Alton Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 1st December 2014 at 7pm
At Alton Village Hall

Present: Councillor F. Eyre (Chair)
Councillor A.S. Forrester
Councillor P Ballard
Councillor S Hollins
Councillor E Bailey
Councillor J Shepherd
Councillor E Brindley
Councillor A Moult
Councillor I Cope
Councillor M. Worthington (County Council)

Mr S.J. Burton (Clerk)

Apologies: None

In Attendance: Two members of the public and one press reporter.

The meeting was opened at 7pm by Councillor F. Eyre the Chair.

126/14 Declarations of Interest.
Members were invited to declare any interests they may have in any matter identified for discussion at the Meeting. Nothing was declared.

127/14. Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 3rd November 2014.
After a minor amendment to a name at 115/14 in the minutes raised by Cllr Brindley, the minutes of the last meeting were declared a true record proposed by Cllr Brindley and seconded by Cllr Moult and agreed by all and were signed by the Chair and the Clerk.

128/14. Matters arising.
There were no matters arising.

129/14. Dog Control Orders Signage.
The signs had been purchased by the Clerk and were shown to the Council by Cllr Eyre. The Lengthsman took six of the signs and Cllr Moult the other two to arrange for them to be erected in the play area, cemetery and the Church Yard.

Cllr Cope raised the issue of dogs not on leads and dog fouling and did the law apply to guide dogs? Cllr Brindley also mentioned dog fouling in Shirley Drive and the car-park. Following a discussion the Clerk

was asked to explain the law regarding dogs being under control. He confirmed that dogs whether on a lead not must always be under control of the person in charge of the dog at the time and that fouling applied to all dogs, however the Council agreed that common sense should be used relating to guide dogs. Cllr Forrester stated that cases of dog fouling should be reported to the Dog Warden at SMDC, with details such as time, date, place and description of the offender and dog if the person is not known. This should not be reported to the police.
Action: Clerk to contact Alton Village webmaster and ask if details on reporting can be put on the website.

130/14. Alton Towers.
A discussion took place with Cllr Moult asking where the car-park money went from Alton Towers, Cllr Eyre stated it was now part of the income of the resort.

131/14 Footpaths.
Cllr Shepherd stated the kissing gate was now in place on the footpath at Toothill (footpath 17 diverted from footpath 16).

132/14 Village Hall.
The Chair gave an update on the playground repairs which had now been completed. Cllr Eyre explained the invoice and that due to being able to claim back VAT and the fact the Council had been in favour of paying for the repairs he had authorised payment of £930.79. Of which £155.13 was VAT and £35 carriage. Cllr Worthington stated he could pay £500 towards the costs from his community fund. This was agreed and Cllr Worthington thanked.

Cllr Hollins stated a bill for the rent of the room at the village hall would be sent to the Clerk shortly from the Village Hall Committee. Cllr Brindley asked that the costs of insuring the CCTV be passed to the Council for payment as agreed in the past.
Action: Cllr Hollins to arrange.

133/14. Lengthsman.
The Lengthsman reported he had been doing general tidying in the village and clearing grids. Cllr Shepherd reported he has cleared the weeds on the roof of the Round House.

Action: The Clerk was asked to send two letters of thanks, one to Stephen Dewhurst, JCB Estate Manager for the Christmas Tree and one in early January to Mr. Dunn of Alton who provides the electricity for the festive lights.

134/14. Highways and Road Safety.
Cllr Brindley stated the patching had been completed at Station Bank. Cllr Hollins stated the water problem at Spring Corner had been dealt with, Cllr Brindley said more work was to be completed imminently in that area.

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The Alton Towers Traffic Management meeting was discussed which took place on 19th November. Cllr Eyre gave an overview of the meeting and the notes taken explaining what had taken place. Cllr Eyre said that the two main points that had come out of the meeting were Highways were looking at placing bollards on the bad bend on Lime Kiln Bank and costing the requested pavement in Hurstons Lane, Cllr Eyre emphasised that there was no money available for the pavement or a by-pass. Cllr Eyre asked if the Council thought that in addition to bollards a further request to consider a box junction on Lime Kiln Bank should be put forward. After a discussion this was agreed with Cllr Worthington stating he would support the Parish Council. **Action: Clerk to put in the request to Highways at SCC.**

Cllr Brindley mentioned the abuse Alton Towers workers who manned the temporary traffic lights in the village received from motorists and that Mar Kerrigan from Alton Towers was considering not using them next season. A discussion took place regarding the positioning of the lights with Cllr Eyre suggesting that this could be discussed with Mark Kerrigan nearer the time. A general consensus was that the lights would be needed.

The footpath in Hurstons Lane was also discussed. Cllr Worthington stated he would make sure that whatever was feasible with respect to the footpath would be done. Cllr Brindley suggested that he and Cllr Worthington meet with Steve Massey (owner of Grassmere) to see how the hedge could be removed to make way for a footpath and report back. Cllr Cope gave his views on the dangers to pedestrians from traffic in Hurstons Lane. Cllr Eyre further explained the discussions contained in the notes of the meeting. Cllr Worthington has had a meeting with the leader of SCC regarding an Eastern By-Pass and that Alton Towers owned most of the land that would be required if the project was ever undertaken. Cllr Cope commented that Rocester and Denstone would object to a by-pass due to the increased traffic in those areas.

The Council agreed no further meeting was required with SCC and Alton Towers at this time.
Action: Clerk to update Leslie Whittle regarding no further meeting.

135/14. Parish Cemetery and St. Peter's Church Yard.
Cllr Eyre read a letter from Brenda Stubbs regarding the overgrown trees at the War Memorial. A discussion took place regarding which trees are the problem. Cllr Forrester explained he had previously spoken to Steve Massey (SMDC) and he would not authorise height reduction of the trees. Cllr Shepherd explained which trees were the problem. They are the trees along the left hand side from Lych Gate to Fox House.
Action: Clerk to write again explaining which trees are the problem.

136/14. Millennium Stone Enhancement.
The Clerk has spoken to Andrea Stafford who although busy at the moment is willing to help with the restoration of the stone. The clerk will recontact her after Christmas.

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137/14. Planning and Licensing Applications.

i. SMD/2014/0710, Mr. R. Rowlands, Rose Cottage, Gallows Green, Alton. Erection of a bungalow (resubmission of SMD/2014/0196). Objections on the same ground as the last application.

ii. SMD/2014/0695. Mr. G. Carr, 10, Shirley Drive, Alton. Part single/part two storey extension. No objections.

iii. SMD/2014/0719. Mr and Mrs McLeod, 1, Summerhill, Gallows Green, Alton. Outline permission with some matters reserved (except access) for erection of dwelling. Object on grounds of overdevelopment, not in keeping with the area, unneighbourly and infrastructure cannot cope with extra demand.

iv. SMD/2014/0782. Merlin Attractions Operations Ltd (Alton Towers). Demolition of existing single storey corrugated building and installation of new high ropes course including the erection of a new single storey building and new play area. Object after a vote on the grounds of overdevelopment and encroachment into Alton Park.

138/14. Planning decisions.

None.

139/14. Councillor Eyre declared an open forum to allow parishioners present to ask questions/raise issues:

A member of the public mentioned he thought Lime Kiln Bank could become blocked with the possible new measures. Cllr Eyre said this is an issue that would be discussed with Alton Towers.

The same member had concerns regarding Salters Ford Lane and that it was like a bog (part of Staffordshire Way, bridle path 64).

Action: Clerk to write to the footpaths authority to ask them to investigate.

A further point from the same person was the lack of lights outside the village hall.

Action: Cllr Hollins to take to the Village Hall Committee.

140/14. Correspondence .

Requiring response .

The following was read out by Cllr Eyre.

i. Email from Lord Shrewsbury accepting invite to the Parish Council 11.5.15 to give a talk on the duties of a government whip. (Response sent thanking Lord Shrewsbury).

ii. Letter from Brenda Stubbs regarding overgrown tree's War Memorial.

141/14. Correspondence for Information.

i. Email sent to Lord Shrewsbury inviting him to deliver a talk to the Parish Council and public on the Duties of a government Whip.

ii. Email to Highways SCC regarding concerns about possible increased traffic in Alton if a development of holiday lodges goes ahead in Whiston.

iii. Recommendation re public footpath 13 and part of public footpath 16 Alton Parish.

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All were mentioned by the Chair.

142/14. Finance.

i. Clerks salary £360.30. Postage £6.36.
ii. Lengthsmans wages £110.00
iii. Easy Fix Emblems (Dog signs) Net £96.00 Vat £19.20 Gross £115.20
iv. Jackson's Nurseries (UK) Ltd, Net £332.43 Vat £66.49 Gross 398.92
v. Alton W.I. payment for compost and daffodil bulbs War Memorial. £16.98

Cllr Forrester proposed and Cllr Brindley seconded the finances were accepted. This was agreed by all.

There being no other business the meeting was closed by The Chair, Councillor F. Eyre at 8.40pm.

Signed..... Chairman 5th January 2015

Signed..... Clerk