

Approved Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Alderbury and Whaddon held on Wednesday 17th May 2017 at Alderbury Village Hall at 7pm.

Present: Cllrs Hartford, Mernagh, Diprose, Clarke, Pace and Lawrence.

In attendance: Mrs Alison McGowan (clerk), Cllr Richard Britton (Unitary cllr), Alasdair Jones-Perrott (Longford Estate) and 44 residents.

Apologies: Cllr Hughes, Cllr Fuller and Cllr Considine.

The meeting opened at 7.03pm. Councillor (Cllr) Hartford as Chairman welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish meeting and thanked them for coming along.

1. Welcome and report by the Chairman of the Parish Council

It is my pleasure as Chair of Alderbury Parish Council to welcome you to our Annual Parish Meeting. It is good to see so many of you here. It has been a very busy year and we have achieved much during this time. We are very sorry to have lost three councillors who have given great service to the PC. Sandra Richardson has now moved from the village, Graham Reeder and Nigel Sell. We are glad to welcome John Fuller and Maureen Lawrence who joined us at our May meeting filling two of the vacancies. We still have two vacancies and would love to fill them. It is essential that we are a strong body as we take on more and more responsibilities from Wiltshire Council who are cutting their services through lack of money.

APC again supported Wiltshire Council to run four "Fun in the Sun" sessions for primary age school children during the summer and had the largest attendance so far after three years of running them. The sessions will be run again this summer and details have been published in the Fountain.

Repainting of some of the play equipment was undertaken single-handedly by Graham Reader, just one of the many tasks that he performed while he was a councillor. We shall certainly miss him. The old metal ramps at the skate park have been replaced with a new configuration. It has had mixed reviews from the users and one or two issues are being rectified as I speak.

As a village we took part in the "Great British Clean Up" in March. Several villagers turned out to help and a large number of bags of rubbish were collected. The local Scouts and Guides also took part and it is hoped that this can become a more frequent event.

Over the past year general maintenance has taken place. The bus shelters are cleaned twice a year. A small pane of glass was broken in the book swap which I have managed to hopefully fix. The rather large pile of beech leaves which accumulated on the memorial green alongside the tennis courts has been removed and the area reseeded. We have accepted a quotation to replace missing posts around the memorial and Fountain greens and hopefully this will be done shortly. We now have a good relationship with the Parish Steward who visits us for one day a month. I meet him first thing in the morning of his visit and we discuss what he can or cannot do that day. He is governed by a list of possible tasks as laid down by Wiltshire Council.

Installation work for the village Christmas tree has now started. The electrical cabinet has been installed and a meter is in the process of being arranged. Our thanks must go to the Longford Estate for undertaking the groundwork for us, and for providing the tree at Christmas.

The Alderbury Footpath group have been very active again. A stile was replaced and a boardwalk was built across the very boggy final part of the circular footpath. It was supported by the PC and SAB and a very successful official opening by Cllr Richard Britten took place in October when over 100 people attended. They then walked the walk, as they say, along with various four legged friends, returning to the village hall for tea and cakes. The Parish Council have purchased two industrial strimmers for the footpath group to use, and three of the group have received training in their use.

We have entered the best kept village again this year. The PC has purchased two new, rather larger tubs and the Gardening Club has very kindly agreed to plant them up, along with a manger made from horse shoes and given to us by Basil from the Forge. Judging is from mid May to mid June, so I am asking if residents can ensure that their frontages are kept cut and litter free. I personally regularly litter pick the recreation field, and can often be seen litter picking the main road from the start of the village by car! Any extra help would be more than welcome.

During the past year, as well as the strimmers for the Footpath Group, we have contributed towards the new chairs that you are sitting on for the Village Hall. We have agreed to pay for a SID to be used for two weeks five times a year. This was started a year ago but the SID at that time proved most unreliable and has now been replaced by a much better one. Unfortunately after about three days of being in situ, I had to report that it was not working and on inspection by Laverstock Community Farm who erect and maintain it, it was noticed that it had been tampered with and a fuse removed! This meant that we lost about 3 or 4 days of our fortnights use. We still operate a CSW when weather and time permits.

To the future. We shall be arranging with the Parish Steward to spray the weeds on the pavements through the village. We are in discussion with SAB and a village resident regarding providing a Christmas lunch on Christmas day at the village hall for any residents who will be on their own at Christmas. A plated lunch could be delivered to any housebound residents.

We have supported investigations by the COB working party into improvements to the village hall so that it will support the changing needs of Alderbury and Whaddon as a community. You will hear more on this later in the evening.

Finally I would remind you that APC meet monthly at St Mary's Hall and we would love to see any of you there. Agendas for the meetings are displayed on the notice boards and the website. Likewise the minutes of previous meetings are displayed on the website and posted in the locked notice board by the village hall bus stop. I regularly attend the Friday coffee shop from 10.30 onwards and am happy to hear any concerns that residents may have. Whilst mentioning the notice boards, this is an impassioned plea from me. Please could people refrain from using staples. They are exceedingly difficult to remove and if they break while removing them the pointed bits can cause injury. If notices could be laminated they last longer and don't get eaten by the snails. There are times when there is not enough room for Parish Council notices to be displayed so I have to remove or cover certain notices. You will notice that I usually leave up the council agendas after the meeting that they refer to. This is for two reasons, firstly it shows what was discussed at that meeting and secondly it keeps a place for the next agendas to go. I do keep an eye on the boards regularly and remove anything else that is out of date.

May I thank on your behalf the Parish Councillors for all their dedication and efforts to make Alderbury a great place to live, and my personal thanks to Darren, our vice Chairman, and Alison our clerk, without whose support I would find it very difficult to fulfil my role as Chair. Last but not least, thank you all for coming and enjoy the rest of the evening.

2. Cyber Crime presentation – Sgt Paul Harvey

Sargent Paul Harvey is the Strategic Support Crime officer and has recently employed a new member to work with him. 80% of cyber crime can be reduced by taking some simple steps which is down to us all in Wiltshire. Cyber crime includes anything online, incorporating gaming too such as on an Xbox where users can be contacted and bullied. How important is cyber crime to Wiltshire Police? In the internet world, victims can go on a 'sucker' list and will then be hit time and time again. The average age of a suspect is 17 years old. But how do Wiltshire Police attack cyber crime?

Protect
Prevent
Prepare
Persue

Sargent Paul Harvey tackles the top two by improving community knowledge by using twitter, facebook, area board meetings, parish council meetings and radio for instance.

If you get a phonecall or spam email, phone 101 to report it. It will then be referred to Action Fraud. Wiltshire Police are the only force in the country to have volunteers who will go to see victims at their homes to give them advice to prevent any further incidents. All of the volunteers have been vetted – tell Mick Leighfield if you would like someone to call. Paul regularly gets a list of victims. Last month someone in their 90's from Landford was tricked out of £76,000. The police work with Age UK and small business enterprises, attending both regional and national meetings. There are three officers who visit schools and colleges to tell young people what to be aware of.

In Wiltshire 4.3 million has been lost in the last 6 months due to cyber crime. 49% of this has been via businesses and 47% individuals. 53% of the individuals have been male with the age range 20-30 making up 25% of the victims, 30% 60-70 and 40-50 30%. 34% of crime is on the phone. A bank will never ring you to ask for your details. Look out for emails with spelling mistakes in them. Never give away your PIN or bank account number. You also need a strong password and good anti-virus software. Make sure you accept updates too when they are sent through to you. The virus that hit the NHS in particular at the weekend was a worm that found its way to all of those without protection. It affected 200,000 companies in 150 countries. In 2020 it is estimated that there will be 40 billion devices out there. It is down to us to keep ourselves safe online. Please protect yourself in your own home.

Question – I have calls several times a week from someone asking about my computer, can we do anything about this?

Answer – Report it to 101. The City of London police have a team set up to tackle issues like this.

Statement – A resident gave an example of a contact of his who was a senior man in banking. Over the phone he was tricked out of £25,000. St. Paul Harvey reminded the audience that each month there is a new scam. Don't open emails with spelling mistakes or from someone you do not recognise and have a strong password with upper and lower case and punctuation included. 34% of people who have been hacked, still have a weak password.

3. The Wiltshire Bobby Van Trust – Mick Leighfield

Following on from Sgt. Paul Harveys presentation, volunteers from the Bobby Van Trust can also support you on cyber crime.

Mick said that he would give some background about the Bobby Van service and how it can help the public. In 1995 Nottingham University conducted a survey and found that as a result of crime, people were left traumatised and feared going back to their house. They looked at repeat victimisation. You are more likely to be a victim of a repeat crime, than a victim for the first time. Offenders know that there will be new items in the house.

The bobby van trust was set up as a charity. There are only three schemes across the country and over a 19 year period over 20,000 properties have been visited. The service has become more proactive and over 60's can have a free security check, not just victims of crime. The service does not charge. If someone has a disability, they can have a free security check, regardless of their age.

There are now two vans operating in Wiltshire and Mick works south of the M4. Therefore if you request a home visit, you can be fairly certain that it will be Mick who calls on you. They will always make an appointment and will never cold call. He will look at door locks and door chains for instance. Don't put door chains on overnight in case you are taken ill. Check that the back of your property is secure – 99% of burglaries take place from the rear of the property. There is normally natural surveillance from the front. Ensure that your back garden is secure. If someone is at your front door, ensure that your back door is locked. Often thieves will only have 3 minutes in a property. They will look for ladies jewellery in a bedroom. It has sentimental value that can never be replaced. Front doors should have a deadlock. The bobby van will change locks 'free of charge'. Donations to the service are always gratefully received. They will also conduct a fire review. If you have gas or oil you should have a carbon monoxide alarm.

Mick can fit a key safe outside. It costs £70 to supply and fit this, but it is a good investment.

I hope that you will leave this evening with some crime prevention advice. Come and help yourself to a leaflet and if you would like a home visit, please let me know.

Question: Double glazing – can you fit door chains?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Shed alarms – do you still supply these?

Answer: Yes, these are available. They are very loud and are effective. They cost £6.00.

4. Report by Unitary Councillor Richard Britton

Cllr Britton confirmed that he would cover three key areas in his report – the recent election, his new role and what he is doing locally. At the elections on May 4th, Cllr Britton increased his majority and was elected unitary councillor for the parishes of Alderbury, the Grimsteads and Whiteparish. If you voted thank you, if you didn't, I am your local unitary councillor and at your service.

At County Hall level, the number of conservatives increased from 61 to 68 seats. It has led to a weaker opposition.

Cllr Britton confirmed that he had declined a nomination to be the Chairman of Wiltshire Council for a third term. Many of the engagements are at a weekend, which has taken him away from home. He is Chairman of the Police and Crime Commissioners panel, Chairman of the Southern Area Board, Chairman of the Audit Commission, Chair of the local planning committee and now a member of the local pensions board.

Closer to home, Cllr Britton paid tribute to the work of Alderbury Parish Council. He confirmed that Alderbury Parish Council is very active with Elaine as Chairman. The Council completes a lot of work, much of which goes unnoticed and he therefore congratulated the members. He mentioned the excellent work of the parish clerk Alison, who does a tremendous job.

Together with Alderbury, I also represent Whiteparish and the Grimsteads. I have been involved in planning locally regarding Matrons College Farm and Nightwood Farm, as well as advising local residents. I am also involved in the village hall project in Alderbury. I have been involved in lobbying for improvements to broadband speeds and the condition of local roads. The condition of some roads is appalling and recently an inspection with a highways engineer was arranged to walk through the village. In a number of instances the view was that 'they are not bad enough yet' to warrant attention. Wiltshire Council is currently spending £24 million on roads, more than ever before. It is a 15 year programme however, to address the neglect over the last two decades. £2.5 million is being spent on picking up litter on Wiltshire Highways.

The villages that Cllr Britton represents are very different. All have a strong community spirit, some residents engage, others are not interested in the community. There is a continuing move by government to cut funds and the communities will have to do more themselves. The role of the parish council will increase in future years and as the local cllr, Cllr Britton will do what he can.

One last comment on the roads. Southampton Road was a key issue in the run up to the election. A bid has been raised for a study on the traffic issues affecting the road. Cllr Britton cannot see a solution of a by-pass or an extension of the road, however may be smaller things can be achieved. The chair asked if the survey would be conducted before or after McDonalds has been built.

Question: What is the latest position regarding the Matrons College Farm development and a medical facility?

Answer: Cllr Britton confirmed that no conclusion has yet been reached. The housing development will go ahead. It is still not known what will happen about a medical provision. A building will be provided and the houses will be built, however an organisation or surgery will be required to operate it. That is uncertain at present.

5. Alderbury Village Hall – a community resource for the future – feedback from the village working party.

The presentation was led by Cllr Richard Britton, together with Adam Taylor from the working party. Nick Phillips from Barclay Phillips (firm of architects based at Oakridge Office Park in Whaddon) presented some drawings of initial images of a possible floor plan for an extended village hall and images of the roadside view.

Cllr Britton explained that the project was in the early stages and a number of options were being explored. The project team includes Adam Taylor, Andy Larkham, Maz Clarke, Kay Robinson, Ken Palmer, Linda Snellgrove and Nigel Sell. Cllr Britton expressed his thanks to Nick Phillips who has given his time free of charge to support the project.

Why has this project been launched?

- The capacity of the Village Hall – with only one usable space – is now inadequate for the size of the village Alderbury has become. It does not currently offer any meeting rooms for instance and cannot cope with current demand eg. recently two local residents have wanted to set up classes in Alderbury, but have been unable to as there is no suitable availability and have gone to other local halls instead.
- In contrast, the Sports and Social Club has space which is underutilised.
- The Sports & Social Club and the Village Hall operate entirely separately. There are two management committees and two different constitutions

The vision of the working party

- A single 'joined up' village amenity
- A second activity space permitting two activities at the same time.
- One or two meeting/committee rooms.

The options

There are broadly two possible strategies to achieve the vision:

- Sell off some part of the recreation ground to raise money towards an entirely new, purpose designed and built hall.
- Accept the financial constraints imposed by not adopting the first strategy and extend the current Village Hall within the limited funding possibilities.

OR the third option would be to 'do nothing'

Adam Taylor explained that firstly the location of the village hall facility had been considered. Is it in the best location for the village? If the project looked at a brand new building, it could potentially be put on the current site of the cricket pavilion. Wiltshire Council may contribute an amount to the project, but part of the Recreation Ground would have to be sold for future housing development to raise a bulk of the funds that a new build would require. A new build is likely to cost in the region of £1 million. For instance, the current site of the village hall could be sold for new houses.

Alternatively, the current village hall is structurally sound as a condition survey has been completed and it could therefore be expanded and developed. The project could be constrained by the amount of funds that can be raised.

Nick Phillips showed some potential images of how the village hall could be extended towards Rectory Road, whilst also giving the external appearance of the building a 'facelift'.

Question: One of the current attractions of the hall is that parking onsite is good. What would happen if the car park is built on?

Answer: It is likely that if the current site is developed, part of the field would have to be used to provide new parking spaces.

Question: Has a needs analysis been done within the village to identify what is required by the current clubs and organisations? There are other facilities that can be hired within the village.

Answer: No, we haven't completed one yet.

Question: How much of the green space would need to be taken for parking?

Answer: We don't know yet. Short mat bowls is proving very popular in other villages and Cllr Britton is confident that it would be in Alderbury too. Therefore more space is required to provide this type of facility.

Question: Would sound proofing be incorporated? An organisation recently held its AGM at the village hall and the music could be heard from the social club. Storage will also be important.

Answer: Yes, both of these issues would be considered.

Funding

Leaving aside the possible sale of land, the following funding sources are being explored in order to further option 2:

- A Wiltshire Council grant (£250,000?)
- A public Works Loan Board loan (£200,000?)
- Landfill Tax grant
- Lottery
- Public subscription (probably a pre-requisite to getting the WC grant)

Martin Woodroffe, Chairman of Alderbury Football Club was present and invited to give an update of the latest position regarding the development of the new clubhouse. He confirmed that in the next 6 weeks the construction of the pitches would start. They have managed to raise funds of over £800,000. Nick Philips has helped, together with Longford Estate and Alasdair Jones-Perrott. MJ Abbot will be working on pitch drainage and grading. Within the new clubhouse, there will be a club room which will be available to hire. There will also be a car park for 100 cars behind the primary school, which the school will be able to use too. The target date for the clubhouse to open is 1st September 2018.

Question: Will the clubhouse have a bar?

Answer: There will not be a licenced bar at the football club.

Next steps

In no particular order since individual aspects will run concurrently:

- Discussions with Village Hall and Sports & Social Club management committees as to how to take forward the vision of a single village organisation.
- Finalise a proposed design.
- Public meeting to seek support for the detailed proposals made at that meeting.

An indicative show of hands was given regarding the two possible strategies as well as an additional 'do nothing' option. The audience at the meeting was in favour of option two (to extend the current village hall within the limited funding possibilities) from the information given. Further resident feedback will be required, together with the view of the village clubs and organisations about their requirements for any future space supplied by the village hall. The audience was firmly in favour of the working party continuing with their investigations.

Cllr Hartford thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and reminded everyone to book an appointment and take a leaflet about the Bobby Van if they are interested.

The meeting closed at 8.52pm.