Alton Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 18th May 2015 at 7pm
At Alton Village Hall

Present: F. Eyre (Outgoing Chair)
Councillor P Ballard
Councillor S Hollins
Councillor E Bailey
Councillor S. Allen
Councillor T. Wilkinson
Councillor J. Shepherd
Councillor E. Brindley
Councillor A. Forrester
Councillor M. Worthington (SCC)

Mr S.J. Burton (Clerk)

Apologies: Councillor P. Wilkinson

In Attendance: 3 members of the public.

The meeting was opened at 7pm by Fred Eyre the outgoing Chair.

69/15. The meeting was opened by Mr Eyre who explained he was in the Chair as the outgoing Chairman purely to oversee the election of the new Chair and that he did not have an original vote but did have a casting vote in the event of an equality of votes. The first meeting rules were read out.

Cllr Ballard proposed and Cllr Allen seconded Cllr Shepherd as the Chairman. Cllr Hollins proposed and Cllr Bailey seconded Cllr Forrester as the Chairman. Mr Eyre established that both the proposed councillors were prepared to act as Chairman, this being so a secret ballot was held whereby each councillor wrote the name of their preferred Chairman on a piece of paper and handed their vote to the Clerk. The ballots were then checked by Mr Eyre and the Clerk. The votes were 5 for Cllr Shepherd and 3 for Cllr Forrester. Mr. Eyre declared Cllr Shepherd as the new Chairman of Alton Parish Council.

Mr Eyre was thanked by the Council for his Chairmanship and membership of Alton Parish Council by the members present and their appreciation was shown by a round of applause.

Cllr Shepherd then took the Chairman's seat.

70/15. The Chair invited the councillors to sign their declaration of acceptance of Office. This was duly done and witnessed by the Clerk. (Cllr P. Wilkinson had signed before the meeting in the presence of the Clerk due to his unavoidable absence).

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71/15. The Chair then invited the councillors to sign the Alton Parish Council Code of Conduct. This was duly done in the presence of the Clerk. (Cllr P. Wilkinson had signed before the meeting in the presence of the Clerk due to his unavoidable absence).

72/15. The Chair then invited nominations for the position of Vice Chair. Cllr Shepherd proposed and Cllr Brindley seconded Cllr Forrester. Cllr Forrester was prepared to accept the role and this was carried unanimously on a show of hands.

73/15. Cllr Shepherd proposed and Cllr Ballard seconded the following responsibilities for councillors:

i. Footpaths, Cllr Bailey.
ii. Highways, Cllr Brindley.
iii. Alton Towers Liaison, Cllr Brindley.
iv. St. Peters Churchyard and Parish Cemetery, Cllr Forrester.

These were all carried on a show of hands.

The position of Village Hall liaison was declined by Cllr Hollins and was deferred to the next meeting as the village hall committee have a meeting shortly to discuss the future of the village hall. Cllr Brindley pointed out that the Parish Council are trustees of the village hall so if the committee were unable to continue any debts may fall to the Council.

74/15. The Chair then briefly discussed the position of the Lengthsman, following which Cllr Brindley proposed and Cllr Forrester seconded that E. Bailey should continue as Lengthsman. This was carried on a show of hands.

75/15 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.

76/15. Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 13th April 2015.
The minutes of the last meeting were declared a true record proposed by Cllr Brindley and seconded by Cllr Forrester and agreed by all and were signed by the Chair and the Clerk.

77/15. Matters arising.

i. Cllr Shepherd announced the ACE group had been busy doing ground maintenance in the village and Cllr Brindley stated that the SCC work party had also been in the village and done a lot of cleaning and maintenance work.
ii. Cllr Shepherd stated that a meeting had taken place in the White Hart regarding the bus service in the village. About 22 people had declared they would use the service. Details will now be passed on the Oakamoor PC. Cllr Worthington has also contacted SCC and some funding looks promising. There followed a general discussion about the service in the area.

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78/15. Alton Towers.
There was nothing for this item of business.

79/15. Footpaths.

i. Cllr Bailey said there was some concern that people were still riding horses on the footpath where signs had recently been placed prohibiting horses. A member of the public was allowed to speak and stated he had challenged two people on horseback. Cllr Shepherd said he thought he knew who the people are and will speak to them. **Action: Cllr Shepherd.**

80/15. Village Hall.

i. Cllr Hollins reported the village hall CCTV has still not been upgraded as the money has not yet been received. Cllr Shepherd will look into the reason. **Action Cllr Shepherd.**
ii. There followed a general discussion on the possible financial position of the village hall and the Council's liability as a trustee. **Action: The Clerk to make inquiries as to the extent of the Councils liability and whereabouts of legal documents.**

81/15. Lengthsman.

i. The Lengthsman reported that he had done some strimming in the village, unfortunately the strimmer has a problem with its carburettor and is now in for repair.

82/15. Highways and Road Safety.

i. Cllr Brindley reported that the money for the new wall in Hurstons Lane may be handed to Cllr Worthington tomorrow (19.5.15). Cllr Worthington stated it was not certain yet if the money will come forward, but he added that if he had to he would offer £5,000 from his Community Fund. **Update at the next meeting.**
ii. Cllr Allen mentioned the hedge in Uttoxeter Road is growing into the footpath forcing people into the road. It was noted this may be solved if the above wall goes ahead.
iii. Cllr Shepherd mentioned a similar problem on the west side of Horse Road. **Action: Lengthsman to cut back.**

83/15. Parish Cemetery and St. Peter's Church Yard.

i. All in order, nothing to report from Cllr Forrester.

84/15. Lord Shrewsbury planned visit and talk on the duties of a government Whip.

i. The planned talk from Lord Shrewsbury had been postponed due to the recent general election. The Council decided to leave the matter in abatement for the time being.

85/15. The Chair asked for two new signatories to be selected to sign cheques on behalf of the Council. Cllr Bailey proposed and Cllr T. Wilkinson seconded that Cllr Shepherd and Cllr Forrester should be the signatories. This was carried.

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86/15. The Clerk presented the internally audited accounts for year ending 31st March 2015 and stated that although £4,000 had been spent over the precept this was planned and accounted for by the money spent on re-building a wall that was dangerous and the cost of the new War Memorial Stone, also to a lesser degree on the back-pay paid to the outgoing clerk, this would have to be explained to the external auditor in a report. This paperwork will be sent off to the external auditor. The Clerk mentioned the Council should take care in spending any money over the coming year that had not been budgeted for. Cllr Brindley said the money should remain as it is with just the precept being spent. The Council discussed the Internal Audit and the paperwork was checked and ratified by the full Council with all forms signed by the Chair and the Clerk. The accounts were proposed to be adopted by Cllr Brindley and seconded by Cllr Shepherd and carried on a show of hands.

87/15. The Chair stated that the date of the next meeting would be changed to 8th June if no-one objected, this was because the regular date was only two weeks from this meeting. This was agreed by all.

88/15. Councillor Shepherd declared an open forum to allow parishioners present to ask questions/raise issues:

i. A member of the public stated that workmen had just blown debris from cleared grids back into the road, this was now accumulating in the gutter and would in due course go back into the grids. There followed a general discussion regarding this issue. **Action: Cllr Brindley will speak to Mr Rob Steele from SCC regarding this issue.**

89/15. Planning and Licensing Applications.

i. SMD/2015/0138. Mr Paul Forrester, Sunny Bank, Cheadle Road, Alton. Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of replacement dwelling. **No objections.**
ii. SMD/2015/0224. Merlin Attractions Operations Ltd, Alton Towers, Farley Lane, Farley. Two storey rear and single storey front extension to the existing 'Air Shop' and installation of a new themed entrance. **No objections.**
iii. SMD/2015/0223. Merlin Attractions Operations Ltd, Alton Towers, Farley Lane, Farley. Certificate of lawfulness for the lawful implementation of building operations (construction works) that commence development of Alton Towers Hotel. **No objections.**

90/15. Planning decisions.

The Chair read out the following decisions:

i. SMD/2015/0094. Refusal of consent to display an advertisement . The Lord Shrewsbury, New Road, Alton. **The Council noted that a large temporary sign is in place despite the planning refusal. The Clerk to inform the planning department.**
ii. SMD/2015/0071. Refusal of planning permission. Bradley Elms Farm, Cheadle Road, Alton. Demolition of two outbuildings, change of use of redundant B&B accommodation and garage to four dwellings and the erection of two garages.

91/15. Correspondence requiring response .

i. Nothing for this meeting.

92/15. Correspondence for Information.

i. Email to planning regarding APC planning comments in April.
ii. Further email to highways regarding blocked grids and reply.
iii. Email to highways giving Lengthsman's contact details.
iv. Emails to and from Lord Shrewsbury regarding his proposed talk to the Parish.
v. Letter to Alton WI regarding Dimble Lane planting and maintenance.
vi. Email to Cllr Worthington re new bus timetable and request for support in obtaining a subsidy to maintain the service at its previous level.
vii. Email to Mark Kerrigan re new bus timetable and request for support in obtaining a subsidy to maintain the service at its previous level.
viii. Emails to Dawn Plant SCC re replacement Kissing Gate, Turnditch Farm and new railing Church Bank.
ix. Clerk P60.
x. Police and Crime Commissioner Community fund leaflets.
xi. Chairmanship skills training course. **Copy handed to the Chair.**

All were mentioned by the Chair and the Clerk.

93/15. Finance.

i. Clerks salary £360.30, postage £12.72. Total £373.02.
ii. Lengthsmans wages and expenses**.**
iii. Ford Partnership payroll function year ending 5.4.15. Net £160.00 VAT £32.00 Gross £192.00.
iv. Newspaper adverts re Annual Parish meeting. Net £36.00 VAT £7.20 Gross £43.20.
v. Bank statement detailing authorised payments from the last meeting for signing.
vi. Parish Council Insurance £430.47 (No change from last year).
vii. Claim for VAT refund to HMRC of £1749.25

The finances were proposed by Cllr Forrester and seconded by Cllr Brindley and carried.

94/15. Cllr Brindley asked if there was any training available for new councillors. **Action: The Clerk will make enquiries.**

There being no other business the meeting was closed by The Chair, Councillor Shepherd at 8.30pm.

Signed..... Chairman 8th June 2015

Signed..... Clerk