**ALDBURY PARISH COUNCIL**

**PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

Held on

**Monday November 5th 2018 at 8.0pm**

**in Aldbury Memorial Hall**

**Present:** Cllrs Brady (in the chair), McCarthy, Pearce (vice-chair) and Tollinton, the Clerk, Borough Cllr Mills and 8 members of the public.

**MINUTES**

1. **Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Eggar, Juniper, O’Neill and Moore and were accepted by the Council.

1. **Declarations of Interest**

Cllr McCarthy stated that he was Chairman of HAPTC

1. **Minutes of meeting on 1st October 2018 to be signed as a true record**

Cllr Pearce proposed that the Minutes from the meeting of 1st October were accepted as a true record; this was seconded by Cllr McCarthy

1. **Review Actions List**

Cllrs reviewed actions from previous meetings and the actions log was updated.

1. **Budget 2019-20**

The Clerk had circulated an end of year forecast for March 2018-19 and key variances to budget were highlighted to Cllrs.

The Clerk had circulated a draft budget for 2019-20 which was reviewed by Cllrs. It was agreed that the Clerk would get comments from Cllrs on the draft with the aim of getting a final draft version ready for the December meeting.

1. **APC Grants 2018-19**

Cllr Brady noted that 7 applications had been received for a grant from APC. The Clerk had circulated details of these. Cllr McCarthy noted that the Council had a budget of £2,000 for grants plus £400 for the church and that the total applied for was £3,550. Cllr McCarthy said there were some areas where more information was required and it was agreed that the Clerk would follow up with applicants. Cllr McCarthy proposed that the item be adjourned to the December meeting when hopefully a fuller Council would be available to make decisions on the applications.

1. **Aldbury Pond**

Cllr Moore had prepared an update which was readout by Cllr Brady:

Pond

CMS and Wallingford HydroSolutions have discussed the merit of a large scale surface water and silt deposition survey. Such a survey could cost up to £10k and may not add to existing knowledge; there is little certainty the cost would provide benefit; a survey would extend the timescale of Phase 2 of the project before real progress could be seen. Therefore the PWG suggests the survey as previously agreed is no longer pursued.

CMS have advised a butyl liner may not be the preferred pond liner because of the risk of damage during pond maintenance. Puddled clay, whilst not perfect, may provide a better solution. The PWG have asked a number of questions of CMS about installation costs; additional, necessary excavation of the pond; the sourcing of clay; the cost, nature and frequency of maintenance regimes. CMS will now identify potential contractors and obtain answers and quotes. It is anticipated more detailed information will be available for the next Council Meeting on December 3rd when proposals will be made and decisions sought.

CMS has advised that the present Heritage Lottery Fund will clos on 18th January 2019; the nature of the successor fund is not yet known. CMS has therefore advised the application for funding should be submitted before that date. PWG will draft the application and as part of its’ project management role, CMS will quality assure the application before submission.

The PWG are providing material to the Clerk for inclusion on the pond web page.

Cllr Moore advised the Council of a potential conflict of interest in that his home pond is maintained by Women in Waders who are associated with Maydencroft Aquatics which is one of the contractors CMS may contact. CMS has also been advised of the potential conflict of interest.

Stoneycroft

Cllrs Pearce and Moore had met with the land agent of a field down from Stoneycroft and had walked the length of the ditch. The need for regular ditch maintenance was explained. The owner of an adjacent field has offered to maintain the ditch across both field for a charge. The land agent agreed to discuss this with the owner. The question of ownership of a field adjacent to Stoneycroft would also be discussed. The landowner agreed to keep the Council informed.

Joint APC & PPC Meeting

Cllr Moore had circulated a note to Cllrs summarising the meeting that took place on 31st October. Feedback indicates that attendees found the meeting useful. There are no immediate plans to repeat the meeting but communication lines will remain open. The subject of devolved services to Bucks Parish Councils arose; enquiries with Herts CC are in progress to determine present arrangements within Herts.

Cllr Moore also advised that work on the Village Green, at Goldings Spring and Stocks Road had been completed by Sunnyside Rural Trust as previously discussed and agreed.

1. **Allotments**

Cllr Pearce said he had had a number of meetings with the Aldbury Garden Club & Allotment Association (AGCAA) and had circulated a note to Cllrs of the key points.

Cllr Pearce proposed that future new allotment tenants should be required to become members of AGCAA so that AGCAA can act as a single voice between the Parish Council and allotment tenants. Cllr Pearce will draft a letter to existing tenants to ask whether they are happy to be represented by AGCAA and for the Clerk to invoice for the AGCAA membership fee alongside invoicing for the allotment rent. This was seconded by Cllr Tollinton. **(Action)**

Cllr Pearce proposed that Aldbury Parish Council become a member of the National Allotment Society at a cost of £56 (+vat); this was seconded by Cllr Tollinton.

Cllr Pearce said that the Council hadn’t been doing its’ duty fully with regards to the upkeep of the allotments. The perimeter which contains a lot of trees, requires tidying up. A quote had been received from Sunnyside Rural Trust (SRT) for £450, although this didn’t include work to the trees. A quote had been received from Luke Mabbett for work to the perimeter including the trees for £910. Cllr Pearce proposed the Council accept the quote; this was seconded by Cllr Tollinton.

Cllr Pearce said there were a number of vacant uncultivated plots at the allotments which need to be cleared and clamped, he said there were currently 2.5 plots in this category. A quote had been received from SRT for £300 per plot, a total of £750 and Cllr Pearce proposed that this quote be accepted; this was seconded by Cllr Tollinton.

Cllr Tollinton asked where the money was coming from to cover the agreed expenditure. Cllr Pearce said that it would essentially come from reserves. Cllr Brady said he assumed that there would now be ongoing maintenance costs for the allotments. Cllr Pearce agreed there would and that these should be reflected in the budget. Cllr Pearce said that there were some plots that are tenanted but not cultivated. It was agreed that Cllr Pearce would draft a letter to these tenants reminding them of their duties in relation to their plots. **(Action)**

Cllr Pearce said the Council needed to agree the position for renting plots to individuals who live outside the Parish. It was agreed that the Council would rent non-parishioners plots but priority would be given to individuals who lived in the Parish or within one mile of the boundary. It was agreed that Cllr Pearce and a member of the AGCAA would discuss how this would be worded in the tenancy agreement. **(Action)**

Cllr Pearce proposed that 4 signs were printed and installed at the allotments to make it clear which paths were public footpaths and which areas were for allotment tenants only. The content and look of the signs had been agreed with AGCAA and a quote from Amber Signs had been obtained for £384 +vat. A sign would be placed in each of the following locations: at the entrance to the allotments off Trooper Road; by the left-hand top gate; by the middle top gate and by the right-hand top gate. The Council agreed this and the proposal was seconded by Cllr Tollinton. It was agreed that AGCAA would go ahead and order the signs, arranging for the invoice to be sent to the Clerk.

1. **Footpaths**

Cllr Tollinton reported that Clayton Rae, Countryside Access Officer from DBC, was waiting for softened ground before installing the new posts at the allotments.

It had been mentioned that the Percy Crow footpath wasn’t noted as a footpath on Land Registry documents. Cllr Tollinton had checked this with Clayton Rae who had confirmed it is noted as a footpath on the Definitive Map & Statement which is a legal record of public rights of way. This is the most important record and means it doesn’t matter that it isn’t noted with the Land Registry.

Cllr Tollinton expressed her thanks to the householder who had done a great job of clearing FP7 which runs from Malting Lane to the top of the allotments.

1. **Traffic**

Cllrs Tollinton and Brady had attended a meeting at County Hall. Work is being done on the consultants’ report and feedback given previously by Cllrs. Proposals will be produced which will be sent to stakeholders for comment. There will then be a statutory consultation with parishioners to get their views. Cllr Tollinton commented that she thought Herts CC wanted to implement a scheme aimed at reducing traffic speed and increasing safety and that Aldbury was a test case. She said she thought the funding would come from Herts CC. Cllr Brady said they hoped to see the next stage early in the new year.

1. **Playground**

Cllr Tollinton reported that she had submitted one application for funding for new play equipment and was waiting for a reply. She had some other applications to make and said that a third quote for the equipment was needed.

1. **Planning Matters**

**1.The following planning applications were discussed**

**4/02659/18/TCA – Glebe House, Station Road, Aldbury**

Fell Trees

NO OBJECTION

**4/02691/18/LBC & 4/02685/18/FHA – 17 Stocks Road, Aldbury**

Replacement of existing 2 storey and single storey rear extension with new 2 storey rear extension

NO OBJECTION

**4/02667/18/LBC – Bridgewater Monument, Moneybury Hill, Ashridge**

Installation of 4 x orientation panels

NO OBJECTION

**2. Planning Decisions made by Dacorum BC**

**4/02428/18/TCA – 4 Toms Hill Road**

Removal of Tree

RAISE NO OBJECTION

1. The Clerk had received an email from the DBC enforcement officer advising that they would be visiting 12-14 Malting Lane. It was agreed the Clerk should follow up for an update. **(Action)**
2. **Finance**

The monthly cashflow and budget monitoring summaries had been circulated and were noted.

1. Cllr Pearce proposed a resolution required to make the following payments; this was seconded by Cllr Tollinton.

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| Martin Walters | £390.00 | Parish Mowing October |
| Cllr R McCarthy | £23.40 | Expenses – travel to HAPTC Executive Committee meeting |
| Cllr Moore | £13.83 | Expenses – posters for pond |
| SRT Trading (Sunnyside Rural Trust) | £1,497.60 | Clearance of soak away at Golding Spring; Clearance of grips along Stocks Road, Reinstatement and turfing of Village Green |
| EP Productions | £155.00 | Website hosting & maintenance 2018 |
| S Welling | Up to £150 | Work to notice board at Tring Station |

1. Cllr Pearce said that currently the accounts are produced from an Excel spreadsheet and he is concerned that things could go wrong. He said he thought it would be good for the Council to have a financial system that is designed for Parish Councils and can accommodate budgeting, making payments etc. He said that the Clerk and himself had spoken to the providers of a system called Scribe and wanted the Council to consider purchasing the system at a cost of £257 per year. Cllr McCarthy said that the HAPTC Officer had been given a free copy of the software and he wasn’t sure how much she used it. Cllr Pearce agreed to discuss it with her. Cllr McCarthy said that the transfer to and setting up of such a system would initially be laborious. It was agreed that this would be discussed again in December.
2. **Proposals for parking at Beggars Lane**

Cllr McCarthy said that Herts CC had issued a proposal to extend verge parking in Beggars Lane by 30metres. He proposed submitting the following response to the consultation on behalf of APC, which was seconded by Cllr Pearce:

Aldbury Parish Council has no objection to the proposed extension of the existing verge parking provision by a further 30 metres in Beggars Lane, per se.  In the Statement of Reasons for Proposing, it is mentioned that Beggars Lane is a popular location for leisure parking for those who wish to use local facilities.  That can certainly be seen as a desirable objective.  In reality, it is unlikely that many individuals ever get the opportunity to take advantage of this verge leisure parking as it is mainly used by those parking long term (daily railway commuters) or by those parking even longer term (multiple days, e. g. parking for long weekends or while away on holidays).  Long term parkers can be expected to fill any new spaces that become available.

Aldbury Parish Council recommends therefore that the County Council goes back to basics and considers introducing short term only parking (up to 4 hours) for the verge parking in Beggars Lane.  This is the arrangement at the Canal Fields car park in Berkhamsted (run by Dacorum Borough Council), where long term parking is not permitted.  Such an arrangement would be more beneficial to those wishing to park for short term leisure purposes, who are intended to be the main beneficiaries of this parking provision.

1. **Aldbury Christmas Tree**

The Council expressed its’ thanks to Church Farm who had kindly agreed to sponsor the Aldbury Christmas Tree again this year.

The Clerk had received an email from the school PTA asking whether the tee could be up in time for their Christmas Far on December 9th. It was agreed that the Clerk would order the tree to arrive by December 6th and Cllr Pearce would co-ordinate volunteers to put up and decorate the tree and carry out the Risk Assessment. The Clerk agreed to send a copy of the previous Risk Assessment to Cllr Pearce. **(Action)**

1. **Filming**

The Clerk said that the filming was going to take place in the village on Monday 12th November. An agreement would be signed between the production company and APC and a fee of £1,500 would be paid to the Parish Council. The Production company had dropped leaflets to residents living near the village green and pond which had a contact number on for queries. The Clerk had agreed to follow up on some queries raised at the meeting.

1. **Elections 2019**

The Clerk had circulated a note to Cllrs following some HAPTC training recently attended on the upcoming elections. Cllr Pearce said that there would likely be some Cllrs stepping down prior to the 2019 elections and that the Council needed to try and encourage parishioners to stand in the elections next year. Cllr Pearce had drafted a letter from the Council to go to every household in the parish inviting residents to find out more about being a Cllr and encouraging people to stand for election. It was agreed that Cllr Pearce would get copies of the letter printed and Cllrs would deliver the letters to every household in the parish. Cllr Brady said he thought that each time Cllrs speak to residents they should highlight the importance of residents stepping forward. Cllr McCarthy noted that in the 2015 elections, only two people submitted their nomination forms to Dacorum BC and so there was no quorum and the parish council was unable to function until a temporary Cllr from DBC stepped in to allow the Council to co-opt new members. Cllr McCarthy also noted that there are two wards in the parish of Aldbury. The Aldbury Ward has 6 seats and the Tring Station Ward has 2 seats. Individuals need to state which ward they are standing for on their nomination paper. Cllr Brady said that this should be kept on future agendas.

1. **Warden’s Report & Matters arising**

* Cllr Moore had been to the Iron Room to look at the chain link fence with Sunnyside Rural Trust (SRT) as agreed at the previous meeting. SRT had provided a quote for £250 + vat to complete the work including removing the fence and all debris. Cllr McCarthy proposed that the quote be accepted; this was seconded by Cllr Tollinton.
* The Clerk reported that she had asked Mr Welling to repair the notice board at Tring Station. The board would be repaired with Perspex to both sides and be varnished. Cllr McCarthy said that lettering identifying the board as the property of Aldbury Parish Council would need to be added at a later date.

1. **Correspondence**

* The Clerk had received an email from Luton Airport in response to the FOI request sent by APC. The email confirmed that ‘London Luton Airport operations ltd, as the operator of the airport, has made no changes to arrival or departure flight paths in the last 12 months.’
* The Clerk had received an email from Berkhamsted Cycling Club regarding cycling hill climb on Toms Hill Road 21st October
* The Clerk had received an email from a resident regarding parking and associated issues in Stocks Road. The email had been circulated to Cllrs and the resident had been advised to contact police.
* The Clerk had received an email from a resident regarding registering Aldbury Shop as Asset of Community Value. Cllr McCarthy said he thought it was difficult to see how another application could succeed without additional information showing that the shop was a social hub. Cllrs said that perhaps a community group set up by parishioners might have more luck. It was agreed that the Clerk would go back to the resident with the original application and the feedback received from Dacorum BC. **(Action)**
* The Clerk had received a FOI request from the press regarding Cllr attendance at meetings and had responded.
* The Clerk had been notified of a consultation on the AONB by the Chiltern Conservation Board which had been circulated. Cllr Brady asked the Clerk to put the ink on the Council website and share it with Outlook. **(Action)**
* Cllr Tollinton reported that she had received an email from a resident regarding the dangers caused by parking round the pond. She had assed these to the traffic consultants.

1. **Meeting open to the Public**

* A member of the public asked what time the film company would be arriving on Monday 12th. The Clerk agreed to follow up.
* A member of the public said that before AGCAA could act as the representative for allotment tenants with APC, there would need to be an AGCAA AGM to agree this.
* Cllr Mills apologised for his recent non-attendance at Council meetings and said that his wife was going through treatment and he may not be attending all meetings over the next few months.

1. **Any Other Business and to consider items for agenda of next meeting**

* Cllr Juniper provided the following update:

Cllr Juniper in his capacity as village representative attended the Ashridge Estate Committee meeting on Wednesday 10th October and noted the following points of interest:

* + The Deer Cull will commence on November 1s and will continue until March 2019 or until the cull target of 640 (same as previous years) is reached if sooner. The NT has produced a document explaining the rationale and impact of the cull which has been circulated to Cllrs.
  + The 10-year Woodland Management Plan draft is nearing completion and it is still intended that local Parish Councils will be consulted but when this will be is not yet clear. In an informal discussion with the Countryside Manager following the meeting Cllr Juniper raised concerns voiced by the village when it had been proposed to clear Toms Hill several years ago. He was told there was nothing like that in the plan. Rail Copse (the conifer plantation on Toms Hill near the car park) is included as the NT would like to think this area and return it to broadleaf woodland. There are also a number of Ash trees on Toms Hill Road which are suffering from Ash Dieback and may have to be felled at some point if they present a safety risk.
* The Clerk noted that the Dacorum BC Town & Parish Council Conference would take place on Friday 30th November 2018. Cllr McCarthy said he would be attending and Cllr Pearce said he would hope to attend.

As there was no further business the meeting closed at 9.45 p.m.

**Next Parish Council meeting – Monday 3rd December 2018**

**Aldbury Parish Council website –** [**www.aldburyparish.org.uk**](http://www.aldburyparish.org.uk)**.**