

# ALVECHURCH PARISH COUNCIL

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<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 12<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2019 AT 7PM

AT HOPWOOD COMMUNITY CENTRE REDDITCH ROAD HOPWOOD

**19/056 Present:** Councillors M Worrall (Chairman), P Freeman, S Hornsby  
A Humphries (vice-Chairman), S Lambert, T Wallis, N Wise

**In attendance:** District Cllrs Annette English, K Van der Plank,  
One member of the public  
Richard Peach (The Village),  
Clerk - Tammy Williams, Support Officer - Gill Lungley

**19/057 Apologies for Absence:**

Received from Cllrs S Baxter, J Cypher, A Helmore, S Lewis, A Willetts and noted.  
Reasons for absence are recorded in the attendance register.

**19/058 Declarations of Interest:**

Cllrs T Wallis and N Wise both declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in their capacity as allotment holders relating to agenda item 18 (minute no. 19/074) "relating to the contractual arrangements for the allotments in Alvechurch".

**19/059 Consideration of Dispensations**

Cllrs T Wallis and N Wise, as allotment holders at Alvechurch allotments, submitted requests for dispensation seeking to be allowed to stay in the meeting and participate in discussion but not vote.

**RESOLVED** to allow both Cllr T Wallis and Cllr N Wise to stay in the meeting and participate in the discussion but not vote on matters relating to the Alvechurch allotments. The dispensations to continue to May 2023.

Localism Act 2011, s33(e)

**Standing orders were suspended to allow for contribution from the following:**

**19/060 Reports from Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) councillors and  
Worcestershire County Council (WCC) Councillor**

- .1 Annette English**, district member for Alvechurch South ward commented:
  - a) Bordesley car boot sales – will speak to the new organiser regarding siting of toilets;
  - b) Village centre pavement parking outside Barney's Barber is to be monitored and escalated if necessary.
- .2 Kate Van der Plank**, district member for Alvechurch Village ward commented:

- a) Launch of the Cleaner Greener Alvechurch initiative during July from which a Facebook group has been created. An open meeting is to be held in The Lounge on 11/09/2019 to set up a working group to drive the initiative forward. BDC will provide support and have produced an A-board to highlight the campaign complete with complementary litter-pick sticks and holder for litter bags. It is suggested this A-board is sited on Wiggin Memorial Playing Field and Alvechurch Parish Council (APC) members are to consider this offer.
- b) There has been coverage in The Village about volunteer litter pickers.
- c) Appropriate sites are being sought to be used for wildflowers.
- d) The decision to allow the New Homes Bonus (NHB) grant applied for by APC looks likely to be ratified by BDC next month.
- e) There is still a shortfall in passenger numbers using the early and late bus service which Diamond Bus Co. state is not commercially viable. It would appear they are not looking to alter any of the routes.
- f) Anti-social behaviour has been reported in the Hollington Road area.

**Questions** were put to the district ward members relating to:

- Had a pathway from Hollington Road to play area been considered?
  - For noting only as the site is not within Alvechurch parish area: Are ward members aware of Dolan Park Hospital 'collapse' and money owing to BDC?
- .3 **Charlie Hotham**, district member for Barnt Green and Hopwood ward and county member for Alvechurch division had submitted apologies for absence.

**Standing Orders were resumed.**

**19/061 Approval of the Minutes of the previous meeting held 22/07/2019**

**IT WAS RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting held 22/07/2019 which were then signed by the Chairman as a true and accurate record.

**19/062 Clerk's report**

The Clerk provided the following updates:

- a) New Homes Bonus Application  
APC had applied for grant funding to purchase a storage unit at The Wiggin Memorial Playing Fields which, as heard above at min. 19/060.2(d), looks likely to be granted.
- b) External Audit Process for the 2018/19 Financial Year  
The External Auditor has been provided with the information requested regarding the differences between the Total Receipts in the 2017/18 and 2018/19 financial years. The External Auditor's report and certificate is expected by 30/09/2019 at the latest.
- c) Wiggin Memorial Playing Field (WMpf)
  - (1) A replacement sling shot seat has been installed.
  - (2) The differing opinions between RoSPA and the supplier regarding the Outdoor Gym Equipment are to be discussed with each.
- d) Purchase of the Refurbished Photocopier  
Midshire Communications are to supply and install a reconditioned Kyocera Taskalfa printer/photocopier in APC office for £2000.00 + vat. Payment arrangements as now.
- e) Adoption of the BT Phone Box on Bear Hill, Alvechurch  
The representative from Alvechurch Churches Together (ACT) who attended APC's July meeting has been advised their proposal (that APC adopts the phone box) would be considered if ACT would commit to its future upkeep/maintenance. ACT are to discuss this at their September meeting and revert.  
Following advice received from a previous APC Chairman, Mrs Meriel Davies, it was noted that the telephone box has a 'Grade II listing'; the Clerk is to contact the BDC Conservation Officer for guidance about the adoption proposal.  
Members were keen to thank Mrs Davies for her input.

- f) Plumbing Work at Hopwood Community Centre (HCC)  
Wythall Heating is to undertake the plumbing work agreed at HCC (minute no. 19/044). They have been asked to confirm the additional costs associated with fitting the hot & cold isolations stated in the Legionella Risk Assessment, and a copy of the Management Asbestos Survey for HCC has been forwarded to them.
- g) Japanese Knotweed Treatment Programme at WMpf  
A contractor attended the site 02/08/2019 and confirmed there is still some growth in one area, which was sprayed; no growth present in the other area although rhizomes may still be present. At the 2020 annual inspection the contractor will spray again if knotweed is still present and will continue annual inspections until contract ends in 2026. No further visits will be arranged if knotweed is not detected at the annual visit in 2020; it will be APC's responsibility to monitor and advise the contractor of any re-emergence of the weed in the two areas. Watching brief on the neighbouring site.
- h) Graffiti at WMpf and zip-wire  
Graffiti on both of the zip-wire seats had been removed by BDC Place Team operatives and they are thanked for their speedy response; since then the flat dish rotator with a green surface has also been graffitied and BDC has been notified. Sutcliffes have been asked to tighten the zip-wire cableways.
- i) Overgrown Hedges, A441 both sides between Hopwood / Roberts Corner  
BDC had contacted the landowners regarding overgrown hedges along the A441, but as there had been no response the matter was progressed with WCC who advise that if the landowner does not reply to their letters they will cut the hedges and charge the landowners.
- j) Damage to the grass matting at Hopwood Playing Fields  
The Grounds Maintenance Contractor confirmed he had caught the edge of the grass matting around one piece of new play equipment; repair is being considered.
- k) Queries regarding the Station Car Park  
Two emails from a member of the public had been received in APC office regarding "the lake" at Alvechurch Station and querying why Network Rail have not fulfilled their obligations to provide a surfaced car park. A copy of the draft minutes from APC meeting 22/07/2019 was sent in response (re. minute no. 19/048). Network Rail are to be asked to clear the drains.
- l) Financial Regulations  
The national Model Financial Regulations for parish and town councils have been updated. They will be reviewed for consideration at a future APC meeting.
- m) Grant application process for the 2020/21 Financial Year  
Three grant application forms have been issued to organisations seeking first-time funding support, for return by 09/10/2019. The application form and deadline have been added to the website and grant availability is to be advertised on Facebook. Organisations who have applied in the past will also be contacted.
- n) 20mph Zone requirement in respect of the Ramblers Association (RA) Charter  
RA representative Noelin Hawkins would like to make it clear that the 20mph zone was only a suggestion and not a prerequisite for signing up to their Charter. Noelin's contact details have been passed to Cllr Cypher for invitation to future meetings.
- o) Application to West Mercia Police & Crime Commissioner for Funding Towards Road Safety Measures in Hopwood  
The letter approved at APC's July meeting has been submitted to the Police & Crime Commissioner, cc'd to local police officer, WCC division member, WCC Highways.
- p) Training on Making Tax Digital and Cyber Security  
The Clerk is to attend training on this subject arranged by Worcs County Association of Local Councils (WorcsCALC) on 24/09/2019 daytime at Hawford, free of charge.
- q) Outstanding Items: 89 Items on to-do list including Street Lighting Tender, Horse safety signs in Rowney Green, Christmas Arrangements Committee Meeting and actions from last Christmas Arrangements Meeting, purchasing an office pay-as-you-go mobile phone, Local Council Award Scheme action plan.

## 19/063 Finance & Administration

- a) List of Invoices for Payment and consideration of exceptional items
- (i) The payments list was presented to the meeting, appended at page 75.
  - (ii) A tree surgeon was contracted to attend WMpf to remove a large branch hanging dangerously from a tree, at a cost of £200 + vat.
  - (iii) The Clerk had transferred £26,000 from the 30-day notice account to cover the cost of the new play equipment (19/041ai)

*Local Government Act 1972, s111*

- b) Updated bank standing orders for staff salaries  
In line with recent salary increases, the standing orders payments to staff have been updated thus removing requirement for cheque payments to cover the difference.

- c) Office broadband and telephone contract  
Transfer of services from BT to TalkTalk (minute no.19/042d) is ongoing.

- d) Replacement bus shelter window (Birmingham Road/Old Rectory Lane)  
Glazing beads will be provided by the bus shelter company; the cost for these plus the glazing installation would be £300 + vat.  
**RESOLVED** to accept the quote for repair to the bus shelter.

*Local Government Act 1972, s111*

- e) Review of first quarter Payments and Receipts against budget  
Slides in the form of graph/bar-charts illustrations of the council's financial position were screened to the meeting; summary included on page 75.

- f) Quotation for providing manned road closures for events in Alvechurch  
Cheryl Welsh (BDC's Centres Manager) would be asked if there are funds to support the costs incurred with the Christmas Lights event.  
**RESOLVED** to accept the quotations from Headway Traffic Management for managing the road closures at both the Remembrance Service (£95) and the Christmas Lights (£295) events.

*Local Government Act 1972, s111*

- g) WMpf: tree impacting the boardwalk and further tree surgery  
Concerns have been raised regarding the durability of the dual-stemmed willow tree that is growing at 70° angle and pushing against the handrail of the boardwalk and the professional advice is to remove it before it falls. Two other trees noted in the arboriculturist's report are also to be removed. The cost is £950 + VAT and work can start on 22/08/2019.

**RESOLVED** to accept the cost of £950 for specified tree surgery at WMpf.

*Local Government Act 1972, s111*

- h) Community Clean-up funding grant  
Funding is available via Bromsgrove and Redditch Network (BARN) to support community action that will assist maintenance of the public realm thereby promoting pride in the neighbourhood, community cohesion and increased social well-being. District Councillor Kate van der Plank was invited to speak: as only one application per community is allowed then in the light of the Cleaner Greener Alvechurch initiative it is unlikely this fund would now be available to Alvechurch.

- i) Payment arrangements for the office electricity contract  
SSE, the preferred electricity provider (minute no 19/042f) would not accept cheque payments; members reviewed the alternatives.  
**RESOLVED** to use SSE and pay by direct debit.

*Local Government Act 1972, s111*

- j) External funding opportunities

**i. Community Solutions Fund (WCC)**

With the closing date 08/09/2019 nearing, members considered they were running out of time to identify a project and submit the application.

**ii. Rural Community Energy fund**

There has been no response to this offer.

### iii. Habitat Grants Programme

The Clerk has sent the fund details to BDC ward members and Cllr Hornsby to review. This may benefit wild-flower areas and areas following tree surgery.

#### 19/064 ROSPA report received re Finlay Church Memorial Garden

RoSPA's recommendations for siting the memorial sculpture, which included fencing around the site, had been circulated to members. Sketches of the proposal had been approved by the Church family and an offer had been made via WCC roads team to provide materials and install; installation to include a plaque at this site and in addition the extra bins and signage required across the field as per Youth Sport and Recreation (YSR) Committee recommendations.

**RESOLVED** to accept the required work.

*Local Government Act 1972, s111*

#### 19/065 Meeting with the Rowney Green Village Hall trustees re parking provision

Cllrs M Worrall, J Cypher and A Humphries had met with two Rowney Green village hall (RGVH) trustees to discuss concerns raised about use of the hall's rear car park by users of the playing field, principally the hirers of the football field. The solution proposed, of using the tennis courts instead, was not welcomed and two alternatives – of re-siting the play equipment to use the current play equipment area or parking on the ground to the west of the pavilion - were mooted.

In addition it was noted that:

- a) the Football Club have decided not to play football this coming season at either Rowney Green or WMPf due to parking issues at both and a lack of storage at WMPf. The decision has not been welcomed by team members or APC. The club will continue to use Hopwood Playing Fields.
- b) A review of sports and recreational provision at RGpf could be undertaken, to include consultation with residents.

**It was agreed** to meet with all parties; APC would be represented by Cllrs M Worrall, J Cypher, A Humphries, T Wallis, N Wise.

*Local Government Act 1972, s111*

#### 19/066 Response to WCC's Passenger Transport Strategy Consultation

There was concern that Alvechurch was being visited only once during the consultation process, compared to 3+ visits in neighbouring villages. The Lounge is to be used on 13/08/2019 at 11am for this purpose.

Cllr A Humphries had composed a response on behalf of APC to which members had commented and contributed.

**RESOLVED** to submit the response composed by Cllr A Humphries.

#### 19/067 Future application of Section 106 monies for projects in Alvechurch Parish

It was believed that BDC will benefit from a substantial allocation of 's106' funding if the development of 960 homes off Weights Lane (Redditch / Tutnall) is approved. As the influx of car-owning new home-owners will have a significant impact on local roads, particularly A441 through Bordesley and Hopwood, it was suggested that APC seek a contribution for traffic management / crossing in Hopwood. It was also thought likely that the development would affect parking at Alvechurch station. BDC ward members would be asked to investigate the scheme and support distribution of funds arising from it within the parish. The Clerk would enquire across the county regarding similar schemes.

#### 19/068 Future of Worcestershire Libraries

Nothing to report; it would appear there has been a WCC delay.

## 19/069 Review of Bromsgrove Polling Districts and Polling Places 2019

No member had any objection to existing arrangements; however no Hopwood member was present and there was a question regarding possible use of the Community Centre that is more central to Hopwood village residents, rather than the current venue of Hopwood Village Hall.

## 19/070 Committees / Sub Committees / Working Parties

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

- i. Hopwood Play Equipment
  - The play equipment was installed prior to the school holidays;
  - The Independent Inspection took place, reviewed by members;
  - Three Hopwood mums are thanked for watering the grass matting during the hot weather.
- ii. Youth, Sport & Recreation Committee meeting held 24/06/2019
  - a) Cllr N Wise commented:
    - Following reports of Anti-Social Behaviour at Hopwood Cllr N Wise is researching the use of CCTV at both Hopwood and Wmpf;
    - Signs are to be installed at Wmpf to clearly show dogs on a lead are welcome on the playing field but not on the children's play area;
    - Wmpf drainage is to be improved;
    - Hoping to install a storage unit on Wmpf if NHB funding request approved;
    - The Neighbourhood Plan's Community Action Plan regarding sport and recreation is to be developed.
  - b) Use of RGpf and pavilion 06/06/2020 for RGVH centenary celebration

The YSR Committee recommends approving the request from RGVH for use of RGpf and Pavilion on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2020 for their centenary celebration.

**RESOLVED** to allow use of Rowney Green Playing Fields & Pavilion by Rowney Green Village Hall on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2020 for a centenary celebration, subject to usual third-party event insurance cover and risk assessments.

**Local Government Act 1972, s111**
- iii. Planning Committee meetings held on 01/07/2019 and 05/08/2019
  - a) Cllr M Worrall commented:

Four applications were considered on 01/07 and five applications considered on 05/08 when the committee reviewed the application for development of land near Weights Lane. Whilst outside this parish, it is of sufficient size and proximity to warrant comment from APC, not least on the requirement for improved traffic management during construction due to problems experienced with first phase.
  - b) Parish Council adoption of pre-Planning Application Protocol

This was considered at the Planning Committee meeting on 05/08/2019 and had been circulated to members for this meeting.

**RESOLVED** to adopt the pre-Planning Application Protocol.

**Local Government Act 1972, s111**
  - c) APC's advice & information for residents when commenting and/or objecting to planning applications

The document had been circulated to members for approval. Cllrs M Worrall, J Cypher and T Wallis would seek a meeting with BDC's Head of Planning and Regeneration Services to discuss it further.

**RESOLVED** to adopt the advice and information document for residents and arrange a meeting with BDC's Head of Planning Services.

**Local Government Act 1972, s111**

iv. Christmas Arrangements Committee

Cllr S Lambert commented:

- It is suggested the event on 06/12/2019 is to have a Victorian theme – to be discussed with the shops in the village and potentially forming the Christmas Best Dressed Window theme.
- To contact the school and see if they would like to be involved this year.
- Holding the Best Dressed House competition again with judging criteria decided in advance.
- Father Christmas has been approached already and has agreed to circulate with sweets again as last year; he requests a donation is made to a charity of his choice.
- Ask The Lounge if they are doing their Breakfast With Santa event again.
- Ask for donations via Facebook to fund prizes for competitions.
- Could hold a raffle to help raise funds for improved street-light motifs which will need replacing at some point in the near future.
- Speak to Cheryl Welsh (BDC's Centres Manager) about publicity.

v. Arrangements for the Community Actions Group

A structure plan for the recommended eight action points arising from the Neighbourhood Plan was displayed via projector. The plan had not previously been shared with all parish councillors in advance of this meeting so would be added with supporting information to the agenda for the next APC meeting for ratification. Community involvement will be invited to contribute to resolving the issues and the plan progress will be kept 'live' on the website.

**RESOLVED** to make progress on the Community Actions Group.

*Local Government Act 1972, s111*

**B. External Bodies**

CALC Executive Meeting

No report - Cllr J Cypher absent.

**19/071 Residents' correspondence**

a) Use of RGVH car park by a user group of RGpf

Rowney Green Preschool's annual sports day, customarily held on RGpf, had been held at the same time as a meeting of the village hall's play group creating friction due to the preschool making use of the hall's parking spaces. RGVH representative had written to complain *inter alia* about lack of communication for which the Clerk had apologised.

b) Rowney Green Residents Association request for dog-waste bins at RGpf

A request has been made for the Parish Council to install more bins at the Playing Fields due to concerns about dog mess on the playing fields and implications for users. After discussion, Cllr T Wallis agreed to seek clarification from residents.

**19/072 Around the Parish – councillors to raise issues for future consideration**

a) Bordesley

Concerned about impact of proposed developments at Weights Lane.

b) Alvechurch

- i. Concerns about condition of play equipment at Swans Length
- ii. Representatives of Canal & River Trust and North Worcestershire Water Management are to meet to progress drainage concerns at Branden Road.

c) Hopwood

No members present.

d) Rowney Green

No additional issues.

**19/073 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)*

**19/074 Progress on the contractual arrangements for Alvechurch Allotments.**

Having declared DPI's (as allotment holders) and been granted dispensation to remain in the meeting, Cllrs T Wallis and N Wise stayed in the meeting to provide advice but did not vote.

Members agreed to arrange for a meeting in due course.

**19/075 Current caretaking arrangements**

The Clerk's arrangements for temporary cover were approved.

This meeting ended at 10.05pm.

The next APC meeting will be held on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2019 at 7pm, at Hopwood Community Centre.

.....  
Chairman – Alvechurch Parish Council

.....  
Date

Minute no. 19/063a(i) Payments list:

<b>Alvechurch Parish Council</b>						
<b>PAYMENTS LIST for month to 12/08/2019</b>						
<b>Voucher</b>	<b>Minute</b>	<b>Cheque No</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Net</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Total</b>
189 - 193		5202	HMRC for 1st quarter	1,935.55	-	1,935.55
194 - 196		DD	Pension Payment	144.89	-	144.89
197		5211	Water rates	17.58	3.52	21.10
198		5205	Play Equipment	29,999.63	5,999.92	35,999.55
199		DD	Telephone & broadband	147.68	29.54	177.22
200 - 203		5206	Street lighting electricity	480.57	89.84	570.41
204 - 207		5207	Dog bin emptying	275.00	-	275.00
208	19/041g	DD	Photocopier	2,000.00	400.00	2,400.00
209		5208	Subscription	196.00	-	196.00
210	19/063a	5209	Tree surgery	200.00	40.00	240.00
211 - 213		5210	Grass cutting/field prep	843.38	168.68	1,012.06
214 - 219		SO	Salaries	3,096.84	-	3,096.84
<b>Total</b>				<b>£39,337.12</b>	<b>£6,731.50</b>	<b>£46,068.62</b>

Minute no. 19/063e

1<sup>st</sup> quarter comparison of actual spend v budget

<b>Function</b>	<b>Budget for year</b>	<b>Payments to date</b>
Car Park	400	0
Highways	6,428	449
Neighbourhood Plan	309	0
Grants	8,000	7,800
Youth fund	1,000	0
Street Lighting	22,000	1,857
YSR	57,000	8,700
Expenses	2,250	127
Employment	61,301	12,175
Administration	24,859	7,855
<b>Totals</b>	<b>183,547</b>	<b>38,963</b>