

ALVECHURCH PARISH COUNCIL

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING – 2020/10/12-180

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held via Zoom on Monday 12th October 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: Councillors M Worrall (Chairman), Cllrs: Baxter, Cypher, Freeman, Helmore, Hornsby, Humphries, Lewis, Wallis and Willetts.

Also present: DCllr English & Mr R Peach.

In attendance: Mrs C Mason – Assistant Clerk/Minute Taker.

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and noted from DCllr/CCllr Hotham and DCllr Van Der Plank

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

3. DISPENSATION REQUESTS

None.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Approval of the Council Meeting Minutes, held on 14th September 2020, was proposed by Cllr Worrall. **Unanimous.**

5. YOUTH ENGAGEMENT/CITIZENSHIP

Cllr Worrall advised that he had still not been able to speak with the School.

Cllr Freeman reported back on the current funding situation at the Lounge and advised that an invitation in this regard has been sent out to request assistance. There has been a substantial increase in the reporting of young people's mental health issues since the onset of COVID-19 and the Lounge Committee are keen to address this support need urgently. Cllr Freeman will report back to the Lounge Committee and encourage them to raise a request for an Agenda Item at the next Meeting.

6. DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORT

Cllr 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.**

Local Issues

Concerns regarding communication between District and Parish Councillors and the Council have been highlighted during the saga of whether or not the Alvechurch Mop was going to be held amidst rising coronavirus cases, with Bromsgrove District having the greatest rise in cases in the whole of Worcestershire. This is now being taken to the Overview and Scrutiny Board to investigate.

Chairman

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DCllr English advised that she had not yet been advised of this and Cllr Baxter agreed. Should any clarity be received at the forthcoming District Council meeting Cllr English will update the Parish Council accordingly.

Cllr Worrall noted that DCllr Van Der Plank had tabled the issue of Fly Tipping at the BDC September Meeting, but this was no further forward though this was not due in any part to Cllr Van Der Plank.

Cllr Worrall thanked DCllr English for her input with a number of recent Planning Applications that did not comply with the Alvechurch District Plan/Alvechurch Parish Neighbourhood Plan.

7. COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT

Cllr Worrall reminded Members that DCllr/CCllr Hotham had tendered his apologies, however; had provided a written report which had also been circulated prior to the start of the meeting (*shown in its entirety below*) **Noted.**

Dear All,

I'm sorry Not to be in attendance, I am at an Overview and Scrutiny meeting at BDC. I'm very disappointed that despite all our efforts that Mop went ahead. I'll like to thank DCllr Van der Plank for her exceptional work on this. I will be asking O and S to examine why this was allowed to go ahead.

I had a meeting with the APC Planning & Highways Committee at which many things were discussed and I'm sure they will update you during this meeting. I've had residents from Weatheroak requesting speeding action and I have asked for data cable to be placed once traffic levels return to normal.

I'm concerned that should APC choose not to replace the street lights in Bordesley that WCC will not step in to provide them.

A recruitment process has begun to appoint a new Chief Fire Officer for Hereford and Worcestershire fire and rescue service.

I attended Crown Meadow and was very impressed with how well the school has adjusted to the current Covid situation and how hard the staff and governors have worked to make sure that everyone is kept safe. A big thank you them all. They currently don't have any concern regarding the social distancing of parents at the school gates. They have agreed to contact me should this change.

Please could I remind everyone how easy it is to report a WCC problem online. Just go to the website, www.worcestershire.gov.uk click on report and follow the instructions.

I am aware of one report of smell in the Hopwood area and I hope that this was a one off.

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Cllr Worrall expressed his appreciation to DCllr/CCllr Hotham for his intercession with Worcestershire Highways, with regard to the various Highways issues currently affecting our Parish.

Cllr Worrall requested an update on the unpredictable temporary lights at Dagnell End Road.**Action Point: Clerk to obtain Update/Schedule of Dates.**

Cllr Humphries advised that following consideration of the APC KIWA Streetlight Column report at Bordesley, he wondered whether it would be possible to approach WCC Highways for assistance with funding the recently removed columns.

Cllr Cypher advised that DCllr/CCllr Hotham has mentioned running a bus in a recent report and that he himself had read that Worcestershire County Council has a budget in this regard.

Cllr Cypher expressed his thanks to DCllr/CCllr Hotham for his engagement with the Parish Council's activities in respect of on-going Highways issues in the Parish. A meeting was held with DCllr/CCllr Hotham and other Parish Cllrs which proved very useful; he then requested that the Parish Council arranges meetings on a more regular basis. The meeting should be planned ahead of the Parishes Planning & Highways Meetings to enable attendees to report back in good time.
Action Point: Clerk to liaise with DCllr/CCllr Hotham to schedule a meeting timetable.

8. OPEN FORUM

Nothing to report

9. COMMUNICATIONS BY THE CHAIR

Cllr Worrall thanked Cllr Humphries and Adrian Smith for their planting of the donated daffodils.

Cllr Worrall referred to the proposal by a resident, that a "Pump" Cycle Track be considered by the Parish Council in any of its Parks.

Action Point: Clerk to table the matter for an Agenda Item at next YSR Meeting.

An approach has been made to supply further defibrillators however it was thought that this matter was more suitable for the YSR Meeting.

Action Point: Clerk to table the matter for an Agenda Item at YSR.

Cllr Worrall advised that he and Cllr Lewis were working together to tackle misuse of the Football Pitch at Hopwood. A visit was planned to HCC on Wednesday 14th October.

10. CLERK'S REPORT

Cllr Worrall reminded the Committee that the Clerk had provided her monthly report ahead of the Meeting. There were no questions or comments with the Report.

Cllr Worrall expressed his thanks to Mr. Penn for the great work he has done overhauling the Parish Council's Noticeboards to date.

Chairman **Date**

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11. MONTHLY ACCOUNTS

- a The monthly Payment Schedule, Reconciled Bank Statements and Budget Overview Report were accepted and confirmed as accurate. **Unanimous.**
- b Virements and transfers between accounts. **Noted.**
It was noted that any further payment requests received relevant to October would be addressed when the Clerk returned, under delegated Powers. Noted.

12. THE WIGGIN (The Memorial Playing Field)

- (a) Cllr Worrall provided a general overview as to the advice received from the solicitor in respect to the Charity status of The Wiggin which it had been concluded must be run separately to that of the Council and its standing committees.

Cllr Humphries advised that the Clerk was keen to have bi-annual meetings of the Trustees with effect from 1st April 2021.

Cllr Cypher noted that there is a requirement to identify two or three Cllrs to be Trustees and that the Trust's income would need separating from that of the Parish Council and would need to be noted and disclosed for transparency.

Cllr Worrall suggested that the Trust should decide whether all Parish Councillors should be Trustees rather than the lower figure suggested. He reminded the Council that a Trust with charitable status could receive Grants/Donations.

- (b) Investigations to ascertain the landowner of the field, in order to gain access for Westside for remedial tree works was ongoing. Cllr Humphries had tried several social media outlets and a name was suggested but the person is not known to the Members of the Parish Council. Cllt Wallis requested that a Map be sent to Cllrs of the field/land parcel in question.
Clerk Action Point: Map to be sourced and circulated.

13. NEW HOMES BONUS GRANT SUBMISSION & MEETING WITH TRUSTEES FROM RGVH

New Homes Bonus Grant Submission

Cllr Humphries advised that the New Homes Bonus Grant had been received and discussions on its proposed use were still on-going.

Meeting Update – RGVH Trustees and APC Councillors

The Parish Council was pleased to learn that a high percentage of Rowney Green residents responded to the recent Consultation.

Cllr Cypher advised that there was a strong indication from the Trustees of RGVH that a long lease would be preferred.

APC have suggested a Business Plan be devised and it is hoped that an update could be provided by the Council Working Party Members at the next FC Meeting.

Chairman **Date**

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14. **P&CC ROAD SAFETY FUND RE. A441 HOPWOOD ROAD IMPROVEMENT SCHEME**

Cllr Humphries advised that there had been no movement on this item as a quote was awaited for the costs of the gates.

15. **ALVECHURCH CARES**

DCllr English confirmed that Alvechurch Cares is ready for immediate support should the Parish go into a further Lockdown. Cllr Worrall stated that this knowledge would be of comfort to many.

DCllr English also advised that Mandy Monger is still running a support group for elderly residents at the Lounge, with other support groups still online offering assistance with Mental Health, Shielding etc. The organisations Support Bromsgrove and B.A.R.N have confirmed that they also have capacity to assist if required.

Cllr Baxter advised that a requirement for assistance with elderly loneliness had been identified in Wythall. DCllr English confirmed that whilst there has been no particular need identified regarding Loneliness issues in the Parish, she would check this with the Alvechurch Cares Steering Group. Cllr Cypher noted that the charity AGE UK was a good source of information in this regard and Cllr Baxter thanked him for the suggestion.

Cllr Worrall thanked all the volunteers of Alvechurch Cares on behalf of the Parish Council.

16. **FORMAL CORRESPONDENCE**

- *Email from West Mercia Police re. survey*

Cllr Humphries confirmed that he had completed the Survey.

The Parish Council has seen an increase in anti-social behaviour of late and Members requested that a letter be written to the Police Neighbourhood Team, expressing concern in relation to the use of drugs at the location of the end of Swans Walk. **Action Point: Clerk**

17. **COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

PLANNING & HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE

Street/Footway Lighting

Cllr Baxter confirmed the split was; WCC responsible for Highways Lighting and APC are responsible for footway lighting. The lighting on the A441 should be deemed 'Highway'. Members agreed and confirmed that the Clerk is to approach WCC in this regard.

Action Point: Clerk & Cllr Worrall to jointly address.

Pear Mapping

Cllr Worrall requested that this item be deferred to the next Parish Meeting in November.

Action Point: Clerk

FINANCE & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Cllr Baxter advised nothing to report.

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YOUTH, SPORTS & RECREATION COMMITTEE

Cllr Wallis advised nothing to report ahead of the next YSR Committee Meeting on 26th October 2020.

Car [Hopwood Drainage Work Claim]

Cllr Worrall confirmed that this matter has now been resolved and APC will initially settle the damages with the driver.

Grass Cutting/Ground Maintenance Tender

To consider the criteria against which Tenders will be gauged ahead of the 5th November submission deadline

Cllrs agreed to wait until the Tender Submissions had been received before deciding upon the criteria for consideration. Cllr Wallis would prefer a local business be given the work if possible.

H/R COMMITTEE

Cllr Willetts advised that the standard of Applications had been very high and could now confirm that a new Caretaker had been appointed and would be starting shortly.

18. OTHER REPORTS - EXTERNAL BODIES

ALVECHURCH VILLAGE HALL

Cllr Helmore advised that the Village Hall is well supported and used – perhaps we could tap in to their expertise with event hire?

THE LOUNGE

Cllr Freeman reiterated the Lounge Committee's concerns regarding the shortfall in funding for mental health support for young people aged between 8 and 18.

PARTY IN THE PARK 2021

Cllr Wallis confirmed that there should be a PIP Meeting around Christmas time.

CALC

Cllr Worrall updated the Members following a recent CALC meeting at which the Enforcement issues in the District were discussed by Parish Council representatives and District Council representatives. He was pleased to report that Dale Birch of BDC had advised that he has committed himself to assisting us in Alvechurch Parish with enforcement issues if needed.

REMEMBRANCE

Cllr Humphries provided an update on the arrangements for Remembrance and confirmed the following:

- (a) A Road Closure has been requested for Bear Hill on 11/11/2020.
- (b) This year will be a shorter Service in accordance with the current UK Government restrictions.
- (c) Wreaths and crosses have been ordered from the Royal British Legion.
- (d) An advisory will be issued to the Public asking people to comply with Social Distancing rules should their attendance on the day really be necessary.
- (e) The Parish Council would very much like to have a “virtual” service and is seeking assistance with this element.

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Cllr Worrall agreed to address a reading at the Remembrance Church Service on 8/11/20.

Mr. R Peach apologised that he was not able to assist with the ‘live streaming’ as he did not use such technology at the Village magazine.

Cllr Cypher asked if the Caretaker could perform Marshalling duties but the Assistant Clerk was unable to confirm this. **Action Point: Clerk**

Cllrs asked whether the Road Closure could be cancelled – the Assistant Clerk advised that it was being maintained during the Service to preserve the peace required for such an event.

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS SWITCH-ON

Cllr Humphries provided an update on the arrangements for the Lights Switch-on and confirmed the following:

- (a) Father Christmas was still attending (subject to revised Covid Guidance).
- (b) Arrangements for the Tree and Lighting were in-hand.
- (c) A Road Closure has been requested for Radford Road on 04/12/2020 (*But may later be cancelled if not required i.e. if decisions taken to host virtual switch-on*).

Cllrs then voted unanimously that the Christmas event should also be a “virtual” Switch-on and will therefore seek assistance for this to happen. **Action - Clerk**

Cllr Lewis was able to offer the name of someone who may be able to help with filming the Virtual Events.

The Assistant Clerk asked whether the Councillors wanted to maintain the Best Dressed House and Best Dressed Business Window competitions as these were still achievable under Social Distancing regulations. All Councillors voted in favour. **Unanimous. Action Point: Clerk**

19. COUNCILLOR REPORTS (*around the Parish*)

Cllr Worrall recorded warm praise and thanks to Councillor Susan Lambert for all of her time and input as a valuable Member of Alvechurch Parish Council. Cllr Baxter remembered that when she joined the Parish Council, Cllr Lambert had been a great support in the early days. Cllr Cypher praised her performance on a very busy Planning Committee. All Members wished her well in her future endeavours; her presence will be greatly missed after ten years of service.

Cllr Lewis kindly offered to replace Cllr Lambert on the Christmas Committee and this was warmly welcomed by all. **Action Point: Clerk**

Cllr Worrall advised that a Meeting is expected to take place shortly with Tom Curwell of North Worcestershire Water Management and that he would be discussing the on-going issues at Branden Road and the ditch in the Wiggin.

Cllr Cypher asked if the Clerk could request a Smart Water Street Level Report from the Police on behalf of the Parish Council. **Action Point: Clerk.**

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Cllr Hornsby confirmed that a letter had been sent to Ruth Bamford in respect of the Weights Lane Development in Redditch and its adverse effect on Bordesley Residents. Cllr Worrall thanked Cllr Cypher, Cllr Hornsby and the Assistant Clerk for working together on this matter.

20. MEETING DATES

As per meeting schedule.

21. PRESS RELEASE.

None at this time.

CLOSE

Meeting closed @ 10.02pm.

Chairman

Date