

ALVECHURCH PARISH COUNCIL
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Clerk – Tammy Williams

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

HELD MONDAY 11th FEBRUARY 2019 AT 7PM

AT HOPWOOD COMMUNITY CENTRE REDDITCH ROAD HOPWOOD

18/141 Present: Councillors A Humphries (Chairman), M Ball (arrived at 19.07), J Cypher, S Lambert, A Smith, T Wallis, M Worrall & N Wise

In attendance: Tammy Williams (Clerk), Sally Oldaker (The Village), District Cllr K Van der Plank, District & County Cllr C Hotham (from 19.56 – see 18/142) & two members of the public

18/142 Apologies for Absence:

Cllr A Helmore (accepted)

Cllr R Chima (accepted)

Cllr A Willetts (accepted)

Cllr P Freeman (accepted)

District Cllr C Hotham arrived at 19.56 as he had attended a meeting at the District Council first

18/143 Declarations of Interest:

None noted

The order of the meeting then moved to Agenda Item 5:

18/144 Clerk's report: Including actions completed since last meeting, report of complaints, emergency expenditure and matters arising from previous meeting, including:

- a. Update on the Letter to BDHT Regarding Parking Concerns on Newbourne Hill, Rowney Green

The Clerk advised that Cllr Humphries had chased up a response from BDHT. Cllr Humphries added in the meeting that he had today received a telephone call from Barry Stevens, BDHT, apologising for not responding to the Parish Council sooner. It is Barry's intention to undertake a site visit on 12th February 2019 and Cllr Humphries had asked Barry to consider undertaking a site visit on the weekend as well.

ACTION POINT: Cllr Humphries to forward pictures of the site to Barry Stevens

- b. Update on the Station Car Park

A meeting was held on 30th January between the Clerk, Cllrs Humphries and Worrall, District Cllr Van der Plank and Andy Baker (Worcestershire County Council) to provide an initial feasibility piece. The County Council will now expand this document further.

c. Update on Parish Council Health & Safety Management

The Clerk has instructed:

- Qube Environmental to undertake water safety checks at the office, Hopwood Community Centre and Rowney Green Pavilion
- ROSPA to undertake a full risk assessment of the Wiggin Memorial Playing Fields. ROSPA has also advised that they will be undertaking their annual review of all our play equipment
- Times Electrical has undertaken electrical PAT testing at Rowney Green Pavilion, Hopwood Community Centre and the office
- Young Air has serviced the office heater
- The Supporting Officer and Clerk will be requesting quotations for tree surgery at the Wiggin Memorial Playing Fields
- The Supporting Officer will be looking for contractors to undertake required maintenance to the boardwalk
- Sutcliffe Play has been to the Wiggin provided training to the Clerk and the Caretaker on undertaking visual checks on the play equipment. Sutcliffe Play has re-tensioned the cableway and replaced some play equipment parts
- Potholes at the Wiggin car park have been filled
- The training from Sutcliffes regarding play equipment safety inspections has been rearranged for next week. They will also be replacing some play equipment parts which are showing wear and tear.

d. Update on the Overhead Barrier and Meadow Lane

A resident reported an incident with an ambulance not being able to turn around at the end of Meadow Lane. The Chairman has spoken to the resident concerned and the Clerk will look into a few options. In line with our Standing Orders, in order for this to be discussed further at the March meeting this will require:

A resolution shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least 3 councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or a sub-committee.

e. Update on the Pollarding of the Conifers at Rowney Green Playing Fields

The Clerk has instructed Blue Sky Arboriculture to reduce the height and width of the conifers at Rowney Green Playing Fields.

A Councillor requested that Blue Sky Arboriculture removes all residue that may fall into the tennis courts in the course of the work. It was also noted that the tennis courts should be closed during the works with a notice on the gate.

f. Update on the Grit Bins for Robins Hill Drive and Rowney Green

Richard Clewer undertook a Highways Assessment for the grit bin at Robins Hill Drive and this could safely be located off the highway; therefore it has passed. The completion of the Highways Assessment at Rowney Green remains outstanding.

g. Update on meetings arranged with external stakeholders

The Library Stakeholder meeting with representatives from WCC has been set for Thursday 28th February.

A meeting between Cllrs Cypher and Humphries to look at a Village Centre Action Project has been arranged for 13th February.

h. Update on staffing arrangements at the office

Gill Lungley began as Supporting Officer on 7th February and Gill will be providing the Clerk function to the Youth Sports and Recreation Committee, providing staff mentoring and assisting the Clerk/Council with strategic planning.

i. Update on the Bus Shelter Benches either side of A441, Hopwood

Thanks to Cllr Smith for sorting out the benches that could be installed in the bus shelters at Hopwood. Thanks to WCC's Parish Team who are going to collect them from Rowney Green

and install them free of charge, as well as filling in the pot holes at Hopwood Community Centre's car park.

The Clerk was advised that the benches are extremely heavy and will need at least 4 people to move them.

j. Update on the Awards 4 All grant application

The Hopwood Mums are delighted to advise that their grant application to Awards 4 All (National Lottery) was successful and they have been granted the £10,000 they applied for. This is a truly fantastic achievement and thanks should be sent to Sam Ogston, Penny Cole, Cllrs Cypher, Smith and Wallis for all their efforts in fundraising for this project. The next steps will be to begin the tender process.

The Chairman of the Parish Council expressed thanks to everyone who had been involved in the application process.

k. Update on the 2019 Elections

As part of their pack Councillors have been provided with the CALC Guide to Elections, in addition to the Electoral Commission's Timetable to Elections. Councillors should note that they will need to take their Nomination Forms to Bromsgrove District Council personally between the date that the District Council issues the Publication of Notice of Election, which can be no later than 26th March and 4pm on Wednesday 3rd April. Potentially, if the District Council does not publicise the election until the 26th March, then they will have no more than 6 working days in order to get their Nomination Form in. Councillors should obtain a receipt from BDC and anyone wishing to have their Nomination Form checked will need to make an appointment in advance.

l. Update on a letter from Cllr Smith to County and District Representatives regarding the pavements either side of the A441, between Hopwood and Roberts Corner, Alvechurch

Cllr Smith has written to County Councillor Hotham and District Council representatives regarding the state of the footpaths between Hopwood and Roberts Corner in Alvechurch. Councillor Hotham advised that he will be conducting a site visit with a County Highways representative in the next fortnight.

m. Outstanding items: Tender Exercise for Street Lighting, Signage Costs, Tree Quotations

The Clerk will work on the Public Loans Board process with the Supporting Officer, the Supporting Officer is arranging for tree surgery quotations and the Clerk has asked Richard Clewer for costs to install a sign regarding the Overhead Barrier at the entrance of Meadow Lane. The Clerk will also work with the Supporting Officer on costs for additional signage in the Wiggin, perhaps after the ROSPA Risk Assessment report has been received.

18/145 Finance & Administration

a. To receive A List of Invoices for Payment And Consider Any Exceptional Items

The Cheque List was reviewed, approved and signed by the Chairman of the Parish Council.

b. To consider Standing Orders in respect of Staff Salaries

A standing order in respect of the Assistant Clerk's monthly salary was approved and signed.

c. To consider the Precept for the 2019/20 financial year as recommended by the Finance & Resources Committee

The Responsible Financial Officer had provided Council with the presentation provided to the Finance and Resources Committee regarding the Precept. The Finance and Resources Committee recommended to Council that the Precept should be increased to £118,076.68 for the 2019/20 financial year, as the budget for the 19/20 financial year. Seven Councillors voted in favour of increasing the Precept to £118,076.68, one Councillor voted against the proposal. The motion was therefore carried that the Precept will be set at £118,076.68 for the 2019/20 financial year.

A Councillor suggested that the Parish Council make a media statement advising Parishioners of the reasons for the increase.

d. **To Consider The Finance & Resources Committee's Recommended Internal Auditor For The 2018/19 Financial Year**

The Finance and Resources Committee proposed and Council **agreed** to instruct Diane Malley Payroll Services to undertake this year's internal audit.

e. **To Consider a Request From Lickey & Blackwell Parish Council To Jointly Purchase Keep Britain Tidy Fight Against Dog Fouling Signs**

Following an update from the Executive Officer of Lickey and Blackwell Parish Council that BDC may provide them with signs for free, it was **agreed** that this agenda item would be deferred pending the outcome of these further discussions.

f. **To Consider Replacement Bollards for Alvechurch Village Centre**

County Councillor C Hotham arrived during this discussion (at 19.56).

The WCC Highways Representative had provided the Parish Council with a choice of styles of replacement bollards for Alvechurch Village centre. County Cllr Hotham advised that he had agreed that these bollards could be purchased using his discretionary fund. It was **agreed** unanimously that the Parish Council prefer the 'Boule' design.

ACTION POINT: The Clerk to advise the Highways Representative of the Parish Council's preferred design choice.

At this point, the order of the meeting moved back to Agenda Item 3:

18/146 Reports from Alvechurch Ward, District & County Councillors

i. **County Councillor C Hotham**

- The County Council has approved its budget for the 2019/20 financial year
- There will still be a budget deficit of £3 million. The County Council is looking at every option to reduce this deficit.
- It was noted that there are issues with staff coverage at Bromsgrove Fire Station, as its current arrangements for volunteers living at the station for three days in a row have been deemed illegal. Should the Local and National Fire Brigade Union approve the arrangement then it would be fine but it appears unlikely that the National Fire Brigade Union will approve it. The implications of a change to the current staffing arrangements will be an increase to the response time to call outs. This is a particular concern in Bromsgrove due to its proximity to the M5 and M42.
- It was noted that the County Council continues to implement improvements to Children's and Adult Services.
- County Cllr Hotham also advised that it appears that the County Council had already paid ten years upfront of rent costs for Wythall Library.

ii. **District Cllr K Van der Plank**

- District Cllr K Van der Plank has provided residents with the reporting details for any fly-tipping that is found in the Parish.
- It was noted that a resident had written to both BT Openreach and the District Council regarding wiring cabling that has been left behind some BT boxes. District Cllr Van der Plank has written to the District Council asking them to enforce their litter charge on BT Openreach.
- District Cllr Van der Plank requested that the District Council install two dog poo bins; one by the canal at the top of Callow Hill Road, which was declined and the other by the entrance to Lodge Farm Lane, which was approved.
- District Cllr Van der Plank received reports of anti-social behaviour at Swans Walk which were reported to 101.
- Residents have complained about the implications of pavement parking by the Red Lion Garage, Alvechurch. District Cllr Van der Plank will email the Clerk regarding this.

- A resident has complained that one dropped kerb was not installed close to the MUGA at Swans Length. District Cllr Van der Plank advised that it may be possible to find the additional funds to pay for this.
- A motion was passed at the District Council to trigger action on helping rough sleepers in the District. However, so far all action has been focussed on Bromsgrove Town Centre and District Cllr Van der Plank is pushing for any action to consider rough sleepers in other areas as well.
- The recent planning application to build 10 new houses at Smedley Crooke Place was declined.

District Cllr Van der Plank left the meeting at 20.23.

The order of the meeting then moved to Agenda Item 10.2.2 but for the purpose of the minutes all items relating to agenda item 10 will be recorded at this point:

18/147 Committees/Sub Committees/Working Parties

a) Reports from Committees and minutes circulated since last meeting

i. To Receive an Update from the Planning Committee Meeting Held on 4th February 2019

Cllr Worrall advised that the Committee had considered three planning applications and had objected to all three applications. In addition, the Committee had discussed the process for requesting that applications are called in to Committee at the District Council. See the Minutes from this meeting for further details.

County Cllr Hotham left the meeting at 21.00.

ii. To Receive an Update from The Finance & Resources Committee Meeting On 28th January 2019

In addition to the items discussed during this meeting, the Finance Committee had considered a late grant application received from a community group. As the Parish Council had previously agreed to maintain the ceiling for grant payments in the 2019/20 financial year and this budget had already been assigned to those applications received before the deadline, it was felt that the Finance Committee couldn't approve this application for the 2019/20 financial year. However, the Responsible Financial Officer did advise that the Parish Council hadn't spent all of its grant budget for the current financial year. The Finance and Resources Committee had agreed that it would review the overall Parish Council budget at the March Finance meeting to ascertain if there was scope to pay this grant application in the 2018/19 financial year. See Minutes for this meeting for further details.

iii. To Consider the Proposed Entertainment and Fundraising Choices From The Picnic In The Park (PIP) Committee

It was **agreed** that there could be a static display of vintage motorbikes at this year's PIP event.

It was **agreed** that 50% of the profits from this year's PIP could be donated to The Lounge and the other 50% would be donated to the Hopwood Play Equipment project. The remaining 50% from the 2015 PIP event that remains in the Parish Council bank account will be donated to The Lounge.

In addition, it was noted that there had been around 40 entries for the PIP Logo competition and that the PIP Committee would still like to source another marquee.

ACTION POINT: Cllr Worrall to speak to the GlastonBeoley Committee to see if there was scope for collaboration with the PIP Committee

ACTION POINT: The Clerk to confirm the Parish Council's insurance requirements for this event.

b. **Reports From Representatives To Outside Bodies**

i. **To Receive a CALC Update**

It was noted that Richard Levett and Jenny Maturi would be retiring from Worcestershire CALC at the end of March and a retirement party was being held.

Cllr Humphries declared a Personal Interest at this point in the next item. At the last CALC Meeting, the matter of whether Parish and Town Councils have the Power to contribute to churchyards was discussed, with disappointment expressed about NALC's handling of it, as NALC had decided not to take this issue to Parliament for clarification. Richard Levett (Worcestershire CALC) has emailed Sue Baxter (NALC) to request that NALC's decision is reconsidered.

ACTION POINT: The Clerk to add to a future Parish Council Agenda that that Parish Council should consider writing to the Diocese of Worcester to encourage them to get behind the Taylor Report.

ii. **To Receive An Update On A Meeting Held With Safer Roads Partnership (SRP) Regarding The Proposed Pilot Speed Camera**

It was noted that Cllrs Cypher and Humphries had attended this meeting. The SRP representative advised that the A441 through Hopwood wouldn't meet the criteria for a fixed speed camera along that stretch of the road. The SRP would put up signs to advise that speed monitoring is taking place. It was recommended that the Parish Council speaks to County Councillor Alan Amos about the available engineering solutions which could seek to reduce the average speeds along the road. The Police & Crime Commissioner may have a small budget that we can also access. Parish Councillor suggestions included the installation of Gateways at the entrance to Hopwood and hatching in the middle of the road like through Bordesley, although it was noted that there are several small roads that join the A441 in Hopwood, whereas there are none in Bordesley.

ACTION POINT: County Cllr Hotham to chase up the County Highways to review this situation.

At 20.27 a member of the public arrived and gave the Clerk a letter regarding the bollards in Alvechurch village centre, after which the member of the public left the meeting.

18/148 To Consider Arrangements for the Christmas Light Switch On in 2019

It was noted that the Chairman had contacted the Bromsgrove Town Crier regarding the switch on of Alvechurch Christmas Lights in 2019 and it had been confirmed that there would be no charge for his attendance. It was therefore proposed and **agreed** that the Parish Council will instruct the Bromsgrove Town Crier to switch on the Christmas Lights on 6th December 2019.

ACTION POINT: The Clerk to confirm these arrangements with the Town Crier.

18/149 To Consider Worcestershire County Council's Minerals Local Plan: Fourth Stage Consultation and Mineral Site Allocations Development Plan Questionnaire

It was noted that the Clerk had contacted WCC and requested an extension to the deadline to respond to this consultation; this extension had been approved. It was noted that the areas defined in the report did not cover our Parish, however since the 3rd Stage Consultation the Alvechurch Parish Neighbourhood Plan had been adopted. It was **agreed** that Cllr Humphries would compile a response which the Clerk would submit.

18/150 To Approve The Current Draft Of The Emergency Plan And To Consider Supporting Its Introduction To Key Community Groups Prior To Its Full Public Launch

Cllr Cypher updated Council on progress made to the Emergency Plan including the meeting with Rebecca Pritchett (North Worcestershire Civil Contingencies and Resilience Manager).

Key points to progress still include:

- Ensuring that data relating to halls that could be accessed as a shelter in an emergency is checked for accuracy each year
- Consult with Residents Associations in the Parish for their views about the best ways to disseminate information in their locality in the event of an emergency.
- It may be helpful to also speak to PC S Albutt

It was **agreed** that Cllrs Cypher and Lambert could progress the Emergency Plan.

18/151 Around the Parish – to Consider Developments and Issues Raised by Councillors Present as they Relate to Hopwood, Rowney Green, Bordesley and Alvechurch

a) Bordesley

The Clerk advised that a hole had seemingly been punched through the Parish Council's noticeboard and the Caretaker will attempt in the first instance to repair it.

b) Alvechurch

- i. Cllr Worrall advised that he had received reports that the flooding issue on Branden Road had worsened, with water appearing on the front drives of two houses and gardens saturated.

On 20th February Cllr Worrall will meet with a representative from Network Rail and North Worcestershire Water Management to try to resolve this matter again. Cllr Worrall noted that he may speak to Cllr Ball about this issue as well.

- ii. A councillor noted that positive comments about the footway resurfacing in Crown Meadow had been received.
- iii. There had also been a successful Wassail.
- iv. Cllr Humphries advised that he had received a letter from the Ex-Services Association that confirmed that they had now disbanded. The letter asked the Parish Council to consider arrangements for future Remembrance Services. Cllr Humphries advised that he will raise the matter with the Churches in Alvechurch as well.
- v. A Councillor requested that the Clerk contacts Bromsgrove District Council's Place Team to ask them to sweep Swans Walk which has become slippery due to fallen leaves again.

ACTION POINT: The Clerk to ask BDC if Swans Walk could be put on a sweeping rota.

c) Hopwood

Cllr Smith advised that the Hopwood Play Equipment Working Group were working on a Tender document for the new play equipment. Jackie Boreham will review the document as well.

d) Rowney Green

It was requested that the Clerk email Mr A May of the Rowney Green Residents Association to update him on the grit bins

ACTION POINT: The Clerk to purchase the grit bins before the end of this financial year.

18/152 Date and time of next meeting: the next meeting will be on 11th March 2019 at 7pm at Hopwood Community Centre, Redditch Road, Hopwood.

This meeting ended at 9.31pm.

Signed..... Date.....
Chairman, Alvechurch Parish Council

DRAFT