Alton Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 4th August 2014 at 7pm
At Alton Village Hall

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

Apologies: Councillor F. Eyre (Attending Award Evening for Best Kept Village)

In Attendance: Mr S.J. Burton (Clerk)
17 members of the public

The meeting was opened at 7pm with Councillor A. Forrester taking the Chair.

46/14 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.

47/14 Minutes of the meeting held Monday 7th July 2014.
The minutes were signed as a true record.

48/14 Matters Arising.
Councillor Shepherd stated he had spoken to Mr. Gee regarding the well at the bottom of Horse Road and he had agreed for it to be cleaned. Also when he checked the trees had been cut back.

49/14 White Hart Hotel-Mention
The Chair announced that the White Hart had been declared as an asset of community value and repeated the Councils neutral stance on the issue of ownership, stating there was no need to discuss this matter in the future. Councillor Shepherd stated that if anything new came up he would wish to discuss it.

50/14 Alton Towers
Councillor Brindley mentioned the temporary traffic lights controlling Alton Towers traffic and coaches going onto the footpath in Lime Kiln Lane. Mr Kerrigan from the Alton Towers had attended as had the police and agreed it is dangerous. Mr Kerrigan had brought in two members of staff to protect

pedestrians. Councillor Shepherd commented he felt the lights were in the wrong place which caused the problem. A general discussion took place and Councillor Worthington was asked by the Chair to investigate if anything could be done for a more permanent solution. Councillor Ballard stated it was totally unacceptable and dangerous coaches mounting the pavement. Various solutions were discussed to make the road safer including a by-pass and widening the road, with Councillor Ballard feeling Alton Towers should fund any improvements.

The discussion also included the overgrown hedges in Hurstons Lane and Uttoxeter Road. Councillor Cope felt the hedge should be removed in Hurstons Lane by compulsory purchase so that a footpath could be put in place, although Councillor Worthington later stated in response to a question from a member of the public that this could not happen in this case. The Clerk had already written to the owner of the hedge in Uttoxeter Road but had not received a reply. Councillor Brindley asked Councillor Worthington if he could look into the problem with the hedge in Hurstons Lane.

51/14 Footpaths.
The Toothill hedge has been cut back on footpath 16 by the Lengthsman. Councillor Cope stated the pavement needs weeding in the High Street by the White Hart. **Lengthsman to attend.** Councillor Brindley mentioned from the County Council that footpath 25 has been roped off which could be dangerous. **The Lengthsman will speak to the owner to remedy.** Councillor Ballard stated that a boisterous Labrador owned by Mr Steven Massey is frightening people at Greenmere. **Lengthsman to speak to the owner.**

52/14 Village Hall.
Councillor Hollins reported that boys were still playing football at the rear of the premises. The Clerk stated he had spoken to PCSO Cliffe who is dealing with the matter. She also stated that the Village Hall Committee are considering charging the Council £8 per hour for the use of the premises. Several Councillors thought the Council already paid, the Clerk stated he did not believe any payments were being made. Councillor Brindley felt that if the Council are not paying for the Hall then we should pay any back charges owed.
Councillor Moult reported that the bottle bank is full. **Councillor Forrester will follow this up with the District Council.**
The Lengthsman was asked to attend to the weeds in the doctors alley, Dimbles Lane.
Councillor Brindley mentioned that the County Council were coming to strim in the area and named various locations including the Village Hall. Councillor Forrester asked if they could also attend to Lime Kiln Lane, High Street, Castle Hill and the War Memorial.

53/14 War Memorial.
Councillor Ballard put forward a vote of thanks to the WI and sub committee for all their work at the recent War Memorial dedication. A letter of thanks has already been sent by the Clerk and Councillor Eyre.
Councillor Forrester read out letters from the Earl of Shrewsbury, Allyson Ablett and Mr Jim Watts regarding the event.

Councillor Bailey stated the event had been videoed and will be placed onto DVD, this to be shown at the next meeting.

54/14 Highways and Road Safety.

The Clerk to write to Councillor Worthington and copy in Mark Deaville to formally ask that the County Council take action regarding the danger presented on the end in Lime Kiln Lane (as discussed earlier 50/14) as a priority and that the County Council consider what can be done in Hurstons Lane regarding the overgrown hedge and joining of the footpaths (see 50/14).

Councillor Shepherd commented that he did not support any widening of the road in Lime Kiln Lane as this would erode the character of the village and there is no problem when the traffic lights are not in place. Other Councillors disagreed.

Councillor Brindley stated that there had been a number of site visits to the pavement on Station Bank the repairs had not been completed. It had now been put on the 'hotspot' list for patching. **Councillor Brindley will follow this up.**

The stop tap in Lime Kiln Lane has now been uncovered and restored to use.

Between Hansley Cross and Rock Villa water is running and missing the gulley's and Smithy Bank has blocked grids. Rob Steele from the County Council to be asked to remedy. **Councillor Brindley to arrange.**

Councillor Cope reported that there is a bad pothole in Spond Hollows. **Councillor Shepherd to follow up.**

55/14 Yew Trees in St. Peters Church Yard.

Councillor Forrester has received a letter concerning the Yew Tree's in the church yard blocking out light. Councillor Forrester will follow up with SMDC Trees and Woodlands Officer Steve Massey.

Councillor Forrester declared an open forum to allow parishioners present to ask questions/raise issues:

1. A member of the public stated that Councillor Brindley has an interest in Alton Castle which he failed to declare at the last meeting. Councillor Brindley strongly denied the allegation. The member of the public persisted with his assertion and Councillor Forrester pointed out the allegation was incorrect and declared the subject closed.
2. A member of the public was concerned regarding the suggestion by Councillor Cope regarding compulsory purchase of land in Hurstons Lane (see 50/14).
3. This same person was concerned about the condition of the road between Alton and Cheadle and he would give a copy of a letter he had written to Councillor Worthington. The same man also advised that a website called 'fixmystreet.com' was a good way to report potholes and get them repaired.
4. A member of the public reported that recently a lorry had parked in the High Street and put up road closed signs without notice. Councillor Worthington will take details and follow up.
5. Members of the public supported the difficulties already noted regarding traffic in line Kiln Lane.
6. A member of the public asked for permission to place a candle on the War Memorial tonight to commemorate the 100 years since the start of the First World War. This was supported.

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56/14 Online watch Link (OWL) update.
The Clerk gave a brief update on OWL, he has obtained the application form and now if the Council wish the scheme can be set up. He would need contact details, email addresses of people who wish to be informed of OWL updates and if the Council wish he will be the first point of contact. Members agreed to this and to provide the Clerk with emails addresses at the next meeting.

57/14 Libraries Consultation Update.
The Clerk read out a letter regarding the consultation about libraries in the Moorlands. There were no issues raised.

58/14 Police and Crime Commissioner People Power Fund.
The Clerk showed members a document that sets out how funds can be requested to support community initiatives to combat crime. It was decided that Councillor Hollins would take the document to see if the Village Hall Committee wished to make an application, possibly regarding upgrading CCTV at the premises.

59/14 Replacement mannequin figures for the Christmas Nativity.
A discussion took place regarding possible help the Council could offer to replace the Nativity mannequin figures. The council could consider a 50/50 split on the spend. Churches together would have to make a grant application. Councillors were in favour of helping if possible. **Councillor Shepherd will investigate and update the Clerk.**

60/14 Planning and Licensing Applications.
None.

61/14 Planning Decisions.
The Chair reported that Miss Wint, Chelsea Cottage, Malthouse Road, Alton. Erection of single storey side extension and porch canopy. **Granted.**

62/14 Correspondence

i. **Requiring response:** None.
ii. **For information only:** None.

63/14 Finance.

i. Clerks salary and expenses £366.66 (£6.36 postage)
ii. St Peter's Church Alton printing 200 Dedication Service leaflets £50.00
iii. Jackson's Nurseries Net £664.86 VAT £132.97 Gross £797.83
iv. Lengthsmans salary and expenses. £286.00 (£16 expenses)
v. D & B Electrics - £150.00 (Assisting chairman to prepare music input for Dedication Service and supplying public address system on the day)
vi. Donation to Royal British Legion for wreath for dedication service - £30.00
vii. Refreshments supplied by WI, Mrs Mendelson for the War Memorial dedication. £240.33

viii. Councillor Eyre proposes a donation to St. John Ambulance as a goodwill gesture (they provided a free service at the War Memorial Dedication should have been £88). Councillor Eyre suggests £20-£25.

ix. Councillor Eyre proposes a donation of £50 each to Alton WI and Staffs Moorlands Branch of the Royal British Legion for their assistance at the Dedication of the War Memorial Stone.

All finance was proposed for approval by Councillor Brindley and seconded by Councillor Hollins with the amount for St. John's Ambulance being £25. This was carried.

There being no other business the meeting was closed by The Chair, Councillor A. Forrester at 8.15pm.

Signed..... Chairman 1st September 2014

Signed..... Clerk