

Parish Council of Alfrick and Lulsley

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council on Thursday 22 November 2018 at 19:30hrs in the Village Hall, Alfrick.

Present: Cllr B Martin, Chair

Cllrs: A G Cooper, A Crockford, B Fishwick, G Lowe, ,

C. Cllr P Tuthill, D Cllr Ms S Rouse, D Bradley (Parish Tree Warden), G M Brewin (Clerk),

Apologies; Cllrs Ms B Brown, Ms L Lowton, E Mutter.

Visitors: Four parishioners, Ms K Humphries MH AONB Orchards Project

Matters of concern prior to the formal meeting.

The parishioners, who are residents of Green Street raised two local issues;

B/Band - it seems that Green Street is not included in the local plan although Painscastle at the Folly Road junction is shown as having it!

The clerk suggested they need to visit the section of the WCC website set out for b/band need and log in their claims.

Green Street road surface - the clerk will re-raise this with WCC.

He would also advise our County Councillor who may be able to add more 'push' our efforts on both issues.

Ms K Humphries, MH AONB Orchards Project reported that the Apple Orchards project was nearing completion and to draw ongoing attention particularly the support from around Alfrick and Lulsley planned to install an information board near the village centre showing what had been done.

Councillors expressed support and asked that the council be kept informed.

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

C. Cllr P Tuthill reported on events at the Worcestershire Royal Hospital, the Worcester Southern Bypass and WCC Childrens' Services.

Dist. Cllrs Ms S Rouse reported on the restructuring at MHDC, on the process of updating the SWDP, the procedure for identifying new housing sites and continuing problems with the Clay Green Farm development.

Cllr G Lowe, Footpaths' Warden, reported that he had reported problems with a stile at Lulsley and hoped it would be replaced with a gate.

Dr D Bradley (Parish Tree Warden) reported on the Pollinators Group and maintaining the 'Pound'. His full report is included in the appendix to the council minutes.

Cllr B Fishwick reported on progress on resurfacing the Village hall car park which would be done once the work on the Playing Field access path was complete.

Cllr B Martin as vice-chair of the Community Shop Committee noted the development of the cafe section of the shop.

The formal meeting commenced at 20.58 hrs

AGENDA

1.

Members' Apologies for absence

The apologies from Cllrs Ms B Brown, Ms L Lowton and E Mutter were accepted.

2.

Members' Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest in agenda items.

3.

Confirm the minutes of the monthly meeting on Thursday 25th October 2018.

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

4.

Financial Matters;

- a) Approve payment: Lengthsman - October - £129.60 inc vat - Agreed
- b) Approve payment: J Clarke - War Memorial planting - £46.00 - Agreed
- c) Review the half-yr financial situation (circulated in advance) and establish a Budget and Precept committee to report at the January meeting

The committee would consist of Cllr B Martin, Chair, Cllrs: A G Cooper and E Mutter.

5.

Planning and Environmental Matters; -

- a) Clay Green Farm development; There was a long discussion over the Northern Area Planning Committee decision to postpone a decision on this development and also that the developer had decided to appeal to the Planning Inspectorate over this.
It was agreed that Cllr B Martin and Cllr A Crockford would discuss this with District Councillors to formulate a council response to the developing situation and if necessary call a Special Meeting of the council to decide on this.
- b) Cllr A G Cooper, reported on Chapel Meadow development. There had been another anonymous complaint about the site and he again pointed out that such anonymous complaints tended to detract from the relationship that he had established with the site management. The council agreed unanimously.
- c) Note delegated response to application 18/01410/FUL
*The building of a detached house in garden of 2, Church Cottages is broadly in line with the preferred options in the Parish Design Statement.
The proposed new house is associated with the semi-detached cottage referred to as 2, Church Cottages. This was bought about 2 years or so ago when it was in a poor state. It has now deteriorated into a semi-derelict condition. We ask for a condition that the owner brings this semi-detached cottage up to a habitable standard before building work on the detached house commences or, at least, at the same time. As the property is surrounded by existing houses there should be a restriction on working hours eg, 8 am to 4 pm and no weekend working.*
Noted
- c) Report by Cllr L Lowton on the South Worcestershire Development Plan Review – Briefing for Parish and Town Councils, Tuesday 6th November 2018
In Cllr Lowton's absence the clerk read her report which is included in the appendix to the minutes.

6.

Highways and Footpaths

Highway Litter-Picking.

The council noted a the contribution from Mr P Tebbit and it was proposed to review this at the January meeting.

7.

Jubilee Plantation

As there is some possibility of linking the plantation into the adjacent field it was agreed the Cllr Crockford would continue informal discussions with various parties to this and report at the next meeting.

8.

Clerk's Report -

- a) Actions from the previous meetings - These had been completed.
- b) Correspondence received. All circulated to members
- c) Items to be drawn to the council's attention
Local road traffic speeds were now available for: 3rd - 17th Sept, Old Police Station, 17th Sept - 1st Oct, Alfrick 30 mph sign, 1st - 15th Oct - just before Fox & Hounds and 15th - 29th Oct - Old Police Station. These had been prepared by Cllr D Findlater of Suckley Parish Council and showed that the Old Police House location in Alfrick has some very high speeds regularly recorded throughout the day. By the Village Sign and Fox&Hounds locations have very similar data to the last recorded set, although the band B offences have reduced by 2/3 journeys a day. there were 58 offences ie over 30mph each day in the parish. Full details in the appendix to the minutes.
He reminded the meeting that 'Band B' offences now are over 40mph in a 30mph zone and if caught result in a fine of 100% of weekly wage, 4 to 6 points and a potential disqualification for 1 month.
The clerk was asked particularly to include this in the next edition of the Sphere and the thank Cllr Findlater for his work.

9.

Items for the next meeting.

Budget and Precept committee to report, Jubilee Plantation, Highway Litter-Picking, Clay Green Farm development.

10.

Confirm the date of the next meeting;

Thursday 24th January 2019 at 19:30 hrs. in the Village Hall, Alfrick Confirmed.

The meeting closed at 21:20 hrs

Tree Warden's Report

Further to the Parish Pollinator's meeting held on October 11th 2018 (notes provided to parish clerk) work is progressing on clearing the pound of brambles and dogwood in order to encourage limestone-loving plants. The work is being carried out by myself and Ben Abrahams a 15 year old from Suckley who was introduced to us by Margaret Newitt. I have followed Worcestershire County Council guidelines on working party risk assessment and obtained Ben's mother's written permission. The work is half complete. Dogwood has invaded the pound and I have treated the stumps with Roundup stump killer in the hope that this will also kill the multitude of suckers, digging them up is out of the question! Cuttings are being disposed of at Malvern tip. There is a dead tree on the pound which should come down. Unfortunately there are telephone wires going through it. I have contacted Open Reach who told me that it is the council's or land owner's responsibility to remove dead trees and if the cable gets damaged by that action then Open Reach would repair (unclear if there would be a charge for this).

The next area to be addressed will be the plantation where it is proposed to remove 75% of the brambles which are preventing access. Management of this area must proceed with consideration for the local residents who a) don't necessarily want the trees to be cut down, b) don't like the inconvenience of the leaves in autumn and c) report wildlife activity there.

Derek Bradley

A&L Tree Warden

Pollinators Group

October 11th 2018 Notes from informal initial meeting

Held at 'Pound Piece', Alfrick Pound, 2.30pm. Present Carol and Derek Bradley, Margaret Newitt, Tony Crockford Areas throughout the parish that could be better managed to improve habitat for pollinating insects were discussed. [Brief management plans may be needed for most of the areas to inform contractors and parishioners.]

Churchyard. Margaret and Helen Cook had a brief walk round last week. It was thought that initially areas within large graves with stone surrounds could be left unmown to encourage wildflowers. [These areas would still need to be managed sensitively to achieve this.]

Playing field. To leave a strip at the top end away from the football pitch and also strips at each side to manage for the wildflowers that are present, by leaving unmown from say February until mid July. Discussions have already taken place with the parish council who are broadly supportive, and with Mark Davies of the Badgers football club who sees no problems. Tony, who is a parish councillor, thought that it would be fairly easy to obtain agreement. A site visit is needed with all those interested, including especially Geoffrey Brewin, parish clerk.

Jubilee Plantation. An ongoing problem, on the agenda for October PC meeting. In 2016 James Hitchcock, then Reserves Manager at Worcs. Wildlife Trust visited and advised coppicing or felling a large number of trees, amongst other management ideas. [Derek walked round with him at the time]

The Pound: a small area of historic geological and wildlife interest. It was the local animal pound and is on a small outcrop of Woolhope limestone. There are almost certainly slow worms in the old walls through the warmer months, and hibernating on or below ground throughout the winter. Some have been seen in the adjacent garden in 2018. Therefore, environmental management should be very mindful of this, as well as the possibility of nesting birds and pollinating insects laying eggs on brambles etc. Machinery being used sparingly and only in the winter months. It should be noted that in the last few years some common spotted orchids have appeared amongst the scrub, two in 2018. The long-term overall aim would be to achieve areas of lime-rich grassland with associated wildflowers; for this, continuing careful management would be needed.

At present the Pound area is covered with trailing brambles, some nettles and other scrub including a large area of dogwood, as well as the dogwood tree, a couple of hawthorns and some other trees, one dead, on the boundary. There is also a young wild service tree, planted in 2011. Recent management has been by a PC-appointed and funded gardening contractor in an ongoing programme of nettle and bramble clearance by physically digging up the roots, and some strimming and removal of the debris. Also, annual verge cutting to 1 to 2 m from the road edge by a WCC contractor (in 2018, only once in May). This has resulted in some valuable and colourful wild flowers in the grass across the strip adjacent to the road edge but also in soil exposure and erosion of the steep roadside bank where the verge mower has cut into it, with soil/shale blocking the roadside drain and ending up on the road (dangerous skid risk, it does happen) at the bottom of the bank.

A site meeting with Carol and Derek, Margaret and Ben Abrahams (a keen and knowledgeable young man from Stanford Bishop) resulted in the following suggestions:

During this winter, fell and poison large dogwood shrubby tree, large hawthorn shrub in centre, fell dead tree by the Pound wall on the right (need to involve Western Power because power lines go through it).

Clear and remove, by digging up using hand tools, encroaching dogwood shoots, also nettles and brambles except in small areas to be identified. Ben has offered to do this, as a winter project. The debris, brash etc. will be left in two or three piles as wildlife habitat and the excess removed by Carol and Derek.

Clear carefully some of the ivy from the old walls; Derek and Carol will do this [the pound walls also act as retaining walls for the higher up garden of 'Pound Piece'. The ivy binds together the stones so without some ivy, the walls may

disintegrate and fall].
Review again after the area is clearer.

Further suggestions for the Pound (some not discussed as yet):

Carry out some 1m quadrat plant monitoring before and after management (Carol and Derek can do this, with anyone else interested).

After the initial clearance, dig up more of the unwanted plants, e.g. further woody scrub, docks and other plants, non-native garden escapes, and wildflowers and grasses that in excess would swamp and suppress the growth of less common species.

Bare patches seeded with the appropriate native wildflower mix for the soil and vegetation type, also to plant appropriate plants, both seeds and plants being commercially available from specialist wildlife/agricultural suppliers.

SWDP Briefing

Submission of new plan due Feb 2021

Current SWDP stands however changes to National Policy Planning Framework 2018 (such as duty to cooperate) and commitment to build 300,000 new homes nationally require changes to the plan.

Issues and options is not site specific and no sifting will be done until 2019 when preferred options will be submitted

Public consultation underway – 6 weeks from Nov 5th

Timeline is

2017/18 evidence, studies, assessments eg. Economic Need Study, Green Belt Land Study, AONB etc

2019 Preferred options

2020 Independent examination of proposals and public engagement

2021 Submission Feb and adoption November

Worcs new house building must increase by 50/year to 1183 new homes per year to meet our target of 14,000 new homes although the number of new homes required is under review nationally, so this could change. This figure includes private building and authority will top up any deficit.

Issues under consideration are employment (Wychavon highest demand), cities and town centre development as traditional high street declines, housing density around transport hubs.

Concerns: Fred Davis, Wychavon and Malvern Planning Policy Team Leader made assertions that public transport was under threat as many services were financially “unsustainable”. This was of concern to me and I would welcome inputs from council members about this. I will check out Issues and Options and report back.

VAS Radar speed meter results

Location:

3rd Sept - 17th Sept - Old Police Station, Alfrick 30 mph sign

17th Sept - 1st Oct Village sign name opp Swan orchard

1st Oct - 15th Oct - Back road narrows just before Fox & Hounds

15th Oct - 29th Oct - Old Police Station, Alfrick

Results Summary

	Location	Days measured	Band A 30-40mph % of journeys	Band B 40-50mph	Band B Daily Rate	Band C above 50mph	Band C Above 60	85th Percentile Speed
A.	Old Police House 30mph sign	14	46.8	250	18	3	0	35.9
B.	Village Sign Swan Orchard	14	41.2	138	10	2	0	34.4
C.	Fox Hounds	14	35.7	88	6	0	0	34.0
D.	Old Police House 2nd set	14	45.0	211	15	4	0	35.7

Analysis:

Old police house location in Alfrick has some very high speeds regularly recorded throughout the day. Village Hall and Fox&Hounds have very similar data to the last recorded set, although the Band B offences have reduced by 2/3 journeys a day.

Reminder that Band B offences are >40mph in a 30mph zone and if caught results in a fine of 100% of weekly wage, 4 to 6 points and a potential disqualification for 1 month.