

# ALVECHURCH PARISH COUNCIL

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Clerk – Tammy Williams

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

**HELD MONDAY 12<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2018 AT 7 PM**

### **AT HOPWOOD COMMUNITY CENTRE REDDITCH ROAD HOPWOOD**

**18/090 Present:** Councillors A Humphries (Chairman), M Ball, R Chima, J Cypher, P Freeman, A Helmore, S Lambert, M Worrall, A Willetts & N Wise

**In attendance:** Tammy Williams (Clerk), Richard Peach (The Village), District & County Cllr C Hotham & District Cllr Kit Taylor (arrived at 7.15pm)

At the beginning of the meeting Mike Dunphy, Bromsgrove District Council provided the Parish Council with a presentation on its Issues & Options Consultation (Appendix 1)

**18/091 Apologies for Absence:** Cllrs A Smith & T Wallis & District Cllrs K Van der Plank

**18/092 Declarations of Interest:** None

#### **18/093 Reports from Alvechurch Ward, District & County Councillors:**

##### District Councillor Charlie Hotham

It was noted that there had been a lot less complaints regarding Mayfield Farm received and District Cllr Hotham had asked for a review meeting. It was felt that Mayfield Farm had been cajoled into a better state.

##### District Cllr Kit Taylor

There appears to be some confusion amongst local residents regarding the Planning process and in particular about asking for applications to be called into the Planning Committee at Bromsgrove District Council.

A Parish Councillor noted that during a recent meeting with Ruth Bamford the Parish Council had suggested that BDC has a policy for automatically calling in applications when more than 5 objections are received as BDC doesn't have a policy on doing so at the moment and the process relied on a Member calling it in presently.

District Cllr Taylor responded that the process of a Member calling it in is detailed in BDC's constitution.

A Councillor noted that it was believed that District Cllr K Taylor would have received correspondence regarding "garden grabbing". It was also noted by the Parish Council that often parishioners don't have much interaction with the planning process and when they do contact us or the Planning Authority it's their first experience of how the planning process works, what they need to do or speak to.

It was also noted that the Parish Council had written to Geoff Denaro about representation of the Alvechurch South Ward at the District level but to date hadn't received a response.

District Cllr K Taylor stated that District Cllr J Griffiths was still unwell but a Parish Councillor noted that District Cllr J Griffiths had attended some District Council meetings on occasion. District Cllr Hotham suggested that the Parish Council could ask to speak publicly at a District Council meeting.

District Cllr Taylor noted that there was a Libraries Consultation ongoing at present.

#### County Cllr C Hotham

- The libraries consultation is indicative of the financial situation at Worcestershire County Council.
- It looks as if the County Council will need to save £32m in the next financial year.
- There are no plans to close libraries but there are four tiers of library status which Wythall is in the third tier and Alvechurch is in the 4<sup>th</sup> tier where the County is looking for the community to take over the costs of the building and the staffing of it.
- It was noted however that Alvechurch library is in a PFI building and therefore costs more than others. County Cllr Hotham has asked if Alvechurch Library could be considered a special case as a result of this? If the community can't pay for the library then the County Council will be stuck with the cost of the building anyway.
- County Cllr Hotham has asked for a breakdown of costs associated with the running of Alvechurch Library including if the user numbers have been divided by the hours the library is open to give a true figure.

The meeting then moved to Agenda Item 11:

#### **18/094 To Consider the Formal Consultation on Worcestershire's Library Service Transformation Programme by Worcestershire County Council, the Relative Performance of Alvechurch Library and Future Public Consultation Arrangements**

It was **agreed** that a working group would be set up and Cllrs Wise, Humphries, Helmore and Freeman would be on this Working Group. It was also noted that the school should be invited to attend Working Group meetings as well. It was also queried what would happen to the Post Office following the Simply Fresh appeal which was turned down.

**ACTION POINT: The Clerk** to publicise the Library Consultation as widely as possible.

**ACTION POINT: Cllr Humphries** to contact the Post Office regarding future plans.

**ACTION POINT: The Clerk** to advise Alvechurch Library staff members that a Working Group has been established.

County Cllr Hotham left the meeting at 8.22pm

#### **18/095 To approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

These minutes were **approved** by Council and signed by the Chairman.

#### **18/096 Around the Parish – to Consider Developments and Issues Raised by Councillors Present as They Relate to Hopwood, Rowney Green, Bordesley and Alvechurch**

This item was deferred until the December meeting.

#### **18/097 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 Annual Fireworks Display at Rowney Green Playing Fields**

The Clerk advised that she had liaised with the organiser of the event after the October meeting and had established that their insurance would be the same as the Parish Council's

insurance provision would be for such an event and that our building would be covered in the event of any damage and as such had approved it taking place on the Parish Council's land.

b. Update on the Centenary Commemorations for the end of World War 1 in Alvechurch

The Remembrance Service took place at the Village Green, Alvechurch yesterday. Many people were involved in making the event a success and the Parish Council thanks everyone involved. The event was well attended and everything went well on the day.

c. Update on the Request for a Fixed Speed Camera on the A441, Hopwood

We have received a letter from John Campion (Police & Crime Commissioner) to Sajid Javid MP advising that he has sent the documents received in respect of the proposed fixed camera pilot on the A441, Hopwood to the Head of Road Safety Partnership within West Mercia Police for them to review and consider what appropriate course of action to take. John Campion also noted in the letter that he has asked to be kept informed as the issues progresses and that "reducing the harm caused on our roads is a key strand in my (his) Safer West Mercia plan and empowering communities to assist us in their fight is instrumental to its success."

d. Update on the Christmas Tree for Alvechurch

The Clerk confirmed that a 25ft Christmas tree had been ordered from Singletons costing £380 + VAT which will be installed on the weekend of Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> November. This price includes the supply, erection, removal and disposal of the Christmas tree.

e. To Note Elections in 2019

The Clerk advised Councillors that in 2019 there will be District Council elections and may also be elections for the Parish Council depending on how many candidates stand for the Parish Council. The Parish Council will have to pay for an election and it will form part of the budgeting process. Councillors may wish to think about whether they are intending standing again after May 2019. The Clerk will be attending a workshop on this in November for Clerks but CALC is organising a Community Engagement workshop on Elections for Councillors on 27<sup>th</sup> November at County Hall. Anyone interested in attending should let the Clerk know please.

f. Update on the Highways Meeting Held on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2018

Cllr Humphries advised that it had been a positive meeting with good co-operation between all parties present. Three residents parking schemes had been discussed with a scheme at the top of Station Road looking more likely. This scheme needs some adjustments and then a consultation on it will be arranged at some point in the future. Parking issues in the village centre were also discussed with the possibility of adjusting the hours available for public parking at the Sports & Social Club car park.

g. Update on the Budget Process for the 2019/20 Financial Year

The YSR Committee considered a wish list of proposed projects for the 2019/20 financial year, Could Councillors please email the Clerk with any suggested wish list items for non-YSR projects for the next financial year to form part of the budget process.

h. Outstanding Items: Signage at the Wiggins, Tree Surgery Quotations & ROSPA

### **18/098 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 to the Parish Council

b. To consider Quotations for Electricity Suppliers for Hopwood Community Centre

The Clerk had used LSI energy who search the energy market for the best energy rates and they recommended that the Parish Council continues to use SSE for its electricity supply to Hopwood Community Centre. It was noted that despite SSE being the cheapest supplier recommended the total cost for electricity would be increasing by a third.

It was **agreed** unanimously that the Clerk should sign the paperwork in order for SSE to provide electricity to Hopwood Community Centre for a term 36 months.

**ACTION POINT: The Clerk** to make the necessary arrangements.

### **18/099 To Consider the Parish Lengthsman Arrangements**

The Clerk advised that in order to be a Parish Lengthsman it would be necessary to undertake the relevant training to work in the Highway and the County wouldn't be holding more training until the next financial year. The Clerk advised that she had had two applications from local residents but neither had the relevant training already. It was therefore recommended that the Parish Council instructs Bromsgrove District Council's Lengthsman Team to undertake Lengthsman's duties for us until the end of the current financial year and review it again just prior to that date.

It was **agreed** unanimously to instruct Bromsgrove District Council to undertake our Lengthsman's duties until the end of March 2019.

### **18/100 To Consider The Additional Detail on the Overhead Barrier for the Wiggin Memorial Playing Fields**

It was noted that the Contractor who had made the overhead barrier for the Wiggin had suggested that a poppy motif be added to the overhead barrier which was cost minimal at £18 (it would be far more expensive to laser cut a tree for example). It was felt that a poppy would be an appropriate emblem for the Wiggin as it is a memorial field following the loss of two sons in the First World War.

It was **agreed unanimously** that a poppy motif could be added to the overhead barrier.

**ACTION POINT: The Clerk** to instruct W D Ornamental to finish off the overhead barrier and have it installed at the Wiggin Memorial Playing Fields as soon as possible.

### **18/101 To Consider the Adoption of the CAA Drone Code as Guidance for Those Using Drones or Model Aircraft in or Around our Playing Fields**

It was noted that this Code had been adopted by a number of other Parish Councils.

Councillors debated whether a Code should be adopted or if the Parish Council should ban drone use on our Playing Fields.

Councillors voted on the proposed adoption of the CAA's Drone Code, to be reviewed again in 6 months time. Eight Councillors were in favour, one Councillor was against and one Councillor abstained from the vote. The motion was carried.

**ACTION POINT: The Clerk** to arrange for the Code to be added to the Parish Council's website and also for this to be added to the May Parish Council agenda in six months' time to be reviewed.

The order of the meeting then moved on to Agenda Item 12:

### **18/102 Committees/Sub Committees/working parties**

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

##### **i. To Receive An Update From The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

Cllr Smith advised that although the Independent Examiner had not been the Steering Group's first choice the Examiner had proven to be a good one. The polices had remained in tact following the review with some suggested changes to wording.

The Parish Council can now refer to its Neighbourhood Plan has having "medium weight" in planning terms. Full weight would be given following a Yes vote in a referendum that needs to be organised by Electoral Services, possibly on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2019. Bromsgrove District Council needs to sing off the Neighbourhood Plan first to trigger the referendum. The Steering Group will then be out in force to encourage voting. If the Neighbourhood Plan is adopted then it will become part of the statutory framework sitting alongside Bromsgrove District Council's Local Plan until 2021-22 when BDC reviews its Local Plan.

The Parish Council sent its formal thanks to Cllr Smith for all his hard work on the Neighbourhood Plan. Thanks were also sent to Matt Stanczyszyn and Mike Dunphy, BDC.

##### **i.i. To Consider the Parish Council's Response to the Bromsgrove District Plan Review and Green Belt Methodology Paper**

A draft response from the Parish Council had been circulated by email prior to the meeting. Councillors **agreed unanimously** that this response could be issued.

A third paper was distributed around future business and employment growth in the District and Cllr Cypher led the discussion on this. It was noted that Bromsgrove is playing its part in a West Midlands resurgent economy and that the Issues and Options Consultation had moved on from being about housing numbers to greater emphasis on economic matters. Councillors noted that this was a change in flavour and were asked if they were happy to include Cllr Cypher's paper as an annexe to the Parish Council's response to the District Council's Issues and Options Consultation.

**ACTION POINT: The Clerk** to issue the Parish Council's response to Bromsgrove District Council including this annexe.

ii. To receive an update from the Planning Committee Meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> October & 5<sup>th</sup> November 2018

It was noted that the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> November had been lengthy with 11 applications reviewed. Cllr Worrall updated Councillors on the applications that had been objected to. Cllr Worrall also commented that the Parish Council does take reviewing planning applications seriously and has recently reviewed its process for asking for applications to be called in: looking at applications early to ascertain if contacting the District Councillor early on to ask for applications to be called into Committee for consideration. Councillors have also been encouraged to undertake a site visit if necessary.

ii.i To Receive an Update on the Meeting Held With Bromsgrove District Council's Planning Department Regarding Planning Issues

It was noted that Cllrs Worrall, Cypher and Wallis attended this meeting and were well received. Ruth Bamford confirmed that there is always an open door for the Parish Council to discuss any issues arising. Ruth expressed that there were always different ways of looking at things and that explained the different approaches to some planning applications recently. Three applications were discussed including the proposed development at Smedley Crooke Place, Hopwood, the three houses that were refused on design grounds on Ash Lane, Hopwood and Corner Cottage in Rowney Green which it was felt went through speedily and caused issues.

It was noted that the Planning Committee was reviewing its processes and will keep up a dialogue with the Planning Authority.

At this point in the meeting it was also noted that one of the recent applications considered was to build a bungalow on the site of garages off Newbourne Hill, Rowney Green. The Planning Committee did not object but it is noted that there will be an impact on users of our Playing Fields who use this location for parking cars during football matches. It was recommended that the Parish Council meet with the Trustees of the Village Hall and also BDHT to discuss the implications of this application. It was also noted that the Trustees of the Village Hall would be meeting tonight to consider whether the footballers can continue to use the car park to the rear of the Village Hall, Rowney Green.

ii.ii To Consider the Planning Committee's Recommendation Regarding a Resident's Request to Lobby Bromsgrove District Council in Respect of the Planning Enforcement Process for Caravans Located in Paddocks

The Council **agreed** with the Planning Committee's proposal that the resident would need to provide the Parish Council with a number of examples of caravans situated in pony paddocks in order for it to progress the matter with the District Council.

iii. To Receive an Update From the Youth, Sport & Recreation Committee Held on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2018

Please refer to the Minutes on the Parish Council's website for further details.

iv. To Receive an Update From the Hopwood Play Equipment Working Group

It was noted that the project still needs to raise around another £10,000 to reach its £30,000 target. The Piggott Trust could be approached for additional funding. It was noted again that Council had agreed in principle that it would increase funding for the project if required.

v. To Receive an Update from the Christmas Arrangements Committee

It was noted that the PA system and road closure arrangements had been made and that there would be a Best Decorated House competition as well.

**18/103 To Consider Residents' Complaints and Queries, as Received**

a) To Consider a Resident's Request to Lobby Bromsgrove District Council Regarding the Updating of Ratings Lists for Equestrian Centres

District Cllr K Taylor advised that this request had been received a few years ago. As this is a Bromsgrove District Council matter the resident would be advised to contact his district Councillor, Kit Taylor to progress this matter.

**ACTION POINT: The Clerk** to write to the resident to advise this.

b) To Consider a Resident's Complaint Regarding the Amount of Litter in the area, Traffic Speeds, Conditions of Roads and Gullies

The Clerk advised that she had recommended that the resident contact the District Council, County Council and the Police accordingly about these matters.

c) To Consider a Resident's Email to Alvechurch and Barnt Green Parish Councils Regarding Speeding Vehicles Between the two Parishes

The Clerk advised that the resident had contacted the Safer Neighbourhood Team who had recommended contacting the Parish Council. The Clerk was surprised as the PCSO who had attended the October Parish Council Meeting had advised that they wanted to receive that kind of information about speeding vehicles.

**ACTION POINT: The Clerk** to notify the resident that it is the Safer Neighbourhood Team who should be dealing with this.

**18/104 To consider, and if considered appropriate, to pass the following resolution to exclude the public from the meeting during the consideration of agenda items 15, 16 & 17 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.”**

Nine Councillors voted in favour to exclude the press and public from this section of the meeting, 1 Councillor voted against it. The Motion was carried.

**18/105 To Consider An Update Regarding the Station Car Park**

Councillors were provided with details of an upcoming meeting between Network Rail, West Midlands Trains, Worcestershire County Council and Bromsgrove District Council. The Parish Council **agreed unanimously** that Cllrs Worrall and Humphries could also attend the meeting on behalf of the Parish Council and that preliminary steps with key stakeholders could be taken in advance of the workshop to facilitate discussions at the meeting.

**18/106 To Consider the Staff Pension Arrangements**

The Clerk provided Councillors with details of the staff pension arrangements.

**18/107 To Receive and Consider an Update on the Staffing Arrangements**

The Clerk provided Councillors with an update on the recruitment of new staff members

**18/108 Date and time of next meeting:** the next meeting will be the Parish Meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> December at 7pm at Hopwood Community Centre, Redditch Road, Hopwood

This meeting ended at 10.15pm.

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

DRAFT