

## ALCONBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting held on Tuesday 24th August 2004 in the New Memorial Hall

### Present:

Mrs. Watkin (Chair), Mrs Adams, Mr Brown, Mr Dawson, Mr. Lane, Mrs Turner and Mr Vanbergen. District Councillor Mrs Sarah Vanbergen. Mrs. Lancey (Clerk), 6 members of the public.

### Presentation from Huntingdon Youth Workers

Mrs Watkin reported that unfortunately the presentation from Huntingdon Youth Workers would not take place. However, Nigel Murphy, the Chair of the Youth Group was available to update the Parish Council on the work carried out by his group. As David Scotney the Chair of the Parish Plan was also at the meeting, and work of the two groups was interconnected, it was agreed to change the order of the Agenda to cover these two Representative Reports at the beginning of the meeting:

### The Youth Group

Mr. Murphy explained that it appeared there had been a break down in communications and hence the Huntingdon Youth Workers had not attended the meetings as planned. He reported, however, that three detached youth workers had begun their work in the village, meeting with young people and discussing their aspirations. He stressed that this was merely an exercise of consultation with the youngsters and no pressure was being put upon them. No action would be taken until this period of consultation had been completed. A bid had been made for funding from the Local Network Fund but the results of this bid were not yet available. He explained that a separate meeting between the Youth Group and the Huntingdon Youth Workers would now be arranged to clearly ascertain the current situation. He reported that new members had successfully been seconded to the Group and that a new Secretary had been appointed. Mrs Vanbergen was representing Alconbury Weston after the resignation of their representative. At these initial stages, the focus was on Alconbury rather than both villages. The Parish Council was concerned that for a second time the presentation from the Youth Workers had not taken place as planned. Clerk would contact Councillor Peter Downes accordingly.

### The Parish Plan

The results of the recent questionnaire were handed out to all Councillors and members of the public. Mr Scotney said that out of approx. 800 leaflets distributed, 149 replies had been received. The opinions expressed as a result of the first document would form the basis of more specific items to be put on the main questionnaire which would be the next step. It was reported that a total grant of £2198 had been made available from The Countryside Agency, which was considerably short of the initial figure that the Steering Group had hoped for. In view of this, Mr Dawson asked whether the Parish Council would be prepared to underwrite any expenditure that exceeded the grant, up to a figure of approximately £1000. This was unanimously agreed. The Steering Group would keep the Parish Council informed of how their expenditure was matching their budget. The Clerk agreed to contact Mr. Stan Rees of Cambridgeshire Acre to inform him that a grant had been made available.

Mrs. Watkin congratulated both groups on their hard work and stressed how important both these activities were in the village.

### Open Forum:

Mr. Scotney expressed his continuing concern over the amount of rubbish left in and around the Truck Stop facility, where apparently no bins were available for use by the drivers. Clerk to contact Night Owl accordingly. Mrs. Horner enquired if there was any news on the new bus shelter outside the New Memorial Hall. Clerk had been informed by HDC that installation had slipped but it was hoped it would be completed before the onset of winter. She reported that the kerb at the bus stop would be built up to facilitate stepping onto buses. Mrs. Horner also enquired if any further news had been received about the cancellation of the direct bus service from Huntingdon to Bedford via St. Neots. Clerk had pursued this item with CCC but had not yet received a reply from the service provider. She would continue to pursue the matter. Mrs. Horner also complained that on occasion the 46 service did not turn up in the village and the Clerk agreed to try and get some explanation for this lack of service.

#### 1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Mrs Dix, Mrs. Dyer, Mrs Elphick and County Councillor Peter Downes.

#### 2. Minutes

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 20th July 2004 were approved and signed.

#### 3. Committee Reports

##### i. Infrastructure Report

Churchyard: Clerk reported that children had been seen on the roof of the church owing to the fact that scaffolding and ladders had been left available by building contractors. The incident had been reported to the police and the Church Warden who has contacted the contractors. The site was inspected by members of the Youth Group after their meeting earlier in the evening.

ii. Village Green: Clerk reported that a cheque had now been received for the replacement planters that had been removed. She would now pay the suppliers. A wasps nest had been destroyed in a tree on the green. Neighbourhood Watch wish to erect a notice board on the village green and had suggested either side of the footbridge as a suitable site. After much discussion it was agreed that somewhere near the New Memorial Hall/Doctor's Surgery might be a point passed by more residents, and it was also felt that it would be unwise to erect the new board on the village green when the flood alleviation plans were not yet known. Mr. Dawson to convey these thoughts to Neighbourhood Watch. The Clerk had met with residents and representatives from the Highways Division to discuss the routing of the new path in Sharpes Lane/Brookside. The dying tree near the bridge had been discussed with the Tree Warden who had confirmed it was a case of dutch elm disease, but that no immediate action was required. The Clerk reported that Neighbourhood Watch had offered to prune the remaining lime trees on the green for a small fee. She had discussed this with the Tree Warden who felt that as this was a Conservation Area, the pruning should be done by a professional contractor. Clerk to reply to Neighbourhood Watch. The Clerk reported various complaints concerning dog fouling in the village. It was agreed an article should go into the Parish Pump and that costings should be obtained for the potential supply and emptying of dog bins for the green.

iii. General: Clerk had spoken with Speedisigns concerning parking on the pavement of the Great North Road and this had stopped but the vehicle was now being left on the path in Globe Lane. Clerk to discuss with Speedisigns. Clerk had contacted the Planning Enforcement Dept. at HDC concerning the overgrown garden in Spinney Lane. Clerk

reported that with the help of the Tree Warden, an area on the school premises had been cleared for coppice planting. He was also considering a suitable site for the sapling oak tree. Work had commenced on the new footpaths in School Lane/Manor Lane. Clerk had contacted Anglian Water concerning the overflowing manhole cover on the corner of the green/High Street, but had been informed that it was not their responsibility. Clerk to contact Environmental Health at HDC for guidance in how to ascertain whose responsibility this might be as it was feared it could be a health hazard. Improvements had been made to paths and ditches in Polecat Lane.

iv. Planning:

New Applications:

04023322FUL – Erection of floodlights for Multi User Games Area – Alconbury Sports & Social Club. Clerk explained that planning permission was required as a pre-requisite from the Football Foundation prior to consideration of their grant allocation for this area. No observations.

0402500FUL – Erection of 2 dwellings with provision for compensatory work relative to flooding Paddock – adjacent bridge and land adjacent 3 Mill Road. This application was discussed at length. Serious concern was expressed over the access onto Mill Road with the resulting increase in traffic on such a dangerous corner. It was also pointed out that no provision was being made for the long term maintenance of the Paddock which was legally required after the last Appeal Decision concerning this site. Concern was also expressed over insufficient parking on the proposed site for two dwellings. It was therefore decided to oppose this application. Clerk to respond accordingly.

Applications Determined:

0401751FUL – Use of building for training purposes - Alconbury Airfield – permission granted.

0402047FUL – Re-establish change of use of former aircraft shelter to explosive storage facility - permission granted.

0401481FUL – Extension to office building – Admiral Conservatories – permission refused (appeal received).

v. Bramble End Playground

Nothing to report.

4. Matters Arising

i. Safer Routes to School: Clerk reported that work would shortly commence on a strip denoting pedestrian right of way in front of the Manor House Hotel. Alconbury Weston PC had nominated Mrs. Pencak as their working party representative.

ii. Flood Alleviation Scheme: A Draft Plan had been received by HDC but there was no date as yet for discussion with the Parish Council.

iii. Parish Council Website: After considerable delay in launching the website it was hoped the PC's contact would now be able to devote some time to its completion. Clerk to pursue.

iv. Donation requested by Alconbury Cricket Club. Clerk reported that the completed Application for Funding form had been received from Alconbury Cricket Club. Clerk reminded Councillors that a request had been made for £500 to go towards routine running costs of the Club. After considerable discussion it was decided to allocate £250

towards the 2004/2005 season (which would soon be coming to an end) and Clerk should point out that a further request might be considered next year.

v. Broadband: Mr Brown commented that after initial problems, Broadband was now available in the village. It appeared there had been problems when customers were not intending to use BT products.

5. Correspondence (A list of all correspondence had been circulated)

i. Hillfield – Ball Games: A petition had been received by HDC from some residents in Hillfield, requesting a sign be erected to the effect that ball games by persons over 10 years old should not be permitted on the green in the Hillfield area. HDC were requesting the PC's views on the matter. Considerable discussion took place and photographs were shown of damage to trees in the area that residents claimed had been caused by ball games. The Parish Council decided that it would not be in the best interest of children in the area for such a sign to be erected – which in any event would not be enforceable – and it was generally felt that residents should be more tolerant of youth. Clerk to respond to HDC accordingly.

ii Presentation – “Parish Councils – You and Your Young People”. This would be held on 21st October and hopefully attended by members of the Youth Group.

iii Jointly funded Minor Improvement Schemes: Bid for 2005/06 had been received. It was agreed that at the current time the PC did not have sufficient resources to adequately consider the scheme but perhaps could do so in the following financial year when Parish Plan work might commence.

iv A14 Thrapston to Brampton Junction Safety Review Study: Presentation on 22nd September. No-one was available to attend.

v. Provision of a Meeting Place for Teenagers: A letter to the Youth Group from Alan Robertson had been copied to the Parish Council. Mrs. Adams confirmed that this would be discussed by the Youth Group.

vi. CALC Agenda/Minutes – 2nd September: Passed to Mrs Dyer.

vii. The Bulletin: Circulated to all Councillors. Mrs Watkin pointed out that according to a recent pay settlement detailed in The Bulletin the Clerk's salary should be increased by 21p per hour as from 1st April 2004. This was agreed.

viii. Grant Aid for Tree Planting: HDC is offering a similar replacement scheme to replace that discontinued by CCC. Copies sent to Tree Warden who is considering suitable sites for new planting.

ix. HELP Access at The White Hart: Councillor Vanbergen had informed the PC that this computer learning facility may be withdrawn due to lack of support. This would be discussed at the next Alconbury Weston PC meeting.

x. American Traffic: It was noted that American traffic passing through Alconbury was not decreasing, in spite of the fact that all personnel were given a map and told to avoid the village. It was suggested that if numbers of cars were recorded and reported, some improvement might be seen.

## 6. Responsible Finance Officer's Report

### i. Payment of Accounts:

The following cheques were presented for payment:

HDC Pest Control – wasps nest - £33.49

Grafton Projects – stationery - £14.45

Grafton Projects – Parish Plan expense - £22.31

Cottage Gallery – Parish Plan expense - £40.00

Fergusons – grass cutting 3 cycles - £822.50

Clerks' Salary – August (32 hours + back pay) - £275.20

Amberol Limited – hanging baskets (refunded by Ringway) - £89.30

Payments were proposed by Mrs Adams and seconded by Mr Lane.

ii. Free Balances: Clerk reported free balances at Deposit Acct. £21,491.35 and Current Acct. £6769.75 (including Parish Plan grant).

## 7. Representative Reports

### i. The Old Memorial Hall

Mrs Watkin reminded the meeting that at the last update, she had reported that the Charity Commission had changed their minds and stated that the New Memorial Hall was the right inheritor to any proceeds from the sale of the assets of the Old Memorial Hall. However, they had still requested a meeting at their offices in Liverpool which she had attended along with Alan Robertson. At this meeting she was astonished to learn that they now had three other proposals:

1. The Old Memorial Hall and the New Memorial should merge and become one Charity.
2. The Old Memorial Hall Charity should re-form and start fund raising for an alternative use of the old site such as a meeting place for young people.
3. The Old Memorial Hall should establish an endowment scheme in order that the sale of its assets might be of benefit to the whole village.

She was waiting for written confirmation of these proposals but suggested a meeting of the Old Memorial Hall Committee should be held on 22nd September to discuss their views. She added that she was astounded that the endowment scheme, which at the direction of the Charity Commission had recently be disbanded, might once again be reformed. The one positive outcome of the meeting was that the Charity Commission had confirmed that the Church Commissioners did not have any jurisdiction in the whole matter, but it was generally agreed that this “had not been the Charity Commission's finest hour”

### ii Alconbury Sports & Social Club

Mrs Adams reported that the proposed development of the additional facilities at the ASSC were taking longer than anticipated, and that because of the length of time involved, the amount of money needed was inevitably escalating. She would keep the Parish Council informed of any developments.

The bench purchased for the Club was shortly to be put into position in the Play Area.

A Family Fun Day was planned for Sunday 5th September 2004.

## 8. Date of Next Meeting:

The date of the next meeting was arranged for Tuesday 28th September 2004 in the New Memorial Hall.