

## Parish Council of Alfrick and Lulsley

### **Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council on Thursday 28th February 2019 at 19:30hrs in the Village Hall, Alfrick.**

**Present:** Cllr B Martin, Chair

Cllrs: Ms B Brown, A Crockford, B Fishwick, G Lowe, E Mutter, C. Cllr P Tuthill, Dist. Cllrs Ms S Rouse, A Warburton,

D Bradley (Parish Tree Warden), G M Brewin (Clerk),

**Apologies;** Cllrs A G Cooper.

**Visitors:** Three parishioners

**Matters of concern prior to the formal meeting.** The possibility of funding for leisure activities from the Chapel Meadow development was raised and councillors were asked to consult across the parish once this was available.

**Reports:** County & District Councillors, Footpaths' Warden, Tree Warden, Village Hall, Community Shop.

Cllr P Tuthill briefed the council on the WCC budget, the progress on the Worcester Southern Bypass and the plans for the widening of the Carrington Bridge..

Cllr S Rouse reported on the MHDC activities including plans to review community transport.

Dr D Bradley (Parish Tree Warden) reported on the work in maintaining the 'Pound' and the WWT Natural Networks Programme.

Cllr G Lowe (Parish Paths Warden) reported on difficulties of getting things done in the current climate.

Cllr B Fishwick reported on progress on resurfacing the Village hall car park which would start at the end of February.

Cllr B Martin as vice-chair of the Community Shop Committee reported that the new new Cafe was making an increasing contribution to the shop's activities.

**The formal meeting commenced at 20.28 hrs**

## **AGENDA**

**1.**

### **Members' Apologies for absence**

The apology from Cllr A Cooper was accepted.

**2.**

### **Members' Declarations of Interest**

There were no Declarations of Interest in agenda items.

**3.**

### **Confirm the minutes of the monthly meeting on 24th January 2019 (circulated in advance)**

It was agreed that the minutes were a true record and they were signed by the Chair.

**4.**

### **Financial Matters;**

- a) Approve payment: Lengthsman - Jan. - £144.00 inc vat - Approved
- b) Approve payment: Parish Tree Warden expenses - £45.35 - Approved
- c) Approve payment: Clerk's expenses, Aug - Dec 2018 - £38.67 - Approved
- d) Approve payment: Andrew's Gardening Services - Alfrick Pound - £130.00 - Approved
- e) In addition the council gave approval for the clerk to make a 'delegated decision' payment of £3636.00 inc vat to Guy Sterry Ltd for work on the Playing Field entrance as this invoice had arrived too late for inclusion in the agenda. This to be formally recorded at the next meeting. The clerk advised that council is expecting to receive several donations towards the total cost of the work but as some additional expense has been incurred in improving access the council agreed to commit a further £780.00 in addition to its original commitment of £1000.00.

**5.**

### **Planning and Environmental Matters; -**

- a) Chapel Meadow development; (Cllr A Cooper's report circulated in advance) This was noted - see appendix -a Clay Green Farm development; a date is still awaited for the appeal to be heard to the latest reserved matters proposal.
- b) Note Clerk's delegated response to:  
Application Number 19/00103/HP - 3 St Marys Crescent Alfrick Worcester WR6 5HW  
Proposal; Proposed single storey rear extension, removal of chimney and proposed rendered panel to front elevation plus canopy roof over garage and front door.  
'No Comment' returned. - Noted

- c) Note Clerk's delegated response to:  
Application Number 18/01812/ADV - Land At (Os 7489 5306) Clay Green Alfrick  
Proposal; Interpretation panel on lectern style noticeboard explaining the area's traditional orchard heritage.  
'This council supports this application' returned. - Noted
- d) Confirm response to request from MH-AONB on its latest proposals. (circulated in advance) This was confirmed and the clerk asked to forward this to MH-AONB see appendix -b

**6.**

**Highways and Footpaths**

- a) Highway Litter-Picking. Review situation and clerk to report. Some 14 residents had volunteered for this on March 23rd. It is supported by MHDC who will provide 15 sets of equipment. It is planned to cover the Leigh - Knightwick road and the Leigh - Suckley road through the parish from 10:00 to 12:00 with refreshments provided by the council at the Village Cafe after.
- b) Speeding through the village. The clerk was asked to contact the police at Malvern to see what can be done to enforce the speed limits.

**7.**

**Jubilee Plantation**

Review situation: The Tree Warden has organised a 'working party' to clear the tangle of undergrowth.

**8.**

**Playing Field.**

Consider the proposal of the 'Pollinators Group' to limit mowing in some areas. (circulated in advance) These were discussed and the clerk asked to review them with the mowing contractor and report at the next meeting.

**9.**

**Clerk's Report -**

- a) Actions from the previous meetings - clerk to report. All completed.
- b) Correspondence received. All circulated to members
- c) Items to be drawn to the council's attention - Council elections - 2nd May 2019 - Procedures.  
The clerk reviewed these and suggested councillors meet informally at 19:00 hrs on 28th March in advance of the council meeting when he will be able to provide information to those intending to stand for election.  
Agreed.

**10.**

**Items for the next meeting.**

See 4 (e), 6 (b), 9 (c), above.

**11.**

**Confirm the date of the next meeting;**

Thursday 28th March 2019 at 19:30 hrs. in the Village Hall, Alfrick. Agreed.

The meeting closed at 21:27 hrs.

Minutes confirmed ..... 28/03/2019

*appendix -a*

The development is drawing to an end. They should be finished by End of March early April.

Plot 14 and the affordable flats are those left to be complete on the outside. Internal work is carrying on at a pace. Bricklayers will have finished by now, and roofers will finish as soon as the affordable properties are roofed.

The sale of plots 5,6,8 and 9 will complete on the 8th March with the purchasers moving in then. In all 8 of the 10 have been sold. The majority of the purchasers are retired.

I have given the site manager a copies of the Welcome Pack for each home, but I intend to go and introduce myself when back from holiday.

All that is left is what is going to happen to those four flats. As the development is now 80% sold can MHDC now talk to Kendrick Homes and the housing associations and come to a decision, or are we going to be left to the potential of the flats being sold on the open market at 70% value and rented to whoever. This needs to be sorted.

*Andrew*

*appendix -b*

### **Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Draft Guidance Document**

The Alfrick and Lulsley Parish Council (ALPC) would like to offer the comments below on the AONB Draft Document. We are a small rural Parish but one which has a substantial part of its area designated as an AONB and we are therefore affected by almost all the issues referred to in the document. The comments we make are based on our experiences as a statutory consultee to planning applications over an extended period of time. As part of the development of a Parish Design Statement the residents were widely consulted on the issues of future developments in the Parish so the ALPC is confident that the opinions expressed will have the support of the residents.

**Current Planning Practice.** It may be useful to start by briefly commenting on the present approach to planning of developments in that some aspects negatively impact on what the AONB document is trying to achieve. We have seen good practice, mainly by small companies working on small scale developments but the larger companies have almost always built at high densities which are out of keeping with their rural setting and in consequence cause damage to the natural landscape that is well out of proportion to the actual area of the development. If there is one thing that we would like to see changed in the NPPF is that any development should reflect the average density of the established built environment into which it is being introduced ie, if the density of existing houses is around 4 to the acre (quite common in a rural area) then that density should apply to any adjacent new developments. Developers will argue that they need to build at high densities because the cost of the land makes such action necessary to keep the site viable. However, if developers knew the density requirements from the outset they could adjust to price offered for the land. A lower density allows for green screening of buildings allowing them to blend into the landscape, as is true for much of this Parish.

#### **Comments on the Draft AONB Document.**

**General.** The Parish Council strongly supports the aims and objectives set out in the document and also supports the general approach taken. Our only serious concern is that we believe the protection offered to AONB sites is not sufficiently strong. We have seen a number of applications in this Parish to build in AONB designated areas, mainly using the excuse of a "house of great architectural importance". All were clearly using a potential loophole to subvert the planning process and all were turned down but not before an extended planning process had taken place and, in one instance, an appeal. We would like to see all potential loopholes closed so that only building of a national, strategic importance could be considered. Whilst there are potential routes for overcoming planning restrictions on building in an AONB there will remain a temptation to try to use them.

**Retrospective Planning Applications.** We have seen a case in this Parish where extensive building work has taken place within an AONB without a planning application, the owners claiming they didn't know they needed planning permission –such permission would have been required even if the development was outside of an AONB. We see this as another attempt to subvert the planning process and would suggest that the new document states that there will be NO retrospective permission given in any circumstances and that any work carried out will have to be removed, the area restored to its former condition, all at the owners expense. If one retrospective application were to succeed then many others would follow.

**Mitigation.** There are many examples of possible mitigation measures that are available given in the documentation, all of them representing good practice. However, there are two comments we would like to make:

a). Where high density building has taken place there is generally little room to install effective mitigation

measures.

b) The view of the ALPC is that “mitigation” is often used to suggest that the worst of the damage caused to the landscape by building can somehow be offset by such mitigation. There are schemes offering money to make “wildlife” areas after the existing areas have been destroyed, an exercise in futility. The view of the ALPC is that if you wish to preserve the landscape and wildlife value then don’t build on it in the first place.

**Areas Adjacent to an AONB.** The document rightly recognises the importance of the areas surrounding an AONB in protecting the overall scene and the ALPC supports the measures proposed in the document.

Developments can have unseen effects on their surroundings; here owls have been displaced from trees where they have nested for years just as the result of noise from an adjacent development.

**Dark Skies.** The ALPC supports the concept of dark skies. In this Parish residents have voted time and again to keep lighting to an absolute minimum and there are no street lights. Such lighting has a profound effect on many nocturnal species.

**Conclusion.** *This Parish strongly supports the concept of AONB designated areas, would like to see more of them and would wish to see their powers enhanced. We see them as a key part of preserving the landscape value and the preservation of the wildlife, all under threat.*