

ALTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting at the Coronation Hall, 7.30 pm, April 2, 2015

Present: Peter Emery, Polly Carson, Kate Fielden, Robert Carpenter Turner, Ben Owen, Alex Oliver, Debby Lester. Apologies: Steve Hepworth, Cllr Paul Oatway, PC Richard Barratt

024/15 **Minutes:** The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed (proposed Robert Carpenter Turner, seconded Kate Fielden) and signed by Peter Emery as Chairman in the absence of Steve Hepworth

Matters arising not on the agenda: none

025/15 **Police report:** In the absence of PC Barratt, Charles Reiss (Clerk) summarised the police report. Since the PC meeting on January 15 there had been no reported crimes in the parish. There had, however, been five burglaries to outbuildings etc in the wider area and two thefts from oil tanks. One PC member pointed out that had also been a case of hare coursing.

026/15 **Horse warning signs:** Members approved the design and location of the proposed horse warning signs in Alton Priors and reaffirmed that there is no cost to be borne by the parish council.

027/15 **Playground fence:** Debby Lester, Treasurer, reported that the insurers for the playing field, Community First, had confirmed that there is no mention of the fence in the policy so that removal would not affect it. Safety warning signs might be advisable but are not stipulated in the policy. Members pointed out that the existing fence is not an effective safety barrier and that dogs can, in any case, get in through the gate. The cost of a proper repair, as opposed to a temporary patch-up, was more than the parish could afford. Agreed nem con, that the fence be removed, with the reasons explained in the next parish Newsletter.

028/15 **Great Stones Way:** Ben Owen reported on the meeting called by the Pewsey Community Area Partnership on March 23. He said that every parish represented affirmed that if a route could not be agreed the project should be abandoned. Councillor Paul Oatway described the project as dead in the water. Friends of the Ridgeway, the originators of the scheme, had apologised for the illegal placing of waymarks. Robert Carpenter Turner, who also attended, said there was overwhelming opposition to the plan but both he and Ben Owen voiced concern that this had not been reflected in the notes of the meeting circulated afterwards. After discussion, the following resolution was proposed by Polly Carson, seconded Alex Oliver:

The Parish Council, having attended the latest meeting on the Great Stones Way, feels the entire project is misconceived and should be abandoned. Agreed unanimously

- 029/15 Housing Needs Assessment request:** Members discussed the suggestion from HAB, the developers of the Honeystreet sawmill site, that the PC request Wiltshire Council to carry out an assessment. Although members did not wish to go out of their way to assist the developers it was strongly felt that there is a need for affordable housing to allow existing villagers and their families to stay on. Agreed that the request to be made.
- 030/15 Honeystreet street lighting:** Robert Carpenter Turner reported that Wiltshire Council would be prepared to change the sodium lighting along Chimney Lane on the canal north bank, which some residents felt was out of place. Paul Oatway, our local councillor, had indicated that grant would be available to cover at least part of the cost. Agreed that Alex Oliver investigate further.
- 031/15 Defibrillator/first aiders' list:** A parish resident had raised the issue of a defibrillator in the village following the death of a neighbour from a heart attack, and also suggested a list of local first aiders with mobile numbers. Members questioned the cost and also noted that the Barge Inn has already been raising money for a defibrillator. It was suggested that the organisers of the Festival of the Three Villages taking place this summer might wish to contribute to that cause. Agreed that RCT approach the Festival organisers, and Peter Emery approach parish residents with appropriate knowledge re first aid courses.
- 032/15 Phone box, BT offer:** The Parish Council had received a renewed invitation from BT to "adopt" the telephone box at Alton Priors. After brief discussion it was agreed that the invitation should be declined, while stressing to BT that mobile reception in the area is poor to non-existent and that the phone box is a vital service.
- 032/15 Parish newsletter:** The contents of the Spring newsletter were discussed and agreed in outline.

Any other business:

- 033/15 Honeystreet sawmill planning application:** Charles Reiss reported an invitation from the developers for a parish council representative to attend a "pre-application meeting" with Wiltshire Council planning department. After discussion it was agreed that Alex Oliver attend on behalf of the PC while making clear that his attendance does not signify support for the application.

034/15 **Resignation:** Kate Fielden notified members of her intention, because of other commitments, to resign from the Parish Council after the Annual General Meeting in May. Although the formal response will follow later, PC members, while understanding her decision, voiced strong regret.

There being no other business, the meeting ended at 8:27 PM.