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ALVELEY AND ROMSLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the monthly meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 8th September 2020, including an Open Forum, commencing at 7.30pm. This was a remote meeting using ‘Zoom’ software in accordance with the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus)(Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings)(England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

022. PRESENT

Cllr. Ms. P. M. Barker (Chairman), Cllr. Mr. R. J. Narburgh, Cllr. Mr. C. D. Noble, and Cllr. Mr. F. D. Voysey.

023. IN ATTENDANCE

Mr. D. H. Rawlinson (Clerk), Cllr. Mrs. T. Woodward (Shropshire Councillor) and one resident.

024. OPEN FORUM

 Cllr. Voysey reported that he had received a complaint about a vehicle parked on the green next to 2 Chapel Lane, on the basis that the vehicle is an eyesore. The Clerk indicated that he has received a similar complaint. Cllr. Mrs. Woodward undertook to look into the situation further and to contact Shropshire Council, if appropriate.

025. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

 It **was resolved** to accept apologies for absence from Cllr. Mrs. J. M. Hall (personal), Cllr. Mrs. S. L. Potter (work), Cllr. Mr. B. A. Punchard (work) and Cllr. Mr. K. R. Stanton (personal).

026. DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY/PREJUDICIAL INTEREST

 None

027. MINUTES -

1. MONTHLY MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 7TH JULY 2020.

 Cllr. Voysey **proposed** that the minutes of the monthly meeting held on 7th July 2020 were a true and accurate record; this was **seconded** by the Chairman and **carried** unanimously.

1. EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE ON TUESDAY 11TH AUGUST 2020.

 The Chairman **proposed** that the minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the Planning Committee on 11th August were a true and accurate record; this was **seconded** by Cllr. Voysey and **carried** unanimously.

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028. URGENT PARISH MATTERS

 None were raised.

029. VACANCIES FOR PARISH COUNCILLORS

 The Clerk confirmed that there are now three vacancies on the Parish Council, and that the Council was, at this meeting, in a position to fill two of these by co-option. He also advised that he had received three applications for co-option. One of the applicants, Mr. James Taylor, was present. A second applicant, Mr. B. Richards, had indicated that he cannot communicate on-line or attend a virtual meeting and a third application from Mr. P. R. Fry had only just been received.

 One Councillor expressed concern at the recent resignations and was keen to know the circumstances. Other Councillors pointed to pressure of work, other commitments, and recent health problems, in both cases, and paid tribute to the past contributions from Cllr. Miss Jakeman and Cllr. Mrs. Preece.

 After further discussion, Cllr. Voysey proposed that Mr. Taylor’s application be considered, and this was seconded by the Chairman. The Chairman suspended Standing Orders to allow Mr. Taylor to speak. Mr. Taylor briefly explained his personal and business interests, and made clear his wish to have closer connections with the local communities in Alveley and Romsley. He had researched the Parish Council website and hoped he could contribute in future to the Council’s work. In response to a question, Mr. Taylor confirmed his readiness to maintain, where necessary, the confidentiality of Council business.

 Mr. Taylor was excluded temporarily from the meeting while Councillors discussed his application. There was consensus that his application should be accepted. Cllr. Voysey then proposed that Mr. Taylor’s application be approved. This was seconded by Cllr. Narburgh and carried unanimously.

030. PARISH COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS –

 The Parish Council noted the following vacancies:

 (a) CHARITABLE TRUSTS – Parish Council representatives on:

 (i) Alveley Charities

 (ii) Whittall Meadows Trust

Councillors accepted the Chairman’s proposal that, given the limited attendance at this meeting, consideration of these vacancies should be deferred until the next monthly meeting. The Clerk was requested to ascertain for the next meeting whether a representative who is nominated

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while serving as a Councillor can continue to represent the Parish Council if he/she ceases to be a Councillor.

(b) PLANNING COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

The Chairman asked for views on whether the membership of the Planning Committee should continue to be the whole Parish Council, or whether a smaller committee would be preferrable. There was some support to maintain the status-quo, but also a suggestion that a smaller more focused group of between five and seven was more appropriate. After discussion, the Chairman **proposed** to move to a smaller committee, with a minimum of five and a maximum of seven members. This was seconded by Cllr. Voysey and was **agreed** by 3 votes to 1. It was also **agreed** that this change would not be put into effect until the monthly Parish Council meeting in October, after the election of a Planning Committee Chairman.

(c) BRIDGNORTH AND SHIFNAL AREA COMMITTEE – Parish Council representatives.

Councillors accepted the Chairman’s proposal that these vacancies should be deferred until the next monthly meeting. There was a request to clarify the role and format of the Area Committee, which the Clerk endeavoured to do.

031. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND DECISIONS.

1. Planning Applications -

20/03213/FUL Conversion of part of building to 1no. live/work unit, Stables at Applecross House, Alveley, WV15 6NB.

The Clerk referred to two previous applications, which the Parish Council had not opposed subject, in one case, to time constraints. Both applications had been refused by Shropshire Council, on the grounds that the proposed development of residential accommodation on a site in the Green Belt was not justified.

After discussion, the Chairman proposed that the Council should register no objection, subject to the proposed development meeting Shropshire Council’s requirements for live/work accommodation. Cllr. Narburgh seconded this motion which was carried unanimously.

20/03340/FUL Change of use of traditional barns to 4 dwellings to include demolition of steel framed buildings, replacement structures and creation of amenity space, construction of garages/stores and installation of private treatment plant, Astley Farm, Alveley, WV15 6ER.

There was discussion about whether the buildings to be demolished were redundant. The Clerk advised that the buildings were redundant but were not

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dilapidated. After discussion, the Chairman proposed that the Parish Council should recommend rejection, as this is an inappropriate development in the Green Belt, which will not promote employment or provide affordable housing. This was seconded by Cllr. Narburgh and was carried with one abstention.

1. Planning Decisions received from Shropshire Council - these were **noted**.

20/02180/FUL & 20/02181/LBC Erection of single-storey side extension, Spring Cottage, 142 Tuckhill, Six Ashes.

Parish Council recommendation – Approve, Decision – Approve.

20/02581/FUL Erection of a single-storey rear extension, 4 Hazelgrove, Alveley, WV15 6JW.

Parish Council recommendation – Approve, Decision – Approve.

1. Planning Applications received from Shropshire Council since the Agenda closed – none received.
2. Planning Decisions received from Shropshire Council since the Agenda closed

20/02199/FUL Agricultural building at Little London Farm, Conversion of existing barn to create a dwelling; erection of an ancillary out-building following part demolition of workshop and agricultural building.

Parish Council recommendation – Approve subject to conditions set out in pre-submission advice from Shropshire Council, Decision – Approve.

1. Other planning matters –

Planning application numbers 18/01358/FUL and 20/02135/DIS, Central Garage Kidderminster Road Alveley WV15 6LL.

The Clerk referred to minute 011.2 of the previous meeting at which a member raised concerns about the progress of this development. The Clerk advised that much of the extensive documentation attached to this application covered the issues of ground contamination, trees and ecology and the Chairman advised that, based on her research, Shropshire Council is monitoring the project effectively on all fronts. The information was **noted**.

032. CONSULTATION ON PLANNING REFORM AND LOCAL PLANS

 The Clerk introduced his report and summarised the various consultation processes and timetables that were currently in place. While recognising the need to respond to the consultation on these major issues, he considered that the main message for the Parish Council was the need for a local Neighbourhood Plan to be in place.

 Cllr. Voysey pointed out that the most urgent deadline (16th September) related to Shropshire Council’s draft housing strategy. He explained his thinking and offered

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 to pass his notes to the Clerk. After discussion, this way forward was **agreed** and the Clerk undertook to prepare a draft response as soon as possible.

 The subsequent discussion considered the Council’s response to the other consultation documents, namely:

1. Shropshire Council’s Draft Local Plan;
2. Government’s Consultation document ‘Changes to the Current Planning System’;
3. White Paper ‘Planning for the Future’

 After careful consideration and debate, it was **agreed** that:

1. The Clerk would produce a response to the Local Plan document that focuses on local issues, that reiterates the Parish Council’s previous submission, and that highlights the need for infrastructure improvements, especially highways and drainage, to meet existing and future housing needs, and to cope with other major developments in the area, such as the creation of 100 park homes at the Butts caravan site.
2. A special meeting of the Planning Committee would be convened to prepare a Parish Council response to the Government’s consultation document and White Paper.

033. POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER’S TOWN AND PARISH COUNCIL SURVEY 2020.

 Councillors considered the survey document and, after discussion, the Chairman agreed to submit a response on behalf of the Parish Council.

034. REPORT FROM SHROPSHIRE COUNCILLOR

 The Chairman suspended Standing Orders. Cllr. Mrs. Woodward referred to a briefing note which had already been circulated to all Councillors covering two current issues:

1. Park homes at the Butts Caravan site;
2. School transport following the start of the new term.

 With reference to item (i), she highlighted and clarified major issues in relation to planning permission and highways. The briefing note is attached to the minutes.

035. PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

 Some Councillors suggested that the decision to move to an on-line only newsletter had been mistaken, and should be reviewed. After discussion, it was **agreed** that Cllr. Noble would investigate the possibility and potential cost of employing Royal Mail to delivery the newsletter to every household.

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036. FINANCIAL REPORT

 1. Examination of Quarterly Accounts to 31st August 2020 – given that this process has not taken place so far in this financial year because of COVID-19 restrictions, it was **agreed** that the Council would appoint two Councillors to examine the quarterly accounts from April to July 2020 as soon as COVID-19 restrictions permit, and to report back to the Council at the next face-to-face meeting.

 2. Deposits/Receipts 2020/21 to 31st August 2020

 Shropshire Council Precept Payment £53,765.00

 Neighbourhood Fund (CIL) £1,201.93

 Refund of VAT £6,666.85

 CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund/HSBC Bank Interest £85.46

 Miscellaneous income (wayleave) 3.45

 £61,722.69

 The deposits/receipts were **noted**.

3. Bank Reconciliation at 31st August 2020

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Balances as at 31.08.20 - |  |  |  |
| **Bank** |  |  |  |  | £ |
| Business Money Manager Account |  |  | 33,410.61 |
| Community Account |  |  |  | 10,041.47 |
| CCLA Public Sector Deposit Account |  |  | 65,000.00 |
|  |  |  |  |  | 108,452.08 |
| Less unpresented cheques - |  |  | £ |
|  |  |  |  | 202226 | 1,000.00 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  | 107,452.08 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Cash Book** |  |  |  | £ |
| Opening balances as at |  | 01/04/2020 |  | 61,348.70 |
| Add receipts to |  | 31/08/2020 |  | 61,722.69 |
| Less payments to |  | 31/08/2020 |  | -15,619.31 |
|  |  |  |  |  | 107,452.08 |

3.1 The Bank reconciliation was **noted**.

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4. External Audit of Accounts 2019/20

4.1 The Clerk advised that, following the Council’s approval of a period of 9th July to 19th August 2020 for the exercise of the public’s right to inspect the accounts, these dates were publicised on the website and noticeboards. He confirmed that no member of the public had chosen to exercise that right. The AGAR is awaiting approval by the Council’s external auditor PKF Littlejohn.

4.2 The Council **noted** this information.

5. Insurance Arrangements

5.1 The Clerk reported that he had challenged the annual insurance premium for 2020/21 of £1,205.70, which is a rise of 12.5%. This reflects the increased physical asset valuation arising from the street lighting replacement programme. However, the Council has a three-year agreement for insurance which should offer stable premiums. The Council’s insurers AXA were able to substantiate the increase but, as a gesture of goodwill, the Council’s insurance brokers again waived their administration fee of £50.

5.2 The Parish Council **noted** this information.

6. Invoices for Approval and Cheques for Signature

6.1 The Parish Council **agreed** to authorise the Chairman to sign the funding agreement for 2020/21 with Shropshire Council in relation to the Severn Valley Country Park (SVCP) on behalf of the Parish Council.

6.2The Council **approved** the schedule of invoices/direct payments and instructed the Chairman and Cllr. Narburgh to sign those cheques still to be paid.

7. Budget Monitoring 2020/21

* 1. The Clerk confirmed that there has been significant disruption to normal Parish Council business as a result of COVID-19 restrictions. As a result, spending to 31st August 2020 totals 24.9% after 5 months (42%) of the financial year, despite emergency COVID-19 grant payments of £2,000. He reported on a number of specific issues which the Parish Council **noted**.

037. ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

 Vacancies for Parish Councillors

 Parish Council appointments

 Parish Council newsletter

 Footpaths and Rights of Way Officer

 Rubbish and litter collection

 Climate emergency

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038. FUTURE MEETINGS.

It was **agreed** that the next meeting of Alveley and Romsley Parish Council will be the monthly Parish Council meeting on Tuesday 13th October 2020. The format/venue of this meeting will be determined by the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman.

The meeting closed at 21.23.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance.