



Aldworth Parish Council

Minutes of the Virtual Parish Council Meeting

Monday 15th March 2021 at 7pm via Zoom

Minute ref: 006/15003021/vPCM

Members Present:	Cllr. Tim Chapman (Chairman), Cllr. Donna Roach, Cllr. John Clark
Members Absent:	2
Officers Present:	Mrs Fenella Woods (Clerk & RFO)
In Attendance:	2 members of public
Meeting Start Time:	19.08pm
Meeting End Time:	20.31pm

1. Cllr. Chapman welcomed all to this meeting. Apologies were received from Cllr. Williams and Cllr. Walters, and were accepted. We are quorate.
2. Cllr. Chapman disclosed an interest in item 14; no dispensation was required.
3. There were no questions from members of the public, nor any representations from members.
4. The minutes from the meeting dated 18th January 2021 were **approved** as an accurate record. They will be signed in due course (due to Covid-19).
5. There were no matters arising from the minutes of the meeting dated 18th January 2021.
6. Cllr. Alan Law (District Councillor) did not join us on this occasion and no report was received.
7. The Action Log was shared on screen. It was **agreed** to send Elaine Cox's email regarding the 'Planings' in an AONB to James Hole at Yattendon Estates for his comments. The bags of soil on the flooded bend in Westridge Green are being investigated by Stuart Clark and his team at WBC as they have failed. A new solution is needed and Yattendon Estates will be contacted to gain permission to lay a pipe into the field opposite. The soakaway will also be re-cleared. A site visit is being arranged by the Planning Enforcement Team at Kiddingington Cottage and we will receive an update on the potential breach. The Log will be updated to reflect these developments and uploaded to the website by the Clerk.

<https://www.aldworth-pc.gov.uk/action-log>

8. All Councillors **agreed** to purchase the Data Protection fee from the ICO. The Clerk will make the arrangements to pay via direct debit annually (attracting a £5.00 discount).
9. The Clerk presented a number of policies to the Council:
 - a) Risk Management Scheme / Assessment – **approved**
 - b) Community Engagement Policy – **approved**
 - c) Complaints Procedure Policy – **approved**
 - d) Equality Policy – **approved**
 - e) Freedom of Information Policy – **approved**
 - f) Media Policy – **approved**
 - g) Grants Awarding Policy – **approved**

All Councillors **ratified** and **approved** the above policies and they will be uploaded to our website.

10. Year End Update:
 - a) AGAR 2019 / 2020: The Clerk determined that some of the values entered for the 2019 / 2020 AGAR were incorrect when signed. After an extensive review (with the internal auditor) the error arose from the previous Clerk entering in a bank switch transfer as 'income' into Box 3. This was not income; it was only a switch transfer from when the account was moved from TSB to Barclays. The Clerk has gone through all transactions for 2019 / 2020 and can confirm that box 3 should have shown a zero value as the only income received in 2019 / 2020 was for the 2 Precept payments. There were other anomalies with the staff costs and expenditure but these have been amended. After consultation with PKF Littlejohn, it was agreed that the AGAR 2020 / 2021 would use the revised figures and add *RESTATED* along the top of the document. All Councillors were **satisfied** that this was the most suitable course of action and **approved** the revised figures. The Clerk will ensure the new internal auditor has clear visibility of the amendment and the Chairman will sign the spreadsheet confirming the actual values.
 - b) It was noted that the previous Clerk had not claimed for VAT for 2019 / 2020. The Clerk has now actioned this and we are waiting for a £46.96 refund. At Year End 2021, the Clerk will post the claim for the VAT refund for this year.
 - c) Preparations for the Internal Audit are going well. The Clerk will prepare an accompanying explanation document advising them of the work undertaken since November 2020 to bring the Council in line with best practices.
11. All Councillors **approved** the purchase of a replacement sign at the Playground which has the correct phone number on should there be an accident or any issues with equipment at a cost of £90.55. The sign will be delivered to the Clerk who will replace the existing sign.
12. All Councillors **approved** the donation of £50.00 to West Berkshire Library Services and £50.00 to Citizens Advice Bureau (Newbury Branch), to support their work during the pandemic. S137 allocation has been used and will be recorded in the finance software.
13. The Planning Applications at Westridge House were discussed and we were joined by the applicants. After reviewing the plans and discussing with the applicants all Councillors **agreed on no objection** to the plans. The Clerk will complete the 2 Parish Observations Sheets and send them back to the Planning Team. Thank you to the applicants for joining us at the meeting.
14. WBC requested our comments on the proposal to remove sycamore, ivy and brambles from the driveway at Woodrows Farm, the home of our Chairman, Cllr. Chapman. Cllr. Chapman informed the Council of the difficulty in maintaining the ivy and brambles and that the plan was to remove them and replace with hornbeam and beech trees which would reduce the

maintenance and match up with the other side of the driveway. There were **no objections** to this and the Clerk will advise WBC of the outcome.

15. Clerk Report:

- a) All Councillors have received the Finance Report for February. Current bank account status is £10,782.45 with 2 pending payments for the end of March which have been approved.
- b) A Settlement Boundary Review has been sent by WBC and informed us that no changes to the Aldworth Parish boundary will take place.
- c) We will shortly receive the invoice for the annual cost of emptying the dog waste bin at the Recreation ground.
- d) The Active Travel Plans consultation from WBC has been received. Councillors are asked to add to the 'Heat Map' areas they think could be improved with regards to safety to pedestrians and dog walkers etc. The Clerk will forward the link to the map.
- e) All Councillors **approved** the payment of £43.63 to the Clerk to cover expenses incurred since November 2020 (stamps, stationery etc.) and this would be paid via BACS.
- f) The Clerk has requested annual leave from 28th June to 1st July inclusive and this was **approved**.
- g) The Clerk and Cllr. Roach attended the District Parish Conference via Zoom on 11th March and found it informative. Particular highlights were the information on Planning Enforcement and PROWs (Public Rights of Way). The Clerk will forward the presentations to all Councillors when they are received.
- h) The Clerk has received numerous communications from a resident at The Glebe with concerns over the 'pit', water charges and services charges. This is run by Sovereign Housing and West Berkshire Council. It was **agreed** to draft a questionnaire to send to all residents of The Glebe to gain an understanding of whether these concerns are felt by all residents and to engage with them more. The results will be reviewed to see if the Council can offer any support with rectifying any issues with Sovereign and WBC.

16. All Councillors **agreed** to bring the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council forward to Wednesday 5th May 2021 to allow us to hold this via Zoom before the expiration date for remote meetings on 7th May comes into force. It was **agreed** that the Annual Parish Meeting would not take place this year due to the pandemic and the challenges of meeting face to face whilst the vaccination program is underway.

17. Cllr. Clark shared on the screen photographs of the bank of grass by the Church which had been severely damaged by a large vehicle. It has been churned up by large and heavy wheels and needs some repair work. It was **agreed** to contact Revd. Katy to ascertain who owns the bank, and to obtain a quotation from CJM Services for the repair if Revd. Katy was in agreement. Cllr. Clark will forward the photographs so the Clerk can share with CJM. Once a quote has been received, all were in **favour** to agree to the spend via email rather than reconvene in an extraordinary meeting.

18. Cllr. Chapman discussed the ongoing issue of flooding in Ambury Road. The soakaway is no longer functioning, pipes are not wide enough to support the volume of water and homes and gardens are being impacted. The cess pit is also being affected which could endanger public health. It was **agreed** for photos and videos to be shared as evidence and to put together a document for WBC requesting help with this ongoing issue.

19. The Clerk advised that the notice board opposite the Bell pub is in a poor state. It is wobbling backwards and forwards (particularly when trying to add posters to the board), the Perspex fronts have gone green making it hard to read the posters inside and there is warping on the locks making it difficult to open. It was **agreed** that quotations will be sourced for a new one and will be discussed at the next meeting. The Clerk also advised

that the current laptop is running very slowly, taking 10 minutes to log on each day. This is impacting the efficiency of the working day and contracted hours. All files have been transferred to the Cloud, updates have been run for both Office and Windows 10 and a major scan with AV software has been implemented along with disk defrag and clean up tasks. This has made no difference to the speed of the laptop. It was **agreed** that quotations will be sourced for a replacement and discussed at the next meeting.

20. There were no further questions from members of the public.

With there being no further business, the Chairman thanked all for attending. The meeting closed at 20.31pm.

Signed:

Position:

Date:

Actions from the Meeting:			
	Description	Assigned to	Completed
1	Update Action Log	Clerk	
2	Purchase Data Protection Fee from ICO	Clerk	
3	Upload approved policies to the website	Clerk	
4	Purchase and install replacement playground sign	Clerk	
5	Pay Library and Citizens Advice Donations	Clerk / TC / NW	
6	Send completed observations sheets to WBC	Clerk	✓
7	Draft questionnaire for The Glebe residents	Clerk	
8	Repair the bank by the Church	Council	
9	Prepare document for WBC on Ambury Road Flooding	Clerk	
10	Source quotations for noticeboard and laptop	Clerk	