



ALBRIGHTON PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of meeting

Minutes of the Albrighton Parish Council Extraordinary Meeting held on Wednesday 15th August 2018 at 7.15 pm in the Red House.

Present

Cllrs. P Woodman, B Hickson, P Illes, P Harrison, S Kirkland, T Maguire, M Medlyn, M Pate, J Pledger, S Pledger, R Smith, A Straney, M Pitchford.

In attendance:

S Reynolds Clerk to Albrighton Parish Council.

18088. Apologies

To receive and approve apologies for absence. Members are asked to give their apologies direct to the Clerk.

Apologies were received from:

Cllr R Rudman (holiday)

Cllr D Beechey (holiday)

18089. Declaration of Interest.

To receive declarations under consideration on this agenda in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 s32 and The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012.

Members must fill out the declarations of Interests Forms for submission.

Where a member indicates that they have a prejudicial interest but wish to make representation regarding the item before leaving the meeting, they must do so under item 4(D) of Public Participation.

Cllr Pate declared an interest in item 1890 as Trustee of the Village Halls Trust (commonly known as the Red House). Cllr Medlyn also declared an interest in item 18090 as an employee of the Red

House. The Clerk advised they were both non-pecuniary interests as the Red House had not received any monetary incentive from the summer activities programme.

18090. Public Participation

Members of the public are invited to ask questions, make representations or submit comments on any item on the agenda. This is **LIMITED TO THREE MINUTES PER PERSON** – at the sole discretion of the Chairman.

There were 69 members of the public present. The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and outlined the various actions leading up to the meeting being held. The Chairman explained that Cllr Harrison and Cllr Kirkland had called for the Extraordinary meeting. He had written to them to suggest that they meet with him and the Clerk to discuss their concerns or to put their item on the agenda for the 6th September council meeting. He also noted to them that to call for such a meeting may generate adverse publicity and be damaging to the council's reputation. He also explained that unfortunately he had not been given the courtesy of a reply to his email. The Chairman explained that as per our standing orders and the Local Government Act 1972 he would be allowing extra time for the public session, he then briefed the public on the rules of public participation and opened up the public session to the floor.

Many residents raised various questions including:

Jenny Wynn, Trustee of the Red House, asked why the 2 Councillors had persisted in holding the Extraordinary Meeting at a cost to the rate payers especially after an email was received from the Chairman offering several solutions and why the matter was not dealt with informally.

Cllr Harrison was given the right to reply by the Chairman even though it was within the public session and was asked to reply to the question. He explained that he had no view on the play activities but he clearly felt the issue was one of democracy and due process which he said had not been followed as the council had not been informed about the council's involvement and so the council had not agreed to be involved in the scheme. He also said that the council was providing the scheme jointly with the Red house and questioned what would happen if there was an accident and then the council would be responsible and would incur financial liabilities. He also said that the issue had been mismanaged on Face book by residents. Cllr Harrison also stated that he was concerned whether due diligence had been carried out and if not, then democracy was not carried out.

Julie Harris ex Chair of the Abney Avenue Play Park stated that she had passed the funds to Albrighton Parish Council to be held in trust and that the funds could only be used for future children's activities, she explained that, after a discussion with Jenny Wynn and the Chairman and Clerk of Albrighton Parish Council she had given written authority for the funds to be spent on the summer activities scheme.

The Chairman asked the Clerk to advise on the point made that the council had not agreed to be involved in the scheme. The Clerk advised that the potential scheme was raised by Jenny Wynn only after the 5th July council meeting and was therefore discussed at the 11th July meeting of the Financial Committee of the council as the question of whether council funds would be needed arose. As explained above no council funds were needed or used as the funding came from the Abney Ave Play Park funds. The council's own Standing Orders allows for the Finance Committee to make such decisions and so effectively the council did agree to the scheme.

The Chairman said that it was a shame that Cllr Harrison, who is one of the four members of the Finance Committee, had not attended the Finance Committee meeting as he would then have known about the issue. The Chairman said that Cllr Harrison had not even sent his apologies for that meeting.

Cllr Harrison said that in any case the notice for the Financial Committee meeting had not been called with the statutory notice but the Chairman waved a copy of the notice of the meeting and said that was not the case.

Andrea Partridge who worked for the NHS explained the health benefits for the children and she felt these outweighed any concerns about the use of the name on the scheme programme that Albrighton Councillors may have.

Sandy Jackson who has worked in the funding arena for many years stated that there was no liability attached to funding arrangements.

Jackie Pate challenged Cllr Harrison regarding his claims on legislation. She was an experienced school governor and confirmed that if the parents were present with the children then the parents are responsible for the children and not any outside agencies.

The Clerk said that the Red House had public liability insurance for the scheme and that the Parish Council also had public liability insurance which covered the council's involvement in the scheme so that concern of Cllr Harrison was ill founded.

Cllr Medlyn questioned Cllr Harrison motives and if he was really concerned about the potential for an accident and whether insurance was in place as he had allowed his two grandchildren to attend the scheme - and they were not from Albrighton but from Wolverhampton but the leaders of the scheme had allowed them to take part

Adrian Robinson asked if any Councillors had helped during the summer program and if any Albrighton Parish Council monies had been spent. He was informed that several Albrighton Parish Council and Donington with Boscobel Parish Council Councillors had volunteered during the holidays and that no Albrighton Parish Council monies had been spent on the activities at all.

Richard Woodman thanked the Councillors and other volunteers for their help and stated that he felt that the issue over the use of the council name, which was not on a public letter

at all as claimed and was on the top of the leaflet, should have waited until the September council meeting and that he believed that this whole saga had further history attached to it. Bill Abbott suggested that Councillors needed to pull together and support activities for all ages in the village and to move forward and provide the funds for this to be repeated in the next holiday period.

Sarah Cox a business owner who had run sessions during the summer activity program asked Cllr Kirkland why the old play scheme closed and where the equipment from it had gone.

Cllr Kirkland stated that the play scheme closed because the school was going to open a 'before and after' school club and she stated that what was left of the equipment was four mouldy boxes which had been disposed of and the money given to Albrighton Parish Council and she thought play scheme funds were ring fenced.

Cllr Medlyn stated that the previous play scheme was closed by Cllr Kirkland and then she opened one at Cosford and it was the Councillors who requested the Extraordinary Meeting who closed the previous play scheme.

Cllr Straney said he supported the summer activities 100% but disputed funds being spent on them saying the funds should be for the park which he believed will be handed over to Albrighton Parish Council by Shropshire Council.

Cllr Pate explained that Albrighton Parish Council do not have to take over the running of Abney Avenue Play Park if they don't wish to or do not have the funds to maintain it. He also explained that the Abney Avenue funds were from the Local Government Association and could only be used for youth activity.

Lorraine Podmore stated that she felt the summer activities programme had been amazing, and that the two Councillors petty concerns were irrelevant and that their concerns should be about our children and how the children feel about the summer activities and not about money or the use of a name.

Cllr Pate expressed his concern that the calling of the Extraordinary Meeting was an absolute absurd waste of public money and councillors' time and called on the two Councillors to resign.

Nigel Hester reminded the meeting that the item on the agenda is the concerns over the use of the council's name on a document

Adrian Robertson asked if SALC (Shropshire Association of Local Councils) advised that we didn't need permission from whole council to use the name. The Clerk advised that the council had received verbal advice and subsequently an email had been received confirming that full council permission was not needed to use the council name and this advice had been circulated to all Councillors well before the Extraordinary Meeting was held.

Cllr Pledger felt that wasn't the point in question but the Clerk explained that this was the item on the agenda for which the Extraordinary Meeting had been requested.

The public session was closed at this point, given that the Chairman had allowed members of the public to participate fully in the meeting.

18091 To consider Councillors concerns regarding the use of Albrighton Parish Council name on a public letter advertising the play activities at the Red House.

Cllr Kirkland was asked to make a statement about why she called the Extraordinary Meeting and said that she was not happy that all the Council has not been consulted on the summer activities programme, the Clerk advised this was not required as the Finance Committee had agreed with the scheme under their delegated powers and no funds were needed from the Council.

The Clerk then provided advice to all Councillors regarding procedures and explained that if members were minded they could suspend the Standing Orders to enable a motion to be put forward without the usual 7 days written notice.

Cllr Smith moved the motion to suspend the standing orders which was seconded by Cllr Pate. Cllr Smith also asked if it was possible to move a recorded vote, the Clerk advised under our Standing Orders this could be allowed if members agreed. The move for a recorded vote was carried unanimously.

Cllr Smith then proposed the following motion which was seconded by Cllr Pate:

This council regrets the actions by Cllr Harrison and Cllr Kirkland calling for this Extraordinary Meeting which risks bringing the reputation of this council into potential disrepute.

This motion was carried by 8 votes (PW, RS, MP, MM, BH, TM, MP, PI) and 5 abstentions (AS, SK, SP, JP, PH)

Cllr Pitchford then requested a second motion and a recorded vote, which was allowed being carried unanimously again.

This council supports the summer activities programme and the partnership working between the Red House, Albrighton Parish Council and Donington with Boscobel Parish Council.

This motion was passed unanimously by the council. The Extraordinary Meeting closed at 8.15pm.

18092. Date of next meeting: Albrighton Parish Council meeting – Thursday 6th September, 2018 at 7.15 pm in The Red House.

The Chairman then called on Jenny Wynn to address residents at the meeting in order to inform them of the recent improvements at the Red House.

Signed..... Date.....

Chairman