

ALTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting at the Coronation Hall, 7.30 pm, March 10, 2016

Present: Steve Hepworth (Chair), Peter Emery, Ben Owen, Robert Carpenter Turner, Alex Oliver, Mike Golden, Apologies: Polly Carson, Debby Lester. In attendance: Cllr Paul Oatway

021/16 Minutes: The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

Matters arising not on the agenda:

022/16 White Horse maintenance: Peter Emery raised the issue of cost, noting that the chalk is beginning to deteriorate and suggesting that New College Oxford, as owner of the land, might be approached for funding. After discussion it was agreed that action be delayed until renewal of the chalk is more imminent.

023/16 Horse warning signs, Alton Priors: Steve Hepworth reported that these are now in place. A bill for £150 had been received from Wiltshire Council and forwarded to the livery stables to pay.

024/16 Honeystreet road signs: Charles Reiss (clerk) reported that the new signs are in place and thanked those in the village who had donated.

025/16 Postal collection times, Honeystreet: A letter has been sent to the post office centre in Marlborough to voice concern at the change in collection from 4 PM to 9 AM. No reply has yet been received.

026/16 Police report: Steve Hepworth noted a request from the police for residents to report any suspicions over hare coursing by calling 101. There had been local incidents, including Alton Barnes. He also noted new arrangements for community policing, to be handled via a team covering the Pewsey area rather than a single beat officer.

027/16 Barge Inn, Community asset: Polly Carson, investigating the option to register the pub as a community asset, was absent. A number of boat owners present at the meeting reported that they were pursuing the same issue but were prepared to wait for the Parish Council. CR, with the consent of members, relayed an email to the PC from Ian McIvor, the owner of the Inn. In it he stated, for the record: "I have never expressed any intention or will ever, to apply for a planning change of use on the Barge to residential... Were I ever to sell the freehold it will be sold as a trading pub and a profitable going concern." He added that the aim was to reopen the pub in April. After discussion it was agreed

that Ian McIvor be invited to attend the next PC in May and that in the meantime SH should seek to meet him to discuss the position.

028/16 Neighbourhood Development Order, Honeystreet sawmill: SH outlined the difficulties which had arisen. These included disagreement with Wiltshire Council over the area to be covered; doubts over the extent of control the Parish Council would have; concern the sawmill had not been properly marketed to continue in business; and the fact that Wiltshire Council, having originally encouraged the NDO, were now suggesting a standard planning application could be preferable. For these reasons the NDO Steering Group had recommended that the process be abandoned. After brief discussion, the following resolution was proposed Peter Emery, seconded Ben Owen:

The Parish Council has decided to withdraw from the Neighbourhood Development Order for Honeystreet sawmill.

Carried unanimously

Alex Oliver pointed out that funding was still available for a planning consultant to advise. It might be possible for the PC to pursue a small-scale Neighbourhood Plan, perhaps limited to a single policy. AO and Mike Golden confirmed that the grant of an initial £1500 was not dependent on continuing the NDO. Agreed that AO fix a meeting date with the consultant earlier approached. SH thanked all involved in the NDO, which had required a very large amount of work.

029/16 Village meeting and questionnaire results: CR summarised the Village meeting on March 5, reported on the parish website. The questionnaire on the sawmill site, delivered to every household in the parish, was only a first step but had proved very useful. It clearly demonstrated local residents' two main concerns: "overdevelopment" on one hand and allowing the site to fall derelict on the other.

030/16 Wharf site, ownership: AO reported that a purchase by local builders Cartys, who had part-demolished one of the historic buildings, had been dropped at the last moment. The ownership by Millside Stockinette was unchanged and the site is currently on offer for sale.

031/16 Highways meeting: Reintroduction of a Parish Steward scheme to be dealt with at a meeting in Devizes on April 6. Agreed Peter Emery and Ben Owen attend.

032/16 Broadband: SH reported final tests are underway before a new system is introduced around the end of March, which should see faster speeds.

033/16 Brown's Lane light: This had been switched off for a 12-month trial period and some residents were suggesting it could be removed. Several members argued that it served a useful purpose on a public

footpath and should be switched on. In line with most of the other streetlights in the parish, it could be set to turn off from 11 PM to 5 AM. To limit light pollution, it was suggested that the existing sodium light might be replaced by a less obtrusive down-light. CR to investigate and report back.

034/16 Defibrillator, Village Hall: SH reported receipt of a £500 grant from Pewsey Area Board. £1500 had been requested from Scottish and Southern Electricity. The total cost with tax would be about £2700. The Village Hall committee was happy to organise and install. CR to enquire about the defibrillator proposed at the Barge Inn.

035/16 Speed indicator rota: SH said the plan was for the indicator to be shared among seven parishes, so available to each for a fortnight every four months or so. It would back up Speedwatch and the village gates. The cost to the parish would be approximately £200 a year. Agreed the scheme be adopted, and reviewed after one year.

036/16 Spring Newsletter: Topics were discussed and agreed. The possibility of expanding the Newsletter beyond the present two sides of A4 was considered but rejected on grounds of cost.

Any Other Business

037/16 Playground equipment: A repair is required to the slide. PE to sort.

038/16 Village Hall stage lighting: Robert Carpenter Turner reported a grant of £991.54 from Pewsey Area Board. Cllr Oatway pointed out that the new financial year would bring new grant availability, local money for local people.

039/16 Workway Drove car park: signs still missing, PO to pursue

040/16 RAF building: Ben Owen asked about protection for the old airfield building at Alton Barnes. SH said English Heritage had been approached but had been obstructive. Agreed Peter Emery contact David Carson to discuss next steps.

041/16 Speed limit, Honeystreet: Emma Lewis, a Honeystreet resident, sought the support of the PC for a 30 mph speed limit through the village instead of the existing 40 mph. SH recalled that two traffic counts by Wiltshire Council had found 85% of traffic travelling at 40 mph or less, with average speeds immediately north of the canal at 24 mph. The Council had concluded the present limit was appropriate. PO said he was happy to have the matter looked at again but stressed that, given existing policies, the outlook for change was not hopeful.

042/16 Transparency Code and Code of Conduct: CR reported that the PC was now required to implement the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities. This had been done and details were on the website. The PC was also required to adopt a Code of Conduct. A model code from Wiltshire Council had been circulated. Proposed RCT, seconded AO: that the Code of Conduct be adopted. Agreed unanimously. To be placed on the agenda and formally confirmed at the next PC.

Reverting to the NDO, Charles Reiss on behalf of the Steering Group thanked Steve Hepworth for the quite exceptional work he had done.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 8.53pm.