Item 5 The Redevelopment of the Post Office - being residents in close proximity.

Mr. Senior declared a personal interest in Item 13, being a resident of Brookside where a commemorative seat was to be proposed.

4. To sign and approve minutes of previous meetings held on 27th March 2007

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

5. Redevelopment of the Post Office (Mrs Elphick and Mr Watson left the meeting for this agenda item)

The Postmaster provided plans of the proposed redevelopment of the existing Post Office and shop area, which were in accordance with guidelines received from HDC Planning. Plans to be submitted to HDC within the next few days.

6. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes (for information only)

PCSO Surgery held on 14th April 2007 – Maypole Square

15 residents had attended. The May surgery would be held on a Thursday evening. Date to be arranged.

Flood Alleviation Scheme

Copy letter received from Mr. Djanogly to the Environment Agency strongly making the

case for a scheme for Alconbury.

Land for Sale – Rusts Lane

Mrs Watkin reported that a petition was being signed by drivers of HCV's in an attempt to retain Truckstop should the land in question be sold for development. Mr Baker confirmed that HDC were not in favour of Truckstop's closure as there were no other similar sites within a wide radius. It was agreed this should be an agenda item for May.

Alconbury Airfield

Clerk had contacted Planning concerning the complaint received about the vast number of containers stored on the Airbase. She had been asked to put the complaint in writing.

7. Community Initiative – Brook Clearance

Two dates had been provided by Penny Ash. Community Relations Officer – 30th June or 7th July. 7th July was preferred. Clerk to confirm with Penny Ash. Clerk reported that she had been contacted by approx. 20 people offering to help, along with members of Neighbourhood Watch who were very keen. Mrs Sue Pike was co-ordinating events. Mr Senior would liaise with her on behalf of the Parish Council.

8. The Bus Shelter

Concerning the complaint received during The Public Forum, alternative positions for the bus shelter were discussed. Clerk to discuss with HDC and Highways on safety issues raised.

9. The Parish Plan and Website

Clerk reported that a letter had been received from Cambridgeshire ACRE enquiring as to the stage the Parish Council had reached with its Parish Plan. Clerk to respond accordingly. Stan Rees had retired.

The Memorial Hall had been booked for 29th August for a meeting with all those residents interested in forming new groups within the village.

No work had yet been carried out on the enhancement of the Council's website. Mr Brown and Mr Senior to arrange meeting.

10. Bi-monthly Newsletter

Positive feed back had been received from the March Newsletter. Mrs Dyer would prepare the next one for distribution at the end of May. It was agreed that year end reports from the Chairman and RFO would be made available to residents via the website/noticeboards rather than being included in the Newsletter. There had been only one entry for the duck poster prize. Clerk to organise book token accordingly. Clerk to arrange for copies of this poster to be made for display around the village.

11. Memorial Hall

Mr Warwick Pike, the new Chairman had enquired about a link to the Parish Council's website. Mr Brown to reply when dealing with the enhancement of the Parish Council site. All maintenance items were in hand and soundproofing was now available.

12. Alconbury Sports & Social Club

Contracts for the purchase of the additional land were due to be signed within the month. The possibility of not having to pay VAT on the expansion to premises was still under investigation but looked positive. It was the Club's 25th Anniversary this year. Charity Cricket Match planned for 22nd June.

13. Neighbourhood Watch (Mr Senior declared a personal interest in the proposed seat on the green which would be close to his residence)

Permission given for use of the village green for The Village Affair which was planned for 14th July. Mr Senior to investigate possibility of Parish Council having a stall at the fete. This should be an agenda item for May. Written report received from Mrs Aylott on recent meeting. More co-ordinators were required. Positive feedback on the recent Parish Council Newsletter and Neighbourhood Watch members very keen on the community initiative to clear out the brook. Neighbourhood Watch wished to erect a wrought iron tree seat, dedicated to Derek Cox, around a lime tree along Brookside. This was agreed by the Parish Council.

14. Proposed Ball Park and Scout Store

Reply from HDC concerning planning permission passed to Nigel Murphy. The Ball Park was considered a permitted development. Further information required on the Scout Store but it would require the benefit of planning permission.

15. Grass Cutting

Clerk reported that if the Parish Council were to take responsibility for grass cutting on behalf of the County Council, they would receive £400 per cut based on the frequency of 4 cuts per season (£1600 per year). There appeared to be no financial gain as the contractor would still charge £400 per cut. Decision made not to take up this offer.

16. Committee Reports

a) Clerk's infrastructure Report

Churchyard: Nothing to report.

Village Green: Continuing problems with water leakage at the bottom of Frumetty Lane.

General: Damaged bridge reported in Globe Lane. Rubbish in ditches in Polecat Lane needed clearing.

Mrs Williams reported that the speed humps along The Great North Road were not effective. It was considered that the Scheme was not yet complete.

b) Planning

New Applications

0701046FUL – Erection of Conservatory – 11 Coulson Way – No observations.

Applications determined by HDC Planning:

0700388FUL – Extension to dwelling, 4 Maple End – refused.

c) Bramble End Playground

Monthly inspection carried out by Mrs Williams. No apparent problems. Turf around the helicopter in need of water.

17. Correspondence

External Auditors

Confirmation received that Moore Stephens would be Alconbury's auditor for financial year 2006/2007.

Donations

Letters of thanks received from Citizens Advice Bureau and Victim Support in respect of recent donations received from Parish Council.

New Model Code of Conduct

Circulated to all Councillors. Order will come into effect on 3rd May 2007.

18. Responsible Finance Officer's Report

Clerk had prepared Draft Accounts for the financial year ending 31st March 2007 which had been circulated to all Councillors. It was agreed that Training and the Newsletter/Annual Report should be shown as separate expenditure items and that Playground Services should be annotated 'ROSPA Inspection'. Public Notice of inspection period had been displayed. Clerk circulated copies of Annual Governance Statement in readiness for completion and signature of Annual Return at the May meeting.

Cheques for signature:

Pipex Internet - £14.99

Demon – Web Hosting - £11.75

Grafton Projects – Newsletter - £22.60

Grafton Projects – stationery - £29.02

Clerk's Salary April - £331.55

H M Customs & Revenue – 328.55

Payments were proposed by Mrs Elphick and seconded by Mr Watson

Cleared Balances:

Current Account: £7327.20, Deposit Account £13,429.90

Youth Group Account: £3819.43

19. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting (AGM and Annual Parish Meeting) will be held on 29th May 2007 in the main hall of the Memorial Hall starting at the earlier time of 7.30pm.