



## Aldworth Parish Council

### Minutes of the Virtual Parish Council Meeting

Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020 at 7pm via Zoom

Minute ref: 003/02122020/vPCM

<b>Members Present:</b>	Cllr. Tim Chapman (Chairman), Cllr. Nick Williams (Vice-Chairman), Cllr. Kate Walters.
<b>Members Absent:</b>	None
<b>Officers Present:</b>	Mrs Fenella Woods (Clerk & RFO)
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Cllr. Alan Law (District Councillor), Ms Donna Roach, Mr John Clark and one member of public
<b>Meeting Start Time:</b>	19.05pm
<b>Meeting End Time:</b>	20.49pm

1. Cllr. Chapman welcomed all to this meeting, and to the new clerk, Fenella Woods. No apologies have been received and we are quorate.
2. There were no declarations of pecuniary interests by members or the clerk.
3. There were no questions from members of the public or any representations from members.
4. The minutes from the meeting dated 8<sup>th</sup> July 2020 were **approved** as an accurate record. They will be signed in due course (due to Covid-19).
5. It was noted that the items in matters arising from the minutes of 8<sup>th</sup> July 2020 had not been actioned or closed. This was due to the change in clerk at the beginning of November. The new clerk will **create an action log** and provide the councillors with a status update on each of them. Councillors advised that they will be happy to provide background information to the new clerk to assist with completing this. The clerk will make contact where necessary.
6. Cllr. Alan Law gave an update on the Covid-19 cases in West Berkshire and our position in Tier 2 since the recent lockdown ended. 130 new cases were reported at the end of last week which places us at 82 per 100,000 (below the benchmark of 100). The tiering system will be reviewed in 2 weeks. West Berkshire suffered two major outbreaks of C-19, one at IKEA in Calcot and the other at Theale Green School. These outbreaks have contributed to two thirds of our overall numbers. The Support Hub at WBC is still operational and helping residents in the area. A Winter Grant Scheme has been issued to help pay utility bills and give access to foodbanks for those who need it. They will also ensure free school meals are

provided throughout the Christmas holidays. There is a £500 grant available to those who are contacted via Track and Trace and lose income from isolating and a 'Kick Start' programme for new job creation for under 25s where 100% of the salary will be paid short term along with a £1,500 grant to help set up the position. All these are in place to support people and businesses as they recover from the pandemic via the Support Hub.

Cllr. Law is in receipt of a Covid-19 Members Recovery Bid, split across his 4 wards, we can apply for £250 and the Parish Council will think about how this could be used.

On 11<sup>th</sup> December a new consultation will be launched on the new Local Plan. It will be open for 8 weeks for us to provide comments.

All WBC meetings are recorded and they can be viewed via their YouTube channel.

The new CIL fund was launched this week. Councils are invited to bid for financial support for a project such as potholes, flooding on road or resurfacing. The Parish Council will look into this further.

Finally, WBC raised £1 million for the Community Climate Bond which is a fantastic achievement and this will be spent on green initiatives such as solar panels on council buildings, planting more trees and other green projects.

Thank you to Cllr. Law for attending this meeting. The clerk will advise you of other dates to join us.

7. Our 'Casual Vacancy' notification period ended on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> December and WBC confirmed no requests for a by-election had been received. We are therefore able to co-opt our two vacancies. Applications Forms have been received from Ms Donna Roach and Mr John Clark who were both present at this online meeting. It was **proposed** by Cllr. Nick Williams to **co-opt** Ms Donna Roach to the Council and **seconded** by Cllr. Kate Walters. All were in favour. It was **proposed** by Cllr. Kate Walters to **co-opt** Mr John Clark to the Council and **seconded** by Cllr. Nick Williams. All were in favour. Our new Councillors signed their Declarations of Office on screen. The clerk will arrange to collect these forms and submit to the Monitoring Officer at WBC. We now have a full council at Aldworth.
8. The model Standing Orders have been sourced from NALC / SLCC and edited for Aldworth Parish Council. Full Council **approved** and **adopted** them in this meeting.
9. The model Financial Regulations have been sourced from NALC / SLCC and edited for Aldworth Parish Council. Full Council **approved** and **adopted** them in this meeting.
10. A model Grievance & Disciplinary Policy and an Anti-Bullying Policy have been sourced from NALC / SLCC and edited for Aldworth Parish Council. Full Council **approved** and **adopted** both policies in this meeting.
11. The clerk had circulated a draft budget proposal to all councillors prior to this meeting with a proposal to increase the Precept for 2021/2022 to £8,000. The introduction of Ear Marked Reserves was explained and discussed. Various projects such as footpath maintenance and village boundary gate posts were discussed, and Ear Marked Reserves can be created to ringfence the funds. Full Council **agreed** that the budget and precept would be **finalised** at a meeting in January 2021.
12. The clerk had determined that the Annual Governance and Review documentation for 2019/2020 was submitted with incorrect figures for 'income received', 'staff costs' and 'all other payments'. After speaking with the External Auditors, advice has been received on

how to rectify this at the end of March 2021. The clerk presented the accurate figures to full Council, along with justification on where the errors were, and this was **accepted** and **approved**. Signatures will be sought at year end when providing the next AGAR to the auditors.

13. The following items were discussed for successful running of council business:
- a) To switch our current account from Barclays to Unity Trust – full council **approved** the switch to allow us access to internet banking and BACS payments. The clerk will start the switching process on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2020.
  - b) To purchase a gov.uk domain name and email – full council **approved** the purchase of a new domain and email via TEEC web hosting in Newbury. The website will be accessible as per legislation from September 2020. The clerk will create the new website and each councillor, and the clerk will be provided with an aldworth-pc.gov.uk email account to conduct council business on.
  - c) To purchase the Alpha Finance Software from Rialtus Business Solutions – full council **approved** the purchase of this software. The clerk is already using it at East Ilsley and does not require training. It was agreed that this would help to safeguard public money, provide more transparency, and ensure no future errors on the Annual Governance and Accountability documentation. The clerk will begin the setting up and installation of this software with Rialtus.
  - d) Appointment of Internal Auditor – full council **approved** the appointment of Heelis and Lodge to conduct the internal audit for year end 2020. They are used by several local councils in the area and are trained in providing this service for small parish councils.
  - e) Parish Council Facebook Page – full council **approved** the set up of a Facebook page for the council. The clerk will set this up and manage the page to improve community engagement.
  - f) Termination of outsourced Payroll – full council **approved** the termination of using Autela for our Payroll as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. This will be delivered in-house via HMRC Basic PAYE and the clerk will manage the process. A letter will be drafted for Autela at the start of next year.
  - g) Re-joining of BALC / NALC – full council **approved** the re-joining of BALC / NALC as the clerk and council receive many benefits from this.
  - h) Small Filing Cabinet – full council **approved** the purchase of a small, 2 drawer, lockable filing cabinet for the clerk office at home to store all the council paperwork.
14. The clerk issued a short report to all councillors prior to the meeting advising on current bank account status, the removal of standing orders to the previous clerk and changes to the Barclays Bank account address. Autela have combined the clerk's salary for November and December into one amount, payable on 25<sup>th</sup> December 2020 due to not setting up the 'new starter' in time for the November payroll run. No other issues were reported on.
15. It was agreed to meet again on **18<sup>th</sup> January 2021** to finalise the budget and precept for the next financial year. A further meeting will be held on **15<sup>th</sup> March 2021** for the year end and accounts update. It is hoped that the meeting in May will be face to face at the Village Hall, and we will be able to hold the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council on the same evening as the Annual Meeting of the Parish and have a small celebration for being together again. This will be reviewed in line with UK Government guidance.

16. Matters for future consideration – many of these will be in the new **Action Log** the clerk is putting together, but the drainage of Ambury Road is still an issue and the drains will need blasting. The Church Gully is blocked again and Cllr. Williams and Cllr. Clark have offered to clear this. Potentially, village volunteers can be sourced to assist them as well. The amount of road closures, patching and pot hole fixing has caused great disruption to the village and it will be looked into if they can more considerate when closing roads to allow for smoother access in and out of the village. There was a small community service group in the village who helped with local issues, but it is likely they ceased due to C-19. Once we recover from the pandemic it is hoped they can re-start.

With there being no further business, the Chairman thanked all for attending, and for coping with the vast amount of business on this agenda. The meeting closed at 20.49pm.

Signed: .....

Position: .....

Date: .....

<b>Actions from the Meeting:</b>			
	<b>Description</b>	<b>Assigned to</b>	<b>Completed</b>
1	Creation of 'Action Log' so activities can be tracked and updated	Clerk	
2	Covid-19 Members Bid - £250 to use for Aldworth – need to apply very soon	Full Council	
3	CIL Funding – agree on a project and secure funding from WBC	Full Council	
4	Clerk to collect forms from Councillors for Monitoring Officer, website, and files	Clerk	
5	Action Bank Account Switch	Clerk	
6	Proceed with new website and emails	Clerk	
7	Install of Alpha Finance Software	Clerk	
8	Appoint Internal Auditors for 2020/2021 Accounts	Clerk	
9	Set up Parish Council Facebook Page	Clerk	
10	Terminate contract with Autela at year end and set up HMRC Basic PAYE	Clerk	
11	Pay fees for BALC / NALC	Cllr. Chapman, Cllr. Williams, Clerk	
12	Purchase Filing Cabinet	Clerk	