

Parish Council of Alfrick and Lulsley

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council on Thursday 22nd September 2016 at 19:30hrs in the Village Hall, Alfrick.

Present:

Cllr Miss L Randall, Chair.

Cllrs; A G Cooper, A J Crockford, B Fishwick, B Martin, E Mutter, G Lowe, N Tudge.

G M Brewin (Clerk), Dist. Cllr Ms S Rouse, Dist. Cllr A Warburton, County Cllr P Tuthill, D Bradley (Parish Tree Warden),

Apologies; All present.

Visitors; none

Reports:

County and District Councillors, Footpaths' Warden, Tree Warden, Village Hall, Community Shop.

There were verbal reports from:

County Cllr P Tuthill, Dist Cllr Ms S Rouse, Dist. Cllr A Warburton, Cllr G Lowe, Parish Paths Warden, Cllr B Fishwick Village Hall representative, and Cllr B Martin, Community Shop Representative.

D Bradley (Parish Tree Warden) provide a report on the future of the Jubilee plantation with several options to be considered by the council. (see appendix - a).

The formal meeting commenced at 8:45pm

AGENDA

1.

Members' Apologies for absence

The clerk advised that following Cllr P Brown's letter of resignation to the Chair on 5th September he had put in hand the process of filling a Casual Vacancy by advising the Electoral Registration Officer and posting the required notice on the council's website and notice boards. The required period for ten electors for the ward to claim an election would be completed on 27th September so the Council could co-opt to fill the vacancy at the next meeting.

2.

Members' Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest in agenda items.

3.

Confirm the minutes of the Meeting held on 28th July 2016

These had been circulated in advance, were agreed as a true record and signed by the chair.

4.

Financial Matters;

- a) Approve payment - R Lambert, VAS maintenance £35.00 - Approved
- b) Note Clerk's Delegated Payment - R Lambert, VAS maintenance £45.00 - Noted
- c) Note Clerk's Delegated Payment - W Roberts, Notice Board Repair £85.61 - Noted
- d) Note - External Auditor's Report on the 2105-6 accounts - Comments on Staff Costs.

The clerk reported that the external auditors had requested that 'Office Costs' should not be included in 'Clerk's Expenses' but reported separately in future. He would do this.

5.

Planning Matters

- a) Respond to 'Reserved Matters - Four houses on Folly Road'
The council discussed this at length and agreed the following response.
- i) It was noted the the clerk had not received a formal request for the council to review this application although it was posted on the Development Office's website.
- ii) Most of the PC's original comments on the outline planning application (under MHDC's reference 14/00950/OUT) have now been washed over by the granting of outline planning permission, the only things the council can comment on are on the REM application.
 - a) The depth of the rear gardens into the field. The developer seems to have taken the line from the outer fence of the property 'Evergreen' but the evidence is that the garden was extended into the field without planning permission –the original depth is defined by the inner fence. This point requires further investigation and the plans redrawn if necessary.
- iii) Footpath. The issues are the width and whether the present position was ever officially agreed.
- iv) The location plan does not seem to be to scale, Wheatley Cottage is shown in the wrong location.

- v) The “changes to the original drawing” note refers to “ ’phone lines being “not copper”, the inference is that they will be in fibre optic cable. Does this mean fibre to the exchange or just to some local junction to await a connection to the exchange? Can the developer show that any ‘phone line connection is possible?
- vi) What provision is being made for the maintenance of the remainder of the field?
- b) Respond to - 16/00624/HOU - Construction of treehouse to accommodate home office.
Hill Orchard, Lulsley.
The council discussed this and agreed the following response.
 - i) It is not a 'Tree House'. It is a separate building raised above ground with virtually residential accommodation.
 - ii) It is too large and obtrusive to be allowed in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
- c) Respond to - 16/01249/HOU Retention of existing garage with alterations to facilitate ancillary domestic accommodation on the first floor. Green Street Barn, Green Street, Lulsley,.
The council discussed this and agreed a response of 'No Comment'.

6.

Working with Leigh and Bransford Parish Council on a Joint Neighbourhood Plan. - Confirmation of the decision at the September meeting that work on the Neighbourhood Plan should be abandoned.
This decision was confirmed unanimously.

7.

A Children's Play Area. - Consider installing a Play Area. (postponed from the previous meeting.)
It was agreed that there was no point in discussing this until a substantial fund was available possibly from a 'Section 106' charge on new houses.

8.

Lengthsman - Clerk to report.

The clerk reported that following the death of the Lengthsman his agricultural contractors business had been wound up and the council must find a new Lengthsman. The council asked the clerk to proceed with advertisements and follow up suggestions made by members.

9. Clerk's Report -

- a) Actions from the previous meeting
 - i) War Memorial, Several quotations indicated a cost of around £5000 and he would investigate the possibility of a grant from the War Memorials Trust.
 - ii) Playing Field Pavillion, He was continuing to search for a contractor to demolish this.
 - iii) Other Playing Field Matters. He had received a quotation from the contractor who cuts the Village hall surrounds to cut the playing field at the same visit and it was agreed to accept this.
 - iv) Jubilee Plantation. Quotations for the agreed work would be obtained as soon as possible.
- b) Correspondence received: All items had been circulated via email.
- c) Items drawn to the council's attention: There was a new report of the progress of Malvern Hills District Council Five Year Plan.

10.

Items for the next meeting.

- a) Lengthsman
- b) Jubilee Plantation.
- c) Clerk's Half-Year financial report

11.

Confirm the date of the next meeting; Thursday 27th October 2016 at 19:30 hrs. in the Village Hall, Alfrick
This was agreed

The meeting closed at 9:54pm

Minutes confirmed

27-10-2016

Several options for the Jubilee Plantation have been proposed.

1. Carry out work as permitted by MHDC and leave as is.
2. Clear area and establish as a community orchard.
3. Clear area and establish as an allotment.
4. Establish a managed wildlife area.
- 5.

The question needs to be asked (of parishioners?) what is the best use of this rather small piece of land (approx. 37x27m) which has very limited access at present. Access could be improved by linking through to public footpaths in the adjoining field. Improvement to the access from Knightwick Rd is very unlikely.

1. Carry out work as permitted by MHDC and leave as is.

This work will be carried out but is not seen as a long term solution for this plot of land. The trees are still not at their mature height and therefore shading to surrounding properties will increase as will the risk of falling trees.

2. Clear area and establish as a community orchard.

This would be an expensive option. The ground would need to be cleared of all vegetation and tree roots removed. The orchard would need considerable management.

3. Clear area and establish as an allotment.

As with 2), this would be an expensive option. The ground would need to be cleared of all vegetation and tree roots removed. Some management would be required but allotment holders would carry out most of the work.

4. Establish a managed wildlife area.

This is my preferred option. It is a wildlife area at present but is not managed. James Hitchcock WWT Reserves Officer visited the plantation with Tony Crockford and me and was very enthusiastic about the possibility of it becoming a well managed wildlife area. Well managed would not mean removal of all ground cover, indeed it would be encouraged implying that the plantation would not become a "play area" but a serious wildlife refuge. Dog walkers would not be encouraged. With the development at Clay Green Farm and on the adjacent field, habitats like the one proposed are becoming more important as wildlife habitats decline.

Some of the trees are unsuitable for such a small area and I would propose that most of the tall ones be removed and less tall species planted. In fact planting may not be necessary as there are many self seeded saplings of cherry and ash and some of the trees that are coppiced (cut down) would reshoot. The objective would be to have a wooded area of up to about 8 m in height. James suggested that bird and bat boxes could be installed, a bug "hotel" provided and a small pond dug. Some or all of this work could be carried out by volunteers.

I suggest that parishioners need to be canvassed and that discussions with Chris Lewis Farley (MHDC Landscape Officer) should be arranged because all the trees are protected by TPOs. Some smaller native trees for consideration are as follows:

Alder buckthorn is unrelated to alder. It's a colourful tree native to England and Wales, most of Europe, northern Africa and western Asia. 6m.

Purging buckthorn is often known simply as 'buckthorn'. It is commonly found growing in scrub and woodland around Britain. 10m.

Blackthorn, also known as 'sloe', is a small deciduous tree native to the UK and most of Europe. 6m.

Common box is a large, slow-growing evergreen tree native to the UK (mainly the south) and throughout mainland Europe. 12m.

Crab apple thrives in heavy soil in hedgerows, woods and areas of scrub. 10m.

Guelder rose is a deciduous, upright shrub that is native to Asia and Europe, including the UK 4m.

Midland hawthorn is native to western and central Europe. It grows best in dense, ancient woodland, shady old woodland and hedge banks on heavy soils. 8m.

Hazel is a deciduous broadleaf tree native to the UK. 12m when not coppiced.

Rowan is also known as mountain ash and is native to the UK and northern and western Europe. 15m.

Spindle is a deciduous tree native to the UK and across Europe. 9m.

Goat willow is a deciduous broadleaf tree native to the UK, most of Europe and parts of Asia. 10m.