

ALMELEY PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of a Parish Council meeting held on
Wednesday 13th September 2017 at 7.30 pm in Almeley Village Hall**

Present

Parish Councillors: Liz Tucker (Chairman), James Edwards, Barry Hall, Bec Held, John Hope, Alan Payne, Martin Skyrme.

In attendance:

Lynda Wilcox (HALC) ... Clerk Cover.
Roger Phillips ... Acting Ward Councillor.

Thirteen local residents.

1. **Apologies for absence:** There were none – all councillors were present.

2. **Declarations of interest & written requests for dispensation:**
 - 2.1 Councillors James Edwards and Martin Skyrme were reminded to deliver new (updated) registers of interest to the Town Hall in Hereford for display on the Herefordshire Council website.
 - 2.2 Councillor Martin Skyrme declared a DPI (Disclosable Pecuniary Interest) in items 6.1 and 6.2.
 - 2.3 Councillor Alan Payne declared a DPI in item 6.1.
 - 2.4 Councillor John Hope declared a DPI in items 6.1 and 6.2.
 - 2.5 Councillor James Edwards declared a DPI in items 6.1 and 6.2.

3. **Open Session:**
 - 3.1 A report on Herefordshire Council matters from Cllr Roger Phillips, included:
 - 3.1.1 Roger Phillips had asked the Locality Steward to liaise with the parish council to identify roads which should be inspected for next year's programme.
 - 3.1.2 The absence of a Woonton sign from the Lyonshall direction would be reported by Roger Phillips.
 - 3.1.3 Drainage matters in Camp Lane had been attended to that morning.
 - 3.1.4 White lining on the A480 had been undertaken.
 - 3.1.5 All smallholdings previously owned by Herefordshire Council had now been sold.
 - 3.1.6 A court case had been won against Amey and Herefordshire Council had received £9.5m.
 - 3.1.7 The 2018/19 budget for Herefordshire Council would be challenging as there was no additional money and further savings were required.

3.2 Views of local residents on parish matters:

- 3.2.1 A local resident queried whether white gates could be sited in an effort to reduce speed. The matter would be discussed at item 8.

4. **Minutes of two previous meetings:**

4.1 June 19th 2017.

4.2 June 29th 2017.

It was RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the above two meetings and they were duly signed by the chairman.

5. **Finance ...** A bank balance of £12,014.84 was noted, following the transfer of £1656.30.

It was RESOLVED to make the following payments:

5.1 Election cost 2015: First of 3 x £625.84 payments re invoice for £1877.52.

5.2 Almeley Village Hall hire invoice number 57 for July ... £36.00.

5.3 HALC clerk cover for meeting @ £150 + VAT = £180.

Councillors Edwards, Hope, Payne & Skyrme left the room.

6. **Planning**

6.1 Planning applications and decisions:

Comments on applications for determination by Herefordshire Council:

- 6.1.1 Application 172485 ... Land at Woonton ... Site for the proposed erection of 3 dwellings, including formation of vehicular access, foul drainage treatment plant and other associated works. It was RESOLVED to make the following comments:
"Almeley Parish Council is opposed to this application because it is at the commencement of open countryside and development in this area would be detrimental to the surrounding countryside. It is also not supported by the emerging Almeley Neighbourhood Development Plan, as outlined below:
The Parish Council has been committed to a NDP since 2012. Through the assessment of public opinion this will establish the development policy which would dictate planning decisions in this parish until 2031. Almeley Parish Council's Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) is now at an advanced stage which contains parish dictated policies to be considered. Therefore this application cannot be considered in isolation but in the wider context of the NDP criteria being formulated by the community.

Herefordshire Council instigated a call for land asking the Parish landowners to cooperate in the identifying sites suitable for residential development. A land-owner responded to the call for land and asked that a redundant farm site at Woonton Farm be considered for the development of 5 dwellings.

Pre-application discussions have occurred between the owner of Woonton Farm, members of the NDP steering group, planning consultant and Hereford Council

planning office and as a consequence a detailed application is being submitted. The NDP process is a community vote and when assessed using the public data this site at Woonton Farm would be the most suitable development as the majority vote is to retain the current settlement boundary in Almeley. However this is based on the current level of development in Woonton. The implication to the community is if another application is approved in Woonton then the Woonton site could be considered unacceptable as this would exceed by far the 20% development threshold. This would then mean the options for development would centre in Almeley by extending the settlement boundary to include one of the 2 sites there. The NDP is being formulated by the community to protect the parish from inappropriate development and feel that only one of these sites should be approved to prevent Woonton becoming over developed. Application P172485/O has been compiled and submitted with no reference to, or negotiation with the NDP process. If approved, this further development would clearly prejudice consideration of the Woonton Farm site which has been reviewed and supported as part of the NDP process and which, it is felt, would be far more sustainable and beneficial to the amenity of Woonton. The application also contravenes Policy RA2 point 1 of the Herefordshire Council's (HC) Core Strategy which states that for smaller settlements such as Woonton, the proposal must demonstrate attention to the character and setting of the site and its location in that settlement. Planning applications have been approved for the construction of 9 dwellings in Woonton, a small hamlet which, at its core, has 15 houses. If this application for 3 houses is approved, the total number of new houses being added to Woonton would be 12, almost doubling the residences in this hamlet. If the site under consideration at Woonton Farm is also approved, the grand total of new houses in Woonton would be 17, which is over double the current number of houses. Based on making a direct choice between the two sites, there are very clear advantages the Woonton Farm site offers over this application.

- a) The Woonton Farm site followed the NDP call for land procedure as recognised and approved by Herefordshire Council. The NDP is formulated from planning policy which dictates that development should be in or adjacent to the settlement. This site is classified as open countryside and could set a precedent for ribbon development along the A480.
- b) Woonton Farm site has been considered a valid site for development, based on the agreed criteria stated in the NDP draft document. These criteria have also been reviewed by the residents of the parish, and following the completion of a questionnaire made available to all parishioners, 99% are in agreement with the criteria. This application would have wider implications if approved on the NDP selection of land for development.
- c) The Woonton Farm site is not prime agricultural land but disused buildings site as opposed to this application which is Grade 2 agricultural land, is currently being farmed and is classified as open countryside not in or adjacent

- d) to the settlement of Woonton. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) issued by the government states in section 11 that planning policies and decisions should encourage the effective use of land by re-using land previously developed. This has been incorporated into HC's Core Strategy Policy RA2, which states that housing proposals will be permitted when their locations make best and full use of suitable brownfield sites.
- e) The Woonton Farm site already has access onto the Almeley road (C1079) and the double access onto the A480. This application is directly onto Hopley's Green Road which is a single track road with currently minimal use. Accessing the A480 there are three significant hazards, a hidden dip and a blind bend. The A480 at that junction is also subject to surface water flooding following periods of heavy rain. This does not satisfy the requirement as stated in Core Strategy Policy MT1 which has a requirement that the local highway network can absorb the traffic impacts without adversely affecting the safe and efficient flow of traffic.

6.1.2 Application 173081 ... The Whittern Farm --- Proposed agricultural muck store. It was RESOLVED to support the application.

Prior approval applications were noted as:

- 6.1.3 Application P173164/PA7 ... Lower Wootton Farm ... Proposed covered manure/silage yard.
- 6.1.4 Application P173317/PA7 ... Wood Farm ... Application for prior notification of agricultural development – proposed building for agricultural muck store.

Planning permissions granted by Herefordshire Council were noted as:

- 6.1.5 Application 171756 ... Little Upcott, Almeley Road. Proposed garage/workshop.
- 6.1.6 Application 171792 ... 21 Bells Orchard, Almeley. Demolition of garage, carport and conservatory and erection of single storey rear/side extension and garage.
- 6.1.7 Application 172003 ... The Meadows, Almeley. Proposed 2 bay extension to an existing hay barn and cattle housing.

6.2 Comments on Minerals & Waste Local Plan ... It was RESOLVED not to submit any comments to the current consultation.

6.3 Neighbourhood Development Plan:

- 6.3.1 The chairman commented that the NDP Group was not for or against development, it was simply putting forward the views of the community established through the consultation process.
- 6.3.2 NDP minutes were on the noticeboard and website.
- 6.3.3 The next grant instalment for £4067 had been paid into the bank account.
- 6.3.4 The next meeting was scheduled for 20th September at 6.00 pm.

7. Parish Maintenance:

- 7.1 Future cost of mowing around Woonton notice board/phone box ... It was thought that £25 would cover the annual cost of fuel for a mower.
- 7.2 A local resident volunteered to routinely check the defibrillator at the pub entrance. It was noted that funding for the defibrillator was held by the Village Hall Committee.

8. Speed reduction measures within the parish

- 8.1 Roger Phillips would raise speed reduction measures for Almeley at a meeting he would be attending the following Tuesday with Ray Wallis.
- 8.2 The speed of some stock vehicles through the centre of the village was causing concern.
- 8.3 Traffic had more than doubled in the last 2.5 years.
- 8.4 It was RESOLVED to seek funding for speed reduction measures such as white gates and SIDs (Speed Indicator Devices).

9. Footpath AM15 ... A public path diversion order was noted.

10. Date of next scheduled meeting ... Wednesday 15th November 2017

- 10.1 Items for discussion would include:
 - 10.1.1 Spearmarsh Common mowing ... £800.
 - 10.1.2 Defibrillator.
 - 10.1.3 Speed reduction ... white gates/SIDs etc.

A resolution was passed to exclude the public for the following confidential employment item

11. Employment Matters

- 11.1 Lynda Wilcox from HALC gave an update on recruitment measures and it was RESOLVED that interviews for a new clerk should take place as soon as possible.

SIGNED



DATE

15/11/17