

## Alwington Parish Council

### Draft Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at the Alwington Village Hall on 10 May 2023, commencing at 8.15 pm.

**Present:** Cllrs Gordon Lester (Chair), Brian Adams, Elaine Beresford, Sarah Bourke, Alison Browning and Neil Rothney.

**In attendance :** Michael Olley (Parish Clerk), Cllr Jeffrey Wilton-Love, Devon County Council and five members of the public.

#### **1. Min. 1:23/24 Apologies**

Apologies were received from Cllr Moore.

#### **2. Min. 2:23/24 Declarations of Interests**

No declarations were received in respect of personal or prejudicial interests

#### **3. Min. 3:23/24 Minutes of the last meeting.**

The minutes of the last meeting on 22 March 2023 were approved as a true record of the meeting; proposed by Cllr Bourke, and seconded by Cllr Rothney.

The minutes of the Extraordinary meetings held since the last Parish Council Meeting were approved as true records as follows: on 28 March 2023, proposed by Cllr Beresford, seconded by Cllr Browning; and on 18 April 2023, proposed by Cllr Rothney, seconded by Cllr Adams.

#### **4. Min. 4:23/24 Correspondence and Communication**

##### **a) Correspondence**

Various bulletins and correspondence from Devon Association of Local Councils, Devon County Council, Torrington District Council (TDC) and Devon Communities Together were noted.

Correspondence from XLinks Ltd providing details of relocation of the converter station site to the Old Webbery Showground and an alternative route for the underground cable to avoid Abbotsham village was noted. The Chair had contacted the project manager who had given the briefing at Caddsdow proposing that to offset local disruption and provide a benefit in kind to the local community XLinks may want to consider setting up a Community Interest Company (CIC). The Chair gave the example of Fullabrook Wind Farm Project in which a CIC was formed which established direct relationships with the local Parish Councils and disbursed money for their locally sponsored projects (village halls, children's play areas etc).

Correspondence received from Airband and their contractors regarding a road closure for the road past Giffords Ford Farm from 8 August to 10 August was noted. The Council agreed no response needed to be made.

It was also noted that TDC had published a five-year land supply statement.

## **b) Website**

Mrs Lester-Walker circulated a report on the use of the Alwington Parish website since the last meeting. It was noted that the trends demonstrate regular use of the website.

## **c) County/District Council Reports**

Cllr Wilton-Love had nothing further to add to the update he had given within the earlier Annual Parish Meeting.

**PUBLIC SESSION.** No comments made.

## **5. Min. 5:23/24 Financial Matters:**

### **a) To receive an update on the current financial position:**

The balance brought forward from the preceding year was £11253.32. The first precept payment of £2540 had been made by TDC. No other income or expenditure had occurred in the financial year as yet, leaving a balance in the Parish Council's bank account as £13793.32.

### **b) To receive any accounts to pay:**

The following invoices/expense claims had been received:

- TDC, £1584.07 for the Clerks salary (1 October 22 to 31 March 23) and charge for payroll service,
- Clerk's expenses (mileage incurred delivering/collecting audit documents), £23.40,
- Internal audit fee, £100,
- Subscription fee for Devon Association of Local Councils (DALC), £108.12,
- Re-imburement of expenses incurred by Cllr Lester, (Printer toner £58.87, Adverse Possession Guide £10, Postage £7.65, Search of Land Registry £6) Total claim £82.52.

The Council approved all the above claims, proposed by Cllr Rothney, seconded by Cllr Bourke.

**c) To note any income received:** The first precept payment of £2540 had been made by TDC.

**d) To consider the terms and conditions applicable to the Parish Clerk:** This item was discussed in private session.

### **e) To note any other financial matters arising and to consider any small grant applications received:**

A small grant application had been received from The Alwington Village Hall Committee for Coronation Mugs to be given to the children of the Parish by the village Hall on behalf of the Parish Council. The cost per mug was shown as £4.20 with a minimum order of 72. The total cost being £302.40. The Parish Council approved the grant request of £142.80 to cover the cost of the children's mugs. Proposed Cllr Rothney, seconded by Cllr Bourke.

A quote had been submitted by Neil Beresford to undertake the work requested by the Council on the Bus Stops on the A39 in Fairy Cross. The quote totalled £672. Cllr Beresford declared an interest and did not take part in discussions or voting. This was approved by Council. Proposed by Cllr Adams, seconded by Cllr Bourke.

## **6. Min. 6:23/24 Planning Matters:**

### **a) To receive any applications for consideration**

Erection of a storage building – Land at Knotty Corner, Fairy Cross. 1/0141/2023/FUL (application amended on 3 May). Concern was expressed about the proposed soakaway being inadequate as a drainage solution because of local water run-off. Furthermore, clarification about the ownership of the ‘old road’ is still required. Cllr Adams agreed to liaise with the clerk to make a suitable response to the application on behalf of the Council to TDC.

ACTION: Cllr Adams

### **b) To note any permissions granted.**

Applications had been granted for:

Rear extension, internal reconfiguration and general refurbishment works, including replacement windows – Ford Farm Cottage, Fairy Cross 1/1061/2/2022/FUL and 1/1062/2022/LBC had been granted.

### **c) To note any refusals advised.**

None received.

### **d) Any other planning matters arising:**

A letter from the Land Registry confirmed that all parties involved in the adverse possession claim in Portledge Place have agreed to enter negotiations. The Land Registry will defer referring the matter to the Land Registration Division of the Property Chamber (First-tier Tribunal) until after 13/10/2023 to allow them to take place.

## **7. Min. 7:23/24 Maintenance & Highways**

Cllrs Adams and Rothney had reported 58 potholes and 3 blocked drains to Devon County Council (DCC). DCC had responded that 23 of the pothole reports did not meet DCC parameters for repair, 13 would be repaired by the 24 May, 6 had been submitted to a sub-contractor to review and 5 had received no response. The drains are inspected annually.

It was agreed that an approach be made by the Clerk to the Neighbourhood Highways Office to formally meet with Cllrs Rothney and Adams to explain how the potholes reported did not meet DCC parameters.

ACTION: Clerk

Cllr Browning reported that the difficulties with the manhole on the A39 in Fairy Cross were re-occurring, with the surrounding tarmac breaking up. The Chair added that all the drains/ironworks on the A39 in that area needed attention. Cllr Browning also raised the issue of littering/muck on verges following the clearance of gulleys by DCC. The Chair requested the Clerk raise these issues with TDC.

ACTION: Clerk

**8. Min. 8: 23/24. Alwington Parish Plan & other issues for action in 2022/23.**

**Neighbourhood Watch.** Cllr Browning requested that 8 new road signs be purchased by the Council to replace those in disrepair. This was approved. Proposed by Cllr Bourke, seconded by Cllr Beresford.

ACTION: Clerk

**Queen Elizabeth II Memorial Gardens.** This item was discussed in private session.

Cllr Browning updated the Council that she had chased Airband for the provision of Fibre broadband to the residents of Woodtown, Fairy Cross and Ford. She had been informed that this could not take place before the work being carried out as part of the planned road closure. Connections should therefore start in the Autumn.

Cllr Browning also updated that a rotten step on the footpath in Woodtown had been reported to her. She had notified DCC who responded that the work would be carried out within 7 to 14 days. The cutting of a stock fence connected to a style had also been reported to her, but that this had been the landowner's responsibility to undertake suitable repair work.

The Chair thanked her for her work with these issues.

**10. Min. 9:23/24 Date of next meeting:** 18 July 2023, 7.30 pm in the Committee Room at Alwington Village Hall.

**The following items were discussed in a private session under S1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. No members of the public were present.**

**11. Min. 10:23/24 Clerk's Terms and Conditions**

The Clerk left the meeting for this item.

An analysis of the impact of any adjustments to the Clerk's Terms & Conditions was circulated to Councillors before the meeting. It was agreed to defer any decision until the National Association of Local Councils publish details of the annual pay review in the Autumn.

**12. Min. 11:23/24 Queen Elizabeth II Memorial Gardens**

Following discussion of the options to establish a green space in Portledge Place, it was agreed that, after consultation with the sub-committee, further discussions with the parties to the adverse possession claim in Portledge Place would take place before a proposed action plan is circulated to Councillors. Furthermore it was agreed that any commitment required, financial or otherwise, would only be made after formal agreement of all Councillors.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ (Chairman) Date \_\_\_\_\_