

ALRESFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
of Alresford Parish Council held on
Wednesday 9 May 2007
in the Parish Council Pavilion

Present : Cllr J Coates, Chairman, Cllr J Robinson, Cllr E Osborne . Cllr J Housden, Cllr Ann Wiggins. Cllr S Carlsson Browne, Cllr Dorothy Barnes, Cllr N Fairbanks Cllr Chris Barrett, Cllr Hedley Green, Cllr J Richards, the Clerk.

PUBLIC FORUM: Members of the public were invited to address the Council for a maximum of three minutes from 7.30 until 7.45pm. One member attended and suggested that a note be attached to the end of the Minutes advising members of the public that further information regarding Councillors or Council matters could be obtained from the Clerk.

05.07.1 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN¹

Mrs Joan Coates stood down and nominations for Chairman were requested from Cllr Housden. Cllr J Robinson proposed that Mrs Coates be re-elected seconded by Cllr Osborne . Cllr Housden asked Mrs Coates if she was willing to be re-elected and upon receiving her confirmation all Councillors voted in favour of the proposal and Cllr Coates was duly re-elected to serve as chairman for the forthcoming year and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Chairman

05.07.2 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Cllr Fairbanks proposed the re-appointment of Cllr Ann Wiggins as vice chairman for the forthcoming year. This was seconded by Cllr J Robinson. agreed and carried unanimously.

05.07.3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE²

No absences were recorded.

05.07.4 ANNUAL REPORT

The Annual Report having been prepared by the Clerk and previously circulated was received. The Clerk was asked to prepare this for printing and circulation to the whole village during the next few weeks and bring a pre-publication draft and costing to the

1 Local Government Act 1972, ss 15(2) and 34(2)

2 Local Government Act 1972 Section 85(1) and (2)

June meeting for consideration.

ACTION : CLERK

05.07.5 DECLARATION OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA³

Cllr Barnes declared an interest in item 05.07.16 and Cllr N Fairbanks declared an interest in item 05.07.19

05.07.6 PREVIOUS MINUTES

It was proposed by Cllr Housden, seconded by Cllr Osborne and agreed that the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 4 April 2007 be confirmed and signed as a correct record. There were no further reports on the following matters arising:

- (i) B1027 progress on petition
- (ii) 21 The Heath – progress report

05.07.7 REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS, STANDING ORDERS AND REGISTER OF MEMBERS INTERESTS

There were no amendments proposed to the Financial Regulations or standing orders and Councillors with changes to their Registers of Interest handed their amended forms to the Clerk.

05.07.8 COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTIES⁴

It was agreed that the following Councillors should serve on the various committees and working parties :

FINANCE : Cllrs Coates, Wiggins, Carlsson Browne, Robinson and the Clerk

PLANNING : Cllr Osborne, Robinson, Richards, Wiggins and Housden

PLAYING FIELD AND VILLAGE HALL : Cllrs Coates, Fairbanks, Robinson, Richards and Carlsson Browne

COMMUNICATIONS : Cllr Osborne, Barnes, Richards and Housden

HIGHWAYS, STREET SIGNS AND LIGHTING : Cllrs Osborne, Barnes, Fairbanks and Barrett

³ Local Government Act 2000 Part III

⁴ Local Government Act 1972 ss 101-106 and Schedule 12, Parish and Community Councils (Committees) Regulations 1990 (SI No 2476)

ENVIRONMENT, FOOTPATHS, TREES AND ALLOTMENTS

Cllrs Coates, Barnes, Housden and Green

HUMAN RESOURCES, PERSONNEL AND TRAINING : Cllrs Coates, Wiggins and the Clerk

05.07.9 PARISH REMUNERATION RECOMMENDATIONS and AMOUNT OF CHAIRMANS ALLOWANCE IN PURSUANCE OF SECTION 15(5) OF LGA 1972

Details of the above having been circulated in advance of the meeting, it was proposed by Cllr Carlsson Browne, seconded by Cllr J Robinson and agreed that the budgeted recommendation should remain as previously agreed.

05.07.10 INVENTORY AND ASSET REGISTER OF COUNCIL PROPERTY

The Clerk having amended the Inventory and Asset Register to include the new bus shelter the above was received and approved.

05.07.11 TO RECEIVE REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Cllr D Robinson was not in attendance at the meeting as he was on holiday.

05.07.12 TO RECEIVE REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

Cllr G Scott was not in attendance at the meeting.

05.07.13 TO RECEIVE REPORT FROM PCSO

Louise Cox reported on the following incidents from the previous month :

Criminal Damage	1	Brick thrown at vehicle and suspect arrested.
RTC	1	Failure of driver to stop after demolishing bench outside butchers shop
Nuisance Youths	3	Apprehended and stopped
Alarm	1	
Suspicious vehicle/person	1	Male reported selling fish
Robbery	1	Suspect arrested
Request for police	1	
Fly tipping	1	Tyres dumped at Brook Farm
Advice required	1	
Call on	1	
Debris	1	Reported on B1027 dropped from lorries
Theft *	1	Solar Lights
Concern for Welfare *	1	
Insecure Premises	1	
Theft from vehicle	1	Unlocked vehicle

Further details regarding the starred items were reported including information regarding a rave at White House Beach one Friday evening at the end of April followed

by an incident at the fishing lakes the following evening when PCSO Terry Fairweather, who was assisting, was badly injured.

Councillors expressed concern at these matters and the Clerk was instructed to send a get well card to PCSO Fairweather.

ACTION : CLERK

05.07.14 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

- (i) RoSPA – date of inspection notice – May 2007
- (ii) EPA – Best Kept Playing Field Competition – the Clerk was instructed to enter
- (iii) ECC re Ford and Cockaynes Lanes – the Clerk was instructed to add this item to the Agenda for June and to thank Mrs Belgrove for her assistance in this particular matter.
- (iv) Interact – appeal – to be deferred until the budget meeting for consideration
- (v) ECC re Libraries response - noted
- (vi) PS Mallet re mobile police station – the Clerk was instructed to respond to the effect that no changes to the present pattern of visits was recommended.
- (vii) CAB Tendring – acknowledgment of donation - noted
- (viii) Open Spaces Society – appeal - to be deferred until the budget meeting for consideration
- (ix) Audit Commission – it was noted that Lubbock Fine would continue as auditors for the forthcoming financial year.
- (x) Kendalls – It was noted that due to circumstances beyond their control Kendalls would require some flexibility in grass cutting arrangements for the current season. The Clerk was instructed to write acknowledging this but asking for confirmation that this would not lead to a lowering of standards and advising that the first cut of the season had not been satisfactory.
- (xi) Mr B Crick had written regarding un-netted debris falling off lorries on the B1027. The Clerk to follow this up with a letter - Cllr Carlsson Browne to let her have details of where to write.
- (xii) Essex Partnership – revising the Essex compact – meeting on 25 May – no Councillors were available to attend.
- (xiii) Powergen re Pavilion and flood lighting increased charges – the Clerk to write and ask for a breakdown of the figures.
- (xiv) ACRFC re revised charges and payment - noted
- (xv) TCVS – Volunteers “Thank You” evening - Cllr Housden expressed an interest in attending

05.07.15 REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTIES :

- (i) **ENVIRONMENT, FOOTPATHS, TREES & ALLOTMENTS** - no meeting held
- (ii) **FINANCE** - meeting to be arranged
- (iii) **PLAYING FIELD AND VILLAGE HALL** – meeting to be arranged
- (iv) **COMMUNICATIONS** – the Clerk to contact EALC for sample Parish

- Communication booklets and add item to June agenda.
- (v) **HIGHWAYS AND FOOTPATHS**
(a) RAILWAY AND CROSSING GATES – *report on consideration of plans received re Network Rail Alresford Level Crossing Variation Order and Network Rail Coach Road Level Crossing Variation Order* – an Extraordinary Meeting to discuss this matter to be held on 22 May. Meanwhile the Clerk was asked to contact Network Rail to ascertain exactly how long the gates are likely to remain closed under the new system.
 (b) Cllr Fairbanks had negotiated a better deal for street lighting costs from the current supplier resulting in a 15-20% reduction and Cllr Green suggested that he might also try to obtain a quotation from Atlantic.
- (vi) **PLANNING** - see appendix 4
 (vii) **HUMAN RESOURCES, PERSONNEL AND TRAINING** – meeting to be arranged
 (viii) **HEALTH AND WELFARE** - no meeting held
 (ix) **QUALITY COUNCIL** – meeting to be arranged

ACTION : CLERK : CLLR FAIRBANKS

05.07.16 MONTHLY PAYMENTS :

Clerk's salary and expenses (DD)	1069.64
NI	81.23
Travel Expenses – Clerk	34.40
Travel expenses - Cllr D Barnes	13.76
Just Lamps – Monthly maintenance - March	71.16
Just Lamps – call out 3V Church Farm	52.88
C & C Cleaning (invoice 8587)	28.20
C & C Cleaning (invoice 8618)	28.20
C & C Cleaning (invoice 8680)	28.20
C & C Cleaning (invoice 8739)	28.20
C & C Cleaning (invoice 8797)	28.20
EON – street lighting - March (DD)	159.48
Powergen – Pavilion and floodlighting (DD)	50.00
Kendall Contract Services (March)	455.50
Banner – stationery	83.40
TCVS Volunteer Thank You Evening tickets	20.00
Open Spaces Society – subscription	30.00
Wicksteed – new swing seats and chains	833.63
Install Sports (balance from original invoice)	176.25
Alresford Advertiser – PC page (two issues)	50.00
Pro-Mac – resurfacing damaged area o/s shops	294.93
Horticultural Society	400.00
Village Hall Committee	500.00
Alresford Advertiser	500.00
Brightlingsea Family Support (lunch club)	500.00

Friends of Cockaynes Wood	150.00
Cubs and Brownies (£150 each)	300.00
PTA/School	150.00
PCC for St Peters churchyard upkeep	500.00
Allianz Cornhill – insurance renewal premium	4,484.27
EDF – advance payment for connection of bus shelter to supply	569.88
Impressions – election newsletters	188.00
Parish Website renewal	22.42

It was proposed by Cllr J Robinson, seconded by Cllr J Housden and agreed that the above payments should be made.

ACTION : CLERK

05.07.17 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

It was proposed by Cllr Carlsson Browne, seconded by Cllr Wiggins and agreed that the Financial Statement for March be accepted.

05.07.18 REPORTS OF MEETINGS AND COURSES ATTENDED BY MEMBERS SINCE THE LAST MEETING

(i) Cllr Coates reported that she had attended a meeting at TDC regarding Special Expenses and had found this useful and enlightening.

05.07.19 BUS SHELTER BY POINTER

Cllr Fairbanks left the meeting at this point. Two quotations for cleaning and painting the bus shelter had been received but they had not been worded in such a way as to be able to make a proper comparison between them so the Clerk was asked to write to both contractors again for further clarification.

ACTION : CLERK

05.07.20 PLAYING FIELD DITCH

Arrangements for this to be cleared of rubbish were discussed. The Clerk was asked to contract TDC to see whether keeping the waterway free of rubbish was in fact the Parish Council's responsibility and then to get quotations from contractors for clearing it if this proved to be an obligation on the PC.

ACTION : CLERK

05.07.21 FURTHER LITTER PROBLEM AREAS

Cllr Barnes had asked for consideration to be given to clearing the track between the Pointer and the railway, especially in view of Alresford being entered in the Village of the Year competition. Councillors felt that this was rightfully a matter for the railways as they owned the land and the Clerk was asked to contact them and ask for this to be done. Cllr Barnes also advised that there were several black sacks of rubbish left along the creek footpath and Cllr Barrett said that he would see whether he could remove these.

ACTION : CLERK : C BARRETT

05.07.22 PARISH PLAN

The Clerk was instructed to contact RCCE to set up the next meeting to form a steering committee to take this forward.

ACTION : CLERK

05.07.23 EALC COURSES

Cllr Barrett and Cllr Green both agreed to attend the Councillors Training Day on 5 June 2007. The Clerk was instructed to make the necessary bookings.

ACTION : CLERK : CLLR GREEN : CLLR BARRETT

05.07.24 PARISH PATHS PARTNERSHIP SCHEME

It was agreed that further consideration should be given to joining P3. The Clerk to pass details to the Environment and Footpaths working party.

ACTION : CLERK : ENVIRONMENT AND FOOTPATHS WORKING PARTY

05.07.25 NATIONAL PLAYING FIELDS ASSOCIATION – PROTECTION SCHEME

It was agreed that Paul Allen, the Fields Protection Officer of the National Playing Fields Association should be invited to the July meeting to advise Council on the subject of protecting recreation land.

ACTION : CLERK

05.07.26 BENCHES AT BUS STOPS

The Clerk was asked to seek three quotations for repainting these.

ACTION : CLERK

05.07.26 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION ONLY AND ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON NEXT AGENDA

Cllr Carlsson Browne advised the Clerk that he had been in touch with TDC regarding the allotments contract and that forms were being sent which she should pass on to him when they arrived.

The Clerk was asked to look out the other tenders for the repairs to the swings as Cllr Fairbanks was unable to do this work until later in the summer because of his injury.

Cllr Wiggins suggested that each working party should formulate a four year plan to be presented to the July meeting. The Clerk to add this to the June agenda for a formal proposal.

Cllr Osborne asked the Clerk to add "Memorial Plaques" to the June agenda for consideration with regard to the new bench at the war memorial and the replacement bench at the shops. The Clerk confirmed that she had now received the necessary details of the drivers insurance to pursue making a claim on his insurance for replacing the bench outside the butchers shop.

Cllr J Robinson noted that planning applications are now being circulated by e-mail and suggested that the Council might pay for the Chairman to be connected to broadband. The Clerk was asked to add this to the June agenda.

Cllr Coates said that she would prefer the weekly circulation envelope to be distributed geographically and asked the Clerk to ensure that the names of the new Councillors were published in the next edition of the Advertiser. She suggested that photographs of each Councillor should be included in the Annual Report when it was published and noted that she was very pleased that all her Councillors had been voted back onto the Council and warmly welcomed the new Councillors.

ACTION : CLERK

There being no further business Cllr Coates closed the meeting at 9.45pm.

**The next meeting of Alresford Parish Council will be held
on 6 June 2007 at 7.30pm in the Parish Council Pavilion**

**Further details of any Council matters can be obtained from
any councillor, from the Clerk on 825714
or from the web site**

www.alresford.org.uk

APPENDIX 2

ANNUAL REPORT 2006-7

The Local Government White Paper published during 2006 has resulted in the 8,700 parish and town councils in England having powers to draw up their own bye-laws and impose on the spot fines. The 350 Quality Status councils will be given the “power of well being” which has been extended from the principal authorities and the number of Quality Councils will run into thousands with the next two years. In addition the number of parish and town councils could increase threefold in the next 10 years because of the relaxation of the rules for creating and setting up councils in rural and urban areas. For the first time since 1894 there could be town and parish councils in London as the barrier towards them being established in the Capital has been removed. The Government White Paper “Strong and Prosperous Communities” gives real opportunities for local people to access the levers of power and influence in their communities. In the past, local communities felt that they had no control over the way public services and functions were delivered and this led to disenchantment with those in power. The White Paper now provides opportunities for local people to have a better say or a larger degree of ownership over the services they use in their daily lives. There should be a renewed drive to bring about change in local government with town and parish councils able to take on more services from other tiers of local government if they so wish.

These are exciting times for parish councils and the councillors who are elected to them. Great opportunities are possible for creating communities where people feel valued, involved, safe and want to live and councillors are encouraged to embrace these opportunities and take up the challenges offered.

2006-7 continued for Alresford parish council where we left off last year – busy and challenging. Monthly meetings continued to be held, with a break in August, and were well attended, occasionally with members of the public being present. The standing orders were amended during the year to allow the public forum to be held at the beginning of the meeting rather than at the end in an effort to encourage better public attendance, but there has been little increase despite this. However, councillors are always pleased to see parishioners at the meetings and are grateful to those who do come along and especially to those who lend their active support to the council.

The football pitches have continued to be used throughout the season and the playing field itself received another certificate of merit award in the Best Kept Playing Field competition run by Essex Playing Fields Association. A three year rolling programme of improvements for the childrens play area has been commenced and it is planned to install a new roundabout during the next few months.

A scheme for refurbishing and adding new litter and dog waste bins throughout the village was undertaken during the year and the council is grateful to local businesses, notably Brett's and Caring Homes, who contributed towards the cost of this. Grants were also received from other bodies to defray the balance of the expenses incurred. The

village sign and notice board were repainted – paint for this came from the paint recycling scheme Repaint, and a grant from RAGS was received towards the overall cost. Several thousand hedging trees and plants were planted around the perimeter of the playing field, including blackthorn, hawthorn, field maple, holly and hazel and a grant for the full cost of this project was received from the Community Initiatives Fund. The majority of these plants survived last summers heatwave and I think we only lost about 2 to the weather; more have been lost to vandals who have pulled them up or simply broken them – but the overall survival rate has been excellent and they are now coming into leaf and showing signs of healthy spring growth. (There are still spares available on the Clerk's allotment should they be required!)

A new bus shelter has been installed at the Ford Lane/Wivenhoe Road bust stop. The full cost was met by grants from ECC and the Community Initiatives Fund.

A PCSO has been employed in the village on a full time basis since the beginning of August 2006 and many people have reported an increased feeling of safety and security as a result of this. In her role as a community officer, Louise Cox is visiting the schools and other organisations locally as well as individuals and will shortly be commencing regular surgeries in the church which will be supported by the parish council who will also have someone in attendance at these meetings.

Progress is being made on the Affordable Rural Homes Scheme and it is hoped that further news of this will be available shortly. A preliminary sketch layout has been prepared for the site adjacent to the railway station where approximately 6 flats at the upper end of the market could be built on the site of the old railway house. Land to the west of the station could be used for further housing and flats.

A village web site has been created and can be accessed at www.alresford.org.uk.

Less successful was the provision of a youth shelter – this is still a hoped for possibility but finding a suitable site is proving problematical.

A Parish Plan day was held in the village hall on March 17 and was well attended. A further meeting to establish a working party to take this forward will be held early in the summer.

The council has continued to press Highways and the Police for an extension to the 40mph speed limit on the B1027 between Alresford and Thorrington and support for this is now being actively received from Thorrington Parish council. Equally the 30mph speed limit in Ford Lane has been extended past the school as far as the cabin, but problems are still being encountered by vehicles being driven inappropriately fast along Ford Lane to the danger of cyclists, horse riders and pedestrians.

Councillors have continued to attend training courses throughout the year to hone their skills and a scheme to provide additional street lighting at the entries to the village on the Main Road has been costed and will be put in hand during the current financial year.

Grants to local organisations were made during the year and were gratefully received. A microwave oven was purchased and presented to the lunch club for their use in the village hall.

Plans for the extension of the village hall with an upgrade to the changing rooms and facilities, the provision of a parish office and generally improved facilities for users of both the hall and pavilion have been further delayed and little progress has been made.

Members of the council took part in a village quiz organised by Horticultural Society in November and both councillors and their wives and partners formed teams for the WI Quiz Night in March – both events proved extremely enjoyable.

Councillor Dorothy Barnes has continued to organise litter picks throughout the year which have been supported by councillors and members of the public alike and have resulted on each occasion in the collection of many bags of rubbish. The most recent of these took place in Cockaynes Lane and Cockaynes Wood on a lovely sunny afternoon early in March.

Financially the Council has remained on a sound footing but costs have risen. However, these have been kept under control and the precept has only had to be increased this year by the amount needed to pay for the PCSO. It is hoped that her presence will reduce the incidence and costs of vandalism to the Council and other property locally and indeed, already, as has been noted, an improvement has been observed, although problems do still occur.

Overall the Council has worked hard to continue to support the village and to provide the amenities and create the atmosphere that is such a valuable part of rural life.

WORKING PARTY AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Planning

The planning committee has met regularly throughout the year to consider the various planning applications put forward for the area and the Clerk has had some training at the Council Offices to enable her to access the planning details for Tending on-line.

Playing Field.

The working party has met on a regular basis to plan for the continuing maintenance and improvement of the equipped play area. Grants are presently being sought for the replacement of the roundabout and provision has been made within the budget to allow this to go ahead whether grant funding is forthcoming or not. All the necessary parts are now available for the swings to be upgraded as soon as the work can be done.

Village Hall.

The joint working party of the PC, AVHMC and ACRFC have continued to meet but the project is no further forward. The lease expires on 31 October and still no decision has been reached with the AVHMC as to how the project might move ahead. Searches are currently being undertaken to establish the exact ownership of the land in question together with the ownership of the car park.

Finance

The Finance Working Party met in November 2006 to discuss the budget for 2007/8. This resulted in a precept figure being taken to the full council meeting in December for consideration and was approved by the whole council at the January meeting. The precept increase has been solely to fund the PCSO – all other costs having been maintained within the same budget figure as last year.

Communications

The Communications Working party has not met but the website has been established and a new edition of the village Newlink booklet is presently under consideration.

Quality Council

1. A Quality Council Working Party was formed and met once. This resulted in the Parish Plan day on 17 March and a Parish Plan will be developed in conjunction with RCCE and volunteers from the village as a result of this. Now that the Clerk has attained her professional qualification (CiLCA) and the elections have taken place all the remaining boxes have been ticked and the Quality Council application will be put in hand at the earliest opportunity and should be attained in the next few months.