

ALTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting at the Coronation Hall, 7.00, November 29, 2012

Present: Steve Hepworth (Chair) Peter Emery, Charles Fletcher, Kate Fielden, Ben Owen, Polly Carson, Robert Carpenter Turner, Jayne Drew
In attendance: John Dunford and Jonathan Young, Sharyn Jarvis
Apologies: Jenni Frost , Councillor Robert Hall, PC Richard Barratt

077/12 Minutes: The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed (proposed Peter Emery, seconded Robert Carpenter Turner) and signed by the Chairman.

Matters arising: none

Steve Hepworth, as Chairman, offered to change the running order of the agenda for the convenience of those attending.

078/12 Canal Quiet Zone – Charles Reiss (Clerk) reported that the Quiet Zone signs at Honeystreet are now in place. With the Barge Inn closed and cold weather setting in canal traffic was down but it seemed that, even before the signs went up, noise problems were easing. There was no progress on the promised resurfacing of the towpath west of the pub. SH said that the Canal & River Trust had recognised the job was too big for volunteers, as originally planned, and said it would carry out the work but no more had been heard. CR said he would approach the Canal Manager.

079/12 Police report: In the absence of a police representative, a short update sent by the police was presented to the parish council.

080/12 Honeystreet sawmill: The pc discussed an outline plan for the future of this site circulated beforehand by Jonathan Young of Woolley & Wallis, surveyors, on behalf of John Dunford, the site owner. Members considered the issues of housing and / or continued employment on the site but agreed that it was too early and that there was too little information for the pc to reach a view. Mr Dunford and Mr Young then joined the meeting. SH thanked them for involving the pc at a very early stage. Mr Young stressed that any changes were some years off. However he was keen to work out some parameters and principles with the pc to avoid wasted planning effort. The turnover of the sawmill had dropped. The question was what were the alternatives. In discussion, options raised included a small office-type development; a facility for tourism; or a mix of housing and light industrial use. The design of any new build, access to the site, and the impact of existing and possible new planning policies were also touched on. Several members stressed the importance of continuing

employment on the site. Summing up, SH said the parish council would now consider all that had been said.

- 081/12** **Precept, 2013:** After brief discussion, and on the understanding that the parish will not be liable for any costs for next year's pc elections, members agreed to leave the precept unchanged, for the third year running, at £2,250. In the absence of Jenni Frost, the following resolution was proposed by Polly Carson, seconded Jayne Drew:
The Parish Council agrees that the precept for 2013 should be £2,250. However, in view of the unforeseen and unavoidable absence of the Responsible Finance Officer, it is further agreed that the Chairman and the RFO shall have authority to amend that figure, if they believe it necessary, and report back.
Agreed unanimously
- 082/12** **Pewsey Neighbourhood Plan:** SH reported confusion over proposals for Neighbourhood Plans. Wilts Council had provided £30,000 for Pewsey, but nothing for other parishes. However it was now clear that for most parishes a Plan is not required; Alton need not be involved except as a "consultee" with Pewsey. The existing Honeystreet Village Design Statement was still planning law. The status of the Altons VDS was unclear; it had been submitted to Wiltshire Council but apparently never adopted. Kate Fielden said written assurance was needed that the Honeystreet VDS was still a protection, and on the status of the Altons VDS. It would also be useful to know if a VDS could be updated. Members, including SH, PC and KF, said that provided those points could be established the two Village Design Statements, possibly updated, and the Conservation Area Statement should be sufficient. SH said he hoped to attend a meeting on the issue on January 17, together with KF. Agreed that CR should check on the outstanding VDS queries.
- 083/12** **Playing field Community Asset Transfer:** CR reported that Wilts Council had been paid and the transfer process was almost complete. Solicitors' fees, originally estimated at £500-1,000, were likely, according to them, to be about £700 plus VAT.
- 084/12** **Community Infrastructure Levy:** KF reported that Wiltshire Council is to be allowed to charge a levy on certain developments, mainly residential, which will be charged per square meter of floor space. She outlined the details and highlighted a number of serious problems, including the likely impact on affordable housing, social housing and starter homes. She pointed out that the pc had not been alerted until very late, and now had only until December 5 to express a view. SH proposed that KF draft a letter on the pc's behalf, and also that she circulate pc members to aid them to voice their concerns individually

via an online questionnaire. Members thanked KF for drawing the issue to the attention of the pc.

- 085/12** **Great Stones Way:** SH reported that the project was on hold. It had not received the second instalment of funding as originally planned. The money had been spent elsewhere. This was in large part thanks to the efforts of Councillor Robert Hall, who had been a brilliant asset, and Andrew Williamson, Chair of Avebury pc. An alternative route through Pewsey, which offered much better facilities, was being considered. However the “Friends of the Ridgeway” behind the project were still publicising the original scheme and needed careful watching.
- 086/12** **Parish Newsletter:** Items for the December Newsletter were discussed.
- 087/12** **Planning application:** Application E/2012/1325/TCA - tree work, Old School House, A. Barnes - which was circulated and discussed by pc members by email and accepted with no objections, amendments or observations, was noted for the record.

Any Other Business:

- 088/12** **Free trees:** RCT reported that free trees are on offer from the Woodland Trust. Members pointed out that they could replace lost ash trees. Tim or David Carson should be consulted about possible sites. Agreed that RCT should investigate.

Main business (resumed):

- 089/12** **Date of next meeting:** Since the scheduled date, January 17, clashes with the Neighbourhood Plan meeting, SH suggested bringing it forward a week to January 10, at 7.30pm. Agreed.
- 090/12** **Barge Inn:** Polly Carson, as a member of the Barge Inn Community Project committee, declared an interest and left the meeting. After detailed discussion it was proposed by Robert Carpenter Turner, seconded Charles Fletcher, that the Parish Council write to the National Lottery to raise concerns about the project and its funding. Agreed unanimously.
- 091/12** **Payments & cheque signatories:** Cheques were presented for playing field safety inspection (£86.40), to Ben Owen for upkeep of playing field (£550) and to Peter Emery for White Horse maintenance (£40) Proposed, Charles Fletcher, seconded Robert Carpenter Turner. Signed CF, PE, SH.

There being no other business the meeting ended at 9.08 pm.

pc minutes 29.11.12
