

# ALVECHURCH PARISH COUNCIL

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Clerk – Tammy Williams

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

**HELD MONDAY 13<sup>th</sup> MAY 2019 AT 7PM**

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

**19/001 Present:** Councillors A Humphries (Chairman), S Baxter, J Cypher, S Lambert, T Wallis, A Willetts & N Wise

**In attendance:** Tammy Williams (Clerk), R Peach (The Village), County Cllr C Hotham & District Cllr K Van der Plank

The Annual Parish Council Meeting was opened by Cllr Humphries. This was the first meeting of the Parish Council following the uncontested election on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2019. Congratulations were also expressed to District Councillors Hotham, Van der Plank and English who had been elected to represent the Barnt Green & Hopwood, Alvechurch Village and Alvechurch South wards respectively.

#### **19/002 Election of Chairman**

Cllr Humphries advised that he would not be standing as Chairman again this year. The Clerk thanked Cllr Humphries for his service to the Parish Council and support of the Clerk since she joined the Council.

Council resolved **unanimously** to elect Cllr M Worrall in his absence as the new Chairman to the Parish Council. Council **agreed** that the Clerk could arrange for Cllr Worrall to sign his Declaration of Acceptance of Office form on his return.

In Cllr Worrall's absence Council **agreed** that Cllr Humphries would chair the meeting.

#### **19/003 Election of Vice Chairman**

Council resolved **unanimously** to elect Cllr Humphries as the Vice Chairman

#### **19/004 To Receive Councillors' Acceptance of Office Forms**

The Clerk received Acceptance of Office forms from all Councillors present. The Clerk will arrange to receive these forms from all Councillors who have sent apologies.

#### **19/005 Apologies for Absence:**

Cllr A Helmore (holiday)

Cllr P Freeman (holiday)

Cllr M Worrall (holiday)

#### **19/006 Declarations of Interest:**

Cllr S Baxter declared that she had prejudicial interests in Agenda Items 12.1 and 12.3 as Chairman of NALC (National Association of Local Councils) and an Interest in agenda item 12.6 as she is also a Bromsgrove District Councillor.

At this point in the meeting Council extended a warm welcome to Cllr Sue Baxter who had joined the Parish Council as a Rowney Green and Bordesley ward councillor.

**19/007 To Consider any Dispensations: Written Requests for Council to Grant a Dispensation to a Councillor (as per the Localism Act 2011, s33) Must Be With the Proper Officer Before the Meeting Starts**

None noted

As Cllr Wallis would be leaving the meeting early to attend the Allotments Annual General Meeting agenda items 9, 10 and 13.1.3 were brought forward although for the purpose of the Minutes these items are documented in order of the agenda.

**19/008 Reports from Alvechurch Ward, District and County Councillors**

District Cllr C Hotham

- Mayfield Farm: Cllr Hotham reported that smell had been an issue again in the last couple of days but has been generally better due to covered vehicles. Noise nuisance has been getting steadily worse. Diaries have been written over a 12-month period by local residents and District Cllr Hotham is hoping to arrange a meeting to review these with the Bromsgrove Community Safety Officer.

County Cllr C Hotham

- Crossing on A441, Hopwood: County Cllr Amos met with Parish Council representatives to review the need for a proper crossing on the A441. It was noted that the first step will be to get this on to the County's list for proposed crossings. In the meantime, the refuge in the middle of the road is inadequate and can be improved, perhaps from the County Councillor's divisional fund.
- Station Road, Alvechurch: County Cllr Hotham has received a proposal from Worcestershire County Council but doesn't solve the problem of on street parking and highways safety concerns.
- Children's Services: The new company was set up on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 and will operate alongside the existing service until October 2019 to ensure it has sufficient time to establish itself.
- School Choices: 92% of children across Worcestershire got a place at their first choice school. Lots of money is being invested into Bromsgrove North which has gone into special measures.
- Stonehouse Lane: County Cllr Hotham noted concerns about the standard of highways work undertaken on Stonehouse Lane and near the rugby club which could also pose a safety concern for pedestrians.

District Cllr Van der Plank

- Has been following many queries received during election campaign including the frequency of grass cutting around the village by BDHT and BDC, rubbish, recycling and fly-tipping in the area.
- Diamond Bus Service: District Cllr Van der Plank has spoken to the Chief Executive Officer of Diamond Bus Services about the reduced service that they're now offering. It is hoped that there will also be a meeting with Diamond Bus Services, District Cllr Van der Plank and Parish Cllrs Humphries and Cypher.
- CCTV Consultation: has received views from people about this
- New Homes Bonus Grant Application: has met with three local organisations and has agreed to support their applications
- Fly-tipping: it was noted that if there wasn't a charge for disposing of commercial waste at recycling centres then that might reduce incidents of fly-tipping.

### District Cllr A English

Apologies received as Dist. Cllr English was attending training at Bromsgrove District Council.

### **19/009 To Consider the Minutes of the Previous Meeting Held on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

The minutes were approved by Council and signed by the Vice-Chairman.

### **19/010 Appointment of Committees, to include:**

It was noted that there were three Councillors absent and two vacant roles therefore it was felt that this agenda item should be deferred until the June meeting however the Proper Officer noted that the Planning Committee would meet before the June Parish Council meeting therefore the members should be agreed:

#### i. Planning Committee

Planning Committee members would include: Cllrs Cypher, Freeman, Lambert, Wallis, Willetts, Worrall and Wise.

The Clerk advised that members could only vote if they confirmed that they wanted to be on a Committee.

### **19/011 Appointment of Representatives to Outside Bodies:**

This item was deferred to the June Parish Council meeting

### **19/012 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 Finlay Church Memorial Garden

The ROSPA report that was completed in May, advised that it would be appropriate for the Lovelock Tree to be secured to the ground. The Clerk will now purchase the bench and arrange for the bench and Lovelock tree to be installed in the garden along with the plaque.

#### b. Update on recent ROSPA inspections

ROSPA undertook its playground inspections at each of its sites and also specifically on the whole Wiggin Memorial Playing Fields. The Clerk will provide Councillors with copies of all reports and these will be considered at either the June Parish Council or Youth, Sports & Recreation Committee Meeting

#### c. Update on boardwalk maintenance

Adrian Bytom who originally installed the boardwalk at the Wiggin, replaced some supports on the boardwalk. He advises that further supports will need to be replaced in the short term and the Clerk has asked for a quotation for this work.

#### d. Update on tree surgery undertaken at the Wiggin Memorial Playing Fields and the Tree Preservation Order application to Bromsgrove District Council

The first phase of the tree surgery was undertaken in April and the second phase (removing epicormic growth and deadwood) will be undertaken this month. The Supporting Officer has submitted a TPO application to BDC and they have advised that we should have a response in June 2019.

#### e. Update on Internal Audit process

The Internal Audit process was completed at the end of April. The Clerk has supplied Councillors with a copy of the Internal Auditors report and these will be added to the website along with the External Audit papers in June.

#### f. Update on the co-option process

The Clerk advertised the two Parish Council vacancies in The Village magazine, on Facebook and our website. The clerk has received enquiries from three members of the public. It is hoped that we will be able to co-opt at our June meeting.

g. Update on the office opening hours

The Clerk has decided to change the office opening hours to 9am to 11am, Monday to Thursday. This change has been reported in the office and on our Facebook page.

h. Update on the new Executive officer at Worcestershire CALC

Councillors are advised that Richard Levett retired at the end of April and the new Executive Officer, Christopher Wayman has undertaken the role.

i. Update on staff and councillor training opportunities

Councillors are advised that Gill Lungley is undertaking the following training sessions here at Hopwood Community Centre which are open to all Parish Councils in the area. It will be a great opportunity to undertake refresher training for those who have done it before:

June 5th 5 P's

June 19th Chairmanship

July 3rd 3 M's

Venue The Hopwood Centre, Alvechurch, Redditch Rd,

Hopwood, Alvechurch, Birmingham, B48 7TL

Time 7pm-9pm Cost £30 per person.

Any Councillors wishing to attend any of these training sessions should let the Clerk know so places can be confirmed with CALC.

j. To note M42 Junction 3 Improvements

Residents have received a letter from Kier on behalf of Highways England advising that they are planning to work on junction 3, of the M42 to install a dedicated lane from M42 westbound to the A435 southbound as well as widening slip roads and adding a lane to sections of the roundabout to mitigate congestion at peak times particularly with the building of new houses and businesses in the area. The work began on 7<sup>th</sup> May to be completed by the end of 2019. This will involve some night time closures of the slip roads and roundabout. Speed limits will be reduced in the vicinity of the work as well and it is anticipated that there will be delays of 30 minutes on the M42 and A435 at peak times.

k. Update on the Planning Inspectorate's Appeal Decision on the Land Between Ash Cottage and Hopwood Garden Centre

Bromsgrove District Council's Planning department confirmed that the appeal decision for the erection of 3 dwellings on the land between Ash Cottage and Hopwood Garden Centre had been dismissed. The Principal Planning Officer advised that "The Inspector considered that the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt and that it would lead to a moderate loss of openness. The proposal would also not make an appropriate provision for small homes (2 or fewer bedrooms). It was therefore contrary to Policy H1: Locations for New Housing Development and Policy H2: Housing for Hopwood and Rowney Green of the Alvechurch Parish Neighbourhood Plan. Furthermore the other considerations in this case did not outweigh the harm the Inspector identified. "

The Inspectors report highlighted the significant role that the Alvechurch Parish Neighbourhood Plan and its policies played in this decision.

l. Update on the allotments

The last plot is in the process of being let at the moment and there is one person on the waiting list now. The Allotments Association AGM is taking place tonight. It is noted that the bank has finally updated the allotment association's banking mandate to reflect the new signatories.

m. Update on the Bromsgrove Plan Review

Bromsgrove District Council has advised that the next consultation stage of the Bromsgrove Plan review is scheduled for Autumn 2019 which will likely include a call for sites alongside a further issues document building on the Issues document from 2018.

n. Update on Elections Expenses Return

Councillors need to return their Elections Expenses form enclosed within their pack by 31<sup>st</sup> May 2019, even if it's a Nil return. These should be sent to the Returning Officer at Bromsgrove District Council.

o. Outstanding items

Benches at Hopwood bus shelters, plumbing quotations, street lighting, pitch maintenance at the Wiggin Memorial Playing Fields, actions from ROSPA reports, switch of Internet provider, Christmas Arrangements meeting, staff annual appraisals, Staffing Committee meeting.

### **19/013 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 Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council.

i. To Consider the Parish Council's Subscription to NALC, CALC & SLCC

Cllr Baxter left the room due to her Pecuniary Interest in this item. Council **resolved unanimously** to pay the subscription for CALC, NALC & SLCC membership all of which continue to provide the Council with valuable advice and guidance.

b. To consider the Parish Council's Asset Register

Council reviewed and approved this year's asset register.

c. To Consider the Insurance Renewal Received

Cllr Baxter left the room due to her Pecuniary Interest in this item. The Clerk provided Councillors with details of 4 quotations received. The Clerk recommended and Council **resolved unanimously** to enter into a 3-year contract with BHIB (AVIVA) to provide the Parish Council's insurance cover.

d. To Consider the Updated Standing Orders Including Delegated Powers to the Clerk and Terms of Reference for Each Committee

Council approved the Standing Orders, delegated powers and terms of reference for each committee.

e. To Consider the Financial Regulations for Alvechurch

Council **approved** the Financial Regulations document.

f. To Consider Potential Projects in Respect of this Year's BDC New Homes Bonus Grant Allocation

Council **agreed** that the Parish Council would submit a grant application to assist with the purchase of a storage container to be used by the football teams to store their equipment at the Wiggin Memorial Playing Fields. The Clerk advised that the Parish Council had spoken to BDC's Planning department already about this however a District Councillor did query whether planning permission would be required.

g. To Consider a Proposed Meeting Schedule for 2019/20

The Clerk proposed that the Parish Council trialled having 12 Parish Council meetings in a year to assist Council with project and work management. Council **agreed** the new calendar.

h. To Consider the Bank Signatory Arrangements

This item was deferred until the June Parish Council meeting

i. To Consider Consultations Received in Respect of the Following Consultations

i. Worcestershire County Council's Planning "Enforcement Plan" document, Pre-Application Guidance Document and Updating Planning Consultation Database

County Cllr Hotham advised that he will request a blanket extension for all Parish Councils on this consultation. If an extension is granted then the Clerk will ask the Planning Committee to consider a response; if an extension isn't granted then the Clerk will email round the consultation for Council input.

ii. Public Consultation on the Draft Supplementary Planning Document for Edgbaston Reservoir

Council **resolved** not to respond to this consultation,

iii. Bromsgrove District Council's CCTV Infrastructure in Bromsgrove District

It was **agreed** that Cllr Humphries would draft a response and circulate it to Council for comments.

**j. To Consider the Parish Council's Response to a Letter Received from Bromsgrove District Housing Trust (BDHT)**

Council debated the contents of the letter, noting that the inference was that BDHT's priority was to provide social housing in the district rather than provide parking. Council **agreed** that it would reply by querying the impact of a substation situated on the site as it is now understood that this has an easement and may have implications for building on the site.

At 20.57 County Cllr Hotham left the meeting.

**k. To Consider the Parish Council's Policies to Include:**

**i. Complaints Policy**

It was requested that the Clerk re-word the first paragraph of this policy and defer its review until the June Parish Council meeting.

**ii. Press, Media and Social Media Policy**

This item was deferred until the June Parish Council Meeting

**iii. Freedom of Information**

This item was deferred until the June Parish Council Meeting

**iv. General Data Protection Policy**

Council **resolved** to adopt this policy

**i. Document Retention Policy**

Council **resolved** to adopt this policy

**ii. Privacy Notices**

Council **resolved** to adopt these policies

**v. Equality Policy**

Council **resolved** to adopt this policy

**vi. ICO's Model Publication Scheme**

Council **resolved** to adopt this policy

The Clerk advised that she is aiming to start a calendar review of policies starting with the policies that are stated in our Standing Orders that should be reviewed at the May Parish Council meeting. A rolling programme of policy reviews will take place in relevant Committee meetings throughout the year to facilitate this process from now on.

**l. To Consider Quotations Received to Bind Copies of the Alvechurch Parish Neighbourhood Plan and Design Statement and Resale Cost**

Council **agreed** that it would instruct Lemon Press in Redditch to print six copies of the Neighbourhood Plan in perfect bound. Lemon Press was the cheapest of the three companies approached but as the quotes were for 10 or 15 copies the price is still to be determined.

**19/014 Committees/Sub Committees/Working Parties**

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

**i. To Consider the Hopwood Play Equipment Working Group's Proposed Tender for New Play Equipment at Hopwood Playing Fields**

It was **agreed unanimously** that the Parish Council would instruct Play & Leisure to supply and fit their proposed play scheme at Hopwood Playing Fields at a cost of £29,999.63 net. Cllr Baxter suggested that the Council notify NALC with details of this project as NALC runs a Star Council award; it was also suggested that we ask for this project to be on the CALC Area Meeting agenda to highlight community collaboration

**ii. To Receive an Update from the Finance & Resources Committee Meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

See Minutes for this meeting for further details.

**iii. To Receive an Update from the Picnic in the Park Committee (PIP)**

It was noted that the Minutes from the last PIP meeting had been circulated prior to the meeting and that the last stages of planning for this year's event.

**iv. To Receive an Update on the Planning Meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2019**

Please see Minutes for further details.

iv.i To Consider the Parish Council's Proposed Written Response in Respect of the Appeal for Land South of Karenswood, Ash Lane, Alvechurch (Appeal Reference APP/P1805/W/18/3205163 & Application REference 17/00821/FUL)

A proposed response had been circulated prior to the meeting and Council **agreed unanimously** that the Clerk should issue this response to the Planning Inspectorate in advance of the deadline.

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

i. To Receive a CALC Meeting Update

Cllrs Humphries and Cypher updated Council that at the last meeting it was suggested that Parish Councils should share successes and concerns as part of the agenda for each meeting.

ii. To Receive an Update on a Meeting Held with West Midlands Probation Services

It was noted that Andy Humphries, as representative of the St Laurence Churchyard Group, and the Supporting Officer, as representative of the Parish Council, had met with the Probation Service as they carry out work for each entity (the Parish Council and St Laurence Churchyard). Both sites had been visited during the meeting and it was noted that it would now cost £45 per session (8 people working). The Probation Service would be attending the Wiggin Memorial Playing Fields prior to Picnic in the Park.

iii. To Receive an Update on the Meeting Held with Alan Amos, Worcestershire County Council, Regarding the A441, Hopwood

Cllrs Cypher, Smith and Worrall attended a meeting with County Cllrs Alan Amos and C Hotham. Cllr Cypher had circulated the following report prior to this Parish Council meeting:

“The meeting took place on site at Hopwood with County Highways officers also present. Discussion concentrated on the area between the Hopwood House pub and the location of the Alvechurch Parish Council playing field (soon to benefit from a new range of children’s play equipment). Some attention was also given to the stretch of the A441 road between the Birmingham boundary and the Westmead Hotel in Hopwood

Below are key points from the meeting for Worcestershire County Council consideration:

- Improvements to the existing pedestrian crossing refuge between Hopwood House and Smedley Crooke Place with a possible relocation. But a controlled crossing at that point was also seen as worthy for listing (though its priority ranking might not be among the highest)
- Changes to the existing road markings and signage at location of the Garage / Ash Lane. This to make clearer to motorists what are the entry and exit arrangements and so reduce the hazard potential
- Other engineering- included here was a review of the existing white line hatching through Hopwood that currently permits overtaking, in favour of more solid white lines which do not permit overtaking; installing a Village gateway and associated road marking (to suggest road narrowing) at the entry to Hopwood by the Rise.

The above came from a general acceptance of high and growing traffic volumes at Hopwood, the challenge in getting further vehicle speed reduction through the Community Concern project and the need to do more to make the A441 at Hopwood less of the poor relation, compared to the other roads connecting Birmingham to motorway junctions like the A 38 Lydiate Ash to Longbridge section and the A453 Birmingham to Portway/M42 junction bypassing Wythall.”

**19/015 To Consider Resident's Complaints and Queries, as Received**

a) A Member of the Public's Request for Additional Benches in the Wiggin Memorial Playing Fields

This was deferred to the Youth Sport & Recreation Committee meeting in June for consideration.

b) A Resident's Complaint Regarding Parked Cars Along Station Road, Alvechurch

Cllr Humphries declared a personal interest in this agenda item.

The Clerk had received a letter from a resident who advised that cars are parked on Station Road between 7.30am until 6.30pm on weekdays causing major issues such as being able to safely exit a driveway on to the road and also for motorists trying to pass the parked vehicles on Station Road. The resident has suggested that a parking restriction from 10am to 11am is imposed (as seen working well in Dorridge the resident advises) and which would be policed by the parking attendant who the resident often sees in The Square, Alvechurch.

Council **agreed** that the Clerk should pass this resident's suggestion on to the County Council's Highways representative and also County Cllr Hotham for consideration.

c. A Resident's Concerns Regarding the Installation of Raised Beds Against a Wall in the Precinct, Alvechurch

It was noted that a resident has asked the Parish Council whether the wall in the Precinct was listed and the Supporting Officer had checked and confirmed that it wasn't. Concerns were also raised about whether the beds, when full, might compromise the wall. The Parish Council advised that this area is owned by the Bernard Piggott Trust and is therefore not Parish Council responsibility.

**19/016 Around the Parish – to Consider Developments and Issues Raised by Councillors Present as they Relate to Hopwood, Rowney Green, Bordesley and Alvechurch**

Cllr Cypher noted that he would re-circulate the Community Resilience Plan for Councillor input.

a) Bordesley

None noted

b) Alvechurch

It was noted that the Parish Council had raised the matter of streetlights owned by the County Council along Swans Walk that have been out of order for some months with both Pysmian and the County Council but to date some are still unlit. The Clerk to raise this matter with County Cllr Hotham.

c) Hopwood

The state of the footways between Hopwood and Alvechurch was raised again and a suggestion was made that this route should be both improved and also converted into a cycle path especially as this is the pedestrian/cycle route between Hopwood and Alvechurch which is the catchment school for Hopwood.

d) Rowney Green

The outstanding Horse safety signs were raised and noted were still outstanding. The Clerk to ask for an update from the Highways representative.

It was also noted that following complaints last year about parking on Rowney Green Lane during the opening to the public of Peck Woods, parking had been provided at Bordesley Hall as well and this had worked well.

**19/017 Date and time of next meeting:** the next meeting will be on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2019 at 7pm at Hopwood Community Centre, Redditch Road, Hopwood.

This meeting ended at 9.45pm.

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