

Alwington Parish Council

Draft Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at Alwington Village Hall on 18 July 2023, commencing at 7.30 pm.

Present: Cllrs Gordon Lester (Chair), Brian Adams, Sarah Bourke, Alison Browning and Christine Moore.

In attendance: Michael Olley (Parish Clerk), Cllr Phil Pennington, PCSO Liz Rendle and one member of the public.

1. Min. 12:23/24 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Beresford and Cllr Rothney.

2. Min. 13:23/24 Declarations of Interests

No declarations were received in respect of personal or prejudicial interests.

3. Min. 14:23/24 Minutes of the last meeting.

The minutes of the last meeting on 10 May 2023 were approved as a true record of the meeting; proposed by Cllr Browning, and seconded by Cllr Adams.

4. Min. 15:23/24 Correspondence and Communication

a) Correspondence

Various bulletins and correspondence from Devon Association of Local Councils, Devon County Council (DCC), Torrington District Council (TDC), Devon Climate Emergency, 20's Plenty Devon, South West Water and Devon Communities Together were noted.

Correspondence from XLinks Ltd providing notification that, starting on 5 June, archaeological investigations will be undertaken along the proposed development corridor was noted. Also noted was an invitation from XLinks to an in-person Councillor briefing.

Correspondence from Airband regarding the installation of 17 10.5 metre wooden poles at High Park Cottage, Littleham was noted.

b) County/District Council Reports

Cllr Pennington (TDC) provided an update on activity. Actions by TDC to tackle fly tipping were ongoing and had recently resulted in successful legal action following an incident of fly tipping along the A386. The members of the Traveling Community within Victoria Park in Bideford had now moved on, but Cllr Pennington noted the lack of a permanent designated site within Torridge. Cllr Pennington also mentioned the fund which had been made available for those in financial difficulty.

Cllr Adams raised the scarcity of free parking to encourage shoppers to make use of Bideford Town Centre. The lack of interest in Bideford Town Centre was discussed. Cllr Pennington noted that

festivals were well attended but this had not had a positive impact on the use of the wider town centre.

ACTION – Clerk to write to Chris Fuller, Regeneration Officer, with concerns raised by Council.

c) Website

Mrs Lester-Walker circulated a report on the use of the Alwington Parish website since 14 June 2022, the first year's activity. There had been a steady increase in all metrics since the website launch. The data showed 1497 visits to the Alwington Parish Website, with the most popular content being the home page (1251), upcoming events (423), St Andrew's Church (190) and meeting minutes (162). The Chair thanked Mrs Lester-Walker for her continued work on managing the website on behalf of the Council. It was agreed that future reports need now only be given on an annual basis.

The Chair had investigated alternatives to the current Parish Council email provider (Zoho Lite). Early research by the Chair showed an alternative option with Google costing £529.92. Cllr Beresford had agreed to review the different options available, including making use of personal email addresses, and to make recommendations at the next Council meeting in September.

ACTION: Cllr Beresford

d) Police Report

PCSO Liz Rendle updated the Council on recorded crime within the Parish. With regard to speeding, specifically along the A39, PCSO Rendle had requested the Speed Detection Unit visit the Parish. She suggested referring concerns to the Speed Compliance Action Review Forum (SCARF) at DCC/Devon Constabulary.

ACTION: Clerk to refer the concerns over speeding to SCARF.

PUBLIC SESSION. No comments made.

5. Min. 16:23/24 Financial Matters

a) To receive an update on the current financial position

The balance brought forward from the preceding year was £11253.32, total receipts were £2540, with total payments £2414.36, leaving a bank balance of £11378.96. The following payments were noted: TDC for the Clerk's salary (£1489.07) and payroll charge (£95), Clerk's expenses £23.40, Councillor's expenses £112.52, Audit fees £100, Neighbourhood Watch signs £51.85, DALC subscription £108.12, small grant to Alwington Village Hall £142.80. The following payments under continuing contract were paid; Parish website £129.60 and defibrillator support £162.

b) To receive any accounts to pay

An expense claim filed by the Clerk (office stationery) for £9.98 was approved. Quotes for the Council's insurance policy, due for renewal in August, were still being finalised. It was agreed that the Chair and Vice Chair consider and approve these for payment.

The schedule for ongoing payments under continuing contracts, statutory duty or obligations was noted. Payments would, however, continue to be reported to the next available meeting before payment was due.

c) To note any income received

No income had been received since the first precept payment of £2540 had been made by TDC in April.

d) To note any other financial matters arising and to consider any small grant applications received

No small grant applications had been received and not other matters were arising.

e) To note, consider and approve, matters arising from the vehicle collision with the A39 bus stop surrounds

The clerk had made a successful insurance claim with the insurers only requesting one quote be obtained. It was agreed that Neil Beresford be approached to prepare a quote for the work, and that the clerk continue to liaise with the insurance company on behalf of the Council.

6. Min. 17:23/24 Planning Matters:

a) To note and consider any applications received

No comments were made on a retrospective application for the erection of a general purpose agricultural building at grid reference 239662 123213 (1/0333/2023/FUL).

An application for a proposed garage and updated access for Three Acorns had been received (1/0609/2023/FUL). The Chair requested that comments be sent to the Clerk by 29 July.

An application for the installation of an air source heat pump at Old Tythesford Farmhouse, Fairy Cross (1/0514/2023/FUL and 1/0515/2023/LBC) had been received. The Chair requested that comments be sent to the Clerk by 1 August.

b) To note any permissions granted

Applications had been granted for a reserved matters application for details of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale in respect of a proposal for 276 no. dwellings, associated infrastructure and open space pursuant outline planning permission 1/0039/2014/OUTM (Amended Plans).

c) To note any refusals advised.

An application for the erection of a storage building on land at Knotty Corner, Fairy Cross (1/0141/2023/FUL) had been refused.

d) Any other planning matters arising: No matters arising.

7. Min. 18:23/24 Maintenance and highways

Cllrs Adams and Rothney had met with the Neighbourhood Highways Officer from Devon County Council to discuss maintenance of roads and standards of workmanship. With regard to clearing of ditches, Cllr Adams was undertaking work in preparation to obtaining quotes. The Chair thanked Cllr Adams and Rothney for their ongoing work.

8. Min. 19:23/24. Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Internal Control Statements

The Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Internal Control Statements drafted by the Clerk, circulated prior to the meeting, were approved.

8. Min. 20:23/24. Alwington Parish Plan & other issues for action in 2022/23.

Neighbourhood Watch. The 8 new road signs purchased by the Council had now been put into position.

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

10. Min. 21:23/24. Other matters

- a) Actions to lower speed limits were agreed.
- b) The Council agreed not to take part within the formal Devon County Council road warden scheme.

Cllr Bourke gave her apologies and left the meeting.

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. 22:23/24 Portledge Place Land Registry Action/Queen Elizabeth II Memorial Gardens

The Chair updated Councillors about a related claim at the Land Registry. It was agreed that a letter should be sent from the Parish Council with a “subject to contract” offer to try and settle matters without recourse to formal proceedings.

Signature _____ (Chairman) Date _____