

# ALVECHURCH PARISH COUNCIL

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Clerk – Tammy Williams

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

**HELD MONDAY 13<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2017 AT 7.00PM**

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

**17/086 Present:** Councillors A Humphries (Chairman), S Lambert, N Wise, M Ball, A Helmore, A Smith, M Worrall & P Freeman

**In attendance:** Tammy Williams (Clerk), District/County Cllr C Hotham, R Peach (Village Magazine), Ron Rand, District Councillor K Van der Plank, Bill Ulyett (The Lounge) and 7 members of the public

Standing orders were suspended to receive an update from Bill Ulyett regarding The Lounge (appendix 1). After that Mr Connolly, owner of the land to the rear of 2 Birmingham Road addressed Council regarding the works carried out on the land recently (appendix 2). Finally two members of the public addressed Council with their concerns regarding railings in front of the cottages on Swan Street (appendix 3).

### **17/087 Apologies for Absence**

Councillor A Willetts (accepted)  
Councillor J Cypher (accepted)  
Councillor A Wallis (accepted)

### **17/088 Declarations of Interest**

None stated at this point in the meeting but Cllr A Humphries did confirm that he had a personal interest in item 17/093c because both the residents concerned are known to Cllr Humphries

### **17/089 Reports from Alvechurch Ward, District & County Councillors**

#### **a. Report From County Councillor Charlie Hotham**

The County Council has stated that there will be a budget deficit of £60m between now and 2021 and the County Council will need to make efficiencies between now and then.

Children's Services is still in special measures and it is expected that it will take five years to get a good grade again. The County Council needs to provide an alternative delivery model for Children's Services and will therefore have to put it out to tender.

The Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) was passed although Bromsgrove District Council was against because there was no mention of a western bypass. County Cllr Hotham noted that Conservative members who are both District and County Councillors voted against LTP4 at Bromsgrove District Council and voted for it at Worcestershire County Council.

It was noted that the Police & Crime Commissioner is still pursuing his take over the fire service. The Police & Crime Commissioner has had to re-write his business case and has sent it to the Home Secretary for a final decision.

b. Report From District Councillor, Charlie Hotham

District Cllr Hotham has asked for the current planning application submitted by Hopwood Services to be called into Committee.

With regards to the Green Belt Review, the local development forum has met a couple of times in private and will hold a public meeting in January and District Cllr Hotham would suggest that Alvechurch Parish Council attends.

District Cllr Hotham reported that the barriers which have been up along Bittell Farm Road have all gone however there is no sign of any work being done. It transpires that the barriers were likely removed in error.

With regards to Mayfield Farm, District Cllr Hotham has been investigating how much it would cost to instigate a private prosecution. Although there would be no court charges there would be costs in seeking professional advice. The latest investigations carried out confirm that there is noise which is annoying but not sufficient levels have been detected to constitute a statutory nuisance. Worcestershire Regulatory Services has confirmed that no minutes exist from investigative meetings with Mayfield Farm. Worcestershire Regulatory Services will be looking a noise levels from 9pm to 12pm and maybe overnight. Local residents are completing diary sheets.

c. Report from District Councillor Van der Plank

District Cllr Van der Plank advised that there hasn't been a meeting at Bromsgrove District Council since the October Alvechurch Parish Council Meeting. However District Cllr Van der Plank has had a number of conversations with members of the public regarding a request for a disabled bay at The Buckleys, residents' parking and also concerns about speeding. District Cllr Van der Plank would welcome a meeting with the Parish Council to form a holistic view on these matters.

With regards to the planning application for Simply Fresh, it was noted that there are community benefits from the store opening and also the re-siting of the post office there but also the scheme is clearly out of kilter with the area and District Cllr Van der Plank supports the decision made by the Planning Department at Bromsgrove District Council.

District Cllr Van der Plank has recently met with Cllrs Humphries and Worrall regarding the history of the station car park.

District Cllr Van der Plank and Cllr Humphries were recently photographed in the Advertiser regarding constituency boundary changes.

Finally, District Cllr Van der Plank is exploring whether Alvechurch could be a plastic free zone starting with approaching the local eateries and discussing no longer using disposable plastic drinks cups.

County Cllr Hotham added at this point in the meeting that he has asked for double yellow lines to be instated at the top of Latimer Road.

At this point in the meeting we moved to Agenda Item 8:

**17/090 To Note the Bromsgrove Centres Management Strategy 2017-2020**

Standing Orders were suspended to allow Cheryl Welsh, Bromsgrove Centres Manager, to speak. Cheryl advised that she had seen that this item was on our agenda and had decided to come along to update Councillors. Cheryl advised that she has been in post for about 18 months and her remit is to improve commercial centres in parishes. Cheryl has been tasked with putting together a Strategy for the next three years which in the short-term will focus on independent shops. The Strategy is currently with Cabinet at Bromsgrove District Council. The Strategy is keen to improve the public realm, projects are currently underway in Rubery and Bromsgrove looking at this and these types of projects look at de-cluttering, repairing and improving the landscapes of village centres.

A councillor noted that if a parking review was part of Cheryl's remit then Alvechurch Parish Council might benefit from that. A Councillor asked if funding was available and Cheryl

replied that she would need to clarify that. She did advise that she has an Operational Budget and is able to match an organisation's budget; she also has the remit to source external funding.

Standing Orders were resumed and the order of the meeting returned to Agenda Item 4:

#### **17/091 To Approve the Minutes of the Previous Meeting Held on 9/10/17**

The minutes from the October meeting were **agreed** and signed by Cllr Andy Humphries.

#### **17/092 Clerk's report including Matters Arising From Previous Meetings and Emergency Expenditure...**

##### **a. Update on the Cycle Racks at the Station**

The Clerk advised that the concrete slab had been laid for the Cycle Shelter thus far.

##### **b. Update on the Street Light on Bear Hill**

The Clerk advised that this street light has now been cowed and the next step is to paint it.

##### **c. Update on the Meeting Held With District Cllr Kit Taylor, BDC & Simon Geraghty, WCC**

The Clerk and Cllr Humphries had recently met with District Cllr Kit Taylor and Simon Geraghty, Leader of Worcestershire County Council.

##### **d. Update on the Demolition of Bridge 64 From the Canal & River Trust**

The Clerk advised that we have been informed that the Canal & River Trust has just approved its budget for 2018 and it is anticipated that the work to demolish Bridge 64 will begin after April 2018. Cllr Humphries requested that this project is well managed as this stretch of the canal is well used by canal barges, walkers and local residents.

##### **e. Update on Publication Scheme, Transparency Code & Policies Training Delivered by Worcestershire CALC**

The Clerk and Cllr Humphries had recently attended training at Worcestershire CALC. The Clerk will update Councillors with an action plan arising from the training in due course.

#### **17/093 Finance & Administration**

##### **a. To Receive a List of Invoices for Payment and to Consider any Exceptional Items**

The Clerk provided Councillors with a list of invoices for payment. A councillor queried a payment to SurveyMonkey and the Clerk confirmed that this was the website being used to compile the results of the Community Survey for new play equipment at the Wiggin Memorial Playing Fields. The invoices were **agreed** and the cheque list was signed by Cllr Humphries.

##### **b. To Consider the Meeting Schedule for 2018**

The Clerk had provided Councillors with the draft schedule of meetings for 2018.

**ACTION POINT: The Clerk** to add this to the December Parish Council agenda

##### **c. To Consider Phase 2 of Our Street Lighting Upgrade Project**

Councillors were advised that there are two street lights still to be upgraded from Phase 2: one on Latimer Road which is in a garden and one on Snake Lane. Cllr Humphries and the Clerk have spoken with both the residents' whose properties are directly impacted by the upgrade process of these two street lights and this now needs to be discussed with the street lighting contractors. A councillor asked if the new street lights are taller and brighter and if they could be cowed?

**ACTION POINT: The Clerk** to ask if the street lights could be shorter

A Councillor asked if there was an update on the requested street light for Ash Lane, Hopwood. The Clerk advised that our Street Lighting Contractor is quoting for the reinstatement of this street light as part of Phase 3 of our Street Lighting upgrade.

Cllr Freeman left the meeting at 20.20 and returned at 20.22.

#### **17/094 To Receive an Update on the Final Pre-Submission Public Consultation Stage for the Neighbourhood Plan**

Cllr Smith updated Councillors about the recent public consultations, including one at Rowney Green and another at Hopwood which he noted were quite well attended with constructive comments received. The Consultation Period ends on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2017 and

copies of the Neighbourhood Plan documents can be viewed on either the Neighbourhood Plan website, the Parish Council website, at the Parish Council office or in Alvechurch library. Cllr Humphries is collating responses as they are received. The intention is to submit the amended Plan to Bromsgrove District Council early in 2018. Thanks were extended to The Village Magazine for their article on the Consultation at the Baptist Church.

The meeting then moved to Agenda Item 9:

### **17/095 To Consider the Proposed Constituency Boundary Changes**

Cllr Humphries had provided Councillors with a draft response to the proposed Constituency Boundary Changes and Cllr Freeman thanked Cllr Humphries for doing this. Councillors were asked if the Parish Council should respond to the proposed changes. A Councillor proposed that the Parish Council should respond formally supplemented with comments submitted from the Neighbourhood Plan. It was **agreed** that a formal response would be emailed to Councillors by the end of November for comments and then submission to the Boundary Commission.

### **17/096 Committees/Sub Committees/Working Parties**

#### **1. Reports From Committees and Minutes Circulated Since Last Meeting**

##### **a. To Receive an Update From the Planning Meeting Held on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2017**

It was noted that three of the applications received generated a lot of debate within Committee Members. Please see Minutes to this meeting available on the Parish Council's website.

##### **b. To Consider Membership for the Picnic in the Park Working Group**

It was noted that the Working Group is pleased that Cllr Wallis has offered to be on the Picnic in the Park Working Group. Councillors **agreed** unanimously that Cllr Wallis could be a Parish Council representative along with Cllr Wise on this Working Group.

##### **c. To Receive an Update From the Christmas Arrangements in Alvechurch Village Committee**

Cllr Lambert advised that she and Cheryl Welsh had visited shops and businesses in Alvechurch to ask them to host pictures for the Find Santa and His Reindeer Competition and also to introduce the Best Dressed Window Competition which Reverend Fiona Lee has kindly agreed to judge. Cllr Lambert also provided Councillors with an update on the arrangements made for the Christmas Light Switch on on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2017.

##### **d. To Receive an Update From the Youth, Sport & Recreation Committee Meeting Held on 16<sup>th</sup> October**

Councillors were provided with an update on the main discussion points from the meeting; please see the Minutes on the Parish Council's website for further details. Cllr Humphries also advised Councillors that a meeting will shortly be arranged with Jackie Boreham and the Wiggan Development Working Group to review the outcome of the three Community Consultations for the new play equipment. A Councillor queried that the footballers hiring Hopwood Community Centre had been granted permission to use the kitchen and it was noted that in the contract it states that a charge would be levied for kitchen use. Concerns were raised about football boots damaging the new floor.

#### **2. To Receive Updates from Outside Bodies**

##### **a. To Receive a CALC Update**

Cllr Humphries advised that there hadn't been a meeting recently but he hoped to be able to attend the December meeting. The Clerk advised Councillors that Cllr Cypher was unable to attend the December CALC Meeting and asked Councillors to let the Clerk know if they could attend in his absence.

### **17/097 To Consider Residents' Complaints and Queries, As Received:**

#### **a. A Resident's Request For The Railings to be Replaced on Swan Street**

The resident addressed Council about this at the beginning of the meeting. County Cllr C Hotham had **agreed** to investigate whether the railings were Highways responsibility and the deal with the matter accordingly.

b. A Resident's Request for a Dog Bin to be Sited on the Verge at the top of Callow Hill and by the Canal

Councillors discussed this and the costs associated with emptying dog bins for the Parish Council.

**ACTION POINT: The Clerk** to ask Bromsgrove District Council if they would site another general bin there as there are none on that road as it is understood that dog waste bags can be deposited in any bin.

c. A Resident's Request for Information Pertaining to the Parish Council's Meetings With the CCG & Alvechurch Medical Practice

The Clerk advised Councillors that she had received a request for Minutes taken at these meetings. The Clerk had advised the resident that none had been taken.

d. Residents' Queries Regarding Parked Cars in Front of Barney's Barbers

The Clerk advised that two members of the public had raised concerns about this. The office staff had responded advising that it is believed that the area to the front of the shop is their land and therefore they can park on it as long as the cars do not obstruct the footway which runs adjacent to the road. Enforcement Officers would review this when they are in the village. A Councillor added that he believed that gaining access would require planning permission and it was noted that the dropped kerbs appeared to be for pedestrian and disabled access to the footway.

**17/098 Around the Parish – To Consider Developments and Issues Raised by Councillors Present:**

a. Hopwood

Cllr Smith thanked County Cllr C Hotham for the bollards which had been installed between the Hopwood island and the island for the M42, although Cllr Smith noted that it was a shame that the bollards didn't extend the entire length of the road. Cllr Smith also commented that Bromsgrove District Council is investigating building along West Hills Lane which doesn't have planning permission to go ahead.

b. Alvechurch

A Councillor expressed thanks on behalf of residents who had commented that the road surfacing along Red Lion Street, Tanyard Lane and Callow Hill had been completed quickly and the workers had worked hard. County Cllr Hotham will pass on these comments to the teams.

It was noted that there were loose flagstones in front of Thomas Bros and the Clerk confirmed that this issue had already been reported.

Councillors were advised that the resurfacing of the footway between Willowbrook and the Birmingham Road will take place before the end of the financial year.

Also it was noted that there were a number of comments received from residents who stated that it was good that Alvechurch respects Remembrance Day. Cllr Humphries thanked Ron Rand and Barrie Lunn for undertaking the road closure during the Remembrance Service.

Two Councillors raised concerns about the leaf litter between The Buckleys and Swans Length and the footway lighting which is obscured by overgrown trees.

**ACTION POINT: The Assistant Clerk** to report this to the appropriate authority

c. Rowney Green

There was nothing to report for Rowney Green

d. Bordesley

There was nothing to report for Bordesley

**17/099 That under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.**

Councillors **agreed** to this motion and members of the public and press left the meeting to enable the following items to be discussed. Cllr Lambert left the meeting at 21.14 and returned at 21.15.

**17/100 To Receive an Update on the Financial Arrangements With Regards The Knotweed Eradication At The Wiggin Memorial Playing Fields, Alvechurch**

Councillors considered the next steps regarding the financial arrangements for knotweed eradication.

**17/101 To Consider the Applications Received in Respect of the Grounds Maintenance Contract**

Councillors were advised that the Clerk and Cllrs Humphries and Smith had met to review the three applications to Tender for our Grounds Maintenance Contract. It was proposed that the contract be awarded to Hosking Grounds Maintenance on cost grounds, the improvement of the pitches since Hosking Ground Maintenance took on the grounds maintenance in 2014 and also the thorough understanding of our grounds, pitches and wildflower meadows demonstrated in the application. Councillors **agreed unanimously** to award the contract to Hosking Grounds Maintenance until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020. The Clerk sought permission to instruct Hosking Grounds Maintenance to undertake the maintenance (fertilising, over-seeding and aeration) proposed in the tender application at Rowney Green and Hopwood Playing Fields and Councillors also **agreed** this unanimously as well.

**ACTION POINTS:** The Clerk to write to all three applicants to advise them of Council's decision regarding the Parish Council's Grounds Maintenance contract. The Clerk to instruct Hosking Grounds Maintenance to carry out maintenance to the football pitches. Cllr Ball and the Clerk to meet to review the required maintenance for the football pitch at the Wiggin Memorial Playing Fields.

**17/102 Date and time of next meeting:** The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2017 at 7pm at Hopwood Community Centre, Redditch Road, Hopwood.

This meeting ended at 9.30pm

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