

# ALVECHURCH PARISH COUNCIL

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Clerk – Tammy Williams

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## **MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

**HELD MONDAY 11<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2018 AT 7.00PM**

**AT HOPWOOD COMMUNITY CENTRE, REDDITCH ROAD, HOPWOOD**

**18/021 Present:** Councillors A Willetts (Chairman), M Ball (arrived at 19.11), R Chima, J Cypher, P Freeman, A Helmore, S Lambert, A Smith, A Wallis, N Wise

**In attendance:** Tammy Williams (Clerk), Sally Oldaker (The Village), District Councillor K Van der Plank and 4 members of the public

In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice Chairman Cllr A Willetts chaired the meeting.

At the beginning of the meeting members of the public addressed Council (Appendix 1)

### **18/022 Apologies for Absence**

District/County Cllr C Hotham  
Cllr A Humphries  
Cllr M Worrall

### **18/023 Declarations of Interest**

None noted

### **18/024 Reports from Alvechurch Ward, District & County Councillors**

#### **a. Report From County Councillor, C Hotham**

County Cllr Hotham sent his apologies and provided Council with the following written report in advance:

Following on from the Hearn report I have become very concerned about a potential conflict of interest. You may or may not recall that the Hearn report has a co-author, namely Wood. During a meeting 10 days ago with BDC planners and following questioning from the Independent group it emerged that BDC have employed a consultant to assist with the BDC plan review and green belt review. They have already worked on the sustainability appraisal. You have by now probably guessed that the consultant involved is no other than Wood!

I have a notice on motion for Wednesdays full council meeting suggesting the process is suspended until we can find out what is going on.

You may also recall that I asked BDC to place a community protection notice on Mayfield, this is an order preventing anti-social behaviour that affects the community. Unfortunately but not surprisingly BDC have reviewed the evidence and refused to act. We are now in a situation where we can call for a community trigger meeting, I believe this is a meeting where all involved, residents and agencies review what has been done and what can be done. I think it would be helpful if APC is represented.

**b. Report From District Cllr Kate Van der Plank, Alvechurch Village Ward**

- Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) sense that there will be fewer applications received in respect of the New Homes Bonus Grant fund this year than last. It was noted that County Cllr Hotham is supporting the Hopwood Play Equipment grant application submitted to BDC.
- Concerns have been raised about children playing in the road in Hollington Road and District Cllr Van der Plank is looking at what safety steps can be taken with different agencies.
- Parking around the village seems to be more and more of an issue with a residents' permit parking scheme being considered for Bear Hill. District Cllr Van der Plank expressed that this requires a holistic review for the whole village. It was noted that there is a taskforce at BDC looking at parking outside schools.

**ACTION POINT: The Clerk** to contact Cheryl Welsh about this.

- Discussions continue regarding the Hearn Report at BDC. Cllr Van der Plank reported being dismayed that the same person who co-authored the Hearn report has also been appointed as a consultant for the Green Belt Review.

**18/025 To Approve the Minutes of the Previous Meeting Held on 14/05/2018**

The Minutes were **agreed** by Council and signed by Cllr A Willetts. It was noted that the Hearn report had been mis-spelt throughout the minutes and that also Cllr Willetts was not included on the Planning Committee Members.

It was queried by a Councillor that neither District Cllr Kit Taylor nor District Cllr J Griffiths had attended this meeting, nor sent apologies nor sent a report for the Parish Council meeting and that perhaps it was time for the Parish Council to issue a complaint to BDC regarding the lack of representation for Alvechurch South residents.

**18/026 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 Parish Council's Insurance cover

The Parish Council's new policy was set up with Aviva on a 1-year contract as agreed.

b. Update on the jet washing of the tennis courts

Hosking Ground Maintenance jet washed the main tennis court area on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> June in the 4 hours quoted. Recommendations regarding a future maintenance programme will go to the YSR meeting for consideration.

c. Update on the Station Road/Latimer Road Prohibition of Waiting Order

A County Traffic Engineer has advised:

'Following further consultation with the Police, a report to the local County Councillor was then prepared outlining the issues and enclosing your email.

As a result of the consultations the Traffic Regulation Order is now proceeding as originally advertised. These proposals have now been authorised by the Network Control Manager and an implementation date for this Order has been arranged for 19<sup>th</sup> July 2018.'

d. Update on General Data Protection Regulations & the provision of the Electoral Roll to Councillors

The Clerk and Cllr Wallis attended the CALC GDPR training at County Hall in May. At that training session, the Clerk queried as requested whether Parish Councillors could still have a copy of the electoral roll. The response was that the District Council will supply a copy of the electoral roll to individual councillors prior to elections. The electoral roll at the office is solely for the Clerk to access in the event of a poll being requested at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council. Many questions were asked and an informative presentation was given by a solicitor from Kidwells Solicitors. The Clerk will put together a training session for Councillors.

e. Update on the installation of new play equipment at The Wiggin Memorial Playing Fields through Section 106 monies

The Clerk and Cllrs Humphries, Lambert and Smith met with a representative of Sutcliffe Play on 5<sup>th</sup> June to review the proposal at the Wiggin Memorial Playing Fields. Sutcliffe will notify the Parish Council one week prior to work commencing which is expected to be the beginning of July so that the Parish Council can notify residents of Meadow Lane of the impending work and the need for vehicular access to the site.

f. To note a resident's proposal for a safe crossing point on the A441, Hopwood

A resident has suggested a safe crossing point using the path under the canal bridge. County Cllr Hotham has replied that a Highways representative has already reviewed this as an option but predominantly on Health & Safety grounds, i.e the proximity to water and the head height under the bridge, this option had already been discounted.

g. Update on CPRE reports

Dorothy Snaddon has agreed to update the Parish Council on the matters under discussion by CPRE.

h. Update on fly-posting in Alvechurch

Bromsgrove District Council's Environmental Services team has advised that they will remove any posters on either of the fences at the entrance of Tanyard Lane Car Park. They have also sought approval from The Red Lion public house to do this.

i. Update on fly-tipping of asbestos on Radford Road near junction of Rowney Green Lane

The Clerk has notified the District Council that asbestos appears to have been fly-tipped on Radford Road. The District Council has responded to say "We have had several calls about this and the team who look after this area are in the process of getting it dealt with."

j. To note the Clerk's complaint to Lloyds Bank about standing order issues and Lloyds Bank's response

The Clerk had cause to complain to Lloyds Bank about standing orders where they had changed the reference number cited on the standing orders to pay for business rates to Bromsgrove District Council. This had caused the payments to be held in a holding account at BDC and subsequently issue us with a non-payment notice. Lloyds has agreed to update the reference number in line with the order issued to them and in line with the payments made in previous years and they have also paid the Council £75 in compensation.

k. Update on Mayfield Farm

Please see County Cllr Hotham's report in Minute Reference 18/024

l. Update on Bridge 64 by the dead arm of the canal

The Chief Executive of the Canal & Rivers Trust has advised that following a site visit:

"Our local operations manager has visited the site again and I am advised that any route passing under the bridge should not be used given the bridge's condition so this closure will have to remain in place. There is no diversionary route within the Trust's land ownership so we can only recommend that the public road be used, pending the re-opening of this (old) towpath section.

I appreciate this is not an attractive alternative, and I have asked my engineering project team to look at arranging for the bridge's removal at the earliest opportunity. I cannot at this stage promise what the timescale will be and will arrange for an update to be sent to you once we have a plan in place."

m. To note the CALC summer training schedule

The Clerk has emailed all Councillors with the CALC training schedules. Any Councillors wishing to attend training should let the Clerk know so that arrangements can be made.

n. Update on outstanding items: Standing Orders/Financial Regulations & Tree Surveys

The Clerk will ask the YSR Committee to consider the tree survey report at the June YSR meeting and the Clerk will review the new standing orders and financial regulations and add them to the July agenda.

Councillors noted in response to the update from The Canal and Rivers Trust and the demolition of Bridge 64, that a lot of people use the towpath and it is a Public Right of Way therefore there should be a diversion in place.

**ACTION POINT: The Clerk** to discuss this with Cllr Humphries.

**18/027 To consider** residents' complaints and queries, as received:

- a. **To consider the Parish Council's response to a complaint regarding the Planning Committee's response to a planning application**

It was noted that the Parish Council had received a complaint regarding the Planning Committee's response to a Planning Application reference 18/00072/FUL. The Clerk had responded to the complainant in the first instance in line with the Parish Council's Complaints Policy but the Complainant was not satisfied by the response and therefore the matter was referred to Council as the second stage response to the complaint. Cllr Wallis appraised Council with the details of the Planning Application and the comments made by the complainant and a response to the complaint was **unanimously agreed** by Council to be sent by the Clerk.

### **18/028 Finance and Administration**

- a. **To receive a list of invoices for payment and consider any exceptional items**

The Clerk provided Councillors with a list of invoices which was agreed by Council and the cheque list was signed by Cllr Willetts.

District Councillor Van der Plank left at 20.00.

- b. **To consider Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2017/18 of the Annual Return**

The Responsible Financial Officer read out each of the statements in Section 1 of the Annual Governance statement. Council **agreed yes** to each statement except statement 9 which was not applicable to this Parish Council. The Responsible Financial Officer and Cllr Willetts as Chairman of the meeting signed Section 1 of the Annual Governance Statement.

- c. **To consider Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2017/18 of the Annual Return**

The Responsible Financial Officer reviewed the Accounting Statements with Council. No queries were raised and the Responsible Financial Officer and Cllr Willetts as Chairman of the meeting signed Section 2 of the Accounting Statements of the Annual Return.

- d. **To consider revised quotations in respect of resurfacing the paddling pool edges at the Wiggin Memorial Playing Fields**

The Clerk provided Council with one new quotation and example surface covering to look at and also additional information from one of the companies regarding maintenance: jet washing the resin bound surface every other year at a cost of £250 and also the warranty period. The Clerk had previously advised Council that ROSPA had stated that they thought that slabbing would be a better surface around the paddling pool edges rather than resin bound stone because ROSPA deemed slabs to be a more durable surface and because they raised concerns about the long-term maintenance and keeping the resin bound stone free from algae. However a Councillor stated that there were slabs in situ currently and they too can be slippery in certain weather conditions and require maintenance when the mortar breaks down.

It was proposed that Council instructs The Original Resin Stone Company at a cost of £3075 + VAT to resurface the paddling pool edges. Six Councillors voted in favour so the motion was carried.

**ACTION POINT: The Clerk** to instruct The Original Resin Stone Company to resurface the paddling pool edges at The Wiggin Memorial Playing Fields

- e. **To consider improvements to the security at the Wiggin Memorial Playing Fields**

Following the May Parish Council meeting, the Clerk ascertained that the proposed overhead barrier is hinged so can be opened to enable access of vehicles taller than the barrier when required. The Clerk had subsequently spoken with the Refuse Collectors at BDC who had advised that the bin lorry is 10ft tall and that they would have no problem getting into The Wiggin Memorial Playing Fields if they had the code/keys to open the barrier and turn around in car park beyond. If there was an issue at all then they would reverse down the lane. The Clerk had also spoken to the Council's Grounds Maintenance Contractor who had said that he would also be happy to open the overhead barrier to enable access for

his tractor. It was **agreed** that Council would purchase an overhead barrier for £3790.00 from Bill Duffett.

f. **To consider** maintenance to the Parish Council's street lighting stock, to include:

**.i To consider** the proposed street lights requiring maintenance and the proposed cost for the Phase 3 Street lighting Upgrade

The Clerk provided Council with Prysman's proposed street lights to be upgraded in Phase 3 which are:

Point Number	Road Name
1	Blythesway
3	Blythesway
2	Branden Road
4	Latimer road
3	Withybed Lane
4	Withybed Lane
6a	Birmingham Road Hopwood

The Clerk had also sought costings to have green rather than grey metal columns. Prysman advised that having green powder coated columns would be expensive as they are non-standard and would have to be done in small batches for the Parish Council. An alternative would be to have a Dacrylate factory painted finish in any RAL colour at a cost of £80-£100 + VAT for each column. Council **agreed unanimously** to instruct Prysman to upgrade each of the identified street lights for Phase 3 to standard grey metal LED street lights at a cost of £9,200 + VAT.

**ACTION POINT: The Clerk** to instruct Prysman to begin the Phase 3 upgrade

**.ii To consider** the quotation received to reinstate the street light on Ash Lane, Hopwood

It was noted that the Parish Council would be spending more than its stated budget for Phase 3 of the Street lighting upgrade in the 2018/19 financial year. The Clerk had asked Prysman and subsequently Western Power to quote to reinstate a street light on Ash Lane and their combined quote was as follows:

Western Power & Prysman costs (to install & energise a new lighting column): £1600 + VAT

Road closure: £1325

Cost of Diversion: £ 450

**TOTAL: £3375.00 + VAT**

It was proposed that the consideration of the reinstatement of this street lighting column be deferred and re-considered in the budget setting process for the 2019/20 financial year.

Eight councillors voted in favour and 2 disagreed. The motion was carried.

Councillors also queried whether there was merit in advising the resident(s) who requested the street light be reinstated of the final cost to ascertain if they would still want this in light of the cost.

**ACTION POINT: The Responsible Financial Officer** include this item on to the budget "wish list" for the 2019/20 financial year for council consideration later on in 2018.

**.iii To reconsider** the proposed removal of a street lighting column on the Birmingham Road in light of new information

The Clerk advised that following Council's instruction to remove a street lighting column on Birmingham Road, Hopwood, Prysman had reviewed the column again and their advice had now been revised as the vegetation covering the column had since been cut back. Prysman confirmed that in fact there wasn't a crack in the column as was first suspected but instead the cover to the maintenance access point on the column had been displaced. As replacing the maintenance cover would cost less than £100 whereas disconnecting and removing the column would cost in the region of £900, Council **agreed unanimously** to keep the column and its condition will be reviewed again in the future.

**ACTION POINT: The Clerk** to confirm that this street lighting column will be retained and that Prysmian should replace the maintenance cover.

g. **To receive** an update from the Hopwood Play Equipment Working Group, to include:

**.i To receive** an update on the New Homes Bonus (NHB) application

Council was advised that Councillors Humphries and Smith had prepared the first draft of the New Homes Bonus application and it was sent to BDC for a preliminary check. Playdale who had agreed to provide the Working Group with some proposed play equipment designs to be on display at Picnic in the Park and also to be submitted with this grant application had been extremely tardy in submitting their designs. Council was also advised that the Hopwood Mums who had had a stall at Picnic in the Park to raise local awareness of their project, had successfully managed to raise £122 at the PIP event, that 50% of the profits from Picnic in the Park will also be donated to the project as well and that County Cllr Hotham had pledged £3000 from his Divisional fund. It is noted that there is an opportunity for the Working Group members to present the project to the NHB Panel in July. In addition to the funds raised above, a letter has been prepared to be sent to local Hopwood businesses asking for donations towards the play equipment project as well.

**.ii To consider** increasing the Parish Council's funding for new play equipment at Hopwood Playing Fields

A proposal had been made by Cllr Humphries that in the event that BDC under the NHB grant fund does not grant any of or grants less than the amount requested to fund the project that Council considers increasing the budget allocated to this project from £5000 to £15,000 maximum in this financial year which would be in addition to the £3000 pledged by County Cllr Hotham, the donation from PIP and any funds raised by the Hopwood Mums from local businesses including the £122 raised at their Picnic in the Park stall. The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) provided Council with an overview of the budget for this financial year including details of this year's available Reserves. The RFO advised Council that as our budget has been agreed and Precept already set, options for concluding this project in this financial year include drawing from our Reserves or moving funds around within budget heads (applying for a loan would be a 3<sup>rd</sup> option subject to NALC approval). It was noted that £6000 had been earmarked from a Capital Projects budget for traffic calming by Lye Meadow which could, if Council wished, be postponed to the 2019/20 financial year and instead the capital fund could be put towards this project which is already underway. Concerns were raised by a councillor about postponing the traffic calming at the southern end of the village. Five thousand pounds had already been budgeted for this project meaning that a further £4,000 would need to be either vired from other budget heads or from Council's reserves. It was proposed that Council underwrites the funding applied for under the NHB application to a maximum of £15,000 and this was **agreed** unanimously.

**18/028 Following a communication from Barnt Green Parish Council, to consider the Bromsgrove Rail Users Group's (BRUG) proposal that the additional electric train through Barnt Green following the Bromsgrove electrification should be replaced by a stop by the Birmingham-Hereford hourly service**

Councillors **agreed unanimously** to support BRUG's proposal.

**18/029 To receive an update on a resident's "Incredible Edible" project in Alvechurch**

An update had already been received at the beginning of the meeting by a local representative for Incredible Edible.

**.i To consider** the Parish Council completing the statement of support letter in respect of the Incredible Edible Alvechurch project

A councillor queried whether the Parish Council had the power to complete a statement of support letter but instead it was proposed that the Parish Council could make a statement of support in principle for Incredible Edible's project at this Parish Council meeting. Council asked the Clerk to advise that we could advertise the project on the Parish Council's Facebook page, a notice could be put up on the Allotments Noticeboard asking for any surplus plants to be donated to the project and to notify Incredible Edible that the Parish Council does provide grants to local groups and organisations.

**ACTION POINT: The Clerk** to write to Incredible Edible's local representative to communicate how the Parish Council can support the project.

**.ii To consider enabling Incredible Edible Alvechurch to plant vegetables in the Parish Council's planters in Alvechurch**

It was noted that the Caretaker had already purchased flowers for the planters this year. A Councillor proposed that the Caretaker plants the flowers in our planters as planned this year and that the Clerk advise Incredible Edible's representative that if he wishes to update Council on the progress the project has made in Alvechurch again early in 2019 that it will reconsider this proposal then for the 2019 growing season. Nine Councillors **agreed** and one councillor abstained; the Motion was carried.

**18/030 To consider the Parish Council's response to the Police & Crime Commissioner's Survey**

It was proposed that Cllrs Humphries and Cypher respond on behalf of Council to this survey. Councillors **agreed unanimously**; the Motion was carried.

**18/031 Committees/Sub Committees/working parties**

**.a Reports from Committees and minutes circulated since last meeting**

**.i To receive an update from the Picnic in the Park Committee in respect of the 2018 event**

Cllr Wise advised Council that the PIP Committee will soon be having a full debrief on the 2018 event. Thanks were given to The Village Magazine, Ron Rand, the Parish Council Office Staff and everyone who marshalled the event on the day. Cllr Wise noted that there were a lot more stalls at the event this year than in previous years and that the Committee will need to review how to get stall holders off the field at the end of the event whilst the Meadow Lane road closure is still in force. Also, it was noted that fewer people brought a picnic to the event because bad weather was anticipated but this meant that food sellers at the event did well. It was expected that Cllr Wise would be able to provide Council with more financial details from the 2018 PIP event at the July meeting.

**ACTION POINT: The Clerk** to add PIP update to the July Parish Council agenda.

**.ii To receive an update from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

Cllr Smith advised Council that the Steering Group is working with a new Planning Officer at BDC. The next steps include BDC's Executive ratifying Alvechurch Parish Council's Neighbourhood Plan at the end of June. The Parish Council will also need to select an Independent Examiner who is paid for by BDC. The Neighbourhood Plan will go out to consultation for six weeks and the Independent Examiner will notify of any required alterations to the Plan.

**.iii To receive an update from the Planning Committee Meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2018**

It was noted that Committee Members were concerned about three new houses proposed in Ash Lane, Hopwood; these plans had been resubmitted without garages but the Planning Committee had resubmitted its Objections to BDC. The Planning Committee also noted concerns that these proposed houses might be seen as 'infill' by BDC Planning Officers. It was also noted that the planning application for Jasmine Cottage in Rowney Green had been withdrawn. Senior Planning Officers leaving BDC Planning Department was also seen as "worrying". It was requested that the Assistant Clerk chase up an update regarding the Enforcement case at Roberts Corner, Alvechurch.

**18/032 Around the Parish - to consider developments and issues raised by Councillors present as they relate to Hopwood, Rowney Green, Bordesley and Alvechurch**

**i. Hopwood**

A Councillor advised that an overgrown hedgerow obstructing a footway between the Hopwood Island and the M42 island had been reported to the Parish Council office and to Worcestershire County Council. It was also noted that fly-tipping had been reported to BDC via their website.

ii. Rowney Green

County Cllr Hotham is attending the next Rowney Green Association Meeting.

iii. Bordesley

Cllr Chima advised that he had emailed the Bordesley Residents Association but hadn't had a response and it was queried whether the Association had folded?

iv. Alvechurch

It was noted that Swan Street had been closed for investigations by Cadent in respect of a gas leak. Issues regarding motorists driving the wrong way down School Lane had been widely publicised on social media.

**18/033 To consider, and if considered appropriate, to pass the following resolution to exclude the public from the meeting during the consideration of agenda items 14 which contains confidential employee information:-**

**“RESOLVED: that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, Section 1 Sub-Section 2 a body may, by resolution, exclude the public from a meeting (whether during the whole or part of the proceedings) whenever publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons stated in the resolution and arising from the nature from that business or of the proceedings; and where such a resolution is passed, this Act shall not require the meeting to be open to the public during proceedings to which the resolution applies.”**

It was **resolved** to exclude the public and the press.

**18/034 To consider the Parish Council's staff pension arrangements**

The Clerk provided Council with an update on staff pension payments during the previous financial year.

This meeting ended at 9.40pm

**18/035** Date and time of next meeting – 9<sup>th</sup> July 2018 at 7pm at Hopwood Community Centre

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