

ALVECHURCH PARISH COUNCIL

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING – 2020/07/13-164

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held via Zoom on Monday 8th June 2020 at 7.00 pm.

[The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020]

PRESENT: Councillor M Worrall (Chairman), Cllrs. Baxter, Cypher, Freeman, Helmore, Hornsby, Humphries, Lewis, Wallis and Willetts.

Also present: DCllrs: English and Van der Plank, DCllr/CCllr Hotham, Mr T Williams, Mr R Peach and Mrs C Mason (Assistant Clerk)

In attendance: Mrs J Smailes – Parish Clerk/Minute Taker

AGENDA

PRESENTATION

Members had received two Expression of Interest letters in relation to the current APC Member vacancy, these being from:, Mrs K Van der Plank and Mr T William.

Prior to the start of the formal meeting Members also received a verbal Presentation from both of the candidates. Following a short Q&A Session Mrs K Van der Plank was duly elected.

1. CO OPTION

Following a show of hands Mrs K Van der Plank was duly elected to office.

Cllr Worrall thanked Mr Williams for also standing for co-option, expressing the council's desire that he once again considers standing as/when another vacancy occurs.

The Proper Officer/Clerk requested the signed *Acceptance of Office* and all other requisite forms be returned to her via email/post as soon as possible.

Cllr Van der Plank was officially welcomed to the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES

None.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

4. DISPENSATION REQUESTS

None.

5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Approval of the Council Meeting Minutes, held on 8th June 2020, were proposed by Cllr Worrall.
Unanimous.

6. YOUTH ENGAGEMENT/CITIZENSHIP

Agenda item deferred until September.

Chairman

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7. DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORT

Clr Worrall reminded Members that they had been provided with a copy of DCllr English/Van der Plank's written report prior to the start of the meeting (*shown in its entirety below*) **Noted.**

Diamond Buses

Unfortunately the operator gave notice of the suspension of the 146 service on 30th June, meaning it's unlikely to re-start. District Councillors had been in discussion with Diamond for over a year now and had already had a temporary extension but the passenger numbers just do not make the service commercially viable. Diamond have also had communication with Sajid Javid and WCC, they have been clear that if funding can be found so that the service then 'breaks even', they would be willing to reconsider but advised they cannot operate it at a loss.

DCllr KVP discussed with them the option of changing routes including providing a circular route via main train stations. Diamond indicated they would be willing to tender for this service should it be required and necessary funding provided.

Shielding residents

Both District Councillors had visited a small number of 'shielding' residents that BDC had been unable to contact. Thankfully, all were ok and seemed grateful to have been check on.

Old Post Office

District Councillors had received a number of calls and emails about the license application for a late bar and music venue in what was, the old Post Office – 1 Bear Street. (The PO is in Annette's wars but the opposite side of the street is in Kate's). The majority of contact had been from residents opposed to the proposals although a small number were in favour of it. Both District Councillors raised concerns about the lack of corrective action from the owners who have still not reinstated the items they were instructed to address by the Conservation Officer.

Alvechurch Cares

As calls to the Care helpline have dropped off considerably over recent weeks, the steering group have decided to suspend the service as of 1st August, however; the team will remain on stand-by and leave everything in place (eg phone lines and bank account etc) just in case there is a requirement to recommence assistance should there be a second wave or further lockdown.

The suspension of the service is being communicated to residents in the next edition of The Village.

News from District Council

Meetings:

Meetings are gradually recommencing, via Skype, and plans are in place to hold a full council meeting via Skype on 5 August. This will be the first full District Council meeting since lockdown and has required much negotiation/pushing by the opposition groups to get such set- up.

Financial:

A report presented at the BDC Cabinet meeting last night, states that it is unlikely that the Government will provide full funding to mitigate the financial losses arising as a result of the pandemic. The Council's focus at the present time is on sustaining essential services and playing its part in responding to the pandemic through the Local Resilience Forum, but attention will now be given to Council recovery. This will include ensuring support to communities, potentially with an increase in unemployment and providing support and advice to businesses to help them increase trade in the new environment.

Chairman **Date**

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In addition, if funding from the Government does not cover all the lost income and extra costs faced by the District Council, and the gap between the two is significant, the Council's own recovery will focus on where savings have to be made and over what time span in order to bring the position into line with the MTFP. The report stresses that it is impossible at this stage to know the scale of the issue to be addressed, as there is no certain knowledge about the totality of Government funding or about the Council's loss of income and extra costs. It is therefore impossible to predict what steps might be required but the Council will be candid with local residents and others about what might have to happen. Over the next few months the following actions will be undertaken and reported to members were appropriate;

- a) *development and presentation to members of the Council's recovery plan to demonstrate how the strategic purposes will be delivered over the next few months*
- b) *full review of the Council Plan to ensure that key elements can be delivered and identifying where there are areas that may be deferred to future years*
- c) *embedding digital and other methods of service delivery that have worked perfectly satisfactorily during the pandemic, particularly if these would reduce operational costs for the District Council*

Funding has also been allocated by the Government for opening of the High Street's safely, including Alvechurch. The Fund will provide council's with additional funding to support business communities with measures that enable safe trading in public places. Bromsgrove has been allocated £88k to spend on specific costs that will enable safe high streets across the District. This is currently under review as to the most appropriate items to fund and to date signage and hand sanitisers have been purchased and installed.

Kate Van der Plank and Annette English
District Councillors

DCllr Van Der Plank also advised that the first 'virtual' BDC Meeting was scheduled to take place on 5th August.

Cllr English advised that Alvechurch Cares would cease in its current form as of 1st August and commended Mrs K Cooke for her sterling work in looking after/managing the AC band of volunteers.

Members noted that Mrs Cooke was currently issuing 'thank you' cards to all AC volunteers and it was suggested/proposed by Cllr Worrall that a small gift be purchased from Chairman's Civic Fund, and presented to Mrs Cooke in recognition of all of her hard work. It was also proposed that a letter be sent to Sajid Javid MP, nominating Mrs Cooke as a 'local hero'. **Unanimous. Action - Clerk**

Cllr Cypher suggested that if there were any funds remaining in the Alvechurch Cares Bank Account, that consideration be given to contributing to one of the local food banks which he believed would be in far greater demand given unemployment was set to increase further because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

DCllr Van der Plank spoke of the service currently in place which provided voluntary food parcel collection from the Food Bank in Reddith, DCllr Van der Plank gave an undertaking to contact the organisation to see if AC could assist their cause. **Action – AC/ DCllr Van der Plank.**

Chairman ***Date***

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8. COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT

Cllr Hotham explained that following the pandemic BDC's financial situation did not look good as the District Council were having to subsidise a number of community costs including those of running/maintaining the leisure Centres.

CCllr Hotham advised that WCC would be holding a virtual meeting on Thursday 16th July and that the committee structure had continued to work well during the 'lockdown' period.

CCllr Hotham reported that the improvement works at Weather Oak had since been completed and that speed checks would take place in the vicinity over the next few weeks.

CCllr Hotham also spoke of his disappointment that the Diamond Bus Service was to be suspended, however; he fully appreciated that such had to be commercially viable.

Cllr Hotham called on the Parish Council to support Hopwood Village Hall in their quest to regain 'Polling' premise rights. The Village Hall could not previously offer disabled access to the building and it was explained that the Trust had therefore lost the ability to operate as a recognised Polling Station and this had resulted in Westmead Hotel being used as an alternative venue. Given the Village Hall Trust had since installed disabled access to the building CCllr Hotham felt it pertinent the Parish Council write to the Electoral Services Dept at BDC in support of the re-engagement/use of Hopwood Village Hall premises as a preferred Polling Station venue to that of Westmead Hotel which remains a licensed premises.

It was noted that detailed Plans were required to support the current P&CC Grant Submission for gateway improvement works on the A441 Hopwood. Cllr Hotham advised that WCC were currently drawing up such plans and would provide detailed costing, which together would support the application.

In relation to the 20MPH village scheme and the request that had been submitted to CCllr Hotham by the Clerk in which she requested he consider meeting the £1000 cost incurred by the Parish Council from his WCC Highway Portfolio; CCllr Hotham instead gave an undertaking to meet this cost personally. **Action: CCllr Hotham.**

Cllr Hotham spoke of the Parish Council's desire to use any New Homes Bonus Grant monies it may receive (grant submitted, pending outcome) to create a Car Park at Rowney Green (*on land owned by the Parish Council*), suggesting that the Parish Council may wish to liaise with WCC Highways to gain its view in relation to an impact assessment in relation to Newborne Hill.

Cllr Worrall extended his appreciation to CCllr Hotham in respect to his prior offer, to cover the £1k cost in relation the 20MPH village traffic scheme.

Cllr Worrall explained that he believed the Rowney Green Car Par proposal scheme was in fact betterment but agreed that input from WCC Highways was essential.

Action: Cllr Humphries/Clerk

Cllr Cypher queried whether Horse/Rider signage could be displayed in Rowney Green Lane given the possible increase in traffic?

Chairman

Date

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9. OPEN FORUM

No requests to speak were received.

[The Chairman ‘moved’ that item 15 be addressed at this point, however; the Minutes reflect the Agenda running order].

10. COMMUNICATIONS BY THE CHAIR

Cllr Worrall spoke in favour of writing a letter of support on behalf of Hopwood Village Hall and canvassed Members support in respect to this suggestion; Cllr Worrall also mooted the suggestion that he contact Hopwood Residents Association and request that they do likewise. **Unanimous.**

Cllr Worrall advised that he was in the process of writing to Sajid Javid MP to state how proactive the Parish Council had been in canvassing for a post office locally, and also inviting him to visit the area and requesting that he speak with Post Office Counters in support of the Parish Council’s effort in respect to this matter. **Action: Cllr Worrall.**

It was noted that the PSE had requested nominations from proactive councils who were currently embracing new technology and different methods of working; Cllr Worrall advised APC had submitted 100 word statement promoting itself and explaining how members had readily embraced the use of Zoom etc. during lockdown. **Noted.**

Finally, Cllr Worrall touched on the Licensing Justice Application re. 1 Bear Hill, explaining the reasons for the council’s letter of objection which had been recently submitted. **Noted.**

11. CLERK’S REPORT

The Clerk presented her monthly report, outlining the actions undertaken since the last meeting.

The Clerk also provided an overview of her recent communications with the Charity Commission and gave an undertaking to provide a further update at the September Full Council Meeting once a response had been received from the Charity Commission. **Action – Clerk.**

It was also reported that Mr Penn had kindly agreed to refurbish the parish Notice Boards, where required, cutting back vegetation as needed and this he would address ‘free of charge’. **Noted.**

12. MONTHLY ACCOUNTS

The monthly Payment Schedule, Reconciled Bank Statements and Budget Overview Report were accepted and confirmed as accurate (Bank Reconciliation totaling £112,902.17). **Unanimous.**

Cllr Cypher queried the makeup of a number of payments and the Clerk/RFO explained that she was required to split invoices across Cost Centre’s/Budget Headers when a Contractor had submitted an invoice covering multiple sites.

Payment of the expenditure shown on Payment Listing, totaling £16,946.14 was proposed by Cllr Worrall. **Unanimous.** Virements and transfers between accounts. **Noted.**

Delegated powers (LGA 1972 S101) were proposed by Cllr Worrall in order that the Clerk/RFO and two Members could address all payments owed during the August Recess. **Unanimous.**

Chairman *Date*

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13. ACTION PLAN

Cllr Humphries presented the Quarter 1 Overview of the Action Plan.

It was noted that several items had since been addressed with a number of items pending completion.

It was proposed by Cllr Humphries that a review of the Action Plan takes place every 4 months; seconded, Cllr Worrall. **Unanimous. Action - Clerk.**

14. NEW HOMES BONUS GRANT SUBMISSION

Cllr Humphries provided an update in relation to the grant submission.

He explained that basis for the submission was to secure funding in order that a Car Park may be created on council own ground at Rowney Green; this would allow for increased useage of the facilities and would reduce ‘on road’ parking issues.

Cllr Van der Plank queried whether there had been any consultation with local residents in relation to the car park proposals?

Cllr Humphries confirmed that last Autumn consultation in Rowney Green was conducted and whilst mixed responses were received the council had a duty to look at both the pros/cons as well as consider the overall impact and what its implementation could offer the wider community; he explained that ‘asset value’ needed to be balanced against the benefit it potentially offered all residents of the parish, not just those residing at Rowney Green.

It was however felt prudent, given CCllr Hotham’s earlier suggestion, to contact WCC Highways and seek their views on the Car Park proposal at Rowney Green. **Unanimous. Action – Cllr Humphries/Clerk**

15. P&CC ROAD SAFETY FUND re. A441 Hopwood Road improvement scheme

[This agenda item was considered earlier in the meeting however the Minutes reflect the agenda order]

Cllr Humphries spoke of the grant application which had been recently submitted, advising that it had been suggested by the Community Ambassador that additional supporting documentation was required and such would strengthen the Parish Council’s submission.

Referring to CCllr Hotham’s earlier report, it was noted that WCC Highways had since agreed to provide detailed drawings and a cost breakdown for the gateway improvement scheme.

Cllr Humphries also reported that a Zoom Meeting had been arranged for Monday 20th July to discuss the council’s submission further with the P&CC Road Safety Team and it was hoped that the detailed drawings and cost breakdown would be available ahead of this meeting.

Action CCllr Hothan/WCC

16. COUNCILLOR EMAIL DOMAIN

Cllr Worrall stated that he had requested the inclusion of this agenda item as he did not believe a decision had been taken prior when discussed in January 2020 .

Cllr Helmore question the merits of implementing such?

Chairman *Date*

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Cllr Worrall explained that he felt that as the Council now had a new/improved website presence that generic email addresses provided for a more professional approach to council business.

Cllr Baxter stated that she welcomed the idea as such would help her compartmentalize her council emails; that with GDPR/ Subject Access Requests, she felt it was important to adopt a professional approach that allowed for the retrieval of such data if so requested.

Cllr Humphries spoke against the proposal, stating he believed it was not necessary at ‘parish ‘level and was in fact ‘overkill’, and that personally he did not want to have to administer any further email accounts.

Cllr Freeman agreed with Cllr Humphries, saying that he and his wife shared an email account. Cllr Worrall queried this point and Cllr Freeman confirmed that, if opened on her phone, Cllr Freeman’s wife was privy to all council emails which it was explained could be considered a GDPR breach .

Cllr Van der Plank was of the opinion that yes, whilst another account to administer it did not amount to any greater volume of emails; she suggested that if the council is going to be proactive then it would need to publish contact details more readily and she suggested that this should not be personal email addresses, she advocated that generic email addresses would also be easily remembered by the electorate.

Cllr Wallis felt there were both advantages and disadvantages, however; a generic email address would ensure if you were no longer a councillor you no longer received any council related emails.

Cllr Worrall proposed that generic email addresses be introduced as of 1st April 2021 (*administered by Tate Technology*) and that these be included on the council website and used by all members thereafter.

Voted Carried.

17. **FORMAL CORRESPONDENCE**

Formal correspondence had been distributed throughout the course of the month, the following items requiring Members attention:

a. ***New Model Code of Conduct Consultation.***

Cllr Cypher felt it important that the Parish Council submit a response as such improves public confidence.

Cllr Baxter advised that all Members should be willing to abide by the council’s Code of Conduct as this provided for harmonious working relations.

The Clerk inquired whether the consultation was simply requesting the views of Members on the new proposals for, having first-hand experience she did not feel the Code of Conduct or indeed the prior Standards Committee regime afforded any comfort to Members/Officers experiencing problems and as such she stated that she felt on this point she could not guarantee her impartiality.
Noted.

Following a short discussion Cllr Worrall asked Cllr Cypher if he would make his individual comments available so that they may form the basis of a collective response.

Action – Cllr Cypher.

Chairman

Date

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- b. ***Financial Support for Councils – SLCC request for support/Ltr to Rt Hon R Jenrick MP***
Cllr Worrall explained that he did not feel that this really applied to APC and he expressed his view that if the parish council was minded to respond that it could potentially weaken the support that was been canvassed by those council's affected by the Covid pandemic.

Cllr Baxter expressed a similar view and proposed that the council did not write as suggested; seconded, Cllr Worrall. **Unanimous.**

- c. ***Planning Strategy - Consultation on temporary amendments to the Statement of Community Involvement due to the Covid-19 restrictions.***

Cllr Worrall suggested that if individual Members wished to submit comment that they did so individually. **Noted**

- d. ***HWFR – Community Risk Management Plan consultation.***

Once again Cllr Worrall suggested that if individual Members wished to submit comment that they did so individually. **Noted**

- e. ***Mayfield Farm Activity***

Cllr Hornsby reminded Members that approx 12 mths prior Cllr Hotham had been aware of an increase in evening traffic activity to the Mayfield Farm, associated with the Hala/Muslin Festival.

Cllr Hornsby queried the merit in contacting Mayfield Farm to understand their operational requirements with a view to then possibly notifying residents via Facebook, that due to the Muslim Festival there may be a slight disruption/increase in traffic activity as he believed this would assist in 'building bridges' within the community and aid inclusivity.

Cllr Cypher suggested speaking to Cllr Hotham in the first instance to gauge his views on contacting Mayfield Farm direct and the public Facebook message.

Cllr Hornsby emphasised that the purpose of such a letter was not to relay any form of criticism.

Cllr Worrall proposed that Cllr Hotham be contacted in the first instance and, subject to his response, a letter then be sent to Mayfield Farm and residents notified of increased traffic movement via Facebook. **Unanimous. Action - Clerk**

18. ***Cllr Cypher moved a point of order – questioning the need to include YSR business on the Full Council Agenda which he felt to already be too long.***

The Clerk explained that a number of items were deemed important business such as the Tree/lighting surveys which required immediate attention.

Cllr Worrall also stated that the council was still playing 'catch-up', with many issues not correctly addressed prior and assured Cllr Cypher and all Members that following the August Recess there was a desire for all Committees to address their own relevant business effectively and for the relevant Chairmen to convene Extraordinary Meetings as deemed necessary in consultation with the Clerk. **Noted.**

Chairman

Date

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18. COMMITTEE & OTHER REPORTS

❖ PLANNING & HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE– *Cllr Worrall*

- a. **Draft Minutes** –available via the Website/Hard copy in Minute books (*publicly accessible*).
- Cllr Worrall provided a brief overview of the content of the prior Planning Meeting.
- b. **Delegated powers** (LGA 1972 S101) to an officer and two Members were proposed by Cllr Worrall in order that any Planning Applications received during the August Recess could be addressed. **Unanimous.**
- c1. **Street/Footway Lighting**
- Cllr Worrall explained that the Parish Council were deemed responsible for its assets and as such should have been ensuring that an independent inspection the structural integrity of its 117 lighting columns was conducted every 5 years in line with industry standard guidelines.
- Cllr Baxter advised that such testing took place at Wythall Parish and that the report commissioned was then used to identify any columns which required replacement.
- Cllr Humphries queried exactly what form of testing was being suggested; he believed that PAT Testing had been undertaken previously.
- Cllr Cypher questioned why the Parish Council was deemed responsible for rotting concrete/decaying metal when to his mind it was the Highway Authority that was responsible.
- Cllr Baxter and the Clerk explained that Highway Street lightening fell to the Highways Authority, however; footway lighting, namely the 117 units owned by APC were the parish council’s responsibility to independently test and maintain.
- Cllr Worrall stated that the Clerk had written both to Prysmian and WCC Highways to gain clarity on the matter; that the independent inspection was suggested by both parties and that by addressing such it could also form the basis for any future lighting replacement project scheme the parish council may wish to undertake.
- Cllr Cypher felt the quote for structural and load testing of the columns did not provide a total cost which could be fully considered, however; Cllr Worrall stated that an indicative price was all that could be given by the Contractor and suggested placing a cap on the amount to be spent.
- The Clerk advised against such a cap given the inspection of the columns was a Health and Safety requirement which potentially could impact on the council’s Public Liability Insurance if not fully addressed. **Noted**
- Cllr Worrall proposed that the indicative quote to test structural and load capacity be accepted without a cap placed on the cost. **Voted Carried.**
- c2. **Pear Mapping**
- Cllr Worrall proposed item deferral until September Meeting. **Unanimous.**

Chairman Date

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18. ❖ **FINANCE & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** – *Cllr Baxter*

- d. **Draft Minutes** –available via the Website/Hard copy in Minute books (*publicly accessible*).

Cllr Cypher requested to speak on the following agenda item and the need for it to be deferred.

Cllr Worrall interjected, advising that he was about the propose that items **18 e, f, g & h** all be deferred until after the council workshop which was due to be held on 23rd July and that furthermore the items then form part of a YSR Committee Meeting. **Unanimous.**

- e. **Marketing of the Council’s facilities** - *Deferred*
- f. **To consider the merits of purchasing an on-line booking system which can then be embedded into the council’s website, including an online payment system.** - *Deferred*
- g. **Proposals concerning the use of pitches/facilities had been submitted by Cllr Worrall and circulated to all Members prior.** - *Deferred*
- h. **To consider whether council wish to proceed with the Rowney Green Car Park Proposal/aeration treatment (£14,658.00 incl. VAT) if the NHB Grant Application is unsuccessful (and to identify from where the funds will be taken, if a decision is taken to proceed) and/or to consider an alternative motion re. the leasing of Rowney Green Pitches/Pavilion** - *Cllr Wallis - Deferred*

18. ❖ **YOUTH, SPORTS & RECREATION COMMITTEE** - *Cllr Wallis*

- i. **Draft Minutes** –available via the Website/Hard copy in Minute books (*publicly accessible*).

j. **Membership Ratification**

Ratification of Cllr S Baxter’s appointment to YSR Committee was proposed by Cllr Wallis, seconded by Cllr Worrall. **Unanimous.**

k. **Play Facilities**

It was duly noted that the Play/Hall Facilities had been were re-opened as of 4th July in line with Government Guidelines and that to facilitate such, sanitizing units and signage had been purchased under delegated powers and cleaning regimes introduced in line with government guidelines. **Noted**

l. **Allotments**

Cllr Humphries provided a verbal update concerning his discussion with Mr Fallon (*Allotment Land Owner*) in relation to the possibilities of the council gaining an extension to its existing lease agreement which currently has two years remaining.

Cllr Humphries proposed a further 5 year lease be requested, with an added break clause after 3 years. It respect to this proposal Cllr Humphries also suggested increasing the sum paid by APC to that of £1500 per annum as of June 2021, Cllr Humphries proposal was seconded by Cllr Worrall.

Unanimous. Action - Clerk

It was proposed by Cllr Humphries that consideration to that of increasing plot rental be deferred until after the council workshop. **Unanimous.**

Chairman *Date*

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m. Signage

Acceptance of the quote received from Signs Express was proposed by Cllr Worrall. **Unanimous.**

n. User Information

Members received a copy of the User Spreadsheet and noted interim arrangements for sports teams to play at APC playing fields, pending the completion of the Council's strategic review of sport and recreation.

o. Tree Works

Prior to the meeting Members had been provided with a full Tree Survey of all sites under the council control.

Following a lengthy debate in which Members expressed differing views as to the total amount of remedial tree work that should be undertaken in the first instance; Cllr Cypher stated that he believed only the work indentified as requiring attention with a three month period should initially be addressed with the additional 12/24mth works programmed in to next year's/2022 budgets.

It was however proposed by Cllr Wallis, and seconded by Cllr Worrall, that all remedial tree works identified as needing to be addressed within a 12 month period be undertaken as soon as possible, at an approx cost of £8350; it was noted that a further quote totaling £340 plus VAT would also be applicable in respect of tree works relating to a fallen limb at The Wiggin. **Vote Carried.**

18. ❖ YOUTH, SPORTS & RECREATION COMMITTEE

p. Hopwood Drainage Sports Pitch & Car Park

Cllr Worrall presented the following costings; Playing Field - £460 / Car Park - £1808 – *Cost £2835 incl. of VAT - Deferred to YSR*

q. Wiggin Bridge Repair

Pending quote – *Deferred to YSR*

r. Japanese Knotweed

Members noted the Annual Report which had been circulated prior.

s. ROSPA Reports

Members noted the Annual ROSPA Reports for each of the council's play areas and the content of the spreadsheet which indicated the action taken. **Noted**

t. Planters

Consideration of the planting quote - *Deferred to YSR*

18. ❖ H/R COMMITTEE – Cllr Willets

u. Approved Meeting Minutes, available via the Website/Hard copy in Minute books (*publicly accessible*).

v. Members were advised that the decision to appoint a further member of staff and also a Caretaker had been placed on hold, pending easing of Covid restrictions/a review of working practices in early Feb 2021. **Noted**

Chairman **Date**

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18. EXTERNAL BODIES

w. Alvechurch Village Hall Trust/Community Lounge.

No reports were received from Cllrs; Helmore or Freeman in relation to the Alvechurch Village Hall or The Lounge.

x. Alvechurch Cares

Cllr Van der Plank reiterated that the ‘assistance’ as currently provided by AC would cease as of the 1st August, however; all measurers would remain in place and could easily be resurrected if there were a second pandemic spike.

Cllr Van der Plank also advised that the ‘Friendship Matters’ group had been well received and provided a valuable contact point for many.

Members noted that the initial float of £1500 had since been repaid to the council. **Noted**

y. Picnic In The Park

Cllr Wallis reported that a decision had been taking by the organising committee, to cancel this year’s event which had been planned for 5th September in line with government guidelines concerning mass gatherings. **Noted**

19. COUNCILLOR REPORTS *(around the Parish)*

None

20. MEETING DATES

As per meeting schedule.

[Note: There will be no council meetings convened during the August Recess]

21. PRESS RELEASE.

None at this time.

CLOSE

Meeting closed @ 10.12pm.

Chairman

Date