

ALCONBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 26th June 2007 in the Memorial Hall

Present: Mr. Senior (Chairman), Mrs Aylott, Mrs Adams, Mr Brown, Mrs Dyer, Mrs Elphick, Mr Hardy, Mrs Hathaway, Mrs Watkin, Mr Watson and Mrs Williams. Mrs Lancey (Clerk). 6 members of the public.

Public Forum

Mr Senior requested that members of the public wishing to address the meeting should give their name and address before speaking.

Mr Hodgson, Manor Lane, drew the Parish Council's attention to the wording in the local press stating what would happen when the viaduct in Huntingdon was demolished when supposedly no decision had yet been made to go ahead with this. The Parish Council were not aware of any such decision and commented that the demolition was part of the ongoing consultation process currently being undertaken. Mr Hodgson also enquired about the reason for the meters which appeared to be monitoring traffic near the airbase. Clerk to contact Highways. He was also concerned about the increased activity on the airbase. Mr Watson summarised the current situation on the airbase together with the recent plans that had been submitted by ADL and assured Mr Hodgson that the Parish Council had strongly objected to them.

Mr Robertson, Chapel Street enquired about the current position with the shop. This would be discussed as a separate agenda item.

Mr Read, High Street enquired if there had been any further information following the meeting to discuss the proposed realignment of the A14 and answers to questions posed at that meeting. Clerk to contact County Councillor Peter Brown to arrange the first meeting of the promised working party to monitor the situation. Mr Read also thanked the Parish Council for their proactive attitude towards development on the airbase.

Mrs Horner, School Lane enquired about repairs to the footpaths in School Lane. These repairs were hopefully due to be carried out in early July. Paths were now considered dangerous. Clerk to contact Highways.

24. Apologies for Absence

Apologies received from County Councillor Peter Brown.

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

Mr Watson and Mrs Elphick registered a prejudicial interest in planning application 0701632FUL – being residents in close proximity.

Mr Watson and Mrs Williams registered a prejudicial interest in Item 30 - Maypole Square - being residents in close proximity.

26. To sign and approve minutes of previous meetings held on 29th May and 18th June 2007

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

27. The Village Shop and Post Office – update from Mrs Aylott.

A meeting of 33 residents and Parish Councillors had been held in the shop on 7th June to

discuss possible ways forward. The postmaster had attended a meeting with the Post Office but unfortunately no decision would be made as to the possible closure of the Alconbury office until April 2008. He did not want volunteers to help in the shop. If his plans for the site were approved, he would seek temporary accommodation for the Post Office, but felt that nothing further could be decided until the plans had been passed. After this, any interested parties could move forward. Papers were now available Monday – Saturday 7.45am – 12.00 noon and Sunday papers were soon to be available from the Manor House Hotel.

28. The Brook Clearance

Mr Senior reported that a meeting had been held with ENCAMS, an organisation who assisted voluntary groups with clearance of waterways, and unfortunately they had advised that the date of 7th July for the clearance should be cancelled as there was too much water in the Brook. Another meeting with ENCAMS and Parish Councillors was scheduled for 5th July. The company were very professional and would provide all necessary equipment for the clearance. They would also involve the Wildlife Trust so the activity could be more interesting to children involved with activities such as pond dipping. All interested parties had been informed of the postponement.

29. The Parish Plan

Mrs Watkin outlined information she had received on enhancement of the Parish Council website. Two suggestions had been put forward, a diary page which would be updated monthly, costing £15 per month and a directory page which would be similar to that found in the Parish Pump but also including link to other websites, costing £160 per year. This was discussed at some length. It was decided to go ahead with the directory page but to defer the diary page until it was proven that this worked for the current Newsletter. The idea of a page on planning applications was also deferred. Future enhancements could be planned for in the 2008/2009 Precept.

The Jointly Funded Minor Improvement Bid had been prepared concerning traffic calming measures in Rusts Lane.

The Memorial Hall was booked for 29th August for a meeting of any like minded people wishing to form new activity groups within the village. It was hoped that representatives from both the Sports & Social Club and the Memorial Hall might be present to help with availability of venues.

30. Maypole Square enhancement (Mr Watson and Mrs Williams left the meeting for this agenda item)

Mr Hardy reported on the recent meeting of Maypole Square residents who were in agreement that the area could be visually improved, but did not want a seat or flower beds. An information board could be a good idea. Mrs. Watkin to make enquiries. Clerk to go back to HDC for a new quotation excluding the seat and flower beds. £2500 was in the Precept for this project.

31. Quality Status

Ian Dewar of CALC was unable to attend the August Parish Council meeting. An alternative date of 18th September at 7.30pm was suggested. A 90 minute workshop should be requested. Clerk to confirm with CALC and venue.

32. The Code of Conduct

Recommendations on adoption of the Code of Conduct had been received from CALC and

would be circulated to all Councillors. This should be an agenda item for the July meeting when the official reply would go to CALC.

33. Parking in the Village

Further complaints had been received about parking on the junction of Field Close and Manor Lane. The PCSOs had been asked to monitor this area. Problems were also being experienced outside the Thera Trust house in Rusts Lane and the police had been informed.

The continuing problems outside the School were discussed. Clerk to arrange a meeting with the PCSOs, Highways, a School Governor and Parish Concillors – hopefully before the end of term – to look at the situation with a view to restricted parking.

34. The Village Affair

Unfortunately Mr Senior would no longer be available on 14th July to organise the Parish Council stand. Mrs Watkin would take over this role helped by Mr Watson and Mrs Williams. Mr Read kindly agreed to supply some of his photos for display on the day.

35. The Fair

The Fair had been cancelled due to concerns of damage to the village green because of bad weather. It was hoped it might visit later in the year. It was agreed that plans should be made for future users of the green to make good any damage caused . Clerk to investigate.

36. Alconbury Sports & Social Club

The planned extension to facilities was still progressing. It had been decided not to extend the car park. The Charity Cricket Match had been very successful. Insurance had covered all losses suffered in the recent break-in.

37. The Memorial Hall

Gerry Aylott had taken over as Secretary and Adrian Bush as vice Chair. There was a new Hall Manager/Booking Clerk – Teresa Wood. Contact details remained the same. Several improvements had been carried out including mending the shutters in the lounge and repairing the clock. Provision of sound proofing was on-going.

38. The Youth Group

Youth Group meetings continued to be very popular. A Ball Park Development Group had been formed for fund raising, lead by Nigel Murphy. There would be a music quiz night in the autumn, and members of the group would have plans of the Ball Park on display at the Village Affair.

39. The Bus Shelter

Mrs Aylott reported that on the advice of a local solicitor and CALC, the Parish Council had responded to the last e-mail from Claudia Waters in order that silence should not be taken as acceptance of payment for installation of sides for the shelter. As yet there had been no response from the District Council.

40. Safer Neighbourhood Panel Meeting

Mrs Dyer had attended. Participants were able to freely speak and ask questions. The next meeting aimed specifically at Alconbury would be in the Memorial Hall on 11th September and would be open to all Parish Councillors.

41. Matters Arising from previous minutes (for information only)

Jointly Funded Minor Improvement Scheme 2008/2009

This had been prepared for submission and concerned traffic calming measures in Rusts Lane.

Warren Hay Road Safety Petition

This was signed by all Councillors.

Tree Work on the Village Green

Clerk reported that on the advice of Peter Rowlings, Tree Warden, the company wanting to carry out agreed work to trees on the village green had been asked to delay until the autumn.

42. Committee Reports

a) Clerk's infrastructure Report

Churchyard: Nothing to report.

Village Green: Further concerns expressed over the footbridge next to the Heritage Bridge which was in need of repair. This had already been reported. Clerk to chase.

The path leading from the bridge to Brookside was in poor repair. Clerk to action.

General: Slippery surfaces on footbridges were still of concern. Clerk to chase CCC for promised action. Clerk also to inspect repair carried out to footbridge at the bottom of Polecat Lane.

b) Planning

New Applications

0701632FUL – Erection of 2 houses, shop with flat over. Demolition of existing shop, outbuildings and part of existing dwelling – Ball Lane

(Mrs Elphick and Mr Watson left the meeting for this agenda item)

This application was discussed at length. Although the Parish Council was in favour in principle of the redevelopment of this area, it considered that the submitted plans did not provide sufficient information in order for an informed decision to be made. The plans were not a good representation of the completed site, had not been drawn to scale and did not clearly show land levels and heights of new dwellings. Councillors were also concerned about insufficient parking for residents of the proposed flat and shop employees. It also felt that there should be restrictions on times of the day when demolition of the old site could be carried out as it was a major route for school children. It was agreed the Clerk should express these concerns to HDC requesting more detailed plans as part of the current application process.

0701532FUL – Extension to dwelling, erection of porch and conservatory – 4 Sharps Lane (Mr Senior, Mr Brown and Mrs Hathaway expressed a personal interest in this application – residents known personally)

No observations.

070186S73 – Renewal 0501534 for continuation of use of former classroom as domestic storage – Alconbury House – No observations.

Applications determined by HDC Planning:

0701182FUL – Extension to dwelling – 25 High Street - granted

0701197FUL – Extension to dwelling, 7 Rusts Lane - withdrawn

c) Bramble End Playground

Monthly inspection carried out by Mrs Williams. No apparent problems. Grass had now grown satisfactorily around the helicopter surface. Mrs Williams had delivered all Community Safety Partnership leaflets and letters concerning ball games. A further supply was also distributed at the school.

43. Correspondence

Huntingdonshire Local Development Framework Documents

These documents replaced the old Local Plan and were a massive public consultation exercise – albeit in its early stages. It was agreed the Parish Council should make representation. Planning Committee meeting arranged for 3rd July at 7.30pm. Venue to be arranged.

Emergency Planning Awareness Session

Agenda circulated to all Councillors. Arranged for 26th September.

Proposed Changes to Mobile Library Service

Van would stop at Crown Gardens for half an hour instead of an hour. No change to Maypole Square service.

CALC Training

Mr Hardy had attended a free of charge session for new Councillors and Mr Senior was booked on a session for new Chairs on 6th July 2007. It was agreed to discuss further training at the July meeting.

Possible Closure of Truckstop Facility

Clerk reported on reply Mr Djanogly had received from CCC. It was understood the site had now been sold. Should the new owners wish to apply for permission to redevelop the site, there would be a need to demonstrate that the truckstop facility was no longer required. CCC would be in favour of the retention of the site for its current purpose, however, as this was a commercial operation, they would have no power to compel this.

44. Responsible Finance Officer's Report

Cheques for signature:

Pipex Internet - £14.99

Demon – Web Hosting - £11.75

Grafton Projects – Stationery/Newsletter - £93.11

Grafton Projects – Stationery - £28.97

Donation to Alconbury C of E School – Drugs Awareness - £100

Clerk's Salary June (including extra for training and salary increase from April and travelling expenses to CALC) - £485.95

Norton Antivirus Subscription – Clerk's computer - £60.98

Youth Group – Memorial Hall Bookings - £100

Youth Group – Petty Cash top up - £150

Payments were proposed by Mrs Williams and seconded by Mr Senior

Cleared Balances:

Current Account: £16,929.32, Deposit Account £13,429.90

Youth Group Account: £3,569.43

45. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on 31st July at 7.45 in the Memorial Hall.