

# ALVECHURCH PARISH COUNCIL

Ground Floor, 1A George Road, Alvechurch, B48 7PB

Tel: 0121 447 8016 e-mail: [clerk@alvechurch.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@alvechurch.gov.uk)

<b>Council Members:</b>	<i>Alvechurch ward:</i>	<i>P Freeman, S Hornsby, A Humphries, S Lambert, T Wallis, M Worrall, N Wise</i>
	<i>Hopwood ward:</i>	<i>S Lewis, A Willetts</i>
	<i>Rowney Green &amp; Bordesley ward:</i>	<i>S Baxter, J Cypher, T Wallis</i>

## MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

HELD MONDAY 9<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2019 AT 7PM

AT HOPWOOD COMMUNITY CENTRE REDDITCH ROAD HOPWOOD

**19/076 Present:** Councillors M Worrall (Chairman), S Baxter, J Cypher, A Helmore, S Hornsby, A Humphries (vice-Chairman), S Lambert, S Lewis, A Willetts, N Wise

**In attendance:** District Cllr K Van der Plank  
District & County Cllr C Hotham  
Two members of the public  
Richard Peach (The Village)  
Clerk - Tammy Williams

### **19/077 Apologies for Absence:**

Received from Cllrs T Wallis & P Freeman and noted.  
Reasons for absence are recorded in the attendance register.

### **19/078 Declarations of Interest:**

None noted

### **19/079 Consideration of Dispensations**

No Dispensation requests were received prior to the meeting.

Localism Act 2011, s33(e)

**Standing orders were suspended to allow for one of the members of the public to speak on agenda item 13 and also for:**

### **19/080 Reports from Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) councillors and Worcestershire County Council (WCC) Councillor**

- .1 Kate Van der Plank**, district member for Alvechurch Village ward commented:
  - a) Cleaner, Greener Alvechurch – shop owners in Alvechurch have expressed support for the initiative; successfully granted funding from BARN (£300); there will be an open meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> September to discuss how to allocate the grant.
  - b) Fly- tipping – BDC is considering a motion on fly-tipping on 25<sup>th</sup> September which will include mobile cctv with number plate recognition technology to be in fly-tipping hot spots. BDC estimates that fly-tipping costs local taxpayers £80k per annum.
- .2 Charlie Hotham**, district member for Hopwood and Barnt Green ward commented:

- a) BDC's Green Belt review – The first review of the Green Belt has split the whole district into parcels of land with BDC looking at the strength of each parcel in terms of green belt. The green belt around Alvechurch has been scored as strong Green Belt which contradicts the District Council's local plan.
- b) Financial Position at Redditch Borough Council – a Notice has been served on the Borough Council stating its finances are in a very poor state; this will also impact on BDC employees as the two offices provide shared services and officers are jointly employed. District Cllr Van der Plank added that she has written to District Cllr Karen May about this and Karen May has reassured that this won't have an impact of BDC's staff and service provision however, District Cllr K Van der Plank commented that she can't see how it won't have an effect as £1m per annum must be saved.
- c) Mayfield Farm – A public enquiry into the two companies operating at Mayfield Farm was undertaken and both owners attended the Hearing. The owner responsible for collecting the lorries has no control over whether they have a sealed lid which eliminates the smell odour. 70% of the trailers used have sealed lids but there are 400 trailers which costs £70k to convert to a sealed lid trailer. As more are converted the smell nuisance will reduce. The Owner of the Halal meat operations at the site suggested that conditions were added to their licence to include a noise reduction strategy.  
Email communications from residents suggest that some improvements have taken place.  
Questions from Parish Councillors were received including a question about County Cllr A Amos's suggestion that there would likely be an allocation for highways improvements in County Councillors' divisional funding. County Cllr Hotham advised that this was a relatively small amount of funding for small projects and all projects have to be in and costed by the middle of October.

**.3 Charlie Hotham**, county member for Alvechurch division commented:

- a) Financial position of WCC – still in a poor condition. A review of senior and middle management has been undertaken. Financial position is due to ongoing cuts in central government funding plus the cost in establishing the new company to oversee the Adult & Children's Services.
- b) Library Review – the Interim Report issued in the summer changed the categorisation of some local libraries but not Alvechurch. A new report will be issued in November 2019.

**.4 Annette English**, district member for Alvechurch South sent apologies

**.5 PC Simon Albutt** sent apologies

**Standing Orders were resumed.**

**19/081 Approval of the Minutes of the previous meeting held 12/08/2019**

Cllr Worrall noted a slight change to the minutes on page 70 minute reference 19/062k that West Midlands trains rather than Network Rail will be asked to clear the drains. This amendment was written on the Minutes and signed by the Chairman. **IT WAS RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting held 12/08/2019 which were then signed by the Chairman as a true and accurate record.

**19/082 Clerk's report**

The Clerk provided the following updates:

**a) Adoption of the BT Phone Box on Bear Hill, Alvechurch**

The phone box is a grade II listed building. BDC's Conservation Officer has been asked for advice and replies:

“The BT Phone Box is listed Grade II, and as a listed structure could not be altered or moved without listed building consent. I assume that decommissioning means that it will no longer be in use as a phone box but it would still be owned by BT. I am not aware that it would be transferred to Bromsgrove District Council.

The Parish Council may want to approach BT directly about taking it on, or see <https://business.bt.com/campaigns/communities/adopt-a-kiosk-how-it-works/>”

**b) Plumbing work at Hopwood Community Centre & Rowney Green Pavilion**

Work to remove the showers, disused pipe-works and new water heaters at HCC will start on 09/09/2019. Whilst on site the plumbers will attend to a blocked toilet in the ladies as well.

A plumber has been booked to look at the toilet at Rowney Green Pavilion as well.

**c) Overgrown hedges alongside A441 between Roberts Corner/Hopwood have been cut**

One section alongside the layby near Roberts Corner couldn't be cut back so the Clerk will ask the lengthsman to cut back that small area.

**d) Damage incurred to the grass matting at Hopwood Playing Fields**

A replacement mat has been received. £0 charge to the Parish Council. The Clerk/Supporting Officer will establish how to have it fitted and will make arrangements for this to be undertaken.

**e) Tree work in Wiggin Memorial Playing Field**

The trees noted as T48 and T49 have received appropriate surgery to make safe. The white willow that was leaning at an angle over the River Arrow and pushing against the boardwalk has been cut down. Damage to the boardwalk handrail during tree removal will be repaired by contractor.

**f) Replacement water meter for Rowney Green pavilion**

is to be installed on Friday 06/09//2019; it would appear the current meter is no longer recording and hasn't been for some time.

**g) Office photocopier**

The refurbished office photocopier was installed and set up in August

**h) Purchase of a new bin for the Wiggin Memorial Playing Fields**

A new bin has been ordered and the Parish Team will install it

**i) Worcestershire County Council Passenger Transport Strategy Consultation**

A reminder that the closing date for individual responses to this consultation is 13<sup>th</sup> September 2019

**j) Road Closure Arrangements for the Remembrance Service and Christmas Light Switch On**

The Clerk has instructed Headway Traffic Management to undertake the manned road closures for these events. The office staff will apply to BDC for the road closure notices this month.

**k) Grants Update**

The application for the ERDF Habitats Programme was unsuccessful and the Clerk was also advised that grant funding couldn't be secured to undertake a feasibility study for solar panelled footway lighting.

**l) Rowney Green Peace hall Centenary Celebrations**

The Clerk has written to a Trustee to advise that Council agreed they could hold their celebrations on the Playing Fields subject to receipt of Events Insurance (£5m public liability), method statement and risk assessment in advance of the event.

**m) Briefing Note to the PCC Regarding the A441**

This was sent after the meeting. To date the Clerk hasn't received a response or acknowledgement.

**n) Completion of the Limited Assurance Review for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019**

The External Auditor has confirmed that they have completed their review of the Parish Council's Accounts with no comments or endorsements made

**o) Outstanding items on the Clerk's to-do list include: Street Lighting Tender, Horse Safety signs in Rowney Green, Office pay-as-you-go mobile phone, Local Council Award Scheme Action Plan**

A Councillor raised that the street lighting tender has been outstanding for a long time.

**19/083 Finance & Administration**

a) List of Invoices for Payment and consideration of exceptional items

The payments list was presented to the meeting, appended at page 83.

*Local Government Act 1972, s111*

b) To Approve Attendance at WCALC Training (September)

Councillors were provided with details of 7 training sessions being held in September and the Chairman encouraged Councillors to attend training sessions on offer. Council **resolved** to cover the cost of the Clerk attending the Planning training being held on 16<sup>th</sup> September at a cost of £40 should she be able to attend.

c) To Approve the Replacement of a Damaged Footpath Light, Withybed Lane, Withybed Close £1325

Council requested that the Clerk seek confirmation from Prysmian whether this light which may have been damaged for some time could be replaced during a wholesale upgrade. Council **resolved** that if Prysmian states that this lighting column must be replaced sooner rather than later then the Clerk can authorise this expenditure.

d) To Approve the Increase in Disposal Costs Following the Removal of Dog Waste

Council **resolved unanimously** to pay the additional costs of £45.50 for the next 6 months and the increased annual costs associated with a larger Eurobin (1100 litres)

e) To Note the Cost for the Bus Shelter Repair is £357.90 to Include Beading (approved by MW & AH)

Members had been previously advised the cost would be £300, however this did not include the beading. The beading should be in situ but we must assume it was destroyed at the same time as the panel. The replacement panel will be polycarbonate rather than toughened safety glass and the work will be carried out by the original supplier.

f) TalkTalk

Council **resolved unanimously** to pay for TalkTalk bills by direct debit which will afford a £54 per annum saving on billing charges.

g) Footballers

The football club had advised the Parish Council in August that it didn't want to use the football pitches at Rowney Green during the 2019/20 football season. However, following feedback from the footballers' parents, two teams have expressed a strong desire to play at football grounds within the parish. The Football Club have therefore approached the Parish Council about this. Council **agreed** unanimously that they were happy for the football club to use our pitches and that the Clerk should arrange a meeting between the football club, Parish Council and the Village Hall trustees to discuss the car parking issues.

**19/084 Committees / Sub Committees / Working Parties**

## **A. Reports from Committees; minutes have been circulated.**

- i. Planning - Cllr M Worrall updated:
  - 10 applications reviewed
  - Planning appeals were also considered and members of the public attended the meeting to address the Committee about these.
  - It was noted that no response had been received from Ruth Bamford or District Cllr A Kent regarding the letter sent to them on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2019.
- ii. Branden Road – Cllr M Worrall updated:
  - The Canal & River Trust has accepted responsibility for the blocked culvert between the Canal & house on Branden Road and Tranter Avenue. Quotes are being sought for the work to be undertaken however their budgets are set for the next 2 years.
  - In the meantime the ongoing water seeping into gardens and emanating through the drives on Branden Road are causing damage to the driveways themselves.
- iii. Highways – Cllr Humphries commented:

A meeting between District Cllr K Van der Plank, Richard Clewer (County Highways), Parish Cllrs Humphries, Worrall and Cypher and Martin Ball (resident) has been arranged for October specifically to look at the speed limits through the village and the state of the footways between Roberts Corner, Alvechurch and Hopwood. Anyone is welcome to join the meeting.
- iv. Village Green Working Party – Cllr Helmore commented:

Costs are being sought for planting out the village green beds. Where Next? Has been approached for costs. A working party group to dig out and replant the beds will be arranged.
- v. Christmas Arrangements Committee – Cllr Lambert commented:

The Clerk and Cllr Lambert went round all the shops and businesses in the villages to raise the Christmas lights switch on with them and to gauge interest in the Best Dressed Window Competition.
- vi. Projects – The Clerk commented:

The budgeting process will begin in September/October and will be resolved in December therefore any Committees/working Groups wishing to pursue projects in the 2020/21 financial year will need to consider and cost these in the next two months.
- vii. Allotments – The Clerk commented:

A number of thefts have been reported to the police. PC S Albutt has offered to Smartwater mark belongings stored at the allotments and also attend the next Youth, Sport & Recreation Committee meeting to discuss security options for the site.

## **B. External Bodies**

- a. CALC Area & Executive Meetings – Cllr J Cypher commented:

Area Meeting – District Cllr K May wasn't able to attend the meeting however Ruth Bamford stood in for her instead.

Executive Committee – there is an agenda item for the Worcestershire Passenger Transport Study with an inclusion for the Diamond Buses issue for this Parish.
- b. Community Transport Seminar

Cllrs Worrall and Humphries will be attending this seminar which is being run by West Midlands Trains

**19/085 To be Aware of the Imminent District Plan Review that is Likely to Include a Call for Potential Sites and Prepare to Respond When Consulted**

Councillors discussed that this is the most important topics to affect our Parish for many years to come. All Councillors were encouraged to read the Issues and Options paper produced by BDC in 2018. The Call for Sites Consultation will conclude on 11<sup>th</sup> November.

**19/086 Community Action Groups:**

- a) To Note an Update on the Progress of the Community Action Groups' Membership and Terms of Reference  
Councillors were encouraged to advise if they wished to be a part of any of the 8 Working Groups. The Supporting Officer has written draft Terms of Reference that each of the working groups must review at their first meeting.
- b) To Appoint the Membership of the Co-ordination Working Group  
Council **agreed unanimously** that the membership would comprise of Cllrs Worrall, Cypher, Humphries, Helmore & Freeman.
- c) To Appoint the Membership of the Community Action 8: Future Growth for the Parish  
Council **agreed unanimously** that the membership would comprise of Cllrs Worrall, Humphries, Cypher and District Councillors English & Van der Plank. Cllr Hotham advised that he would have to consider whether he has a conflict of interest if he participated in this Working Group.

**19/087 To Agree a Review of Alvechurch Parish Council's Website**

Councillors **agreed** unanimously that a review of our website arrangements could be undertaken to encompass imminent changes in accessibility legislation.

**19/088 To Respond to a Resident's Request to Remove a Tree**

A member of the public has contacted the District Council who suggested speaking to the Parish Council about an immature oak tree that was causing issues with the resident's property. The Clerk had spoken to BDC's Tree Officer to clarify the situation. The Chairman thanked the resident for taking the time to speak to the Parish Council but confirmed that the Parish Council couldn't give permission for such a thing but acknowledged that BDC could and it sounded like the resident had gained permission for the tree to be cut down.

**19/089 Residents' correspondence**

- a) Email From Margaret Westwood Memorial Charity  
Requested that the Parish Council will publicise that this charity is devoted to supporting the physical, educational or moral welfare and benefit of children and young people (up to the age of 25) who reside in the County of Worcestershire as at 1946 (including parts of Stourbridge, Halesowen, Dudley and Oldbury) ("the Area of Benefit").
- b) Minerals Consultation – deadline 30<sup>th</sup> September  
Previous responses to this consultation have been submitted but it was noted that this Minerals Plan doesn't impact on Alvechurch Parish
- c) Request from Air Ambulance Charity to Site a Collection Bin on Parish Council land  
The office staff have a standard response that we issue regarding sites for charity bins however it was noted that The Air Ambulance already has a collection bin in the Sports & Social Club

**19/090 Around the Parish – councillors to raise issues for future consideration**

- a) Bordesley  
There is more traffic travelling through Bordesley likely due to the road works being undertaken off Junction 3 of the M42 or possibly due to the development off of Weights Lane, Redditch.

- b) Alvechurch
  - i. Sign denoting Disabled Parking Bay by the Precinct – The Assistant Clerk has raised this.
  - ii. Letter sent to Residents in The Buckleys advising of roadworks affecting them but this would actually impact on residents of Crown Meadow. Possible issue with Google maps.
  - iii. A Councillor advised that he received a first class service in Alvechurch and recommended that the Clerk issue a letter to the Post Office asking for an update on the future of Alvechurch Post Office.
- c) Hopwood
  - i. Footway between Roberts Corner, Alvechurch and Hopwood – photographs had been circulated to Council prior to the meeting. The Ward Councillor for Hopwood advised that the state of the footway was so bad she had to walk in the road: the surface is broken up and tree roots are penetrating the surface.  
**Standing Orders were suspended to allow County Cllr Hotham to advise:**  
It is unlikely that the County Council will find all the money required to resurface the footpaths on both sides of the road but County Cllr Hotham will be pushing that the school side of the road is resurfaced at a likely cost of £50k.
  - ii. Land to the Rear of Smedley Crooke Place Appeal – Planning Committee hopes that the Neighbourhood Plan will be taken into consideration by the Planning Inspectorate.
- d) Rowney Green  
No additional issues.

**19/091 Resolution to exclude members of the public and the press.**  
**RESOLVED** to exclude members of the public and the press to discuss matters relating to a contractual legal position and to staff.  
*Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, s1(2)*

**19/092 To Consider the Arrangements for Caretaker Duties**  
 The Clerk provided an update to Council and also a job description for temporary cover. Council **resolved** that the Clerk could look for a temporary caretaker using the job description provided.

This meeting ended at 10.00pm.

The next APC meeting will be held on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2019 at 7pm, at Hopwood Community Centre.

.....  
 Chairman – Alvechurch Parish Council

.....  
 Date

Minute no. 19/083a(i) Payments list:

<b>Alvechurch Parish Council</b>						
<b>PAYMENTS LIST for month to 09/09/2019</b>						
<b>Voucher</b>	<b>Minute</b>	<b>Cheque No</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Net</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Total</b>
227		5214	Pest control at the allotments	80.00	16.00	96.00
228		5215	Tree Surgery	950.00	190.00	1140.00
229		5216	Japanese Knotweed Treatment @ The Wiggin	264.00	52.80	316.80
230 – 233		5217	Dog bin emptying	200.00	-	200.00
234 - 236		5217	General waste bin disposal	100.00	-	100.00
237 – 243 252 – 253 255 257-258		5218 5222 5224 5227	Staff & Cllr expenses	118.32	2.24	120.56
245 - 247		5207	Street Lighting	495.37	92.70	588.07
248		5220	Audit	400.00	80.00	480.00
249-251		5221	Grass cutting/field prep	795.38	-	954.46
254		5223	Training	120.00	-	120.00
256		5225	Community Centre Cleaning	87.50	-	87.50
214 - 219		SO	Salaries	826.28	-	3,096.84
<b>Total</b>				<b>£4,472.85</b>	<b>£592.82</b>	<b>£5,065.67</b>