

ALCONBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 31st March 2009 in the Memorial Hall

Present:

Mr Senior (Chair), Mrs Aylott, Mrs Adams, Mrs Dyer, Mrs Elphick, Mr Hardy, Mr Pickering, Mr Sale, Mr Watson and Mrs Williams. Mrs Lancey (Clerk). 7 members of the public.

Public Forum

The problem of large HGVs continuing to attempt to get through the centre of the village was discussed in the light of further damage being recently done to property along Brookside. It was acknowledged that the main cause was the use of Satellite Navigation systems. Clerk to liaise with PCSO Gemma Clark on her work with companies on the airbase and weight restrictions in the village and also to contact companies at Alconbury Hill to encourage vehicles not to enter the village. The situation had improved considerably when Trading Standards had been carrying out their spot checks so it was considered that better signage could improve the situation.

Mr Hodgson was concerned that progress would be made on the proposed housing development on the airbase without consultation with the Parish Council. He was assured that the Parish Council had already written to EERA and that they would be liaising closely with both CCC and HDC on any progress.

Mr Scotney enquired of the representatives from the new Truckstop who attended the meeting (agenda item 200) whether they would be installing large refuse bins similar to those used in Europe at the exit of the new facility. It was explained that there were no plans for these at present but that 30 wheelie bins were already in place on the site for use by drivers and that the site would be regularly cleared of any litter. Mr Hodgson was concerned that off-site parking would continue after the facility was open. It was agreed that this would continue to be a police matter and that both the new owners and the Parish Council would liaise with the traffic police to attempt to keep this to a minimum. It was agreed that a litter pick should be arranged with HDC now in order that the site would open with the surrounding area in a clean and tidy state.

196. Apologies for Absence

Apologies received from Mrs Hathaway, County Councillors Peter Brown and Laine Kadic and District Councillor Keith Baker.

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

Mrs Williams declared a prejudicial interest in agenda item 211 as her daughter had entered the competition.

198. To sign and approve minutes of previous meetings held on 24th February 2009 and the Planning Committee Meeting held on 10th March 2009.

Minutes from 24th February were proposed by Mrs Aylott and seconded by Mr Watson. Minutes from 10th March were proposed by Mr Watson and seconded by Mrs Williams. Minutes duly approved and signed.

199. The Heritage Bridge and village Bus Service

On behalf of Laine Kadic, the Clerk reported that Laine had secured the village bus service when repairs were being carried out to the bridge. CCC would be commencing a scheme

for repairs in the new financial year and a meeting would be set up with English Heritage to define the scope of the work. The Parish Council would be kept informed.

200. The new Truckstop facility

Mr Senior welcomed Mr George Heys and Mr Mark Stanojevic from the new Truckstop facility. It was emphasised that this facility was absolutely needed in the area and had the full support of the Parish Council. Mr Heys reported that the site was already open for fuel and that the lorry park would be open within the next few days. It was proposed that the new site be known as Alconbury Services and with a new image would not just be a truckstop but eventually would have other facilities for the general public including a shop and a petrol station. There would be secure parking for 200 lorries. They were seeking to erect an illuminated sign to draw attention to the site from major routes. As mentioned during the public forum, they were very keen to maintain a completely safe and clean site controlled by CCTV. They were prepared to work with the Parish Council by handing out leaflets to drivers in an attempt to prevent HGVs accessing the village. Mr Senior expressed the Parish Council's appreciation of their attendance at the meeting and looked forward to working with them over any local issues.

201. Provision of Allotments - Mr Sale/Mrs Aylott (Standing Orders were relaxed for this agenda item)

Mr Senior welcomed Steve Womersley to the meeting, a prospective allotment user who was willing to help with the setting up the scheme. Mr Sale and Mrs Aylott reported on the recent workshop which had been presented by Karen Kenny of the Allotments Regeneration Initiative. At the workshop it had been recommended that an Allotment Association should be formed locally to help drive the initiative. Karen Kenny would be available to help with this.

It was now considered that the original piece of land offered for sale was not large enough. Another farmer has subsequently been approached who was not opposed to the idea of leasing some land to the Parish Council but there were some access problems which needed to be sorted out. The size of an allotment plot is 10 poles (10 x 30 yds.) It was envisaged that in total approx. 3.5 acres would be required. It was decided that a letter should be sent to all local farmers seeking any available land. Progress would be reported at the April meeting.

202. Alconbury Flood Alleviation Scheme

As reported at the February meeting, the Scheme was no longer going ahead due to financial constraints. It was accepted that even though the Scheme was not going ahead, residents at risk should be given any available advice in order to protect their properties. The Environment Agency should be contacted accordingly. Mr Pickering agreed to draft a letter and to also find out when the EA were planning their community drop in sessions for Alconbury. If necessary, the EA should be invited to attend a Parish Council meeting. Jonathan Djanogly to be kept informed.

203. Northbridge Development

Persimmon Homes had invited a representative from the Council to attend their offices in Peterborough. Mr Watson would attend and voice the Council's concerns about traffic and local amenities. Clerk to arrange suitable date.

204. Alconbury Sports & Social Club

CCC would provide costings for directional signs in the new financial year. It had been

suggested that the small piece of land at the bottom of the playing field alongside Polecat Lane could be tidied and planted with a few fruit trees. Mr Watson to liaise with ASSC Committee. Details for Skanska had been passed to the secretary of the Club with a view to help clearing the ditches in Polecat Lane.

205. Small Scale Scheme - Maypole Square

Mr Hardy and his wife were thanked for painting the pump. A rota for watering the plants would be worked out for the summer. Clerk to arrange for commemorative plaque to now be put back on the pump.

206. Compost Giveaway

After some discussion it was agreed to go ahead with this again this year. Clerk to arrange distribution from the Memorial Hall and delivery dates with HDC. Mrs Adams agreed to help.

207. Planned Scout Store

The Church Commissioners had agreed that as the PC would not receive any rental for the planned scout store and that they would not allow any third party exclusive possession of any part of the site, consent for its erection could be given. They had requested more detailed plans and also advised that the Parish Council would incur surveyor fees of approx. £125.

208. School Perimeter Path

A letter of thanks had been received from the School Governors in respect of the Parish Council's help with the perimeter path. After a number of meetings with Skanska, they had agreed in principle to give the school some assistance with this project.

209. The Bi-Monthly Newsletter

Suggestions for the May edition included the Compost Giveaway, Duck Posters, a change in CCC contact telephone number, the Flood Alleviation Scheme, the new Truckstop facility and the provision of allotments.

210. Neighbourhood Panel Meeting - report from Mr Hardy

Problems with large vehicles getting lost and entering the village had been discussed and it had been agreed that weight checks carried out by Trading Standards had been helpful. PCSO Gemma Clark was organising leaflets in different languages to be handed to drivers at the base gates. There had been some anti social behaviour in the Wren Close area. It was agreed that Alconbury would not volunteer for the Speedwatch Scheme.

211. Duck Posters

It was agreed to judge the duck posters after the meeting. Book tokens would be awarded for the two best posters. Mrs Adams to organise laminating. Mr Pickering and Mr Senior to organise the display.

212. The Memorial Hall

The Memorial Hall had held its AGM and Regular User Group meeting. One new committee member had been appointed. Due to the current financial climate it had been decided not to increase hall rental charges. The hall had suffered some vandalism from users and the situation had been addressed. £500 had been donated from the PCC.

213. The Power of Well Being

CPALC had enquired whether the Parish Council intended to seek to use the Power of Well-being. Clerk explained that the power could be used to promote or improve the economic, social or environmental well-being of their area. It was decided that the Council could not foresee using the power at this time. Clerk to respond.

214. Request for donation from East Anglia's Children's Hospices (EACH)

Clerk had requested further information about this charity which had not yet been received. This should therefore be an agenda item for April.

215. Committee Reports

(a) Planning Applications Received - None

Applications Determined by HDC Planning:

0900164FUL, Alteration and extension to dwelling, 12 Spinney Lane - permission granted.

The application for the new Post Office and shop with flat over had still to be determined by the District Council.

(b) Clerk's Infrastructure Report

Churchyard: Nothing to report.

Village Green: The first grass cut of the season had been carried out and looked very good.

General: Pot holes had been filled in along Mill Road.

Highways Agency had been chased to carry out further maintenance to the land at Field Close.

Contaminated soil had been removed from verges in School Lane.

Clerk to check request for dropped kerb at the bottom of the road leading to Mill Farm.

Complaints received about cars parking on pavements. Clerk to contact residents concerned.

Clerk to contact PCSO re. parking on the High Street opposite the green.

(c) Bramble End: Monthly inspection carried out. Nothing to report.

Complaints had been received from residents about work carried out to the boundary fence between 15 Spinney Lane and the playground, and also the fact that the debris had been burned causing damage to the grass and danger to children. A letter had been written to the resident concerned. Clerk to take advice from HDC on any further action that might be taken. The ROSPA inspection would take place in April.

Re-development (Mrs Williams and Mr Watson):

Mrs Williams and Mr Watson advised that three consultations and three estimates had been obtained. Mrs Williams had circulated a copy of the proposed layout. Consultation had also taken place with prospective users of the equipment. It was envisaged that the safety surface would be made of re-cycled material. It was now time to make an application for funding. WREN were being considered as a source of funding with a total estimate of approximately £20,000. It was agreed that the Parish Council should contribute a maximum of £7,000 from monies set aside for this purpose in the precept. A letter should be drafted and a meeting arranged with residents living around the play area in order to explain the plans. Mr Senior thanked Mr Watson and Mrs Williams for their work on this

project.

216. Correspondence

- Homes on Alconbury Airfield - letter had been sent to the Chief Executive of EERA voicing the Parish Council's concerns about the Arup Report. This had been copied to Jonathan Djanogly who had replied giving support to these concerns.
- Public Footpath No. 3 - CCC had advised that the stretch running from Rusts Lane to Beech End would have a straighter alignment with a wider tarmac level surface making it more accessible for all users.
- CCC Contact Centre - new telephone number 0345 045 5200
- New Sustainable Communities Act - Invitation to public meeting on 2nd April. No one available to attend.
- Latest Pay Scales - Clerk's salary increased by £0.032p per hour from April 08. Increase implemented.

217. Responsible Finance Officer's Report

Alconbury Parish Council had been called to audit for 1st June 2009. Notices advertising the audit had been displayed accordingly. David Armstrong had agreed to continue as the Internal Auditor. The accounts would have to be signed at the AGM on 26th May ready for submission by 1st June 2009.

Cheques for signature:

- Demon - Webhosting March 09 (paid by direct debit) - £11.50
- Pipex Internet - £14.67
- Colemans Stationery - Newsletter - £29.30
- Grafton Projects - Newsletter - £51.35
- Grafton Projects - stationery - £161.34
- Michael Cullum - work in churchyard - £585
- Paul Tait - annual website maintenance - £437
- Clerk's Salary March 09 - £428.84
- Petty Cash Top Up - £29.52

Payments were proposed by Mrs Aylott and seconded by Mrs Adams.

Cleared Balances (not confirmed as bank statements not yet received): C/A £2,098.40.
D/A £26,926.02. Youth Group £740.52.

218. Date of Next Meeting

28th April 2009 at 7.30pm in the Memorial Hall.