

ALVECHURCH PARISH COUNCIL

Ground Floor, 1A George Road, Alvechurch, B48 7PB

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Council Members:	<i>Alvechurch ward:</i>	<i>P Freeman, A Helmore, S Hornsby, A Humphries, S Lambert, M Worrall, N Wise</i>
	<i>Hopwood ward:</i>	<i>S Lewis, A Willetts</i>
	<i>Rowney Green & Bordesley ward:</i>	<i>S Baxter, J Cypher, T Wallis</i>

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

HELD MONDAY 11th NOVEMBER 2019 AT 7PM

AT HOPWOOD COMMUNITY CENTRE REDDITCH ROAD HOPWOOD

19/107 Present: Councillors M Worrall (Chairman), A Humphries (Vice-Chairman), S Baxter, P Freeman, S Hornsby, S Lambert, S Lewis, T Wallis, A Willetts, N Wise

In attendance: County & District Cllr Charlie Hotham, District Cllr Annette English, One member of the public
Richard Peach (The Village),
Clerk - Tammy Williams, Support Officer - Gill Lungley

19/108 Apologies for Absence:

Received from Cllrs J Cypher, A Helmore.

Reasons for absence are recorded in the attendance register.

19/109 Declarations of Interest:

Cllr N Wise – an Other Disclosable Interest in agenda item 8.2.2 as a member of the Village Hall committee that has requested grant funding.

Cllr S Lambert – an Other Disclosable Interest in agenda item 8.2.2 as a member of the St Laurence church congregation; the Parochial Church Council has requested grant funding.

Cllr P Freeman - an Other Disclosable Interest in agenda item 8.2.2 as a member of the St Laurence church congregation; the Parochial Church Council has requested grant funding.

Cllr A Humphries - an Other Disclosable Interest in agenda item 8.2.2 as a member of the St Laurence church congregation and volunteer; the Parochial Church Council has requested grant funding.

Cllr M Worrall - an Other Disclosable Interest in agenda item 8.4 as he knows one of the contractors who has submitted a quote.

19/110 Consideration of Dispensations

No requests to allow a councillor's dispensation had been received.

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

19/111 a) **Members of the public**

No contribution.

b) **Reports from Worcestershire County Council (WCC) Councillor and Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) councillors**

.1 Charlie Hotham for Alvechurch Division, WCC

- Work has started on replacing the railings in Alvechurch village centre to be followed by attention to the bollards.
- The gully in Station Road / School Lane has been moved; the work is being funded by WCC
- WCC will consult in the near future on the potential for installation of double yellow lines in Station Road
- WCC will consult in the near future on the potential for village centre 20mph speed limit
- Complaints have been received relating to speeding through Weatheroak Hill; however it would appear the original speed restrictions were imposed without police approval and are not enforceable.
- WCC continues to suffer financially, needing to find £20m savings whilst mandated to find the increasing costs for adult social care.
- There has been no progress on the library consultation.

.2 Annette English for Alvechurch South ward, BDC

- Fellow district councillor Kate van der Plank sends her apologies.
- Progress is being made with the Cleaner, Greener Alvechurch scheme having established two working groups to take it forward.
- Ms English and Ms Van der Plank have met with the BDC's Head of Environmental Services to discuss how they can work with the 'team'.
- Thanks were expressed to the Clerk for sorting out the BARN grant funding.
- There have been no decisions yet on requests for double yellow lines on the Birmingham Road service road, Alvechurch.
- There are concerns about the post office building
- Cllr Van der Plank had submitted a motion on fly-tipping for discussion at BDC meeting which is to be discussed at their next meeting.
- The Green Belt review call for sites ended 11/11/2019.

Members' questions and answers:

- Who will carry out the feasibility study on the double yellow lines? WCC
- Has BDC undertaken the correct procedure for the Green Belt review? Discussion ensued regarding the odd situation that sees the use of Bromsgrove district land by Redditch Borough Council (RBC) which counts towards satisfying RBC's housing demand rather than BDC's. In turn BDC does not have its own 5-year housing-land supply (despite these 3,000 new homes for RBC) and is therefore vulnerable to developers wishing to build in advance of the Green Belt review.
- Will the Whitford Vale transport assessment cover the whole district? BDC deferred making a decision on this because of lack of clarity of the impact regarding hospital trust services.

Standing Orders were resumed.

19/112 Approval of the Minutes of the previous meeting held 14/10/2019

A Councillor advised that Cllr T Wallis was listed as ward member for both the Alvechurch Village ward and the Rowney Green ward. Cllr Worrall amended the minutes. **IT WAS RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 14/10/2019 which were then signed by the Chairman as a true and accurate record.

19/113 Clerk's report

The Clerk provided the following updates:

- a) Remembrance Service
Cllr Humphries reported this had been well attended, the weather was good and the PA system worked. The Ex-Servicemen's Association had provided thanks and the good behaviour of the children from local schools and nurseries was exemplary.
- b) Damaged footway light on Withybed Lane, Alvechurch
Instructions have been issued to replace this lighting column.
- c) BDC District Plan consultation
The Parish Council's response has been issued to BDC.
- d) Localised flooding concerns
The Lengthsman checks the drains as part of his routine when working in the parish and submits service requests to WCC if gully cleansing is required.
- e) Letter to Police and Crime Commissioner regarding A441 Hopwood
A response is expected for report at the next council meeting.
- f) CALC AGM
The CALC AGM will be held on 20/11/2019 at County Hall.
- g) Alvechurch Village Green
Thanks were given to Cllr & Mrs Helmore for the planting improvements at the Village Green.
- h) Railings and bollard replacements, Alvechurch
As reported on by Charlie Hotham, above.
- i) The Gaunts verges, Alvechurch
WCC had been notified the verges in The Gaunts had been churned up whilst work is being undertaken in the road; WCC will arrange for restitution.
- j) Wiggin Maintenance
The maintenance contractor has installed a new bin, re-installed the bin by the snake sculpture, levelled the 3-plank bridge that connects the play area to the boardwalk and replaced areas of worn chicken wire on the boardwalk.
- k) Outstanding items
The To-Do list still includes street lighting tender, horse safety signs in Rowney Green, office pay-as-you-go mobile phone, Local Council Award Scheme action plan.

19/114 Update on Post Office service in Alvechurch

The post office sited at 1 Bear Hill, Alvechurch has closed; a mobile post office will visit once a week on Fridays for 2 hours from 2pm, sited in the Social Club car park. The Post Office appears to be keen to remain in the village and are contractually obliged to work with 'Simply Fresh' but have not made progress due to planning issues.

The Chairman passed on his thanks to the Sports and Social Club for hosting the weekly Post Office visit.

19/115 Finance & Administration

.1 List of Invoices for payment authorisation and note any emergency expenditure

- (i) The payments list was presented to the meeting, appended at page 96.

Local Government Act 1972, s111

- (ii) The Chairman's Allowance to be paid to the Chairman was confirmed as £300

.2 The Council considered recommendations from the Finance & Resources Committee

.2.1 **To approve updated Model Financial Regulations**

AGREED to approve the model Financial Regulations

.2.2 **To consider the proposed grant payments and grants budget for the 2020/21 financial year**

AGREED to support the proposed grant payments and grants budget, below, for the 2020/21 financial year:

Applicant	Reason for Applying	Amount Requested	F&R C'ttee Recommended Grant	Power / Act
The Lounge Community Cafe & Youth Group in Alvechurch	Running costs for the Community Cafe & also Youth Group The local police has stated that since the inception of the Youth Group anti-social behaviour has been eliminated.	£7600	£7600 Lounge asked for £7600 last year but Council agreed to pay £6600.	Power to equip centres with educational objectives via Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 s.19 Power to spend money on crime prevention via Local Government and Rating Act 1997, s.31
Citizens Advice Bureau Charity	May be providing advice to local residents	£100	£100	Power to support via s142 of Local Government Act 1972
Alvechurch Village Hall	New curtains in three rooms	£500	£0 The Committee recognised the Village Hall applied last year for £400 to carpet 2 rooms	Power to provide and equip community buildings via S133, Local Government Act 1972
Alvechurch PCC (St Laurence Church)	To help fund activities at St Laurence Church to provide a direct benefit to the community	£500	£500	Power of local authorities to incur expenditure for certain purposes not otherwise stated Local Government Act 1972, s.137
Rowney Green Shared Church	Grant to cover the expenditure of quarterly breakfasts to encourage attendance at Rowney Green Shared Church	£200	£200	Power to provide funding for Involvement with Religious Events and events connected with a belief via s138B Local Government 1972 Act
Midland Sinfonia	To assist with the costs of providing classical music performances at an affordable cost for local people	£500	£300	Provision of entertainment and support of the arts via S145 Local Government Act 1972.
Knit & Natter	Assistance with the cost of hiring the Village Hall for a group to meet to combat isolation and	£100	£100	Power to contribute to recreation via s19 Local Government Act (Miscellaneous Provision) 1976

	loneliness whilst raising money for charity			
		Total	£8,800	

.2.3 To approve the updated Document Retention and Disposal Policy
AGREED to approve the policy and rename it to 'Document and Information Retention and Disposal Policy'

.3 To consider the RFO's report on the budget up to the end of Quarter 2.

The Clerk/RFO explained the report to the end of quarter 2 and any over/under spends; all is fairly on track.

.4 To consider signage for Wiggin Memorial Playing Fields and quotes received

Cllr Humphries was asked to detail progress: the siting, types and styles of signage had been discussed at a recent site meeting with general agreement to move forward with seeking quotes.

.5 To consider quotes for waste collection services

These will be considered at the next meeting of the council.

.6 To consider Support Officer's report on APC policies

The report was noted and progress on the creation, adoption and adherence to policies would be undertaken by both the Finance & Resources Committee and the Staffing Committee.

It was pointed out that councillors must keep up to date with the policies.

.7 To note change of contractor for the deep clean at Hopwood community centre

This was noted.

.8 To consider the risk assessment for Christmas Tree and Christmas Lights switch on

The Christmas Arrangements Committee have prepared the risk assessment, currently in draft format.

19/116 Committee / sub-committee / working party reports

.1 Planning Committee meeting held 04/11/2019

Cllr M Worrall reported – no applications of great concern. Members of this committee would be meeting with BDC's Head of Planning Services regarding improvements to procedures on notifying the public and will report back to the next meeting of the council.

.2 Meetings of the Community Action Group

A meeting was held of Community Action Group 7: Better Traffic and Transport Management was held in October however no report was given to Council.

.3 Update from the Christmas Arrangements Committee

It was noted that the Chairman would not be able to attend the event and would be substituted by the vice-Chairman.

- The PA system has been provided free of charge by a member of the public again
- BDC has agreed to provide sandbags for gazebo in the event of bad weather
- The Town Crier is booked to switch the lights on at 5.30pm
- Father Christmas will be there too
- The Lounge will be open
- The Baptist Church will be selling mulled wine
- Both Middle School and Community Choir will sing before and after the switch on
- The Clerk has asked for donations via Facebook for prizes for the best dressed window competition and the best decorated house competition. No offers to date

- Judging criteria has been agreed for two categories for the best decorated house competition. Judging to take place on 23rd December.
- District Cllr English has agreed to judge the best dressed (shop) window competition on 4th December
- Road closure application has been submitted to BDC; Headway is undertaking a manned road closure
- Cllrs Wallis, Lewis, Baxter and Humphries (and the Clerk) have volunteered to be marshals on the day.

.4 Update from Finance & Resources Committee meeting held 28/10/2019

The committee is keen to move forward with internet banking and making online payments within a recognised and transparent payment procedure which may mean changing to a different bank. The Clerk will update in December.
The committee has also appointed Cllr S Baxter as the Council's new Internal Financial Controller.

19/117 External Bodies: reports/updates from APC representatives

.1 To consider nomination for a new trustee to the Almshouses

AGREED on the recommendation of Cllr Worrall, to appoint Desmond Thomas as one of the council's representatives to the Almshouses Trust.

19/118 Correspondence received

None received

19/119 Around the Parish – councillors reported as follows:

- a) Alvechurch
 - i. Swans Walk drains are being repaired;
 - ii. Question about cleaning of drains in Swans Walk
 - iii. A pedestrian had hit their head on the overhead barrier; it was believed this is a hazard caused by the narrow pavement and has been referred to BDC.
 - iv. The Baptist Church Minister, Fiona Lee, is leaving Alvechurch and residents can take the opportunity to say goodbye to her on 22/11/19 upstairs at the Red Lion. A letter of thanks is to be sent to Ms Lee for her work to the community during her time here.
 - v. The concerns about the drainage in Branden Road are being addressed by North Worcestershire Water Management and the Canal & Rivers Trust through Cllr M Worrall.
- b) Bordesley
 - i. In periods of heavy rain water flows as a 'brown river' along the A441; councillors will meet with NWWM officer to see what can be done. It was noted the Lengthsman had reported all gullies are full there.
- c) Hopwood
 - i. The hedges along A441 have been cut.
 - ii. It is thought up to 8 properties' out-houses have been burgled recently; the police have been helpfully providing supportive information on security.
- d) Rowney Green
 - i. Recent firework display was successful.

19/120 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 members of staff and staffing requirements.

Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, s1(2)

19/121 Due to the changing nature of the work involved in the parish council office along with the expectation that services are likely to be devolved to parish councils from the principal authorities, members agreed there is a requirement to 'future-proof' the council to ensure it is prepared and able to cope with such increased demands

on the office and administration function. Members recognised there is an associated cost to this. After hearing from the Staffing Committee, members **AGREED** to:

- i. Increase the Clerk's hours to 30 per week with immediate effect
- ii. Appoint a second assistant clerk.
- iii. Arrange training for all members to attend
- iv. It had been recommended by the Supporting Officer that a 6-month moratorium of projects should be implemented to enable the office staff to focus on day-to-day workloads whilst training a new member of staff, but Council didn't adopt this recommendation. Instead, it agreed to keep channels of communication open with the Clerk about workloads and to be mindful of the time and resources available in the office when getting in touch.
- v. Work on a business plan (in addition to the budget and precept setting). The Clerk recommended that this would be a Council project, but Council advised that this was something that the Clerk would complete.

It was noted that all monies raised via the precept are spent within the parish.

This meeting ended at 9.30pm

The next APC meeting will be held on Monday 9th December 2019 at 7pm, at Hopwood Community Centre.

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Chairman – Alvechurch Parish Council

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Date

Minute no. 19/115(i) Payments list for month:

voucher	chq	cost centre	reason for payment	amount
336	5251	Village Green	Wreath	18.50
338	5253	RG pavilion	Plumbing repairs	160.00
339	5254	Bus shelter maintenance	Bus shelter repair	429.48
341	5255	RG dog bin	Dog bin emptying	50.00
342	5255	towpath dog bin	Dog bin emptying	50.00
343	5255	WMpf dog bin	Dog bin emptying	50.00
344	5255	Hopwood playing field	Ctkr duties, bin emptying	66.67
345	5255	RG playing field	Ctkr duties, bin emptying	66.67
346	5255	WMpf playing field	Ctkr duties, bin emptying	66.66
359	5255	Hopwood dog bin	Dog bin emptying	50.00
347	5256	sundry expenses	Stationery and expenses	6.30
351	5258	RG playing field	Grass cutting / field prep	277.01
352	5258	WMpf playing field	Grass cutting / field prep	198.50
353	5258	Hopwood playing field	Grass cutting / field prep	245.64
354	5259	Hopwood Community Centre	Ctkr duties, Cleaning	160.00
355	5259	RG pavilion	Ctkr duties, Cleaning	160.00
356	5259	WMpf playing field	Ctkr duties, Cleaning	160.00
357	5260	Hopwood Community Centre	Defibrillator parts	37.14
358	5261	RG water	Water rates	26.38
337	5263	Village Green	Wreath	34.50
348	5264	electricity	Street lighting	526.60
349	5264	electricity	Street lighting	22.28
350	5264	electricity	Street lighting	21.53
			Total	2,883.86