

**ALVECHURCH PARISH COUNCIL**  
**16 THE SQUARE, ALVECHURCH, B48 7LA**  
 Tel/fax : 0121 447 8016  
 e-mail : [clerk@alvechurch.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@alvechurch.gov.uk)  
 Clerk - Yvonne Goode

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

HELD MONDAY 11th FEBRUARY 2008, 7.30pm

AT THE COMMUNITY CENTRE, REDDITCH ROAD, HOPWOOD

08/017 Present: Cllrs J Puckering, S Caddick J Cypher, D Farlow, J Griffiths, D Matthews, P McHugh, A Willetts, T Thurrell, T Wallis

In Attendance: Y Goode, Clerk  
 District Cllr J Luck

08/018 Apologies: Apologies received and accepted from Cllr R Hollingworth, District Cllr J Luck  
 08/019 Declarations of Interest: None

08/020 Reports from District/County Ward Councillors: None

08/021 Minutes of the previous meeting:

The minutes of the meeting held 14/01/2008 were agreed and signed.

**08/022 Clerk's report:**

- 1 Grants application the Wiggin Memorial application. An application was submitted recently to County Councillor G Lord for a grant of £3500 to assist with a new section of safety surface at the Wiggin memorial Playing field. The Clerk has been advised that the application was unsuccessful
- 2 Street lighting maintenance. The detailed survey has now been received and is currently being reviewed by Cllr Thurrell. The Clerk is to request further information about the methodology of testing and to enquire about sonic testing for the concrete columns and dipstick testing for the steel columns. Approximately 20 have been identified as needing immediate further testing/action. If these are to be replaced this could require a budget of £30,000.
- 3 An invitation to a Civic Buffet Reception for the Chair and Clerk has been issued by BDC Chair Janice Boswell. The event is to be held 12/03/08
- 4 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment by Redditch Borough Council. A questionnaire has been received asking if we are able to identify any site with potential for housing and invited APC to have further input into the Assessment. Cllr Griffiths outlined land at Bordesley which has been earmarked as ADRs. It was requested this be put as an agenda item for the next APC meeting
- 5 Outstanding items include:
  - 5.5.1 Traffic calming issues. County Councillor G Lord and Jon Fraser have been contacted again about their availability for a meeting.
  - 5.5.2 Street light removal at St Laurence Churchyard. A meeting of the Committee has been held recently where this was raised.

08/023 Proposal to suspend Standing Orders to allow members of the public speak  
 Agreed. The representations for the members of the public are appendices to these minutes

Appendix C

**08/024 Chairman's report**

The Chairman gave an outline of the meeting held 28/01/08 with Kevin Dicks CEO BDC to review the performance of the Alvechurch Neighbourhood Community Group. A summary of the points discussed has been circulated to all Councillors. The points regarding the timely issue of an agenda to all invitees together with the opportunity to submit agenda items was noted. The power of the elected members to make decisions was clarified. It was questioned whether APC were more supportive of the ANCG following clarification of these points in particular to the publicity around the presence of the meetings, the agendas, core group, decision makers and any outcomes. It was mentioned that the ANCG is a pilot and currently subject to an independent review and results will be made public to the stake holders.

It was felt that the ANCG was useful to receive the public view and this would be useful if it was effective in getting things moving in Alvechurch. It was noted that the APC membership was not limited to the Chairman who could send a substitute, as had been done at the last meeting as Cllr Caddick had attended so that he could raise the subject of highways issues. It was questioned whether a satisfactory answer was received regarding the £90,000 for play equipment in Alvechurch being delegated to the ANCG. It was pointed out that the £90,000 will not be delegated and will be spent as directed by BDC.

**08/025 Finance Report**

1. APC has been notified by the Audit Commission that Clement Keys has been appointed as external Auditor for a five year period. It was confirmed Clement Keys are the current auditors.
2. Councillors expenses. An expense form was given to all councillors which should be completed and returned to the Clerk by 24/03/08 to allow cheques to be drawn before the end of the financial year. A list of meetings is available in the office. An electronic version of the form is also available.
3. A list of bills was circulated and agreed. It was noted this included some of the costs for the Hopwood Community Centre refurbishment which APC will be looking to reclaim from the insurers.

**08/026 Committee reports:**

1. All Councillors should have received minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held 15/01/08 and 04/02/08
2. All Councillors should have received minutes of the Wiggins Memorial Playing Field Committee held 21/01/08
3. All Councillors should have received notes of the Parish Plan Working party review held 23/01/08. The agenda item relating to this meeting was noted.
4. All Councillors will receive minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held 28/01/08.
5. All Councillors will receive minutes of the Youth and Charities Committee held 29/01/08. In the absence of available minutes Cllr Cypher gave a summary of the meeting in the absence of the minutes being available. The proposal for the bus stop to be repainted by the youth of the village was considered and support expressed in principal subject to details of the project being received in full.
6. All Councillors will receive notes of the working party meeting for public parking at the Sports & Social Club meeting held 30/01/08. Cllr Puckering gave a summary of the meeting in the absence of the notes being available

**08/027 Representatives to other bodies:**

1. The representative to the CPRE was considered. Cllr McHugh had been nominated to fulfil this role but it was noted there had been a personality clash. Cllr McHugh explained that he would bury his differences if no one else wanted to represent APC at CPRE meetings. It was noted that CPRE had suggested that a representative who was also a member of the Planning Committee would be useful. Cllr Wallis agreed to be the representative and the Clerk is to notify the CPRE.
2. Alvechurch Neighbourhood Community Group 24/01/08. A summary of some of the points raised at the meeting was given by Cllr Caddick. This included representations by local residents against a proposed MUGA and traffic calming issues raised by Cllr Caddick. As there was a query raised about one issue, it was enquired whether the minutes were available. The Clerk confirmed that she produces draft minutes however these are forwarded to Cllr Hollingworth as Chairman of the



ANC&G. The query was with regard to the crossing point adjacent to the vets in Birmingham Road which is part of the traffic calming measure in connection with new school. It was suggested that the Clerk write to BDC enforcement to ask that all of the measures detailed on the plans approved for the traffic calming are completed prior to the school being allowed to open. Cllr Griffiths reported a recent article in local newspaper which had stated that the roads outside many Bromsgrove schools were a mess but because the schools are a business and are being pushed through. It was pointed out that APC gave there views over 12 months ago and it would appear those and the ongoing comments are being completely disregarded. It was requested that the traffic calming at the school be put on the agenda for the APC March meeting.

**08/028 To consider approval of Precept**

The draft Precept submitted and approved at the F&GP Committee held 28/01/08 was presented for approval. It was noted that the final costings of some items had still to be finalised, for example the costing of street light replacement. It was questioned that if the items in the Budget could not be afforded then surely the Budget should have been a cost cutting exercise. It was pointed out that the Budget had been agreed at both the F&GP meeting held 26/1/07 and the APC meeting 14/01/08. The Budget had been set within stringent financial constraints and a reduction in the Precept had been achieved over the last three years. The projects for 2008-2009 were being funded predominantly out of the Capital Projects fund. Other items such as the bus stop at Bordesley was not originally to be funded by APC, similarly the projects at the Wiggin will now be funded in full or in part by APC when funding was originally expected from BDC and WCC. Most of the Precept is to cover everyday running costs. It was questioned again why the Budget could not be cut. In addition the 106 monies arising from the Mill is for BDC to spend as it sees fit.

It was pointed out that any counter proposals regarding the Budget should have been proposed at the meeting 14/01/08. The Budget was a three month process with Councillors being invited to submit proposals and comment on each proposal. With some of the proposals such as the replacement of street lighting the method of funding cannot be finalised until APC are aware of the immediate requirement at that stage options such as a five year loan might be considered. Other requests such as paying for the resurfacing of the Sports and Social Club had been turned down otherwise it could have been another £20,000. APC had been prudent over the last 3 years and the Precept had fallen even though WCC and BDC had increased their rates. Cllr Griffiths pointed out that if she had been aware of a shortfall in funding she would have not approved the Budget.

It was proposed that the Precept proposal be accepted, agreed with one against.

**08/029 To consider Parish Plan review**

A summary of the working party meeting was given. It was pointed out that there was still much more mileage in the action points, however some needed refinement and others needed revision of timescale. It was reiterated that a 'Champion' should be nominated for each cause. In addition a copy of the Parish Plan should be made available at the ANCG meeting, perhaps on the agenda. It should also go on the agenda for the Annual Parish Meeting. It was noted that the Plan on the website needs converting to .PDF.

It was proposed that rather than start work to produce a new plan APC should re-examine each section of the action plan in more detail over the coming months and as necessary, refresh the detail of the action requirements, agreed. Cllr Cypher is to work with the Clerk re publicity and getting the Plan out in a better format.

**08/030 To consider MUGA siting consultation**

It was pointed out that the proposed MUGA development came from an active discussion regarding facilities. The next part of the consultation is regarding its siting. It was pointed out that the draft consultation document made no reference to the Parish Council and any opinion it may hold. Assuming the consultation does go ahead should not APC have a view on its siting and publicize its view. Cllr McHugh pointed out he had circulated a letter regarding much opposition from residents to the whole project to all Councillors. It was questioned whether APC should defer any view on the siting until the results of the residents survey is known. It was pointed out that at the recent Wiggin Playing Field



Chairman's Initials.....

Committee meeting the Committee felt it was an inappropriate amenity for the playing field. It was felt that such a facility should be supervised. It was felt that the consultation gave the impression that it was going ahead whereas a lot more discussion was required.

It was pointed out that no other options for siting the MUGA were being considered except Swans Length and Wiggin Memorial Paying Field

It was enquired whether a revised consultation document had been received as promised at the ANCG meeting, it was confirmed it had not,

It was pointed out that the Wiggin Memorial PF Committee would discuss other possible facilities on the site but not a MUGA (or a skateboard park).

BDC are well advanced in the consultation regarding a MUGA therefore should APC decide whether it is supportive of a MUGA in Alvechurch. It was noted that many objections to a MUGA are being received from residents. There had been reference to the developer of the old school site offering more land adjoining Swans Length. It was noted in the recent Youth Committee meeting that Kim Caves had made reference to additional sports development officers being available for supervision.

It was felt that either a MUGA or a skateboard park would welcome the wrong type from outside the area. This is why residents were complaining and the plans had been announced at PACT meeting. It was pointed out that the youngsters had attended the PACT meeting to press the point that they wanted facilities. This created the consultation and at the consultation the MUGA was chosen not a skateboard park, along with risky play and climbing facilities. Neighbourhood warden Chris Smith has spent much time with the youth who are not committed skateboarders.

The question is now where do they want it and the feeling is nobody wants the youngsters in Alvechurch. Anti social behaviour is a problem identified and it is more likely to happen when there is nothing to do. BDC have two extra Sports Development Officers and two Community Officers in the Budget so there is provision for extra supervision. A public meeting will explain all this and this is planned for the end of the consultation.

It was questioned whether APC have to support the decision of the Wiggin Memorial PF Committee in not wanting the MUGA sited there, it was confirmed this is not necessarily the case.

It was questioned whether APC want any play facilities in Alvechurch.

It was questioned whether a MUGA could be built on the new school site, it was confirmed that there will be a MUGA on the new school site but this will be hired out at quite a high cost.

It was pointed out that an unit MUGA can only be used for 6 months of the year.

It was proposed that APC support the Wiggin Memorial PF Committee in that the MUGA is an inappropriate development on that site.

Prior to the vote Cllr Griffiths asked for a named vote, agreed. It was queried whether in a named vote the Clerk should ask each Councillor for their name and their vote or should note their names in the minutes. The Clerk checked guidance in Charles Arnold Baker which did not dictate how a named vote should be done. The Clerk is to check the Standing Orders and circulate this with the minutes.

Advice should be taken from CALC if not clear.

The proposal was agreed Cllrs Puckering, Mchugh, Thurrell, Farlow, Willetts, Cypher, Matthews, and Wallis

Not agreed Cllr Griffiths

Abstaining Cllr Caddick

As the MUGA is now subject to a consultation should APC support it.

It was pointed out that some facility was needed but there was the feeling of not in my back yard, There had been mention of a youth club at the old library but this has caused uproar.

It was suggested that APC should wait until the results of the consultation are available.

It was suggested that APC should be leading by its opinion and be positive.

It was stated again that a MUGA can only be used for 6 months of the year. Floodlights would allow 12 month use.

It was pointed out that it could be used in school holidays and weekends.

It was pointed out the older youths are complaining they have nothing to do at 9pm

What ever facilities are available they need supervision.

The MUGA at the new school was mentioned and Councillors expressed surprise that there was to be a MUGA at the new school. Could this be rented out did Alvechurch need two MUGAs?

It was proposed that a MUGA in Alvechurch is an appropriate development and APC should recommend to the residents that it is in inappropriate. This proposal had no seconder

It was proposed that APC support in principal a MUGA and are neutral about its siting on Swans Length with the proviso that the actual siting is dependant on the results of the consultation. Agreed 6 in favour one against, three abstaining.

**08/031 Information Exchange, Councillor's Questions and agenda items for the next meeting.**  
It was requested that an update on the traffic calming measures for the new school be put on the next agenda.

**08/032 Date and time of next meeting**

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Monday 10th March 2008, at 7.30pm.

This meeting ended at 9.40pm.

Signed .....  
Chairman, Alvechurch Parish Council  
Date .....