

A Meeting of Great Alne Parish Council was held on Wednesday 15th January at Great Alne Primary School at 7pm.

PRESENT	Councillors Mr L Bowring, Mr P Clark, Mrs M Holding, Mr I Millard County Cllr Mr C Rickhards, Members of the public: 15
APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	Cllr Ms H Mainwaring, District Cllr Mrs G Forman
DECLARATION OF INTERESTS	None
MINUTES	November meeting Minutes agreed by Cllrs and signed by the Chairman
ALCESTER SOUTH SNT	<p>OPEN FORUM:</p> <p>The following incidents have been reported in the period 18th November 2019 to 12th January 2020. These were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspicious Circumstances. Nightingale Close. Two males looking around house and driveway with torch. No offences disclosed at the time. • Anti-Social Behaviour. Spernal Lane / Stroat Lane. Report of 4x4 vehicles using the bridle path. • Attempt Burglary. Spernal Lane. Member of the public woken by the sound of smashing glass. On checking they saw a male with a torch trying to gain entry to a workshop in the grounds. This man then ran off. • Damage / ASB. Grassed area outside the Great Alne & Kinwarton Memorial Hall. Grass damaged by vehicle driving over it. Possibly a 4x4 vehicle. • Anti-Social Behaviour. Spernal Lane. Report of several off-road motorcycles being used between Great Alne and Coughton. One bike seen but several could be heard by the person calling. • Anti-Social Behaviour. Stroat Lane, Spernal Lane. Report of several 4x4s in the area, occupants possibly removing logs in order to drive onto private land or land that has been fenced off to prevent further damage. Ongoing problem. Vehicles had left prior to police arrival although fresh damage could be seen. <p>The police were unable to attend the meeting due to operational demands needing to take priority.</p>
GREAT ALNE PARK UPDATE (FORMERLY MAUDSLAY PARK)	<p>Kelly Webb provided the following update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new village manager has been recruited and will join the company mid-February. The new manager will not be on site until mid-March once his induction training is complete. <p>Following the November meeting, the Clerk enquired again about the white hoarding fence. It was originally confirmed that the fence would be up for 3-6 months but Great Alne Park now say it is likely to be in place until November 2020. A local resident has been in touch with Stratford District Council Planning Team who have investigated and confirmed the hoarding will fall under permitted development whilst the main works are ongoing. The planning team appreciate how unhappy residents are with this however and have contacted the agent representing the developer with regards to these matters and in the hope of reaching a compromise. The agent has suggested a meeting with the Parish Council and residents to discuss any concerns and also provide details of the remaining works still to be undertaken to complete the development. The Parish Council have suggested Monday 27th January at 7pm but await confirmation if this time/date is possible. As soon as the Parish Council have further information, Facebook, the website and the email contact group will be updated to inform residents should they wish to attend.</p>
MEMORIAL HALL REP REPORT	<p>Cllr Mrs M Holding explained there has been no Memorial Hall meeting since the last Parish Council meeting on November so nothing to update.</p> <p>The Clerk provided an update regarding the 75th Anniversary of VE Day Celebrations which is on Friday 8th May (Bank Holiday). The Trustees of Great Alne & Kinwarton Memorial Hall would like to arrange a day long series of events along the lines of the 50th Anniversary celebrations held in the</p>

	<p>village in 1995. Current ideas that they are exploring involve: Thanksgiving Service, Themed Village Concert, Single Wicket Competition and a Themed Dance and Supper. Cllr Holding will contact Martyn Davey about how and when this will be advertised as no one at the meeting was aware of any events taking place.</p>
<p>REPRESENTATIONS FROM RESIDENTS</p>	<p>None – several residents had issues they wanted to discuss in relation to items on the agenda so these will be included in the minutes under the relevant agenda item.</p>
<p>COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT</p>	<p>County Cllr Rickhards had the following updates: Temporary road closure – As of 10th February 2020, Alne Hills will be closed to vehicular traffic from a point outside Pipers House to a Point outside Newlands. This is so fibre cabling can be installed. It is anticipated the work will be completed by 20th February 2020.</p>
<p>MATTERS ARISING</p>	<p>U-Route – County Cllr Rickhards acknowledged the frustrations of residents with regards to the use of the U-Route by 4x4's and motorbikes. He explained that Warwickshire County Council are working through all of the U-Routes in the County, exploring and researching further legalities in an attempt to determine the status of each route. As it is a 'Unclassified Route', unless someone was to take legal action to investigate, at this point in time no one is able to determine whether it is a footpath, bridleway etc. and can therefore not legally enforce 'No Vehicular Access'. Warwickshire County Council will only maintain the route to the standard of a footpath. Residents raised the point that the vehicles are damaging the route to the extent it is becoming unsafe for walkers to use. Sadly, there is no way of knowing how long it will take for WCC to determine the status of this route. There is only one member of staff assigned to it and a great deal of U-Routes within the County.</p>
	<p>U-Route - The Parish Council are both greatly disappointed and frustrated that the attempt made to block the access for vehicles has been unsuccessful. Out of the 3 logs that were placed and tied down in late November, only one remains in situ (Spernal Lane end). This is most likely due to the fact that those moving the trees are more likely to be seen at the Spernal Lane end. The Chairman invited further suggestions. Please contact the Chairman or Clerk should you have anything you would like us to explore further. Sadly, due to the Unclassified status of the route, the police are unable to enforce anything other than obviously criminal behaviour. As things stand, It is not a criminal offence to use the track. Moving the logs/cutting the ties and anti-social behaviour are criminal offences but these are very difficult to police. Additionally, as suggested at a previous meeting, having a sign saying 'No Motorised Vehicles' is not allowed as it isn't legally correct. The Chairman will contact the local landowner adjacent to the route to discuss further as the off-roaders are now managing to get on to the U-Route by driving across this private land. Residents explained that last summer, the landowner had put some signs up and also blocked access using telegraph poles, but these were moved during Harvest and not reinstated. The Clerk will ask the landowner if he is happy for his details to be passed on to local residents. Coughton Parish Council have also been in touch as they are having trouble with 4X4s by the ford. This is a slightly different situation as that is not a U-Route but the Chairman will contact a Coughton PC representative to discuss.</p>
	<p>Huff Cap Update – The following update has been provided by the owners: <i>"As the Parish Council and local residents are aware, we were deeply saddened by the need to close the Mother Huff Cap almost a year ago. The building has been made secure and the car park is still accessible for local residents and visitors to use (at their own risk and as long as the car park is not misused). Unfortunately, even with local media coverage, we have received no further approaches from potential pub operators. We continue to investigate all possible uses for the site, but this may take a significant time to complete. And given the costs involved in the closure of the pub, we do not intend to carry out any further maintenance work in the near future. We will of course provide councillors with a further update as soon as we have any firm news.</i> <i>Harwood Willmott Partnership</i> <i>Proprietors of The Mother Huff Cap".</i> Residents whose house adjoins the pub came to the meeting to express great concerns over the boarding up of the building. They feel it leaves the pub, and, by default, them, in a very vulnerable</p>

position, – potentially at risk from robberies, theft, arson or travellers. They had been in touch with the owners with whom they shared a good relationship over the years, strongly requesting that the pub should not be boarded up. Unfortunately, due to a window being broken at the back, the owners were told for Health & Safety reasons it would have to be done. The resident requested that the Parish Council ask for the boarding to be removed. Whilst the Parish Council will certainly request this and explain concerns, it is felt it is very unlikely they will be willing to do this. Cllr Millard explained that it is very likely that the insurers would have insisted the pub be boarded up. The clerk will contact the representative to establish further info.

With regards to the state of the pub's grounds, a village team effort 'Tidy Up' was suggested to try and get it looking more presentable. Several residents volunteered. The Parish Council are happy to advertise times/dates on Facebook/Website if residents let them know once organised.

There are two builder bags of rubbish on the Huff Cap car park that appear to have come from the house that is for sale next door – when work on the drive was done many months ago. Clerk to contact estate agents again asking for this rubbish to be removed. A resident suggested rubbish is moved back on to their drive or a bill sent to owners of the house should we arrange removal ourselves.

Mowing Contract Quotes – The PC has now received quotes from 3 different companies for the amenity contract. Based on amenity areas being cut 8 times per season, the playing field and School Rd verges being cut on average 17 times per season, the playing field hedge cut once a year and the Memorial Hall being cut 8 times, the quotes are as follows:

Existing provider: Approximately £3000 + vat per annum

New Quote 1: Approximately £2635 + vat per annum

New Quote 2: Approximately £9550 + vat per annum

The second quote is 12% cheaper than our existing provider. The clerk will contact existing provider to see if prices are reviewable. Councillors felt that we should take in to account that our existing provider, whom the Parish Council have used for a great number of years, has generally done an excellent job, understands our needs, responds quickly to emails etc and is, importantly, able to tend to playground and tree maintenance. Whilst they may not be cheapest, a value will be placed on the service to date. Clerk will also contact new quote 1 company to see if they would be able to tend to playground repairs/ tree works etc when necessary and will follow up references provided. Clerk to report back to Councillors once further information obtained so a final decision can be reached.

Following a lot of confusion in 2019 over the payment for the mowing at the Memorial Hall, the Chairman, Martyn Davey, has kindly asked for confirmation of the number of cuts the PC are happy to pay for. Councillors agreed that the PC will pay for up to 8 cuts per season. Clerk to let Martyn Davey know.

Alne Cote Corner – justification from WCC for not reducing speed limit to 30mph

At the November meeting, residents asked the Clerk to request written confirmation from WCC as to why the speed limit of 30mph cannot be extended to include the very tight bend. The following was received from Warwickshire County Council:

"I am sorry to hear that the Parish Council is disappointed with the decision regarding the extension of the 30 mph; however, this is a final decision after discussion with Colleagues. The reasons for this decision are threefold;

Firstly, we have a national document produced by the Department for Transport that sets out when, where and for what reasons we are allowed to introduce speed limits. This ensures that decisions on speed reductions follow a national standard and are consistent through the whole of the UK. The guidelines within this document would not allow us to introduce this section of carriageway to 30 mph. Secondly, if we were to install speed limit signs and gateways past the double bend, this would introduce another visual distraction to the main hazard at this location which is the bend itself. On top of the chevron signs, markings and advanced warning signs, the 30 mph signs and gateways would further distract the driver and likely cause further issues.

Thirdly, the Police have to be consulted for any change of speed limit, and it is likely that they would object to the new 30 mph extents as it would not be enforceable for them.

Clive Rickards has spoken to us heavily about this issue and after discussion is willing to re-look at the chevron signs using his delegated budget. This may go some way to helping with the issues you are experiencing.

Again, I am sorry that we cannot suggest the extension to the speed limit, however we have to take issues such as this very seriously, which I'm sure you can appreciate".

Cllr Clark reported that there looked to have been a serious accident at this bend on the previous Saturday, with the road closed for a short while and several emergency vehicles in attendance. The Chairman highlighted that even if speed limit was moved, no one could safely drive around that

bend even at 30mph. County Cllr Rickhards will suggest an alternative warning sign such as 'DEAD SLOW' or 'Recommended 15mph max' to make people more aware.

Facebook – The new Facebook group 'Great Alne Parish Council' now has 36 members and has already proved useful in reporting a faulty streetlight. We hope more and more residents will join the group. Cllr Millard suggested it would be a good idea to advertise the group on the noticeboards.

Winter Newsletter – This was sent at the end of December. A copy can be found on the website or requested from the Clerk.

Speed Awareness Group – Cllr Millard has been in touch with the Wilmcote Speed Awareness group and one member has kindly offered to help establish the Great Alne group. Three residents who attended the training approximately 18months ago are, very kindly, still happy to be involved. As training is currently on hold (confirmed by the Police at the November meeting), Cllr Millard will proceed with those who have currently had training. There have been sufficient new volunteers to make this group viable now. These volunteers will be contacted once training resumes. The Wilmcote group have offered to help Great Alne find suitable locations with the agreement of the police. Cllr Millard hopes to have moved forward with this within the next 6-8 weeks.

General Maintenance Issues –

Flooding between Great Alne and Little Alne – despite 300 reports of flooding within the County following the heavy rainfall in mid-November, the County Council have acted quickly to this report and this issue has now been resolved (as confirmed by residents). Thank you to County Cllr Rickhards for progressing this on behalf of the Parish Council.

Drainage – Spernal Lane – Several residents raised the issues of flooding on Spernal Lane. There is a drain cover that is being forced up suggesting a blockage of some sort. Warwickshire County Council are aware of this issue and there is a job in place to resolve this. Clerk will try and establish a more definite timescale for the completion of this work.

Trees by Orbit Housing Association properties, School Rd – The Clerk has spoken to Orbit Housing Association who have instructed a contractor to carry out necessary work (Residents complained previously that it is very dark in this area due to the overgrown trees). Work should be completed before March.

Request for Survey from Flood Risk Management Team – The Chairman and Cllr Clark have reviewed the village road drains and will now submit a request to the Flood Risk Management Team for a comprehensive survey. Cllr Millard suggested that a member of the Parish Council should be present when the initial survey is conducted so we are able to explain, in person, persistent problem areas.

Parish Assembly 2020 – The Parish Assembly will be held on 16th May 2020 – AM. The Memorial Hall have kindly agreed for the Parish Council to use the hall free of charge again.

MAIN BUSINESS

APPROVAL

BUDGET/PRECEPT 2020-21

A budget summary document spanning 2018-2021 was made publicly available on the Parish Council website ahead of the meeting.

Following discussion of the draft budget for 2020/21 at the November meeting, the Clerk has amended it as requested, using inflation of 2% rather than 1.7% and rounding everything to the nearest ten pounds.

The Parish Council requested a precept of £18,564 (precept and Council Tax Support Grant) from SDC for the current financial year 2019/20 and has spent 85% to date.

SDC have confirmed that the Council Tax Base for 2020/21 is estimated at (?) 377.74, an increase of nearly 40 since 2019/20.

The Chairman calculated that we were able to add a further £520 to our draft budget without increasing the Parish Council element of residents' tax bill. It was agreed by all Councillors to add this additional money in to contingencies, for example for possible further spend for work on the U_Route.

A parish precept of £20,500 will therefore be levied. There is no Council Tax Support Grant offered anymore. The estimated Band D Parish amount 2020/21 will be £54.27 (Parish precept divided by the tax base). This is allowing us to top-up Street Lighting Reserves which were not in the budget for 2019/20 but have been heavily utilised and need replenishing.

Retaining the value of one year's precept in Parish Council reserves is always good practice as well as providing adequate contingency funds for expensive repairs/replacements. In 2019/20, 6 streetlights will have required total replacement at a cost of approximately £7500 +VAT. As of 16th January, only one of these has been invoiced and paid for so some costs may end up falling within 2020/21 financial year.

<p>PROGRESS AGAINST BUDGET</p>	<p>Clerk to complete and submit Parish Council Precept Form and return to SDC by 31st January 2020.</p>
<p>STREET LIGHT REPAIRS</p>	<p>As of 2nd January 2020, progress against budget stands at 85% (£15,767 of £18,564). As discussed at the November meeting, the Parish Council spend will be over budget for 2019/20 as there is still substantial playground maintenance work to pay for. Councillors acknowledged it has been a costly year with the Tree Survey and subsequent work, U_Route and playground maintenance.</p> <p>The following street lights have been reported as broken/faulty:</p> <p>Park Lane –This was replaced last week. Invoice not received yet but estimated costs of £1250 plus VAT.</p> <p>Henley Rd (at the bottom of Church Walk) - WCC contractors have reported that the lantern is beyond repair and requires replacement. These lamps are 50-year-old concrete columns and WCC recommend replacement as they cannot guarantee the structural integrity of the concrete, especially the reinforcement bars. WCC Street Lighting offer estimated costs of £1280 plus VAT. This includes removal of the concrete columns, removal of tree branches, installation of a new grey plascoated column with a 27W LED lantern, plus EON connection costs. Councillors had approved this work since the last meeting in the hope that work could take place as soon as possible. The Parish Council requested that this replacement was dealt with as a priority over the others, but this will not possible due to the process involved in setting up the contracts for this work. Work is due to take place before the end of January.</p> <p>Henley Rd (at the front of The Spinney). Councillors approved the replacement of this at the November meeting and work is expected to take place in February. Date to be confirmed. Estimated costs of £1400 plus VAT.</p> <p>School Rd and Gunn Court – Once again, these are concrete columns and WCC contractors have reported that the lamps are beyond repair. WCC Street Lighting offer estimated replacement costs of £1200 plus VAT for each. This includes removal of the concrete columns, installation of new grey plascoated columns with 27W LED lanterns plus the EON connection costs. Councillors all agreed to approve this work. Clerk to contact Street Lighting to confirm this. They anticipate work will be completed in March but cannot guarantee this.</p> <p>Nightingale Close – This was reported as faulty and has since been fixed (on second visit/attempt).</p>
<p>APPROVE INTERNAL AUDITOR APPOINTMENT</p> <p>ANNUAL ANTI-VIRUS PURCHASE</p>	<p>Councillors are happy for the clerk to ask Lorraine Holmes if she will act as our internal auditor for 2019-20. Lorraine did an excellent job in 2018-19 and has helped the clerk with queries over the year.</p> <p>The annual anti-virus cover for the Parish Council laptop is due in the next month. The Clerk reported that she is having ongoing problems with the laptop – predominantly with it being extremely slow and regularly closing documents down with a message saying ‘Programme is not responding’. Councillors were happy for the Clerk to look at new laptops and send a selection of options through for review/agreement. Cllr Millard recommended laptops with the latest version of Windows and also ideally with anti-virus included.</p>
<p>VAT RECLAIM</p> <p>CLERK’S HOLIDAY PAY, HOME WORKING ALLOWANCE PAY, ANNUAL REVIEW AND CONTRACT</p>	<p>The VAT reclaim will be done before the end of the month. It is now an online process.</p> <p>The retrospective payment of the Clerk’s annual home working allowance was agreed, to cover costs of electricity, heating, broadband etc. for the last year. The Clerk informed Councillors she had submitted her claim for holiday pay from 1st July-31st December 2019. Two Councillors have already replied confirming they are happy with this. The Clerk requires an annual review before the end of March and is also awaiting a written contract. The Chairman has both of these matters in hand.</p> <p>The repair work to the playground agreed at the last meeting has yet to be completed. Clerk will contact contractor to request it is done before the end of March.</p>
<p>RECREATION GROUND UPDATE</p> <p>CPRE – ANNUAL RENEWAL</p>	<p>All Councillors happy to renew the Annual Memberships to CPRE.</p>

	Reference	Received	Status	Address																																				
PLANS	19/03453/TPO	06/12/19	Pending Consideration	Plantation Wood, Henley Rd, Great Alne																																				
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	19/03181/FUL	12/11/19	Pending Consideration	12 School Rd, Great Alne																																				
	19/03150/TREE	07/11/19	Tree Works approved	Parkfield House, Park Lane, Great Alne																																				
	19/03141/TREE	06/11/2019	Tree Works approved	Manor House and Land to the west of Manor Court Drive, Henley Rd, Great Alne																																				
	19/01294/FUL	10/05/2019	Planning permission refused	Glebe Farm, Alne Hills, Great Alne																																				
	There were no new planning applications to discuss at the meeting. Since November, the following representations have been made by the Parish Council: 19/03453/TPO – The Parish Council submitted a representation of No Objection 19/03181/FUL - The Parish Council submitted a representation of No Objection 19/03181/FUL - The Parish Council submitted a representation of No Objection																																							
ACCOUNTS	<p>Bank Account Balances @: 21st December 2019 Community Account: £25966.40 Business Money Matters: £13984.26</p> <p>The Chair and Cllr P Clark approved and signed all of the invoices and cheques. Those highlighted in blue below were paid since the last meeting.</p> <p>Clerk has now been added as a signatory – HSBC have confirmed this verbally but don't send confirmation in writing as standard practice.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Cheque No.</th> <th>Payee</th> <th>Amount (£)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>a.</td> <td>200037</td> <td>CPRE Annual membership fee</td> <td>36.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>b.</td> <td>DD Sheet 432</td> <td>E.ON (UMS electricity supplies) Inv No.H17E361C06</td> <td>161.01</td> </tr> <tr> <td>c.</td> <td>200035</td> <td>Clerk wages and exps - November</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>d.</td> <td>200036</td> <td>Great Alne School - Annual Christmas Decoration Competition Prize</td> <td>100.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>e.</td> <td>200038</td> <td>Complete Tree Services - supply and lay tree trunks and wires to Uroute</td> <td>1536.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>f.</td> <td>200039</td> <td>Clerk wages and exps- December</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>g.</td> <td>200040</td> <td>Clerk holiday pay - 1st July - 31st December 2019</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>h.</td> <td>200041</td> <td>Clerk home working annual allowance</td> <td>40.00</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>					Cheque No.	Payee	Amount (£)	a.	200037	CPRE Annual membership fee	36.00	b.	DD Sheet 432	E.ON (UMS electricity supplies) Inv No.H17E361C06	161.01	c.	200035	Clerk wages and exps - November		d.	200036	Great Alne School - Annual Christmas Decoration Competition Prize	100.00	e.	200038	Complete Tree Services - supply and lay tree trunks and wires to Uroute	1536.00	f.	200039	Clerk wages and exps- December		g.	200040	Clerk holiday pay - 1st July - 31st December 2019		h.	200041	Clerk home working annual allowance	40.00
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CORRESPONDENCE	<p>a. Mr D Robinson – Jehovah's Witnesses, Station Rd, Alcester– request to make use of the Great Alne Parish Council Web Site under the Directory section regarding Pastoral Care with the addition of their contact details for local town residents to have access to.</p> <p>b. Mr I Greig – Website requires updating - Informed that page 13 of the online parish plan - the Conservation area map and details - is at too low resolution and is illegible. The contact form does not work either.</p>																																							

- c. **Mr J Crossling – Disaster Plan** - a template for a disaster plan that can be adopted by Parish Councils in Warwickshire.
- d. **Mr J Crossling – Funding opportunities** - available for innovative community-based initiatives that promote health and wellbeing across Warwickshire.
- e. **Mr J Crossling – Severn Trent Community Fund** – they have chosen to design their fund around improving community wellbeing, namely: **People:** Projects that help people to lead a healthier life and gain new skills, **Places:** Projects that help to create better places to live in and use and **Environment:** Projects that will help look after our natural environment, give people greater access to that environment or help look after water
- f. **The Pensions Regulator - Re-enrolment** – what we need to do so we are prepared for the third anniversary of our staging date, which is 1 April 2020.
- g. **Mr J Crossling - Heritage and Culture strategy** - first newsletter from WCC about their Heritage and Culture strategy and how they are progressing the work. It is likely that Parishes will be invited to a consultation event in the new year.
- h. **Mr P Spencer – Improving Stroke Services** - details of public consultation events to hear about the proposals for improving stroke services across Coventry and Warwickshire and to share your views.

The next Meeting will be held on Wednesday 18th March 2020 at Great Alne Primary School at 7pm

Meeting finished at 9.15