



## ALDINGBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES of the ordinary meeting of the Full Council of Aldingbourne Parish Council held on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2021 at 7.00pm via Zoom under SO's Amendment Remote Meetings 2020

#### **Members Present:**

Cllr Martin Beaton (C)	Cllr Michael Warden (VC)
Cllr Tom Blaylock	Cllr Michelle Warden
Cllr Ron Flitter	Cllr Mike Turner
Cllr Sue Foott	

**In attendance:** Lindy Nash (Clerk)

#### **Also present:**

Arun DC Cllr Isabel Thurston (left at 20.01 after providing her District Councillor Update), Louise Beaton (left at 20.26), John Spence (left at 20.26) and Dr Mario Trabucco della Torretta (left at 20.26).

826. Apologies for absence: Cllr Elaine Sturgess – apologies accepted.

Also received from WSCC Cllr Whittington who has now stood down from his WSCC role (to be succeeded at next month's elections). Cllr Whittington was sincerely thanked for his many years of dedicated service to the local area and the Council wished him much happiness for his retirement.

827. Declarations of Interest: Cllr Tom Blaylock as an Allotment Holder.

828. Public Participation: No questions were raised by members of the Public.

829. Minutes of Previous Meetings:

a. Full Council meeting held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021

It was noted that Item 801 referred to Cllr Foott being noted as an allotment holder. This is NOT correct. Indeed Cllr Foott has never been an allotment holder and, consequently, by way of this minute, any previous reference to this having been the case is duly corrected. Cllr Harbord also noted a reference to Cllr Michelle Warden when it should have said Cllr Michael Warden.

b. Full Council meeting held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2021

Cllr Warden requested that contact details be circulated re Fandango so that Cllrs can make contact directly when appropriate. Clerk to action.

Having noted the above amendments, the minutes of both February 2<sup>nd</sup> and March 2<sup>nd</sup> were approved, as proposed by Cllr Flitter and seconded by Cllr Harbord.

830. Matters arising: Issues raised are noted above under minute 829.

831. Planning Minutes for meeting held 9<sup>th</sup> February 2021: These minutes were approved at the Planning Meeting held 13<sup>th</sup> March 2021. They were noted by Full Council for information this evening and contained no resolutions for formal approval.

832. Finance Minutes for meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2021: These minutes are to be approved at the next Finance Meeting (now scheduled for May 20<sup>th</sup> 2021 as the meeting on April 22<sup>nd</sup>

had been postponed). They were noted by Full Council for information this evening and contained no resolutions for formal approval.

833. Urgent Matters:

- A) Cllr Beaton provided an update regarding progressing the Barclays signatory mandate:
- It had been confirmed by letter yesterday that this had now been updated with the bank and all current Cllrs are registered as signatories on the main Aldingbourne Parish Council (APC) bank account. Cllr Beaton continues to pursue a compensation claim given the extensive difficulties experienced.
  - Cllr Warden will now be progressing the setting up of online banking and obtaining of an APC debit card facility to enable online purchases to be made.
  - Cllr Beaton will now progress updating the separate Barclays signatory mandate for the accounts related to the Custodian Trustee accounts relating to the Blackrock accounts linked to the monies previously raised from the sale of the original playing fields.
  - Cllr Beaton will also ensure the address contact is updated with Barclays so that all future Barclays post goes to the APC care of the Aldingbourne Community and Sports Centre (ACSC).
- B) Cllr Warden provided an update regarding updating the signing mandate with Blackrock:
- Two signatories (Cllrs Beaton and Warden) are already registered. The other APC Cllrs are also to be added.
- C) Current guidance indicates that legislation allowing Parish Council meetings to take place 'virtually' will end as at 7<sup>th</sup> May. It is therefore expected that APC's Full Council meeting on May 4<sup>th</sup> will be the last in this format and face to face meetings will recommence from the APC Planning meeting on May 11<sup>th</sup>. It was noted however that Hertfordshire County Council are currently mounting a challenge to seek the continuation of the right to hold meetings virtually on occasions. Hence guidance may change and this authority will keep this matter under review.
- D) Planning Matters – Last week's Planning meeting had been hampered by ADC's Planning Portal not being available due to essential maintenance being carried out. Consequently, the three applications on that agenda were considered this evening so that formal decisions could be taken. The respective applications were:
- AL/36/21/HH re Long Acre, Littleheath Road – following discussion Cllrs agreed they had NO OBJECTION provided the Drainage Engineers requirements were satisfied.
  - AL/24/21/HH re Barnside, Hook Lane – following discussion Cllrs agreed they had NO OBJECTION.
  - AL/35/21/DOC re Norton Farm House, Norton Lane – following discussion, and building on from conclusions drawn at last week's Planning meeting, the following decision was agreed:
    - o The Council OBJECTS to this application on the following basis. The application is subject to a temporary stop notice so cannot be approved. In addition, the proposal is contrary to the Aldingbourne Neighbourhood Plan (ANP), most notably in that it negatively impacts on a designated conservation area and is in contravention of ANP Policies EH8 (which seeks to protect 'Buildings and Structures of Character) and EH9 (which notes that development affecting Conservation Areas will only be supported where they "enhance their character, setting and appearance"). In addition, this Council highlights that it's emerging ANP is currently at Regulation 15 (delayed by Covid) and that the evidence base behind this Plan remains valid.

- E) BEW Masterplan – A brief discussion took place regarding progress since last week’s Lichfield’s Presentation at both the BEW meeting and APC Planning. It was agreed that APC needs to communicate its concerns to the community so that they are informed as the latest consultation exercise on this issue takes place. It was agreed that Cllr Flitter would work with Cllr Allington (Chair at Eastergate and Barnham) to devise an A5 leaflet which can be shared through Facebook, website, noticeboards and via a letterbox drop. ADC Cllr Thurston joined in this discussion, noting that she welcomes APC’s intentions to communicate with the community on this issue. She has particular concerns regarding the traffic projections and is continuing to actively scrutinise this matter. In conclusion, APC are to pull this leaflet together as a matter of urgency with Cllr Flitter taking the lead on content and Cllr Warden to research printing options. Cllr Warden asked whether all APC Cllrs present were in favour of this action and there was unanimous support.

834. Clerk’s Report – the Clerk provided a verbal update on key issues of interest to the Council regarding matters that have been progressed since the last Full Council meeting:

- A) Actions following death of the Duke of Edinburgh:
- The Council joined the nation in paying respects by noting this on both it’s website, via it’s E Comms routes and on all APC Noticeboards. A link had also been provided to the national book of condolence.
- B) Finance Update regarding planned Rialtas 20/21 Closedown and Internal Audit Review:
- Due to Barclays inability to provide a March end of financial year bank statement, the planned dates for both the Rialtas closedown and the internal audit review had had to be postponed from their respective dates of April 7<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>. Both had been rescheduled for May.
  - Cllr Warden however had successfully obtained the relevant statement information from Barclays this morning and, consequently, the Clerk has been able to arrange for the Rialtas closedown to take place on April 26<sup>th</sup>, prior to her departure from this post.
  - Currently the Internal Audit review is scheduled for May 12<sup>th</sup>. Cllrs will need to correspond with the Internal Auditor, Mike Platten, to establish whether this should be postponed until a replacement Clerk is appointed (noting that the AGAR does not need to be submitted until June 30<sup>th</sup> - though it does need to be approved by Full Council after the internal audit review, but prior to the end of June).
- C) Clerk’s Resignation – the Clerk noted that, in response to both her APC role demanding increasing hours and flexibility, plus the considerable pressures that had impacted her life as a result of the Covid pandemic, she had, with regret, decided to step down from her role. She thanked the Council for her two and a half years of working with them and wished the authority much success as it moves forward.

835. Emergency Delegated Powers:

The following instruction was issued by the Clerk on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2021

“Cll. Flitter is hereby instructed, by the delegated Powers under Emergency actions, to engage with JNR, the Council’s IT contractor, to advise and assist to implement the attached IT Work Plan for the Council’s use.

To also liaise with JNR to upgrade the IPads as required and to enable Councillors to operate the same system on their preferred equipment as requested by individual Councillors.

This matter and course of action was agreed in a virtual meeting with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council on the morning of Tuesday 6th April as it was considered to be a matter that needed prompt action to comply with Legislation and will be an agenda item on 20th April to be ratified by Full Council”

This instruction was duly noted and agreed, as proposed by Cllr Warden and seconded by Cllr Beaton.

836. Neighbourhood Plan:

It was noted that the emerging Aldingbourne Neighbourhood Plan was currently at Reg 15 with an Examiner now appointed and a report expected on May 24<sup>th</sup>. An update report has been received and is appended below as Appendix A.

Following discussion, it was agreed that Cllrs should agree to meet informally following receipt of the Examiner’s Report and, consequently, a meeting on the evening of May 25<sup>th</sup> was agreed. It was further noted that should significant changes be proposed, an Extraordinary General Meeting would need to be called.

837. County and District Councillor Reports:

As noted above under Minute 826, WSCC Cllr Whittington had sent his apologies.

ADC Cllr Thurston was however present and noted the following:

- Both Arun DC and Barnham PC have had recent meetings with Southern Water linked to Climate Change matters. Aldingbourne may wish to pursue such a meeting should capacity allow.
- Cllr Thurston had already noted her concerns regarding the BEW Masterplan (noted above under minute 833).
- There being no further questions from APC Cllrs, Cllr Thurston was thanked for her attendance and left the meeting at 8.01pm.

838. Policies – It was noted that the following Policies are all based on the latest standard NALC templates and are in line with those adopted by similar authorities. Cllr Harbord noted that there was some ‘tidying up’ required (eg. addresses needing to be changed as they refer to the outgoing Clerk’s previous address). However, despite the recognition of the need for those minor amendments in due course, it was agreed that the Council would adopt all Policies listed at tonight’s meeting, and then a subsequent program of review would be developed that will enable all documents to be reviewed and updated in detail when the new Clerk is recruited.

In conclusion therefore, upon a proposal by Cllr Beaton, seconded by Cllr Foott, the following Policies (available via the Authorities One Drive Policy records, and shortly to be published on its website) were duly adopted:

- Co-option Policy and Procedures
- Co-option Eligibility
- Co-option Application Form
- Sickness Absence Policy
- Grievance Policy

- Disciplinary Policy
- Training Policy
- Stress Policy
- Protocol for Disciplinary and Grievance Policy
- Lone Working Policy
- Equal Opportunity Policy
- Code of Conduct for Employees Policy
- Appraisal Policy
- Annual Leave Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Recruitment Policy
- Dignity at Work Policy.

839. Correspondence:

The Clerk brought the Committee's attention to the following items of communication that had been received from the Community since the last Full Council meeting:

- A) In response to APC's 'No Objection' decision at the March Planning meeting, re "Land West of Fontwell Avenue", correspondence was received as follows:

*"Latest update for your information.*

*A comprehensive Independent Planning Review undertaken by a very well established well qualified Planner, is currently being considered by the Ombudsman.*

*It is 9.30 am on Wednesday 17th March. We write about AL/122/17/PL specifically the discharge of his Construction Management Plan. The applicant CONTINUES his project, without the discharge of this condition, The Construction Management Plan.*

*Two large delivery lorries have already delivered to the site this morning. At this rate, the Construction Management Plan will be NULL AND VOID by the time it is approved. We know that it will probably be approved despite the issues already raised, so it is not clear why he doesn't wait, the few days required.*

*The applicant has had 3 years of his planning permission, to have a Construction Management Plan approved.*

*He has already been given SPECIAL PERMISSION to start his build, after the expiry date, before the access road is completed, so he has already violated 2 conditions. We are told that an investigation is being undertaken.*

*The first planning permission on this site, AL/121/16/PL has also already been given SPECIAL PERMISSION to waver Conditions 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 17. WHAT IS GOING ON HERE?*

*What makes this issue particularly galling, is that the Planning Department were not able to alter the conditions of AL/121/16/PL back in 2017, so that we were given a screening fence as protection and privacy from the VERY WELL DOCUMENTED activities which were CONTRARY to the conditions on the planning permission granted. WE have suffered serious consequences and financial hardship as a result.*

*Someone needs to review this matter.”*

The Council took note of this correspondence upon receipt and responded accordingly. They sympathised with the correspondent’s position, however, since the relevant Planning decision relates only to the Construction Management Plan, they confirmed that the ‘No Objection’ decision was the only one that was appropriate in these circumstances.

- B) In response to recent concerns expressed by residents whose properties neighbour the Aldingbourne Community and Sports Centre, the following letter has been distributed by Aldingbourne’s Police Community Support Officer:

*“Dear resident,*

*We have had reports about anti-social behaviour in this area, specifically people gathering in the play park and causing criminal damage to the fences, and also groups gathering within the car park causing noise and disturbance.*

*We understand that anti-social behaviour can leave people feeling intimidated, angry and frightened, and we take it very seriously. We are increasing local patrols to try and prevent it and if you see any anti-social behaviour, please report it to us.*

*The information we receive from you and your neighbours plays a huge part in enabling us to catch criminals and make your area a safer place to live. No information given is ignored; we use it to develop the bigger picture and when the time is right we will take action.*

*If you witness what you believe to be a criminal offence in progress, ie damage to street furniture, fencing or play park equipment then please call 999. If you want to report anything else, then either call 101, or you can email 101 via [www.sussex.police.uk](http://www.sussex.police.uk). I can also be contacted directly on [caroline.wilson@sussex.pnn.police.uk](mailto:caroline.wilson@sussex.pnn.police.uk) Please note that I work part-time hours so a response can be delayed. I am also happy to make appointments for Crime Prevention advice, talks etc.*

*If you can provide any information about criminals who live in your area, please call Sussex Police on **101**.*

*You can also report crime anonymously to Crimestoppers on freephone **0800 555 111** or online at [www.crimestoppers-uk.org](http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org)*

*Thank you for your help. For more information about anti-social behaviour, the work of Sussex Police, and some useful advice on crime prevention, please visit our website: [www.sussex.police.uk](http://www.sussex.police.uk)*

- C) Following receipt of a number of communications received over recent months regarding the Aldingbourne Allotments, a further enquiry has been received enquiring specifically about Cllr Foott as an allotment holder.

As clarified under Item 829a, Cllr Foott is NOT an allotment holder and a response explaining this is to be sent imminently to the correspondent.

- D) In response to a letter that had been distributed to residents of the Furlongs, regarding litter concerns at a nearby footpath, the following correspondence had been received:

*“Good afternoon*

*I live in the furlongs estate and have received a letter today from EMRC about the litter that’s left along that pathway.*

*I walk along that path every day , twice a day, as I have a child that attends Eastergate school and I have noticed some rubbish but mainly a ridiculous amount of dog mess which I myself have picked up many times (I don’t even have a dog but I don’t want my kids walking through it or my buggy) I see people every day walking down there and 90 percent are not from the furlongs estate.*

*Is there any way a dog bin at each end could be put in and a bin too? Not saying it would stop the issue but it could help. If that path way closed off from the furlongs then as someone who doesn’t drive , I don’t know how I would get my child to school as there is no way I can walk around the long way, it adds a good 10/15 mins to my journey and we already walk a mile to school as it is.”*

AND

*“I’m writing to you regarding a letter I and all the other residents on The Furlongs development have received today from EMRC on behalf of Aldingbourne Parish Council.*

*This letter feels like a direct blame from the Parish Council to all the people living on The Furlongs development and blaming us for the litter issues in the area. This litter issue in Aldingbourne is far greater than the 70 or so houses on this development as it can be seen all across our parish. I feel really strongly about the finger being pointed at the people living on this development.*

*I also feel very strongly about how this has been dealt with. We have not been spoken to previously by the Parish Council about this and then out of the blue a letter arrives from EMRC with the threat to block our access to the path. I feel this is totally the wrong way to approach this.*

*I’m sure other residents feel the same as me about the litter problem in the area, it isn’t long ago that I spoke to a neighbour expressing my concern about the litter problem in Aldingbourne and not long ago from my partner spoke with one of your volunteers on a litter clean up in Hook Lane.*

*I love the area I live in and feel very privileged to live here, but now feel very unhappy about this situation or a ‘blame game’ that we find ourselves in.*

*I look forward to hearing from you on this matter.*

*Kind regards,*

A response is being formulated by the Council and will be forwarded to the correspondents as soon as possible, and publicised via next month’s APC Full Council meeting minutes.

840. Working Group, Society and Club Reports – the following updates were received:

- A) Allotments - Cllr Foott reported that all allotment plots are now let and a waiting list is being maintained for when future vacant plots arise.
- B) Footpaths - Cllr Flitter has passed evidence to Cllr Blaylock regarding safety concerns relating to Footpath 297, adjacent to Pine Close. The matter has now been referred to WSCC Highways and their response will be reported back to Full Council in due course.
- C) Communications - Sincere thanks were given to Cllr Harbord for her successful community litter pick last month, as well as the subsequent positive press coverage that her report had generated.
- D) ADALC - Draft minutes of the ADALC AGM of 5<sup>th</sup> March 2021 had been circulated previously with the agenda for tonight's meeting – Cllr Beaton highlighted that these remain draft and, therefore, subject to further amendment. Cllr Beaton also noted that Mark Mulberry's services are to provide ADALC support, and that a refreshed ADALC website is now being developed.
- E) ACSC – The following was noted:
- Thanks were noted for Jonathan Leahy, Chair of ACSC, for his success in gaining an £8k grant to assist the social club as it reopens to the public from May 17<sup>th</sup>.
  - Cllr Warden confirmed that the new ACSC benches are to be permanently sited on Friday.
  - Cllr Flitter confirmed that a master key for the ACSC Filing Cabinet's has been obtained.
  - Cllr Beaton asked about progress on the ACSC Business Plan – Cllr Warden replied that he would chase this up at his next ACSC meeting on Monday evening. Cllr Beaton asked that the Business Plan be circulated to all, and that APC/ACSC Partnership Meetings be set up, as soon as possible.

841. Finance – The following payments were put forward for approval:

Date of Invoice	Name	Invoice Number	Payment method	Description	NET	VAT	Total amount including VAT
28.3.21	Fandango	1062	Chq	Facebook Mngt	120.00	24.00	144.00
17.10.20	Moore East Midlands	302350	Chq	Auditor Fees	40.00	8.00	48.00
10.3.21	Cllr Warden	031	Chq	Flowers for Locum Clerk	N/A	N/A	50.00
24.2.21	Brushwood Tree Services	1016	Chq	Tree Services	300.00	60.00	360.00
1.4.21	WSALC Subs	1119	Chq	WSALC & NALC Subs	1002.78	243.08	1245.86
31.3.21	Rialtas	28538	Chq	Finance System Support	200.00	40.00	240.00



5.4.21	DM Payroll Services Ltd	1396	Chq	20/21 Payroll Services Administration	240.00	N/A	240.00
20.4.21	CLT	N/A	Chq	Funds in support of the Community Land Trust	5000.00	N/A	5000.00
10.3.20	Action in Rural Sussex	3386	Chq	To assist ACSC with transition to CIO	800.00	160.00	960.00
31.3.21	M Harbord	N/A	Chq	Councillor Allowance for 20/21	548.00	N/A	548.00
31.3.21	L Nash	N/A	Chq	March Pay	1264.24	N/A	1264.24
28.2.21	S Simpson	N/A	Chq	February Pay	1497.20	N/A	1497.20
31.3.21	S Simpson	N/A	Chq	March Pay	417.00	N/A	417.00
28.2.21	MH Kennedy and Sons	13669	Chq	Groundwork Maintenance	66.00	13.20	79.20
	D Chaffe – Process matters2	MAC/AL1/2021/Web	Chq	Website Mngt Jan-March'21	120.00	N/A	120.00
16.3.20	ACSC	SI715	Chq	March 2020 – Room Hire	37.00	N/A	37.00
1.2.20	ACSC	SI700	Chq	Feb 2020 - Room Hire	49.00	N/A	49.00
10.3.21	A Burrows	N/A	Chq	ACSC Grounds – FencingWorks	N/A	N/A	328.57

Following a proposal by Cllr Warden, seconded by Cllr Flitter, all payments listed were approved.

842. Exempt Business: Cllr Foott proposed to move the meeting to exempt, Cllr Harbord seconded the proposal. *It was UNANIMOUSLY agreed to move the meeting to exempt at 20.26pm at which time all observers to the meeting departed the zoom meeting, leaving only APC Cllrs and the Clerk present.*

Thereafter Cllrs considered matters relating to the need to appoint a replacement Clerk and the following was RESOLVED:

- Castle Consultancy to support the appointment process.
- Anna Beams (currently employed by Mulbery and Co, who are appointed to assist WSALC in such circumstances) to provide emergency cover during any gap between Clerks.
- Role to be advertised as soon as possible, giving a fortnight for applications to be submitted; Cllr Foott is currently arranging a suitable interview panel to include independent assessment; and remuneration to be agreed following consultation with Trevor Leggo regarding appropriate going rates. Following discussion, Cllrs gave

UNANIMOUS SUPPORT for this to be progressed by Cllrs Beaton, Foott and Warden to enable matters to be progressed as needed in order to secure the best outcome for the Authority.

There being no further business for discussion the meeting closed at 20.35 pm

Signed .....(Chairman)

Date .....

**The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021**

**(Cllr Beaton provided his apologies in advance for May 4th)**