

**Minutes of the Meeting of Alderbury Parish Council
held on Tuesday 6th September 2022 at 7.30pm
in The Fountain Room, Alderbury Village Hall.**



Present: Councillors Elaine Hartford (Chair), John Fuller, Adam Hughes, Mike Huntley, Mel Lawrence, Darren Mernagh and Barry Sloan,

In attendance: Wiltshire Councillor Richard Britton, PC Pete Jung, Steve Milton (Parish Clerk), and eight members of the public.

Public question time

Alex Wilkinson of Silverwood

reported that Wiltshire Council had removed the dead and diseased trees along the side of Southampton Road. The land had been left in a poor condition and he offered to work with the wildlife volunteers to create a nature rich scheme on the land. The Council welcomed and agreed the idea. Mel Lawrence the Council's Wildlife Champion agreed to meet with Alex to talk through the ideas.

Ken Carley

Reported that a local scientist had raised concerns about the loss of hedgerows and the use of chemical pesticides long before the current climate crisis. He welcomed the Council's intention to create new hedges. Mel Lawrence reported that Witherington Farm had planted many hundreds of metres of native hedging and had set aside field margins for wildlife. This could be seen from the Circular Walk. Members welcomed the efforts being made to create a more wildlife rich environment.

Adam Hughes

Asked about **the** diversion of the footpath at Ferry Cottage that had been closed during the redevelopment of the property. The Chair reported that the reopening of the footpath had been delayed because of a family bereavement.

John Turley

Asked about the allocation of housing in the village. Cllr Britton explained that there were no specific housing targets for the smaller villages, with most new housing targeted at larger more sustainable settlements. Wiltshire's housing targets were set by national Government, although the new Prime Minister had signalled her desire to scrap this top-down regime. The pressure in Alderbury had been created by Wiltshire's inability to demonstrate an adequate future supply of housing to meet the targets. As a result, planning inspectors were allowing appeals on sites outside of housing policy boundaries – ruling that the housing policy was unsound as it did not comply with government guidance.

Wiltshire Councillor Richard Britton

- August had been a quiet month due to the Council's recess.
- He now had a full calendar of meetings for the coming weeks and would have more to report in October.

PC Pete Jung, Wiltshire Police

- Reported that it had been a quiet month following actions taken to address the spate of petty thefts in the village. There were no significant matters to report.
- In response to a question from Cllr Sloan, Pete reported that suspicious behaviour at night should be reported using the 999 number.
- In response from a question from the Chair regarding a noisy motorbike, Pete confirmed that it was fine to report that action had been taken provided personal details were omitted from any press or media statement.

6233. Apologies for absence

With very heavy regret, the Chair reported that she had received a resignation from Councillor Ken Bath. She paid full tribute to the contribution Ken had made to the work of the Council. Members joined with

the Chair to pay their own tributes. Ken will be missed by everyone. The Clerk reported that the vacancy would be notified to the Returning Officer for Wiltshire.

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors Michael Considine (work), Kim Diprose (holiday) and John Ridd (work).

6234. Declaration of Cllrs Interests and dispensations

No declarations were submitted.

6235. Council meeting minutes

RESOLVED: that [the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 9th August, 2022](#) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

6236. Village Maintenance Update

The Council received the following updates from the Chair, Cllr Hartford.

- She had undertaken a tilt test at the cemetery and found that one headstone was leaning and in danger of falling. She reported that she would arrange for the stone to be laid flat to make it safe and the family would be requested to effect repairs.
- The Council considered quotes for the replacement of fencing at the Recreation ground and agreed to award the work to the lowest tenderer. The Council further agreed that the company should be invited to undertake the replacement of the rotten posts at Old Road.
- The Chair reported that [Salisbury Men's Shed](#) had agreed to replace the Council's noticeboards for the cost of materials and a small donation to the charity. She had agreed that Ken Carley (a member of the Salisbury Men's Shed) could remove one board to use as a template.
- In response to a question from Cllr Sloan, the Chair agreed to seek a price for the provision of a new waste bin for the open space in Avon Drive adjoining the Canal.
- The Chair reported that ongoing problems of litter collection had been addressed with the contractor and she would contact the operators of the textile bins to arrange for them to be emptied.
- The Chair thanked Cllr Sloan for removing a dumped settee from the Recreation Ground to the Council refuse centre in Salisbury.

6237. Solar Panels – Alderbury Village Hall

Councillor Fuller reported that the Council had commissioned a survey based on a provisionally accepted quotation for solar panels on the Village Hall roof as part of [Wiltshire Council's Solar Together cooperative buying scheme](#). Wiltshire Council tendered (by auction) for companies to provide the panels and selected the company [EE Renewables](#) as the best value for money provider. EE would conduct a survey of the Village Hall roof and recommend a suitable scheme for installation.

The Clerk reported that the Council had allocated £7,500 in its reserves to support this project and a further £24k of Community Infrastructure Funds (CIL) was available. Members questioned whether such a considerable sum should be committed to a single project. The Clerk reported that the Council's reserves were healthy with further CIL receipts of £40k expected over the next 18 months. This would provide adequate funds for other village projects. In response to a question about the use of a single contractor, Cllr Fuller explained that Wiltshire Council had undertaken a stringent process to select the provider and the Council did not have expertise in-house to undertake a tender process of this nature. Cllr Britton questioned whether it was the right time to be installing panels with prices continuing to fall. Cllr Fuller explained that the opportunity to coat-tail on the Wiltshire Council scheme was financially advantageous to the Council.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That £20k is earmarked in the Council's reserves and CIL to undertake this project,
- (2) That detailed proposals be brought to a future meeting for discussion and approval; and
- (3) That, in view of Wiltshire Council's comprehensive tendering exercise that identified the best value provider, the requirements of standing orders and financial regulations in respect of tenders is waived in this case to expedite the delivery of the project.

6238. Wildlife Friendly Alderbury – Projects 2022

Councillor Lawrence reported that the Council's forward plan included several wildlife projects. After discussing these with the volunteers, it had been agreed to move forward with a slightly less ambitious programme. The second phase of the community orchard and wildlife meadow project would be completed with the mowing of the meadow, scarification and overseeding of the designated wildflower area. This should increase the diversity of wildflowers in 2023 and enable the meadow to continue to develop with little intervention in future years.

The second project proposed for Autumn was the planting of a wildlife friendly native hedge along the Northern boundary of Oakwood Grove Open Space. The initial proposal was to create a 30m stretch of indigenous wildlife hedgerow consisting of Hazel, Holly, Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Crab Apple, Spindle, Dog Rose, and Dogwood. It was intended to plant four new native trees (Birch, Hawthorne, Malus, Sorbus) to link to the hedge alongside the path leading to Southampton Road. It was also planned to create small log piles along the length of the hedge to increase biodiversity, plus install a couple of hedgehog lodges.

The hedgerow would be managed for wildlife but cut outside of the nesting season to prevent it affecting nearby properties. Rabbit guards and mulch would be required for the planting. Cllr Lawrence, the Clerk, and volunteers had met on site and agreed that a further area of hedge (around 10m) could be accommodated to the South of the site. The Clerk reported that the Council had set aside £8,500 in its ear-marked reserves for the project. Cllr Lawrence explained that she would contact the Woodland Trust to find out if they had any schemes that might support community projects of this sort. In the absence of such, the Wildlife Group would acquire the trees from Landford Trees.

RESOLVED: that, subject to consultation with residents, the Council approves the Oakwood Grove wild hedgerow project as described above.

6239. Southampton Road Allotments

The Clerk reported that the Council, together with members of the Southampton Road Allotments Association, met with representatives of Formula Land (Alderbury) Ltd on Friday 5th August to discuss the future of the allotments. Formula Land had submitted an initial proposal to relocate the allotments to a new, larger site further down the pasture at a point just NE of Oakwood Grove (adjoining the woodland and extending down to the land drain across the field). A new access and improved parking had been proposed.

Following a tour of the existing allotments and the proposed new site it became apparent to all present that the proposed alternative location was waterlogged, exposed and unsatisfactory for cultivation. In addition, the proposal involved the removal of a substantial area of mature woodland. Formula Land agreed to reconsider its position and prepare fresh proposals. At the meeting, the Directors of the Company signed an amended licence with the Council extending the notice period for early vacation of the site from six to twelve months as requested by the Council in its letter to Formula Land dated 18th May. This brought the licence into line with the Council's own tenancy agreements.

Subsequently, Formula Land had submitted a further draft proposal. This delivered the desired objectives the Council submitted to Formula Land on 18th May. The proposal protected the existing allotments and, subject to planning, provided a new hard-surfaced access and parking area. This proposal has been circulated to allotment tenants.

John Turley, representing allotment holders, pointed out the significant role the tenants had played in securing these agreements. He explained that the tenants were reassured by the current proposals subject to planning and agreement of the final details. He indicated his support for the Council's proposal to seek the freehold of the site. The Chair thanked Mr Turley for his hard work in support of the negotiations with Formula Land.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Council formally welcomes Formula Land's offer to retain the existing allotments and thanks the Directors for their willingness to address the concerns expressed by allotment holders and the Council;
- (2) That the Council confirms its desire to acquire the freehold of the allotment site, access, and car park (together with all obligations relating thereto) to secure the provision of allotments in the village for the future;
- (3) That the allotment holders be invited to submit priorities for the improvement of the site in order that the Council as Licensee may negotiate the terms of the freehold; and
- (4) That the Council expresses its thanks to the members of SRAA for their assistance with this matter.

6240. Playground Equipment

Following the request for quotes for the repair equipment in the playground, an inspection of the large multiplay unit at the NE end of the field was undertaken. In the opinion of the inspector, the unit was beyond economic repair due to the extent of structural wood rot.

It was recommended that this unit should be replaced with something of comparable size using the same location. The cost of replacing a unit of this size, including removal and disposal of the old unit and the installation of new equipment plus reinstatement of the safety surfacing could be as much as £20k. The annual RoSPA safety inspection was due in September, and this would determine whether the unit was still fit for use.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That should the multi-play unit fail the RoSPA safety inspection it be decommissioned immediately and replaced as soon as the second tranche of CIL money is received in respect of the Firs Road development – due in 2023; and
- (2) Should the unit need replacing, primary school children be invited to suggest the type of play equipment that should be installed in its place.

6241. Picnic in the Park 2023

The organisers of the Picnic in the Park event had requested permission to stage the event again on Saturday 3rd June 2023, starting at around 1.00pm and finishing at 10.30pm. The Council received no complaints regarding the 2022 event and the field was cleared of litter and left in excellent condition.

RESOLVED: that the Picnic in the Park 2023 be supported, and the organisers be thanked for the excellent event held this year.

6242. [Planning Application PL/2022/06383](#): Replace Window with Bi-fold Door - 4 Foster Lane, Alderbury, Salisbury, Wilts, SP5 3FY

RESOLVED: that the Council makes no comment on this proposal.

6243. Conclusion of Audit 2021-22

The Council noted [the Conclusion of Audit Statement from PKF Littlejohn](#). In accordance with proper practices, this would be posted on the Council website and noticeboards together with [a statement of public rights](#).

6244. Budget Monitoring Report – 31st August 2022 (Month 5)

The Council noted [the budget monitoring report](#).

6245. Bank Balances and Bank Reconciliation – 31st August 2022

The Council noted [the bank balances and bank reconciliation statement](#).

6246. Reserves – 31st August 2022

The Council noted [the reserves statement](#) including the additional Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds received in respect of the new development at Firs Road.

6247. Accounts for Payment

RESOLVED: that [the schedule of payments and invoices received](#) be approved.

6248. Reports from Outside Bodies

The Chair reported that the Southern Area Board would be meeting on the following Thursday and the Council’s highway schemes – Firs Road and Clarendon Road – were due to be discussed.

6249. Correspondence

The Clerk reported that there were no items of correspondence to report.

6250. The Fountain magazine

It was agreed that the Clerk should submit an article based on these minutes.

6251. Dates of future meetings– to note the following meeting dates:

Wednesday 5 October Thursday 3 November Monday 5 December

The Chair closed the meeting at 9.27pm

Signed as a correct record

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Chair

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Date