

ALTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting at the Coronation Hall, 7.30 pm, March 8, 2018

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

014/18 Minutes: The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

Matters arising:

015/18 Pewsey surgery: Ben Owen had raised PC concerns with Pewsey Community Area Partnership. However there were doubts whether this was an appropriate matter for PCAP and hopes that the issues raised were only teething problems. Members agreed the need to keep an eye on the situation.

016/18 Vale historical awareness project: The PC had been asked whether it wished to be involved in this project, including a display board and an online interactive map of the Vale. Members agreed to discuss the details by email before replying.

017/18 Barge Inn: Members of the steering group of the Barge Inn Cooperative, speaking at the invitation of the Chair, explained that they were seeking funds to carry out a feasibility study for a possible purchase of the pub. They were very keen for local residents to be involved, whether on behalf of the Parish Council or personally. PC members welcomed the offer of involvement and agreed that request should be publicised in the parish Newsletter and website.

Ben Owen reported that an email to Wiltshire Council seeking information about the sale of the pub had been interpreted as a formal intention to bid. Members agreed that the parish council is in no position to make such a bid and has no intention of doing so, and that Wiltshire Council should be so informed. Proposed Ben Owen, seconded Robert Carpenter Turner. Agreed unanimously.

018/18 West Stowell Farm: Following a Freedom of Information request, BO had secured a copy of the Viability document relating to planning application 17/07355/FUL to convert a farm unit to a dwelling. After discussion it was agreed that a resume of the history of the application should be submitted to Councillor Oatway to consider whether it should be referred for scrutiny.

019/18 Local Green Space: Alex Oliver suggested the PC should consider the possibilities of designating one or more areas within the parish under a Community Open Space Order, equivalent to a conservation order for an area of countryside. Agreed that Charles Reiss secure details from AO and circulate for discussion at the next PC.

020/18 Data Protection new rules: CR reported that new rules regarding data protection are about to come into force. As they stand, they would require the parish to employ a professional Data Protection Officer at a cost of some £850 a year. Members protested that this would be absurd for a tiny local authority which employs no staff and has virtually no data to protect. The cost would amount to almost one fifth of the PC's total precept. Cllr Oatway said that the concerns, shared by PCs across the county, were being raised in Parliament by Baroness Scott, leader of Wiltshire Council. He advised the PC to take no action at this stage.

021/18 Broadband: BT Openreach are carrying out initial surveys to bring ultrafast broadband to the area with fibre connections direct to properties, including Newtown which currently has the worst service. The development would necessitate an overhead cable crossing the road to supply Browns Lane.

022/18 Highways: An appeal to residents was proposed, to report potholes and incidents of fly tipping directly to Wilts Council either online or using the My Wiltshire app. Agreed that should be publicised on the parish website and in the Newsletter. CR reported that the request for a reduced speed limit on the approach to the Honeystreet canal bridge had been formally closed.

023/18 Honeystreet Village Design Statement: Alex Oliver presented drafts of the updated VDS. To be considered and discussed at the next PC.

024/18 Obstructed footpath: A complaint had been received from a Woodborough parish resident concerning a footpath near the Barge Inn. Ben Owen to check the situation with Wilts Council.

025/18 18/01343/FUL - Newtown Dairy, Knapp Hill, extension. After discussion BO proposed, Polly Carson seconded, to support the application. Agreed unanimously.

026/18 18/00658/FUL, St Johns Cottage, Alton Barnes: Previously settled via email with no objections or comments, noted for the record.

027/18 Honeystreet barn: AO said that while this application (17/11265/FUL) was settled it was important to ensure that procedures were properly followed in future to safeguard the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Having declared an interest, AO left the meeting. After discussion, it was agreed a letter be sent to the Head of Planning at Wilts Council to voice concerns and seek assurances.

028/18 Finance: Debby Lester reported that financial records for the years 2013-14 and 2015-16 had been lost online. She sought consent to recommence the records from 2017-18 and maintain them on paper in future. Agreed. A cheque to Peter Emery for £150.00 for spraying of the White Horse was presented and signed.

029/18 Spring Newsletter: Topics were discussed and agreed.

Any other business

030/18 Honeystreet wharf site: CR reported that the sale had still not been finalised pending the clearance of contaminated land. Planning consent for a new teashop next door could impact on the site. Members agreed this would require continued monitoring.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8.51pm.