

ALTON PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of meeting at the Coronation Hall, 7.20, May 22, 2014*

- Present:** Steve Hepworth, Peter Emery, Kate Fielden, Ben Owen, Robert Carpenter Turner, Polly Carson
Apologies: Jenni Bickerdyke. In attendance: Councillor Paul Oatway.
- 025/14** **Minutes:** The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed (proposed Robert Carpenter Turner, seconded Peter Emery) and signed by the Chairman. Matters arising not on the agenda: none
- 026/14** **Annual audit, Funds in savings and current accounts:** In the absence of Jenni Bickerdyke, Responsible Finance Officer, these items were postponed. Cheques for £19 to Steve Hepworth for Wessex Printing costs, and for £766.59 for playing field insurance were approved and signed.
- 027/14** **Parish Council resignation and vacancy:** Charles Reiss (Clerk) outlined the procedure to fill the gap left by the resignation of Jayne Drew. If a by-election is not demanded by ten electors it will be open to the parish council to co-opt a replacement. Agreed a Notice of Vacancy be posted on notice boards and the parish website as required.
- 028/14** **Flooding, Browns Lane and elsewhere:** In the absence of Jayne Drew, who was handling this matter, SH had consulted with Wiltshire highways department, and some remedial work at Alton Priors had been done. The option of keeping a supply of sandbags in the parish had been considered but storage was a problem. They were in any case available at Devizes. Agreed that there should be a reminder of this in the Autumn Newsletter.
- 029/14** **Highways repairs:** SH reported that Wiltshire Council had been notified of work outstanding.
- 030/14** **Workway Drove car park - byelaw:** Paul Oatway reported that he had spoken to Wiltshire Council's rights of way officer over concerns that the car park is still being used as an unofficial caravan site. The council's legal services department was now investigating whether a bylaw would be practicable. There was also a question of cost given that such a bylaw would have to be advertised nationally.
- 031/14** **Parking, The Bank:** Ben Owen warned that cars parked on the blind corner at The Bank would cause an accident sooner rather than later. A pull-in had been created which it was believed might be contrary to planning consent. Other members also voiced concern, while feeling that yellow lines would definitely not be an appropriate answer. Agreed

that pc members talk to residents, and SH to check the issue of planning consent.

- 032/14** **Footpath grants:** CR reported that grant is available for footpath improvements, and that it had been suggested this could go to restore the stiles on the historic footpath between St Mary's and All Saints churches. However it would require 50% matched funding from the pc. Members agreed, bearing in mind that the stiles are all in working order, that the money is not available.
- 033/14** **Protection of buildings of value to the community:** The Department for Communities and Local Government has proposed that pcs could nominate buildings which they believe merit special protection. Agreed to consider and follow up, if appropriate, at the next pc.
- 034/14** **World War I commemoration / RAF memorial maintenance:** Ben Owen reported that he has delivered to Pewsey Area Partnership a list of those from the parish who died in the Great War. There were no plans for a local event. SH said that a planned commemoration at East Grafton had widened to become an event for the area. Members agreed that should be the focus. Agreed also that the pc take responsibility for maintaining the immediate area around the RAF memorial.
- 035/14** **Conservation Area status, Honeystreet:** Members felt this would give an extra level of protection to the village, which has seen several development proposals, with more expected. The village borders an existing conservation area and given Honeystreet's industrial history and canal-side setting an extension was fully justified. Resolution proposed Robert Carpenter Turner, seconded Polly Carson: That the Parish Council seek conservation area status for Honeystreet. Agreed unanimously. Kate Fielden to make initial approach to Wilts Council. CR to investigate possible expert help.
- 036/14** **Pewsey Vale bus services:** KF reported widespread anxiety that, despite a so-called consultation, the community was being presented with a fait accompli in the shape of a much-reduced service. This fear had been voiced at a public meeting and in a strong letter from the Chair of Rushall pc, calling for a further round of consultation. She felt the pc should endorse that letter. Members voiced particular concern at the threat that Alton would lose direct services to Devizes and Pewsey, the loss of the night bus, train connections; and the impact on jobs and on young people. Agreed that KF write in those terms to Wilts Council on behalf of the pc.
- 037/14** **Canal towpath, Honeystreet:** BO reported that the towpath on the south bank is being eroded, partly by spikes driven in for moored

boats, and is in need of restoration. SH said that could be raised at one of the twice-yearly meetings being arranged between the Canal and River Trust and parishes along this stretch of the Vale. The meetings should also address the issue of over-stayers, where CRT enforcement was toothless. This parish was fortunate in having a pretty good working relationship with boaters, and the situation at Honeystreet was also currently quite good.

038/14 **Playing field CAT:** CR reported that the deed of surrender for the Community Asset Transfer of the playing field to pc ownership has been signed & deposited. This marks the final stage of the handover. Documentation is held by the solicitors, Wansbroughs.

039/14 **Planning applications:** Fernbank, Honeystreet Wharf, Priors fertilizer tanks (breach) – concluded and noted for the record

Any other business:

040/14 **Ad eyesores:** RCT said there were, once again, unsightly advertisements at the Devizes-Pewsey crossroads. SH to contact highways to ask them to remove.

041/14 **Newspaper deliveries:** PC pointed out that there was now no one available to deliver newspapers to the parish. Agreed that an appeal be posted on the parish website.

There being no other business, the meeting ended at 8.32 pm.

* minutes subject to confirmation at the next pc