

ALMELEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Almeley Parish Council held on Wednesday, 12 August 2014.

Councillors Present: Mr Hope (Chair), Mr Edwards, Mr Hall, Mr Payne, Mr Skyrme, Mrs Tucker.

1. APOLOGIES for absence – none were received.
2. MINUTES of the annual meeting of the Parish Council held on 28 March 2015 were approved and signed.
3. MINUTES of a meeting of the Parish Council held on 28 March 2015 were approved and signed.
4. MATTERS ARISING.
 - a. Contribution towards purchase and maintenance of defibrillator for the Parish. The defibrillator has been installed in the porch of The Bells. It was proposed by Mr Hope, seconded by Mr Payne and agreed unanimously that a donation of £50 should be made.
 - b. Lengths Men scheme. It was reported that it had not been possible to obtain a grant for employment of a lengths man for the Parish. Obligatory induction programme for an unqualified prospective length man is for a minimum of two months and would be prohibitively expensive for the Parish Council. An alternative arrangement had been made by Balfour Beatty. A lengths man, employed by them, who has responsibility for the work of three lengths man, will arrange for one of his employees to be responsible for Almeley Parish. Mr Hope had discussed requirements for road maintenance, etc., with a representative of the Highways Authority. Mr Hope will assist with induction of the lengths man. Costs incurred for work undertaken in the Parish by the lengths man will be retrieved from Balfour Beatty. A contract between the Parish Council and Balfour Beatty will be drawn up before the work starts.
 - c. Replacement rubbish bins. It was agreed that until the cost of the recent and the forthcoming election are known, that purchase of a replacement bin in West View is deferred.
5. CORRESPONDENCE
 - a. Letter from Mrs Brain requesting that the Highways Authority is made aware of the state of the roadside gutters in Bells Orchard, Mountain View and Manor Close, which may impede the flow of water in the gutters.

Mr Hope explained that the Highways Authority had been informed of essential work requiring attention. When a lengths man is available, the work will be included in his schedule.
 - b. Letter of resignation as a Parish Councillor from Mrs Claire Price. It was noted that an election to fill the vacancy will be held on 17 September 2015,

- c. Letter from Mr Barry Hall. Mr Hall raised various issues:
- i. He expressed concern that minutes recording proceedings of the Annual Parish Meeting did not reflect concerns raised by residents. These included late night crop spraying which was noisy; consultation with residents with regard to planning applications, particularly an application for a pig rearing unit to which the previous Parish council had raised no objection. It was also thought that this could have an adverse effect on tourism. Work on a pond on the Lyonshall Road, which had apparently not been completed, although a grant had been received.
It was noted that it had not been possible to record in detail issues raised by residents because of lack of coherent discussion. Guidance on crop spraying is provided for farmers, and is not within the remit of the Parish Council. Councillors are elected and part of their role is to consider planning applications and submit comments to the District Council Planning Department. A mechanism exists for residents to comment directly to the Planners. A proposal that Councillors should overturn the comments made by the previous Parish Council was rejected. Those elected Councillors exercised their right to comment on planning applications as they considered appropriate. It was noted that other, much larger Parish Councils, identify a representative group to review planning applications. Regarding the Pond on the Lyonshall Road, Mr Hope reported discussion with the owner of the pond and had been informed that they wished to withdraw from the contract. The money will be returned. Mr Hope reported an exploratory discussion with Mr George Thompson, the County Land Agent, with responsibility for commons in the Parish. A tentative proposal was made that work of a similar nature should be implemented on the Meer Common, to which residents have access, and subject to agreement of the donor. Mr Hope will meet Mr Thompson on 7th September 2015 to discuss possibilities for the work, and estimated cost. Finally, consideration was given to planning meetings of the Parish Council up to one year in advance. It was proposed that the next meeting of the Parish Council should be held on 24 September 2015. This is subject to availability of the village hall.

6. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR.

It was agreed that until a replacement Councillor has been recruited, the Vice Chair vacancy should remain in abeyance.

7. REPORT ON INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM HEREFORDSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (HALC). Mrs Tucker, who represents the Parish Council on HALC, presented several documents prepared by the National Association of Local Council and HALC

designed to assist Councillors in their work. Documents were circulated for information to Councillors.

8. NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN. The clerk reported that work was progressing. A draft of the NDP had been reviewed by Mr Ted Bannister, Forward Planning Officer, Herefordshire Council, and received support with suggestions for some amendments. He noted that no sites had been allocated for development, but accepted that this was dependent on land owners. No compulsory purchase orders will be issued. Woonton and Almeley Wootten were favoured areas for development. Sewerage disposal and water supply services would be the responsibility of developers. Mr Bannister proposed employing a technical writer to assist with production of the final document for which a grant is available. Before submission to the District Council for approval, a public meeting will be held and comments invited from residents.

9. FINANCIAL MATTERS

It was proposed by Mr Hope, seconded by Mr Payne and agreed unanimously that the following accounts should be paid:

- i. Hire of Village Hall £18
- ii. Internal audit fee £30
- iii. Contribution towards defibrillator £50
- iv. Payment for restoration of kiosk in Woonton, refurbishment of rubbish collection bin and refurbishing the public bench in Woonton.

10. PLANNING MATTERS

Two storey extension Little Logaston (Woonton) Herefordshire. No objections were raised.

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 9.10pm