

ALVELEY AND ROMSLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a monthly meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2021 in the Pavilion, Daddlebrook Road, Alveley, including an Open Forum, commencing at 7.30pm

046. PRESENT

Cllr. Ms. P. M. Barker (Chairman), Cllr. Mr. C. D. Noble (Vice-chairman), Cllr. Mr. M. A. Haddon, Cllr. Miss I. D. Jakeman, Cllr. Mr. R. J. Narburgh, Cllr. Mr. J. R. Taylor, Cllr. Ms. V. N. Voysey.

047. IN ATTENDANCE

Mr. D. H. Rawlinson (Clerk), Cllr. Mr. E. L. Lynch (Shropshire Councillor), Mr. M. L. Love and Mr. P. W. Whale.

048. OPEN FORUM

Mrs. Margaret Shaw advised the meeting that she would be unable to continue to maintain the village planters in future; she referred to the need for regular watering as an increasing struggle. The Chairman thanked Mrs. Shaw for all her work and Cllr. Hadden offered to help with watering the planter at the Post Office.

Cllr. Miss Jakeman highlighted the problem of speeding on Arley Lane, especially past the visibility splay at the junction with Golden Acres. She noted that the visibility splay was used for parking, which increased the accident risk, and she suggested there should be a speed check or warning on this stretch. After discussion, she agreed to raise this at the forthcoming Annual Parish meeting.

049. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It **was resolved** to accept an apology for absence from Cllr. Mrs. S. L. Potter (personal).

050. DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY/PREJUDICIAL INTEREST

None.

051. MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 6<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2021

It was **resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2021 were a true and accurate record.

052. VACANCIES FOR PARISH COUNCILLORS

The Chairman formally proposed that Mr. Malcolm Love and Mr. Paul Whale be co-opted to serve on the Parish Council and this was seconded by Cllr. Miss Jakeman. Both Mr. Love and Mr. Whale spoke in support of their applications, outlining their previous experience and emphasising their desire to work on behalf of the local

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community, Mr. Love as a longstanding resident and Mr. Whale as a recent arrival in the Village. After due consideration, the Parish Council **agreed unanimously** to approve the co-option of Mr. Malcolm Love and Mr. Paul Whale to serve as Parish Councillors. Both Councillors completed and signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office, which was witnessed by the Clerk, and were welcomed to their first meeting.

## 053. URGENT PARISH MATTERS

- (i) Annual Parish meetings – it was confirmed that the Alveley Annual Parish meeting will take place on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2021 with crime detection and prevention as a focus for discussion. The Clerk also reported that, after consultation with the Secretary of the Romsley Parish meeting and with Romsley Councillors, it had been decided not to hold a Romsley Annual Parish meeting in 2021.
- (ii) Queen's Platinum Jubilee – the Clerk explained that, in 2022, Her Majesty The Queen will become the first British Monarch to celebrate a Platinum Jubilee, seventy years of service. He referred to a recent press release from Buckingham Palace which was with the agenda papers. This highlighted an extended bank holiday, from Thursday 2nd to Sunday 5th June 2022, which will provide an opportunity for communities and people throughout the United Kingdom to come together to celebrate the historic milestone. The Clerk advised that he has been approached by the Secretary of Alveley Village Hall Committee to enquire what plans the Parish Council has to mark the occasion and what scope there is for community groups to collaborate in a joint event.

The Chairman reported that previous discussions have established that the Recreation Association is prepared to allow a tree to be planted at the corner of the Recreation Ground. There was support for this as a suitable way of marking the occasion and a suggestion to plant more than one tree. After further discussion, it was **agreed** that the Clerk would contact local organisations to explore the possibility of joint activities/events, and report back to the next Parish Council meeting.

- ii) Climate emergency – the Clerk emphasised the importance of the Parish Council's involvement but indicated that, because of other 'pressures' he had not been able to give time to this issue since the last meeting. His advice was that the Parish Council should consider setting up a Working Party/Task and Finish Group to address this agenda. He considered that such action would enable enthusiasts within the community to be brought into the discussion and would allow work to be managed through virtual meetings. The Parish Council **agreed** to consider this proposal at a future meeting.

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054. REPORT FROM SHROPSHIRE COUNCILLOR – the Chairman suspended Standing Orders to allow Cllr. Lynch to speak.

Cllr. Lynch updated the meeting on the following local issues:

- (i) Empty property at 16 Cook's Cross – Shropshire Council is now involved and have carried out a site inspection. The elderly resident is now in care.
- (ii) Roadside site mirror – the mirror by the Church has been replaced.
- (iii) Recreation Ground sign – this is on order but has not yet been replaced.
- (iv) A442 - Road safety concerns have been raised by a number of residents in Alveley and in Quatt. The matter is being raised with Shropshire Council's Portfolio Holder for Transport.

The Chairman informed Cllr. Lynch of concerns which have been reported to her concerning groundwork activities at Beauty Bank, near the junction with Lindridge Lane, which involve a pond being drained. They may need to be investigated by Shropshire Council. After discussion, it was **agreed** that the Clerk would investigate and, if necessary, report to Shropshire Council.

055. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING – the Clerk's report was considered and the Vice-chairman outlined previous experience locally with neighbourhood planning. Subsequent discussion focused on:

- the scale and duration of the commitment involved;
- the benefits that an approved Neighbourhood Plan would provide in minimising the threat of inappropriate development;
- the possible need to update the 2016 Housing Needs Survey;
- the need to target particular groups of residents and the possible role of social media and virtual meetings.

It was subsequently **agreed** that the Clerk would circulate a briefing note to all Councillors, setting out the proposals for Alveley within Shropshire Councils draft Local Plan, so that this could form a basis for a subsequent discussion in a Task Group setting.

056. REVIEW OF PARISH COUNCIL POLICIES – the Clerk explained the reviews that were proposed within the approved Action Plan for 2021/22. He also clarified the position with regard to the Council's approved Code of Conduct, in the light of the Local Government Association's new model Code. He advised that the Parish Council's approved Code should be closely aligned to Shropshire Council's Code, and therefore that the Parish Council should defer any changes for the time being. The Parish Council **agreed** this course of action and to review the position in December 2021.

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The Parish Council then received updated drafts of two policies, namely -

- (i) Equality and Diversity Policy, and
  - (ii) Complaints Policy and Procedures;
- and **approved** both documents.

057. TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND DECISIONS

1. Planning Applications received –

21/03347/FUL Erection of a riding arena and retrospective permission for the change of existing buildings to stabling, Kingsnordley Farm, Kingsnordley, WV15 6EU.

There was concern that this site is served by a narrow country lane which is in very poor condition. It was therefore **agreed** to raise no objection, subject to there being no significant increase in traffic as a result of this development.

21/03706/FUL Erection of two storey rear extension (resubmission), Paper Mill, 121 Alveley, WV15 6HE.

Note This is a resubmission of previous application 21/02443/FUL which has been withdrawn, and proposes a rear extension/alteration to the existing property, rather than a side extension. The Parish Council considered the previous application on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2021 and agreed not to oppose the application.

There was agreement that this application was preferable to the previous proposals, and it was **resolved** to raise no objection to the application.

2. Planning Applications received since the Agenda closed –

21/04252/TCA, To fell to ground level 1 no multi-stemmed willow tree within Alveley Conservation Area, The Vicarage, Alveley, WV15 6ND.

After discussion, it was **agreed** to raise no objection to this application

21/03655/LBC Work to Grade II listed building comprising of external repairs to include new roof, windows render and repointing, and internal works to include removal of walls and replacement beams, Shropshire Farm, Dye Lane, Fenn Green, WV15 6HY.

Members noted that this application did not involve any extension to the existing building and was solely related to external and internal repairs and replacements. It was **agreed** to support the application.

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3. Planning Decisions received from Shropshire Council – the following were noted:

21/02913/COU, Change of use from business to ancillary residential use, the Granary, Bell Orchard, Alveley, WV15 6NE.

Parish Council recommendation – notified for information only; Decision – grant permission.

21/03064/FUL Alteration of existing first-floor window and additional new first-floor window, 44 Romsley View, Alveley, WV15 6PJ.

Parish Council recommendation – grant permission; Decision – grant permission.

21/03240/FUL Erection of single storey extension to existing farmhouse to provide orangery, dog room, lobby, toilet and shower; Little Coton House, Coton, Alveley.

Parish Council recommendation – refuse permission; Decision – refuse permission.

The Chairman asked the Clerk to remind Shropshire Council that relevant information, including comments by expert consultees, should be made publicly available without unnecessary delay.

4. Planning Decisions received from Shropshire Council since the Agenda closed – none.

5. Other planning matters for information only – none.

058. CHRISTMAS TREE AND DECORATIONS – the Clerk reported that, after consultation with the Chairman and Cllr. Narburgh, he had approached Lite Ltd. Their representatives had visited the area and had provided a number of written quotes for Christmas decorations in the area around Cook's Cross, the Primary School and the Recreation Ground. Their quote for a 15 ft. Christmas Tree on the usual site – delivery, erection, lighting, dismantling and disposal was £1,560. The Clerk had not been able to obtain written quotes from other suppliers but had received a verbal quote of between £2,500 and £3,000 for a 12 ft. Christmas tree from Blachere Illuminations.

The Chairman was keen for this year's display to be of high quality. She also stressed the importance of procuring a supplier with the expertise and experience to manage all the health and safety issues, and with proper insurance cover, rather than to rely on local volunteers. After a brief discussion, it was **agreed** to accept the quote from Lite Ltd.

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059. FINANCIAL REPORT.

- (i) Bank Reconciliation at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021 - the Parish Council **agreed** to **note** the information.

- (ii) HSBC Banking

The Clerk reported that HSBC are introducing new charges for their banking services from 1<sup>st</sup> November 2021. From then, there will be a monthly fee and a charge for every cheque raised. He advised that, if the new charges had applied in the 2020/21 financial year the total of bank charges to the Parish Council would have been £160.

A preliminary survey of other 'High Street' Banks, had revealed that all of them offer a period of free banking. Most have a monthly fee after that but some waive this if there is a significant credit balance. There appears to be a lot of applications in the system to switch small business bank accounts and Lloyds have temporarily ceased taking further applications. He confirmed that the marketing focus of all the major banks is to move business customers to internet banking, and the majority of alternative banks only offer internet packages.

The Clerk also reported that, at the last monthly meeting, a new banking mandate was approved to update the list of authorised cheque signatories on the existing HSBC account (minute 043(2) of 6<sup>th</sup> July 2021 refers). The new mandate was despatched immediately. However, on 3<sup>rd</sup> August the Clerk received a letter from HSBC indicating that a different form should be used. Because of the situation described above, the Clerk has not yet followed this up, so the existing banking mandate remains in place.

The Parish Council **resolved** to authorise the Clerk, in conjunction with Councillors Love and Ms. Voysey, to investigate future options, including internet banking, and to report back to the monthly meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> October with their findings and recommendations.

- (iii) Severn Valley Country Park – Funding Agreement 2021/22

The draft funding agreement had been circulated, and the Clerk reminded Members that the Parish Council has already agreed a grant of £2,500 for the current financial year, including a one-year grant of £1,000 to support COVID recovery work. The Parish Council **approved** the draft funding agreement and **authorised** the Chairman to sign it.

- (iv) Footpath Improvement and Safety Issues

Alveley Strollers and Striders have drawn attention to a serious accident on the A442 near the Squirrel Public House. They advise that, had there been pedestrians in the vicinity, the accident might have resulted in

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serious injury or fatalities. The Strollers and Striders have decided not to use the narrow pavement in this area, and have advised that a better alternative is to cross the A442 via the central reservation at the end of Daddlebrook Road, go up the side of the Central Garage building site, turn left and follow the footpath across the field to St Peter's Finger on Romsley Lane. However, this route involves a number of awkward stiles. It is therefore proposed, with the permission of the landowner, to install four kissing gates at a cost of £360 each, making the total cost £1,440. The Strollers and Striders have requested financial support from the Parish Council to install these gates.

Members were advised that the approved budget for 2021/22 includes an earmarked reserve of £500 for footpaths, and that a reserve of £3,437 of Neighbourhood Fund is also available. After discussion, the Parish Council **agreed unanimously** to provide this additional funding, including £940 from the Neighbourhood Fund reserve.

(v) Electronic Communications (including Zoom)

The Clerk noted that, although most of the legal restrictions on activity arising from COVID-19 have been lifted, there remains the need for events which require people to congregate to be managed with extreme care. He also drew attention to the possibility of working parties or task and finish groups being established to deal with specific issues and priorities. He advised that such groups will not be subject to the legislative requirement for face-to-face public meetings which applies to the Parish Council and its committees. He confirmed that, after consultation with the Chairman of Council, he had therefore taken the opportunity to subscribe on behalf of the Parish Council to Zoom Standard Pro Annual at a discounted cost of £89.92 for the year from July 2021 to July 2022.

The Clerk considered that this facility would be very useful in engaging with the community about neighbourhood planning and the climate emergency. In addition, he also suggested that it would be helpful if additional equipment could be procured to facilitate hybrid meetings, where some participants are face-to-face and others are on-line. This could be used to enable those Councillors who remain uncomfortable with face-to-face meetings to access future task groups. The Clerk recognised that Councillors Haddon and Taylor have expertise in this area and undertook to consult with them regarding the best way forward.

The Parish Council **endorsed** the Clerk's action in procuring Zoom for a further year and **authorised** him to identify further options for improving the Parish Council's ability to communicate with local residents, in consultation with Councillors Haddon and Taylor, and to report back to the next monthly meeting.

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(vi) Vouchers/Invoices for Approval and Cheques for Signature

The Parish Council **approved** the revised schedule of vouchers and instructed Councillors Miss Jakeman and Narburgh to initial the vouchers and sign the cheques to be paid.

060. ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Membership of Committees

New Councillor induction

Review Parish Council's Code of Conduct

Climate emergency

Review of the Council's procedures for handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 2018

Review of the Council's policy for dealing with the press/ media

Parish Council Noticeboards

Street lighting

061. TO CONFIRM THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be a monthly meeting to be held on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2021 in the Pavilion, Daddlebrook Road, Alveley, commencing at 7.30 pm, to include an Open Forum.

The meeting closed at 21.30

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance.