

**Clerk to Council: Elizabeth Martin**

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**PARISH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

Minutes of the Full Meeting of Alton Parish Council  
held virtually on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2021  
commencing at 7:30pm.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Councillors Polly Carson [PC], Alex Oliver [AO], Robert Carpenter Turner [RCT], Hayley Kington [HK], Carol Whittle [CW] Ewan MacKinnon [EMK]

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Elizabeth Martin [EM], Clerk to Council

**CHAIR:** Robert Carpenter Turner

**APOLOGIES:** None Received

FC20/21/145 **TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**  
None.

FC20/21/146 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION**  
AO stated an interest in agenda item 5b for planning application APP/Y3940/W/20/3256886, The Clock House.

FC20/21/147 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON NOVEMBER 19<sup>TH</sup>**  
Proposed PC. Seconded CW. Agreed.

**IT WAS RESOLVED THAT the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 19<sup>TH</sup> November 2020 be accepted as written.**

FC20/21/148 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**  
RCT, Cllr. Oatway and Head of highways for WC looked at brown's lane. High-Jet Drain cleaning will be done around areas of the village. The "Grips" (Culverts) will also be added/cleaned to ensure good water run-off. At Baker's Corner, the flooding repairs are now 5<sup>th</sup> on the list of items to be completed.

FC20/21/149 **TO RECEIVE THE PLANNING REPORT DATED 4<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2021**  
Report received

FC20/21/150 **PLANNING TO CONSIDER AND AGREE PLANNING APPLICATION APPEAL FROM WILTSHIRE COUNCIL**  
AO withdrew from the Meeting but remained connected to the Online Meeting.

Parishioner Mike Spencer was invited to address the Council and outlined a number of reasons for not supporting the Clock House application. For information made by Mr Spencer please see notes from the Public Participation section.

- Application:** APP/Y3940/W/20/3256886  
**Location:** Clock House, Road Off Honeystreet North Of Canal, Honeystreet, SN9 5PSV  
**Proposal:** Demolition of two dwellings and vacant commercial buildings and replacement with six dwellings.  
**Response:** The Council will continue to oppose. EM to write a response with reference to previously submitted comments. See attached letter

AO re-joined the meeting

- FC20/21/151 **TO RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION, THE CLERK'S REPORT**  
 EM advised that the January meeting is due to take place after the precept is required to be sent to Wiltshire Council. The Council was asked to amend the date of the next meeting for January to meet the required deadline.  
 The draft budget has been circulated for review. Any queries from the Council are welcomed before January.  
 EM has put forward for a review of the insurance policy for Alton to ensure the Village is paying proportionate rates.
- FC20/21/152 **TO DISCUSS THE MAINTENANCE OF THE SPRINGS.**  
 PC explained that there needs to be annual maintenance at the Springs. Funding will be addressed in the budget section.  
 CW left the meeting
- FC20/21/153 **TO CONSIDER AND AGREE THE CONTINUANCE OF THE CONTRACT FOR GRASS CUTTING FOR BEN OWEN FOR 2021-2022 FOR £630**  
 Proposed RCT. Seconded MG. Agreed.  
**IT WAS RESOLVED THAT the contract for grass cutting contract with Ben Owen for the financial year of 2021-2022 be accepted as written.**  
 RCT expressed thanks to Mr Owen for the work done.
- FC20/21/154 **TO DISCUSS THE REPLACEMENT AND FUTURE MAINTENANCE OF PLAQUES ON TREES IN THE VILLAGE TO COMMEMORATE THE FALLEN**  
 PC stated the names on the plaques may have worn off. HK will check.  
 CW rejoined the meeting
- FC20/21/155 **FINANCE MATTERS**
- FC20/21/156 **To Receive For Information, Disbursements made since the last meeting**  
 No disbursements since the prior meeting.
- FC20/21/157 **To Receive The Bank Reconciliations As Presented**  
 The bank reconciliations were presented and received  
 EM explained that one statement for December has not been received from the bank. Currently being re-issued. Reconciliations are to November.
- FC20/21/158 **To Consider And Agree The Presentation On The 2021-2022 Budget**  
 Proposed RCT. Seconded CW. Agreed.

**IT WAS RESOLVED THAT the 2021-2022 Budget be accepted as presented.**

FC20/21/159 **To Consider And Agree The Precept for 2021-2022**  
Proposed RCT. Seconded PC. Agreed.

**IT WAS RESOLVED THAT the 2021-2022 Precept be accepted as recommended at £5500.**

FC20/21/160 **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION, CORRESPONDENCE AND CIRCULARS RECEIVED**  
All information sent out is on the Parish website for the Council.

FC20/21/161 **TO CONSIDER ITEMS OF MAINTENANCE.**  
Notice Boards need attention.

FC20/21/162 **KEY MESSAGES.**  
The Council has agreed and set the precept for 2021/2022

FC20/21/163 **NEXT MEETING.**  
The next meeting will be held on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2021, 7:30pm. Unless otherwise notified, this and all subsequent meetings will be 'virtual' meetings in accordance with the current legislation, up to and including 5<sup>th</sup> May 2021.  
Meeting Closed.

These minutes are accepted as a true and accurate record: -

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date 7<sup>th</sup> January 2021

## **Summary Of Public Participation Section**

### **I. To Receive a report from the Unitary Councillor Paul Oatway.**

Cllr. Paul Oatway provided an open statement that was read out at the beginning of the meeting. This has been attached below verbatim and was confirmed received with the Parish Clerk. The Council took the view regarding the statement to make a public vote of confidence and stated that Cllr Oatway has been a great support for the Alton Parish Council over the years. This vote of confidence was proposed by MG and seconded by RCT, EMK abstained as this was his first meeting as a Cllr, all others in favour of the vote.

Dear members,

*I need to bring to your attention an email that has been circulated from someone not a member of this council, regarding my involvement in the planning application that I recently took to The Eastern Planning Committee, the contents of this email brings my credibility and public office into disrepute, at the outset I wish to advise you that the information contained within this email of which I will read to you shortly is totally inaccurate and so wrong with no substance of truth in it what's so ever. I am completely appalled at what has been written, I have always represented the people of Honey Street and the Alton's as your County Councillor with their and your best interests at heart and will continue to do so as long as I am in office.*

*I will now read the contents of this email to you of which names and identities have been redacted,*

*“Some feedback re Paul, which I find hard to tell but it's better that you know what is going on, quite some residents think Paul Oatway was also misinformed or manipulated by a councillor, I have redacted personal details. e.g., because despite the positive recommendation by planning officer Jonathan James Paul took application 20/ 01631 / Full change of use former warehouse to exhibition to committee, many were surprised by this and even more when they saw Paul acting during the virtual meeting as if he was talking on behalf of, a councillor, I have redacted personal details. hope we're wrong.”*

*As a result of this email being brought to my attention, I have on Monday morning of this week brought its contents to the attention of the Head of Democratic and Legal Services, Mr Ian Gibbons the Monitoring Officer for Wiltshire Council and in so doing self-referred myself and my alleged conduct for investigation.*

*So to conclude I totally deny what has been said about me, I am absolutely appalled that someone could write this email with the potential to damage my credibility locally, I am keen once this matter is closed to identify who, these residents are, to enable me to discuss this on a one to one basis to clear my name of this total wrongdoing. It refers to me taking this application to committee going against the planning officer, that is the purpose of the committee process, to be able to air and debate matters in the public domain, I also add it was this council that wanted it taken to committee with the support of some residents of Honey Street. I further add that this process was not unusual or unique and indeed this is not the first time that I've taken planning applications revolving around Honey Street to committee.*

*For the benefit of this council and to assist the Clerk in the accurate recording of my message I have sent what I've said to you tonight by way of email to your learned Clerk, Elizabeth would you please confirm that what I have read tonight is a true and accurate reflection of the email that you are in possession of.*

*Thank you for your time, Mr Chairman.*

RCT proposed a vote of confidence in Cllr. Oatway. All In Favour, excepting EMK who has only just joined the Council and was not appraised of the above.

Cllr Oatway provided the Council with an update from Wiltshire Council. From the start of this new lockdown, Wiltshire Council has already provided £9000 pounds in Grants predominantly to the hospitality trade on top of a further £10,000 pounds that had already been issued. Wiltshire Council has also allocated £1.1million pounds for laptops to be purchased and circulated to all vulnerable children in the schools across the County. The Wellbeing Hub is still running 7 days a week. Several staff have been relocated to ensure that the Wellbeing Hub remains operational and affective during this COVID19 time. If there is a known parishioner who is vulnerable or in need of extra help, please get in touch with the Wellbeing Hub at <https://adults.wiltshire.gov.uk/Services/1544>

Wiltshire Council has also opened up discretionary Grant schemes that has helped to identify and acknowledge areas that perhaps have been left out of National named Grants over the year. Wiltshire are now taking applications from these areas that have not been able to get a grant in the normal way.

The Vaccination role out has started and is being directed by the NHS. Wiltshire can confirm that they have been in contact with the NHS to ensure the NHS are aware of vacant sites that may be appropriate for vaccination clinics to take place. Wiltshire are concerned that a site in Bristol had been identified but believed other sites around Wiltshire were needed. There is a current scam that is finding people being contacted and told they are able to “fast track” the NHS set up to vaccination if a credit card is provided and a small payment taken. The public are being asked to remain informed and diligent regarding scams around the vaccination process.

Wiltshire Council will be making further decisions on car parking fees during this lock down and likewise have made an application on all street car parking lifted so that people that are working from home will not have concerns about car parking.

Wiltshire Council is also still involved in the track and trace but is not leading on this.

## **II. Comments from members of the public to be considered by the Council regarding items on the Agenda.**

A member of the public Emma Therese Lewis [ETL] addressed the Council specifically on the car parking application and also about the Clock House application. ETL also wanted to make a broader point in relation to the pressure that Honey Street is coming under from development generally and aired her concerns that these things need to be taken and looked at in the round and not just individually. In relation to the car parking issue, the concerns she raised initially still stand which acknowledges the car parking challenge for the café but does not believe the proposed solution is the right solution and that the car parking solution should be addressed within the bounds of their existing footprint. The primary reason for this surrounds a concern that whilst supporting commercial interests within the village is a priority, the balance between this and the residential interests need to be balanced. ETL has heard of another potential proposal for parking across the canal by the woodyard where some carparking already exists and could be available for weekend parking. This would use an area already used for parking and reduce the use of agricultural land. The broader point also applies to the Clock House where the original developer and the Council were really involved in the development of the plans and had ended up with something that was considered to be liked. Now there seems to be a really contrasting set of plans that many of the Villagers in Honeystreet have issues with and now sits with the inspectorate. ETL has two questions

1. Does anyone on the Council or Cllr Oatway have any experience with the Planning Inspectorate to help the public understand what they are liking to be looking at and likely to be doing to help ETL with her letter to address this with the Inspectorate?

Cllr. Oatway explained:

- a. WC will be putting the case to the inspectorate on why they refused the application
- b. A site meeting will be made, and will be discussed with Parish Council representative and the owner
- c. The inspector may hold a public meeting before making a decision. The decision is binding.
- d. Previous correspondence will be given to the inspectorate, but re-writing to enforce the opinion is also helpful

2. What is the extent that the Council is involved with the Developers on the Parking issues and the Clock House issue in terms of is there any collective working happening and where we may be in these processes of trying to come up with working to liaise with the village and the commercial interests in question?
  - a. The Parking application has now completed for time and with WC for decision

### **III Comments Made Related to item FC20/21/150**

A member of the Public Mike Spencer addressed the Council with a statement outlining a number of reasons why the appeal APP/Y3940/W/20/3256886 should not be supported by the Parish Council. Mr Spencer reminded the Council that application had been made and put through the local and Unitary process appropriately and highlighted that this application had been made with disregard to this process. It is thought that this application has submitted this application without consultation and with a focus of the utmost profit being sought from the development. The Freeholder of the land knows what he purchased and should get on with what has been approved. If failure to complete due diligence and satisfy himself with the financial viability based on the exiting approved planning permission that was his risk. The second theme is about the actual plan. This will stick out like a sore thumb and is not sympathetic to Honeystreet. Each dwelling is almost identical in shape, colour and general appearance. This alone prevents it from fitting into the existing Honeystreet landscape. We have no black weatherboard barns in Honeystreet. Honeystreet VDS is explicit in their design and should be on the scale and character of the Hamlet. There has always been a drive to ensure a sympathetic mix of housing size and types. This original application was refused on the grounds that it did not take account or include the character or the heritage of the site and surrounding dwellings, neither did it preserve the open character of the Village and gave the impression of just dropping in a slice of suburbia easily identifiable in any large town or city development. Evidence of this is things like the uniformity, bike storage, bin stalls all synonymous with city living. The design is of large cathedral type windows incorporated from the ground to the roof space will produce an additional amount of unacceptable light pollution and this is conflict with core policies. Our property Well Cottage and the immediate neighbours along, along with Mill House are most impacted and we will look across the whole development site and see a huge sea of light in the evenings. Planning officers' ideas to control this with blinds and light timings is not realistic, nor is it seen in planning circles as a viable mitigation and is not police enforceable. Vehicle movement is another issue as it is degraded on this plan to a dangerous level with reversing out onto the reasonably used public road on the corner of plot one. Mr Spencer also reminded the Council of the intension of the National Planning Policy Framework under section 85, in that due regard is given in considering the enhancement of the natural beauty of the area. This appeal if successful, that policy intension will be utterly undermined. Mr Spencer strongly encouraged the Parish Council to participate in the Appeal Process and robustly act to ensure that the Appeal Process conclusion is to uphold the decision of the Council to refuse this application. Mr Spencer confirmed that he would independently be making his own contribution to the appeal and the process but would encourage anyone else to do so before the 18<sup>th</sup>.