



ALBRIGHTON PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of meeting

Minutes of the Albrighton Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 8th January at 7.15 pm in the Red House.

Present

Cllrs. D Beechey, B Hickson, T Maguire, M Medlyn, M Pate, J Pledger, P Woodman, R Rudman, P Illes, M Pitchford, S Pledger, P Collins, R Smith

In attendance:

S Reynolds Clerk to Albrighton Parish Council.

19106 Apologies

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

Cllr Straney – Holiday

19107. Declarations 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.

Cllrs Pitchford, Illes and Medlyn declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 19116.

19108. 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 no members of the public present.

19109. Report by the Shropshire Council member, Cllr. M Pate, with regard to items of business likely to affect the community.

Cllr Pate updated members on the budget progress, he explained that it was likely that the increase in Council Tax was going to be 3.9% of which 2% would be ring fenced for spend on Social Care. He also informed members that Shropshire Council were going to change all of the street lights to LED which are much more energy efficient, these are to be changed at a rate of about 100 a week so it would take a significant period of time for all the lights to be replaced.

Several councillors raised the issue of potholes in the area and the poor state of the roads around the village. Cllr Pate encouraged members to report all these issues direct to Shropshire Council for action either on the website or by emailing the portfolio holder Steve Davenport directly. Councillor Pate also explained the financial constraints Shropshire Council was under with the need to find a further £20 million in savings this year.

Cllr Medlyn thanked Cllr Pate for the work that had been undertaken in ensuring that the houses in Talbot Road had been allocated to local families. Members were reminded that Shropshire Council Chief Executive Clive Wright and his housing managers accepted an invitation to address the Parish Council on 4th October 2018 and a dozen members of the public were present. Councillors supported the points made by several members of the public, currently in private rented accommodation, who said that the Shropshire Council points scheme, which is used to choose which people on the waiting list will get a dwelling, did not differentiate between a person who has already established their life in Albrighton (with for example nearby relatives or friends providing child support or with children in local schools or with a local employment etc.) from a person from the other side of the county with no links to Albrighton. We recommended that a local person should have some additional points due to them having already set up in Albrighton. Mr. Wright understood the issue and promised that this matter would be reviewed. The Chairman, Vice Chairman and Clerk then met again with Mr. Wright in Shire Hall on 14th May 2019 and this was one of the matters discussed. We have now been told that most, if not all, of these new houses have been allocated to Albrighton/Donington residents. All members agreed this was a real positive for the village.

19110. Parish Councillors' reports with regard to any items of council business they have recently conducted likely to affect the community.

Cllr Medlyn informed members that the OAP Christmas lunch had been well attended and she thanked APC for their continued support with this event. The Chairman Cllr Woodman expressed his thanks to Cllr Medlyn and her team at the Red House for all the work undertaken in organising this event.

19111. Minutes of previous meetings:

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 4th December 2019

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the Albrighton Parish Council minutes of the 4th December 2019 were true and accurate records.

19112. Matters arising

To consider any issues arising from the minutes that are not included on the agenda. Meeting actions points to be noted where appropriate.

Chairman's Report on the Banning Orders on Cllr Silvia Pledger and Cllr James Pledger.

At the December meeting, Cllr David Beechey had expressed doubt on their validity and in his Letter to the Parish Magazine (Jan 2020) he said that he had asked Shropshire Association of Local Councils (SALC) at their recent meeting for advice which was that "the imposition of such sanctions was 'ultra vires' i.e. beyond the legal powers of the council...". The Chairman reported that he had, as agreed at the December meeting, sought confirmation and had written to both SALC and the Shropshire Council Solicitor. They had replied but neither of them had answered the question posed. The Chairman said that the banning orders remain in place because: -

- a) The verbal advice given to Cllr Beechey has not been confirmed and neither is it recorded in the SALC Minutes for November or December 2019
- b) The SALC Model Vexatious Complaints Policy is a template for parish councils to use and to amend as they see fit to suit their requirements. The SALC Model Policy Template has text showing it to apply only to residents.

- c) The Albrighton Parish Council Vexatious Complaints Policy states that it applies to both residents and councillors.
- d) The Albrighton Parish Council Vexatious Policy was approved by Albrighton Parish Council in 2014 and was signed by Cllr David Beechey who was then Chairman.
- e) The banning orders have been properly approved by Council under the Parish Council's Vexatious Complaints Policy

Cllr Malcolm Pate said that the Council had to make the orders to protect an employee and a councillor, as not to do so the Council would be at risk of legal action, he said that in the last 35 years he had never come across anything like the situation currently at Albrighton Parish Council. He was very mindful that if this action had not been taken then the Clerk would be well within her rights to sue the council and that the ban needed to remain. The proposal by the Chairman was seconded and put to the vote

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the banning orders on Cllrs S & J Pledger remain in place (11 for, 2 against, 1 abstention).

Cllr Maguire suggested that further to the issue regarding potholes it would be helpful if the telephone numbers for reporting these issues to Shropshire Council who were responsible for the repairs could be advertised, he said this would hopefully encourage people to report issues themselves direct to Shropshire Council to increase the pressure on them to repair the roads around the village.

Cllr S Pledger asked if Donington with Boscobel Parish Council had been informed that the decision had been taken not to hold an approbation ceremony this year, the Chairman confirmed that he had not done this yet but would contact their Chairman with this information.

Action – Cllr Woodman

19113. Planning:

Planning applications:

Reference: 19/05472/CPB

Address: Albrighton Railway Station, Station Road, Albrighton, Shropshire, WV7 3DR.

Proposal: Application for lawful development certificate for the proposed erection of 2No 4m columns with 3no CCTV cameras on each column

Applicant: West Midlands Trains

This application was for information only, it was noted that the columns have already been erected.

Reference: 19/05499/TCA

Address: 20 High Street, Albrighton, Shropshire, WV7 3JB.

Proposal: Reduction of up to 20% of 2no Yew (T1 & T2) and 1 no Honey Locust (T3), reduction by 6ft and shaping the sides of 1 no Holly tree (T4) & reduce by half and shape sides of 1 no Variegated Holly (T5) within Albrighton conservation area.

Applicant: Aaron Price (Heartwood Professional Treecare, 43 High Street, Albrighton, Wolverhampton, WV7 3JF)

Reference: 19/05592/TPO (validated 6/1/20)

Address: 24 Delaware Avenue, Albrighton, Shropshire, WV7 3BW.

Proposal: Reduction canopy volume by 25% of 1 no Beech protected by Shropshire Council (land at and to the west of Church Lane, Albrighton) TPO 2010 (Ref:SC/0020/10).

Applicant: Mr. Craig Smith (24, Delaware Avenue, Albrighton, Wolverhampton, WV7 3BW)

The Clerk informed members that the application had been resubmitted for a reduced volume reduction as the first application had been refused.

It was felt by members that it would be more helpful if these applications were forwarded to the village tree warden for his comment.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that all future TPO planning applications be sent to the Tree Warden. **Action – Clerk**

Planning decisions:

Reference: 19/04847/TPO (validated 1/11/19)

Address: 24 Delaware Avenue, Albrighton, Shropshire, WV7 3BW.

Proposal: Reduction canopy volume by 60% of 1 no Beech protected by Shropshire Council (land at and to the west of Church Lane, Albrighton) TPO 2010 (Ref:SC/0020/10).

Decision: Refuse

Reference: 19/03152/FUL (validated: 17/07/2019)

Address: Land East of Beamish House, Beamish Lane, Albrighton, WV7 3BW

Proposal: Use of land for the standing of caravans for residential purposes for 1no gypsy pitch and part retrospective installation of hard standing and septic tank

Decision: Refuse

Reference: 19/04972/FUL (validated 19/11/19)

Proposal: Erection of oak framed 3 bay car port to include change of use of land to domestic

Address: Beamish House, Beamish Lane, Albrighton, Wolverhampton, Shropshire.

Decision: Refuse

Planning enforcement:

None

19114. Finance & Personnel:

- a) To receive a report by the Chairman of Finance & Personnel Committee to also include receipts and payments up to 30th November 2019, (enclosed) – Cllr. Maguire.**

Cllr Maguire asked members if there were any questions on the month end figures, none were asked.

Cllr Illes expressed his thanks to Cllr Maguire for providing the summary for the Flyer and the Library explaining that this made it a lot easier to understand the financial position on these.

b) To consider income & expenditure in December 2019 details below:

Date	Cheque	To Whom Payable	Reason	Amount
03/12/19	4561	Heartwood	Trees at allotments	2500.00
03/12/19	4562	Turnock	Additional snowfall display tree by Red House	914.40
03/12/19	4563	Keith Gibson	Ad Blue for the Flyer	16.50
03/12/19	4564	SALC	Training 29/11/19	70.00
03/12/19	4565	Turnock	Clean, test & store Christmas lights	4160.00
06/12/19	4566	Amazon Payments	Rhyme Time resources	4.04
06/12/19	4567	Water Plus	Surface water – Albrighton library 29/8 - 29/11/19	123.82

09/12/19	4568	The Melville Club	Support grant March 19&20 and storage March 20	950.00
13/12/19	4569	Viking	Bleach, toilet rolls, A3 & A4 paper	52.75
16/12/19	4570	P Woodman	Reimbursement for staff gifts	75.99
17/12/19	4571	Midshires	Rental 1/12/19-29/2/20 Library copier & usage	61.30

Income Received:

Date	Payment Type	Payer	Reason	Amount
02/12/19	Cash	Albrighton Parish Council	Flyer cash 26-29 Nov	100.00
02/12/19	Cash	Albrighton Parish Council	Flyer cash 26-29 Nov	55.00
02/12/19	Cash	Albrighton Parish Council	Library cash 25-30 Nov	32.86
09/12/19	Cash	Albrighton Parish Council	Library cash 2-7 Dec	201.00
09/12/19	Cash	Albrighton Parish Council	Flyer cash 3-6 Dec	202.00
16/12/19	Cheque	Albrighton Parish Council	LAH Flyer November	172.00
16/12/19	Cash	Albrighton Parish Council	Library cash 9-14 Dec	58.91
16/12/19	Cash	Albrighton Parish Council	Flyer cash 10-13 Dec	197.00
16/12/19	Cash	Albrighton Parish Council	Meeting room booking 29/11/19	13.00

The Clerk invited questions on the income and expenditure figures, Cllr J Pledger asked why there were to payments made on the same day for the Flyer (2/12/19), the Clerk explained that these were two different transactions and that the one should have been detailed as a cheque. The Clerk explained that the auditor had asked that each payment be shown for clarity and a good audit trail.

19115 To receive update on the war memorial

The Chairman asked the Clerk to circulate a report which updated members on the work which was being undertaken regarding the funding opportunities for restoration work on the war memorial. An application to the War Memorials Trust had been submitted and they were requiring a specialist structural survey before the grant application could progress any further. The Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of the two Parish Councils - Albrighton and Donington-with-Boscobel - had met on site with Bob Watson the Council's new Tree Warden and John Stretton, Chairman of the Historical Society. The stone paving slabs surrounding the memorial was seen to be unstable in parts and a lot of vegetation needed cutting back from the rock face (it was a quarry), trees needed pruning and one tree removed. This would reduce the risk of branch falls onto the memorial and would reduce wind load on the surrounding tall trees which are rooted in the quarry face. We are fortunate to be able to call on arboreal advice from Bob Watson. The ownership of the land and memorial was not clear with some conflicting advice and various people's memories of what had happened decades ago. So, before any work could start the Land Certificate was obtained which confirms that Albrighton Parish Council is the owner of the land and war memorial. This work will now be put in hand.

We are grateful to John Stretton who has taken on the task of leading the two Councils' review of work needed to conserve the memorial and in seeking multiple sources of funding. Work is needed on the metal entrance gate, the stone plinth, the timber post and carved figure and the metal canopy - all these are subject to rules governing how the work may be done and has to be carried out by a specialist approved by the War Memorial Trust. It seems that the cost of the work to the memorial itself is likely to be expensive but we are able to apply for a grant. However, even if successful is not expected to cover more than half the cost. Before applying the Council has to have a structural survey carried out, again by an approved firm – this is now being arranged. It is unlikely that the two Councils could cover all the remaining cost and so other sources of funding are being sought without which it is unlikely that the work could be carried out. Following the meeting the Tree Warden had produced a report detailing works to be undertaken and he had sought a quote for this work. A quote for £500 had been received A quote for £500 had been received but this did not appear to include the height reduction of the trees behind the war memorial and a further quote was needed for this. In response to a question the Chairman informed members that DBC Chairman Cllr Williams had agreed that DBPC would pay their contribution.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the Clerk be given delegated powers to seek a quote for the extra work and that both items of work could be approved and set in motion by the Clerk up to the value of £1,000.

Action – Clerk

19116 To consider Grants Working Party report (Cllr Smith)

Cllr Smith updated members on the recent meeting of the Grants Working Party. The first application that had been considered was an application from the Severn Strollers. The health benefits from this group which was run by volunteers was very worthy and agreed to award a grant of £100 towards their running costs.

The second application was from the Melville Club who had submitted an application for a grant. The Grants Working Party Chairman, Cllr Smith, reported that the Working Party recommended that the current £300 per year grant paid from the Council central budget be doubled to £600 per year and that the Club be advised that they may make an application for a one-off grant if they have a future project. Cllr Pitchford asked that thanks be recorded to Cllr Medlyn and the team of dedicated volunteers who are really making a difference at the Melville Club. The Council voted to accept this proposal.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that Albrighton Parish Council award the Melville Club £600 a year to support the club.

Action – Clerk

19117 To consider legislation changes for compliance of website

The Clerk informed members that there was new legislation which covered the accessibility of local government websites and all parish and town councils would need to ensure their websites were compliant by 20th September. The Clerk had previously circulated details of the costs involved in the upgrade being offered by our webmaster. If councils placed their order by 17th January, they would be able to take advantage of a £100 discount. The Clerk explained which package would be suitable for our needs and what the accessibility issues were that were covered by the legislation.

Cllr S Pledger said that the Clerk had more knowledge of the website and the technical details and that she thought the council should delegate authority to the Clerk to approve the technical upgrade needed.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that delegated powers be given to the Clerk to make the necessary arrangements and associated costs for ensuring the website was compliant.

Action – Clerk

19117 To consider Remembrance Day attendance by Councillors, refreshments (Cllr S Pledger)

Cllr S Pledger said she had received lots of complaints regarding the lack of attendance by councillors at this event and that she felt all councillors should attend. The Chairman explained that over 50% of councillors had attended and that several councillors had given their apologies to the Clerk as they were away on holiday. It was also noted that this is not a parish council event but was organised by the RBL. Cllr S Pledger then asked who paid for the event and was told by Cllr Medlyn that a buffet was now provided for anyone rather than a ticket for a drink, this had been positively received. The refreshments were provided at cost by the Red House and that RBL were happy to pay for these.

19119 To consider Armistice day (Cllr S Pledger)

Cllr S Pledger stated that the attendance at this event by councillors was disappointing. The Chairman explained that this event was again led by RBL, attendance by any councillor was voluntary and the parish council could not enforce attendance.

10120 To consider war graves, should we put poppies there (Cllr S Pledger)

Cllr S Pledger stated that the war graves in St Marys do not appear to be looked after. The Chairman said that he understood that RBL put wreaths on these graves and that we should liaise with them to ensure we are not treading on their toes. He also informed members that the war grave in St Marys of the young RAF Pilot was meant to be cared for by RAF Cosford, he had received assurance for Tone Baker that this would be done.

19121 To consider Sandra Kirkland – Has the Chairman, on behalf of the Council written to thank her for her years' service (Cllr S Pledger)

Cllr S Pledger asked if the council had written to Sandra Kirkland to thank her and the Chairman informed Cllr S Pledger that as is custom and practice the Clerk had written to Sandra Kirkland as soon as her resignation had been received. The Clerk confirmed she had written a note of thanks for all her work and commitment to the parish council over many years straight away.

19122 To consider Maintenance of the defibrillator (Cllr S Pledger)

Cllr S Pledger asked who undertook the maintenance of the defibrillator as this was done by the former Clerk but she didn't know who was now doing it. The Chairman informed Cllr S Pledger that she was incorrect on that point, the former Clerk had not carried out the maintenance correctly and problems had arisen when this machine was needed in an emergency. He further informed her that the current Clerk had now resolved this issue and asked the Clerk to provide details. The Clerk informed members that the defibrillator wasn't registered previously but has now been registered with British Heart Foundation and was also on the national register with the West Midlands Ambulance Service. The defibrillator has been checked recently and the defib pads replaced, the current pads are compliant until November 2021. The Clerk thanked Dave Fitton from the Albrighton First Responders for his help and support with maintaining the defibrillator.

19123 To consider Publication of Draft Minutes of Meetings (Cllr S Pledger)

Cllr S Pledger asked why the minutes were not being issued within 14 days as agreed, she said that the minutes were published in the parish magazine and further stated that council had passed a motion a few months ago agreeing this would be done. The Chairman informed Cllr S Pledger that this was not correct, the minutes were not published in the parish magazine. He explained that for the last two years 'Notes from the Chair' had been published but these were not the council minutes. He further stated that the motion was for draft minutes to be published prior to them being signed at the following months council meeting. The Chairman asked the Clerk to confirm this and the Clerk read out the resolution from the meeting which stated that:

'Draft minutes would in future be published prior to being signed off by full council at the subsequent council meeting.'

The Clerk informed members that it would be very difficult for the minutes to be issued within 14 days with the current staffing structure and work load. She further explained that it wasn't a requirement; the only statutory expectation is that they are issued to members within 3 days before a full council meeting and she confirmed this had always been the case, with the shortest time scale of issue being 6 days prior, and this was due to her leave period.

Cllr S Pledger said that this wasn't a complaint about the Clerk, but the Chairman said that all of Cllr S Pledgers items looked like they were complaints. Cllr S Pledger stated that 'I can't ask the Clerk' but the Chairman informed her that under the condition of the banning order she could ask the Clerk through Cllr Maguire (as the named liaison member) and could also ask him anything if she had a query. Cllr Maguire informed members that he had received an email from Cllr S Pledger which was only 'one word' items and he had told her that one word was not enough she needed to compose a more comprehensive description of the subject matter to be included on the agenda. Cllr Maguire went on further to say that the email and the way Cllr S Pledger had asked for it to be put on the agenda had contained

unjustified criticism, possibly unintentional, he asked her to consider more carefully how she worded her correspondence in future.

19124 To consider SAMDev Plan amendment (Cllr Smith)

Cllr Smith updated members regarding the development East of Shaw Lane and its implications on our SAMDev plan. In Shropshire Council's plan for the village (the SAMDev Plan) there is a statement concerning this land that "proposals must provide for long term comprehensive development of this site and facilitate an eventual through-road from Kingswood Rd to the northern end of Shaw Lane." Cllr Smith explained that Jessup used this statement in his proposal for traffic access/egress along a widened school drive into Shaw Lane. To avoid a future developer using this statement as a basis to connect traffic into Shaw Lane the Parish Council need to agree and take steps to have this sentence removed from the plan. Cllr Smith suggested that the Place Plan Working Group should look at this as a matter of urgency and asked members to agree that the Place Plan Working Group be given delegated powers to liaise with Shropshire Council to ensure that this is removed from the SAMDev.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the Place Plan Working Group be given delegated powers to inform Shropshire Council to remove the statement from the SAMDev regarding the through road from Kingswood Rd to the northern end of Shaw Lane.

Action – Place Plan Working Group

19125 Correspondence

For action:

a) To consider email received from Donington with Boscobel Parish Council (bench/nature reserve)

The Clerk informed members she had received an email from the Clerk at Donington with Boscobel Parish Council regarding projects which they wanted APC to consider. The first request was for a contribution towards the purchase of a bench for VE day. Donington with Boscobel Parish Council were considering siting this bench by the doctors and were asking if APC would consider contributing to the cost.

It was suggested that Donington with Boscobel Parish Council should contact the RAF to see if they would fund this as a contribution to VE day. Cllr Pitchford informed members that the Severn Valley Nature Reserve had shown reluctance for too many benches and had said they would prefer trees to be planted, these were far more environmentally friendly. Cllr Smith suggested that if Donington with Boscobel Parish Council really wanted to purchase a bench it would be better sited near the picnic table at the parish council land at the corner of Cross Rd and Patshull Rd where the current sets are broken. The Clerk was asked to contact Donington with Boscobel Parish Council confirming that Albrighton Parish Council would support a bench at the corner of Cross Rd and Patshull Rd or the planting of a tree in the Nature Reserve.

Action – Clerk

The Clerk informed members that the second request from Donington with Boscobel Parish Council was regarding the clearing the channels of the pond at the Nature reserve and were asking APC to consider contributing to this. Cllr Collins informed members that it would be helpful if Donington with Boscobel Parish Council tapped into the funding that would be available via the Flood Action Group, there was multi-agency funding which would be suitable for this as it would have an impact to help ease further flooding in the village. The Clerk was asked to contact Donington with Boscobel Parish Council and suggest this and to pass on Cllr P Collins details as a point of contact.

Action – Clerk

b) To consider email received regarding Buckingham Palace Garden Party

The Clerk informed members that a letter has been received from SALC asking if we wish to submit our Chairman's name for the Garden Party, this will go into a hat for the tickets. She informed the Chairman that if he was chosen, he would be responsible for his own travel arrangements and any costs incurred associated with attending the Garden Party.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the Clerk should submit the Chairman's name for the Buckingham Palace Garden Party.

Action – Clerk

To note:

The Clerk informed members that a letter had been received 7th January 2020 from the Albrighton & District Walking for Health Group thanking APC for the grant towards their expenses. The group had provided details regarding their average weekly attendance of 34 with 116 walkers on their register, 28 of which are new walkers since Jan 2019. It was felt that the level of continued support from walk leaders is the reason for the success of the group, and the council wished to express thanks to the Walking group Leaders.

19105 Date of next meeting:

- a) Albrighton Parish Council meeting – Wednesday 5th February 2020 at 7.15 pm in The Red House.