



ALBRIGHTON PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES – 7th April 2021

The remote Albrighton Parish Council meeting which was held through Microsoft Teams on Wednesday 7th April 2021 at 6.00pm.

COUNCILLORS IN ATTENDANCE: P Woodman, R Smith, P Illes, A Straney, P Collins, R Rudman, S Pledger, J Pledger, M Pitchford, M Medlyn, B Hickson, M Pate, D Beechey

ALSO, IN ATTENDANCE: Shirley Reynolds Clerk to the Council and three members of the public.

ORDINARY BUSINESS MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL.

20126 Apologies

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

none

20127. 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.

Cllr Medlyn declared an interest in item 20139.

20128. Public Participation

Members of the public are invited to ask questions, make representations or submit comments please contact the Clerk prior to the meeting. This is LIMITED TO THREE MINUTES PER PERSON – at the sole discretion of the Chairman.

There were three members of the public present who were invited to speak by the Chairman, a question was asked regarding an item of expenditure on the agenda, the Chairman explained this matter would be dealt with later in the meeting.

20129. Minutes of previous meeting:

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd March 2021

Cllr J Pledger asked for a change to the wording of the minutes, this was agreed and then:

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the minutes of 3rd March 2021 were true and accurate records.

20130 Matters Arising

To consider any matters arising from the minutes which are not included in the agenda

None.

20131 To consider the Clerks report

The Chairman asked the Clerk to outline a few main points from her report which had already been circulated which the Clerk did and then asked members if they had any comments.

The problem of graffiti was raised by Cllr Illes who was asked to notify the Clerk of the details for her to follow this matter up.

The Chairman thanked the Clerk for her work and moved that the report be accepted.

20132 Finance & Personnel

a) To receive a report of the receipts and payments up to 28th February 2021

The Clerk informed members that the end of month accounts had been circulated to all Councillors and she was happy to answer any questions, Cllr S Pledger queried nominal 4725 which amounted to £50 for the year for library window cleaning asking why it was labelled as such. The Clerk explained that this was for cleaning of the windows for the library building, within which the Parish Office was sited.

b) To adopt asset register

The Clerk had circulated the approved asset register from 19/20, to which the purchases for this current finance year had been added. Cllr S Pledger queried why some items such as the cutlery, glass water jug and the fridge were not on the register. The Clerk explained that this was the asset register which she had inherited from the former clerk which council had previously approved without the inclusion of these items, but she was very happy to check any omissions and asked that Cllr S Pledger let her have a list of items she felt should be included so she could follow up on these. . The Chairman then asked members to approve the asset register being mindful of any additions required.

Resolved: It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the asset register be approved with any additions to be added if required.

c) To consider income & expenditure in March 2021 details below:

Expenditure

Date	Cheque	To Whom Payable	Reason	Amount
01/03/21	FPM	Amazon	Memorial folder & black satin ribbon	24.03
01/03/21	FPM	Viking	Ink Cartridge	19.19
01/03/21	FPM	Manby Bowdler	Professional fees nett	1500.00
01/03/21	DD	Eon	Invoice 121865	586.22
09/03/21	FPM	S Reynolds	Reimbursement postage SAR	13.70
10/03/21	FPM	From the Ground Up	Village Planters maintenance/watering etc	140.00
15/03/21	FPM	PHS Group	Invoice 68096615 – hygiene services	18.07
15/03/21	FPM	Mainstream Digital	Fraud Prot & Call Charges, Lib & Office	68.46
15/03/21	FPM	Fuel genie	Flyer Fuel	57.00

18/03/21	DD	West Mercia Energy	Gas Charges	174.44
18/03/21	DD	West Mercia Energy	Electricity charges	135.78
19/03/21	FPM	HMRC	PAYE/NI Contributions March 2021	1331.84
19/03/21	FPM	Manby Bowdler	Professional Fees nett	1000.00
22/03/21	FPM	Shropshire Council	Pension Contributions	1645.17
23/03/21	DD	GB Copiers	Rental & Maintenance Equipment	73.94
23/03/21	DD	BT PLC	Rental lines CCTV & Library	94.80
23/03/21	FPM	Albrighton	Salaries - March	4934.27
26/03/21	DD	Ald Auto	Flyer lease – March 2021	713.41
29/03/21	FPM	T Ewins	Reimbursement – hardware supplies	8.47
29/03/21	FPM	Midshires	Library Copier charges	9.46
29/03/21	FPM	Viking	Bleach, air fresheners, paper towels etc.	37.24
29/03/21	FPM	A Price - Heartwoods	Trimming around War Memorial	150.00
29/03/21	DD	Veolia	Duty of care	4.00
31/03/21	FPM	Manby Bowdler	Professional Fees nett	1000.00
31/03/21	FPM	SALC	Training – Make a Change Council Elections	30.00
31/03/21	FPM	BG Ground Maintenance	1 * Patshull mow 17/03/21	70.00

Income

Date	Payment Type	Payer	Reason	Amount
01/03/21	DD	Nationwide Building Society	Interest on Business Account	3.26
2/03/21	cash	Albrighton Parish Council	Flyer fares 16 – 19 Feb 2021	18.00
02/03/21	DD	Shropshire Council	Library subsidy March 2021	1200.00
09/03/21	cash	Albrighton Parish Council	Flyer fares 23 – 26 Feb 2021	26.00
16/03/21	cash	Albrighton Parish Council	Flyer fares 2 – 5 March 2021	43.00
23/03/21	cash	Albrighton Parish Council	Flyer fares 9 – 12 March 2021	52.00
30/03/21	cash	Albrighton Parish Council	Flyer fares 16 – 19 March 2021	20.00

The Clerk asked members if they had any questions, Cllr J Pledger asked if the £3,500 costs were in addition to those shown last month, the Chairman confirmed they were. Members approved the income & expenditure for the month together with all internet banking transactions.

Resolved: It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the income & expenditure for the month together with all online banking transactions be approved.

20133 To receive planning report - Planning Working Party

a) Whiteacres planning application Land East of Garridge Close

The Chairman invited Cllr Woodman to lead on this item, a report had previously circulated regarding the planning items received which had been reviewed by the Planning Working Party and that they were recommending support. Cllr Woodman also updated members on the Whiteacres development explaining that another set of plans were going to be submitted and that the Parish Council should have the opportunity to comment on these again. Cllr S Pledger asked if Cllr Woodman would be able to speak on this matter at the Planning Committee but Cllr Woodman explained that due to the new

covid working arrangements he would not be able to address the committee personally but the Parish Councils comments would be read out to the committee.

Resolved: It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the applications were recommended for support. Action – Clerk

20134 To receive update from War Memorial Working Party

The Chairman invited Cllr Woodman to speak on this item as he had chaired the meeting in his absence. Cllr Woodman updated members on the latest position regarding the war memorial, with the Clerk having already circulated the minutes from the meeting. Cllr Woodman asked councillors if they had any questions, none were received.

20135 To consider the report of the Chairman regarding the ICO item and to vote upon its recommendations – Cllr Smith

The Chairman informed Councillors that in the interest of transparency and to allow enough time for all to speak and to avoid the meeting running too long as it did the previous month, he was going to insist on the council complying with the Albrighton Parish Council's Standing Orders No. 2 paragraphs o and t which would mean that a councillor should speak on an item only once and for a maximum of 5 minutes.

The Chairman reminded councillors that his Report and Appendices had been sent to all councillors. The Appendices contain the various key documents and records on which the Report was based and were sent in case a councillor wishes to see or refer to them.

The Chairman proposed a motion which was seconded by Cllr Pate

The Chairman then briefly talked through the main points of the Report starting at the section Review of the Information/Evidence. The Chairman thanked Cllr J Pledger and others who had sent information by the required deadline and then invited councillors to make comments if they wished. Almost all councillors spoke on the matter and the Chairman invited Cllr J Pledger to speak for a second time with the Chairman then making a final comment. He read the motion once more and the motion was put to the vote.

Resolved: The motion was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED by a majority (9 for, 4 against)

Cllr Medlyn asked if the votes could be recorded but it was explained that this motion needed to be passed before the vote was taken, to assist with Cllr Medlyn's request the Clerk noted those Cllrs who voted against the motion, Cllrs Straney, Medlyn, S Pledger and J Pledger.

Information Notes:

1. The Report and all its Appendices are part of the Minutes, however being many pages, they are not printed within the circulated Minutes but it is confirmed that they are appended and lodged with the Minutes in the Council record and are available for members to view by appointment with the Clerk.
2. This item received the requisite 8 signatures of councillors as Standing Orders No. 7a so that it could be revisited which is covered by the Minutes of the extraordinary council meeting on 5th May 2021 which follow.

20136 To vote on the proposal by Cllr J Pledger that ‘the council corrects the public record in all areas it made the mistaken allegation and issues a comprehensive apology to Cllr J Pledger’

The Chairman expressed his view that the previous motion would seem to mean that this motion should fall, but the Clerk explained that she had received the motion from Cllr J Pledger and had therefore included it as requested. Cllr J Pledger began to outline issues discussed in the previous item when Cllr Pate interrupted him calling a point of order, stating that he could only debate the current motion and not the previous one. Cllr J Pledger again continued to express his thoughts regarding the previous agenda item and Cllr Pate then called for the motion ‘to be put’ explaining that this means that there can be no more debate. Cllr J Pledger called for a recorded vote and this was lost 4 for, 5 against and 1 abstention. Cllr Pate again called for the motion to be put and this was put to the vote, with 4 for, 5 against and 3 abstentions. Cllr S Pledger stated that she wanted the votes recorded but as the motion had been lost this would not be the case. Again to assist this request the Clerk noted those Cllrs who voted for the motion, being Cllrs Straney, Medlyn, S Pledger and J Pledger.

Cllr J Pledger then proposed the motion the council corrects the public record in all areas it made the mistaken allegation and issues a comprehensive apology to Cllr J Pledger’ which was seconded by Cllr S Pledger. Cllr Pate reminded council that this motion negated the decision that had been taken in 20135 and therefore should not be considered. Cllr Smith again expressed his concern that following the decision taken in item 20135 that the motion in item 20136 should fall. Cllr Pate reminded the council that the Chairman’ decision was final and that item 20136 negated item 20135. The Chairman then resolved that the motion should fall without further debate.

20137 Correspondence

To note:

a) Letter received from Hewitts Butchers

The Clerk had circulated a letter to all councillors which had been received from the above and informed members that the bench did not belong to the Parish Council and was currently sited on private land. The Chairman explained whilst we were unable to officially make a decision as this item had not been on the published agenda, it would be helpful if members could express their view on this issue. Cllr Woodman informed members that he had been approached by Hewitts regarding the bench being moved and the village green had been suggested for its new location, he felt it would be nice if the Parish Council could support this but wanted to know how other councillors felt. Councillors discussed this fully highlighting the various advantages and disadvantages to the location of the bench and Cllr Woodman was asked to convey this to Hewitts on the Parish Councils behalf.

The Clerk drew councillors’ attention to the time and explained that Council needed to vote on whether to continue the meeting as over two hours had passed, this was in line with the councils Standing Order 3x.

Resolved: It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED by a majority that the meeting should continue.

b) Email received from Cllr S Pledger

Albrighton Parish Council meeting – 7th April & 5th May 2021

An email had been received from Cllr S Pledger which a lot of Councillors had responded to regarding the Flyer and the Clerk had been asked by Cllr S Pledger to include this on the agenda. The Chairman stated that he had replied to Cllr S Pledger confirming that he was not aware of any decisions having been made by any councillors to dispense with the Parish Flyer. Cllr S Pledger asked the chairman if he would write to the Patients group confirming this and the Chairman said he would write confirming that there had been no decisions made to dispense with the Flyer. **Action – Cllr Smith**

20138 Date of next meeting:

- a) Albrighton Parish Council meeting – Wednesday 19th May 2021 6pm

Exclusion of Press and Public

Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 – to Resolve that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted which will involve the likely disclosure of information as defined in the Public Bodies (Admission to Meeting) Act 1960, the public and press will be temporarily excluded from the meeting and asked to withdraw.

20139 Staffing Update

This item was held in private session, for which a separate minute of item 20139 is held on file in the council office and members may view this by appointment with the Clerk. (as explained in item 20089)

The Chairman thanked all Councillors for attending and the meeting closed at 20.46pm

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

ALBRIGHTON PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES – 5th May 2021

The remote Albrighton Parish Council meeting which was held through Microsoft Teams on Wednesday 5th May 2021 at 6.00pm.

COUNCILLORS IN ATTENDANCE: P Woodman, R Smith, D Beechey, P Illes, A Straney (from 6.15pm), P Collins, S Pledger, M Pate, J Pledger, M Pitchford, B Hickson

ALSO, IN ATTENDANCE: Shirley Reynolds Clerk to the Council

EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL.

20140 Apologies

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

Cllr R Rudman (holiday)

The apology was accepted by council.

20141. 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.

None declared.

20142 To re-consider item 20135 of 7th April 2021

The Clerk has received a written notice as per Standing Order 7a from the designated number of councillors, to re-consider the resolution 20135 (which refers to Cllr J Pledger's request for the public record, concerning his Declaration of Pecuniary Interests and an allegation of his breach of the Localism Act, to be corrected).

The Chairman said that following the last meeting he had received an email from Cllr J Pledger saying that he didn't find the decision by Council on 7th April 2021 acceptable. Cllr J Pledger said that he expected Graham White (Monitoring Officer's solicitor) should have been contacted for advice prior to any decisions and that APC could expect legal action to be taken against it if the council's decision on 7th April was published.

The Chairman reported that he had replied to Cllr J Pledger to say that he had now written to Graham White as he requested and that his response would be taken to full Council to consider.

The email (20/4/2021) from Graham White had been circulated to all councillors. The Monitoring Officer firstly says that the email dated 3 October 2019 did not confirm that an offence had or had not occurred. The third paragraph of the email leads us to understand that Graham White feels that a planning application of a neighbouring property, even having an impact on the value of the subject's property, does not make it a disclosable pecuniary interest.

However this recent advice from Graham White while it may appear to contradict LGA guidelines (Local Government Association), this is the guidance we are now asked to respect and the earlier statements are now considered incorrect.

That being so then no breach of the Localism Act occurred.

The Chairman said that Cllr J Pledger then sent a 4 page email on 3/05/2021 to all councillors. Cllr Peter Illes replied saying that he "suspected some will regard your email as threatening and if the Council, as a body based on democratic majority, is to be sued, this could impact on those who have supported you". This email proposed an alternative motion be put on the agenda although it is very similar to the motion on the agenda. The Chairman discussed this with the Clerk who said that the motion could not be accepted. The Clerk said that for a motion to be added to the agenda in line with our standing order 9b, *no motion maybe moved unless it is on an agenda and written notice is given to the Proper Officer 7 clear days before a meeting* Cllr J Pledger queried this and the Clerk explained further.

The Chairman said he had discussed this with the Clerk and that in order to accommodate Cllr Pledger's desire for some different text the Chairman would propose an amendment to the motion which would pick up some of his wording and suggested it will satisfy his wishes. The proposed amended motion was read and Cllr J Pledger asked if a further change to para a) could be made which was then agreed.

The Chairman then read out the motion:-

The Council notes the recent advice from Graham White dated 20th April 2021.

The Council agrees that:

- a) **Cllr J Pledger has never committed a criminal offence and it was wrong to state that he had ever done so.**
- b) **Cllr J Pledger was never in breach of The Localism Act and did not commit a criminal offence. The statements in previous council Minutes to that effect are therefore not correct.**
- c) **APC will issue a public apology to Cllr J Pledger and this will be included as soon as is possible in The Parish Magazine, on the notice board outside the Red House, in minutes of the meetings and on the council's website. APC will also correct all erroneous minutes where the allegation was made, with the appropriate apology.**
- d) **Cllrs Smith and Woodman will apologise to Cllr J Pledger at the meeting on 5th May 2021.**

Cllr P Woodman seconded the motion. The Chairman called for a recorded vote and the vote was carried unanimously.

Councillors' comments:

Cllr Pledger thanked the Chairman for calling the Extraordinary Meeting and for amending the motion. However Cllr J Pledger said that he had provided councillors with the advice from Graham White that he had not breached the Localism Act many times previously and that councillors could also have contacted Mr White directly which would have avoided this matter.

Cllr P Woodman replied that this was not the case and he had asked Cllr J Pledger for the full Graham White advice which had not been provided and then when he did contact Mr White then Mr White replied that he could not send this as Cllr J Pledger had refused to give him permission to send it. Cllr J Pledger said he could send Cllr Woodman copies of the minutes after the meeting where he had quoted the email. The Chairman said that it was not correct that Mr White's full advice had been provided to councillors previously as only parts of it had been quoted. A fuller version of Mr White's email dated 3 Oct 2019 had only been provided by Cllr J Pledger recently.

Cllr J Pledger said that he also wanted the motion to include *"Cllr J Pledger has not harassed the clerk, nor has he harassed Cllr P Woodman, and it was wrong to state that he had"*.

Cllr M Pate explained that the Standards Board had been abolished mainly because 60-70% of its work had been with internal Parish Council issues, he went on to say that Shropshire Council had given ambiguous advice as they didn't want to get involved and he personally wouldn't seek their advice on legal matters. Cllr Pate stated that this matter needed to be put to bed and brought to an end tonight so that the new council did not have to start dealing with the matter and it was important that the new council serve the residents of Albrighton and he was concerned about how the new council was going to run in the future and to serve the community. Cllr J Pledger and Cllr Pate then had a discussion on the matter.

Cllr M Pitchford said that he felt that a planning application for a building at a person's boundary could affect the value of the person's property and he would expect it be a pecuniary interest.

At this point Cllr S Pledger said that she didn't feel that we should be going over things from two years ago and asked the Chairman to read the motion out.

Cllr P Woodman said that this matter of harassment had been dealt with some couple of years ago and this was irrelevant to the topic under discussion. Cllr J Pledger insisted that he had not harassed anyone.

The Chairman said that the topic in hand was to address the request by Cllr J Pledger to correct the public record and that Cllr J Pledger had emailed the Clerk on 5th February 2021 saying “...my request that the public recorded be corrected. Specifically, APC and its Councillors have repeatedly stated that I have committed a criminal offence and have not adhered to the requirements of The Localism Act.....I therefore request that: APC corrects the public record immediately and states that I committed no such breach and no criminal offence”. This item is 20135 which the Chairman had reviewed and not anything concerning harassment so he could not agree to adding that to the motion.

The Chairman read the motion once more (see page 8) and the motion was put to the vote.

Resolved: The motion was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED by a majority (For: SP, AS, DB, PW, MP, PC, MGP, RS, PI, BH, Against : None, Abstention:JP)

The Chairman on behalf of the Albrighton Parish Council hereby corrects these records and apologises to Cllr J Pledger for the previously incorrect record. Cllr Woodman confirms and personally apologises to Cllr J Pledger for the previously incorrect record.

The Chairman advised that he had received an important letter addressed to the Chairman of the Council and asked if councillors wished him advise further or to pass it to the new Chairman when elected next week? Councillors asked to be informed of the contents. The Chair said it was the letter of resignation of the Clerk and asked if she wished to say anything further. The Clerk said it had been a very turbulent time at Albrighton Parish Council, she stated that she loved the village of Albrighton and she wished the new council well. The Clerk advised that she had been successful in being offered the post of Chief Officer of a very large Town Council and she would be taking all leave that was due to her prior to her departure on 13 June. In order to assist the new council she would postpone her leave until after the new Council AGM next week so that her last working day would be 14 May.

The Chairman said he was sorry that Shirley is leaving but it seems that she has a major promotion and to a much larger Council. On behalf of the Council, myself, the Vice Chairman, Councillors, Staff and residents I would like to thank Shirley for her dedicated and hard work and support to the Council, Councillors and staff over the last three years. On behalf of us all I wish her well in the future

There being no other business the Chairman thanked all Councillors for attending and the meeting ended at 6.45pm.

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