

MINUTES OF ALDERTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held in Alderton Village Hall on Wednesday 24 January 2024

Present: Jeff Hayward (JH) Chairman, Nick Rose (NR), Tim Giles (TG), Laura Gowen (LG), Bob Loughlin (BL), Mal Ward (MW)

In attendance: Joy Andrews (JA), clerk

Absent: Joanne Butler

Members of public: None

1. **Open forum:** There were no members of the public present so no issues raised
2. **Apologies for absence:** Christina Joyce, Will Palmer
3. **Declarations of member's interests in any items on this agenda:** None
4. **Approval of minutes of meeting:** The minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2023 were approved and signed.
5. **Clerk's report –**
 - (i) The clerk reported that prices had been received from Kevin Foreman to erect new bollards and clear rubbish on the recreation ground and this work was to go ahead. However, it was felt that the suggestion to build a slanted roof on the containers may not be the best option and advice should be taken from a roofing company. **MW and BL** agreed to follow this up.
 - (ii) The events held to celebrate Christmas were a great success enjoyed by many parishioners. The total cost was £778 of which £500 of which had been received from James Mallinder via the East Suffolk Council's Enabling Communities Budget. **MW** to provide ESCE with a summary of expenditure.
 - (iii) An invitation has been received from Bawdsey Parish Council to join them at a presentation to be given by Judi Hallett on setting up a Neighbourhood Plan. The **clerk** volunteered to attend this and report back to councillors.
6. **Finance: (i) To review budget and to set precept for 2024/25 –** The chairman handed out copies of the budget showing the position to date. It was noted that as the council now has an agreement with a gardener to carry out general maintenance throughout the year this would have to be taken into account when setting the 2024/25 budget. It was also agreed to purchase an accounts software package which would incur a charge of £12 per month. JH asked councillors to let him know if they have any projects in mind for next year so that these can be considered and included in the budget. **JH** and the **clerk** will finalise the budget which will need to be agreed at the next meeting. After discussion it was unanimously agreed to increase the precept for the coming financial year by 5% as it had been held at the same amount since 2020/21.
(ii) To approve payments and note payments made since last meeting – These were duly authorised and noted. Copy attached
7. **Areas of Responsibility –** The chairman proposed that areas of responsibility should be divided up so that the councillor in charge could authorise work within a set budget without having to wait for the next meeting of the full council. This has arisen because there are outstanding repairs required on the play equipment which have been highlighted by the Rospa safety report.

LG asked that this should be looked at as a matter of urgency. Clerk to liaise with other local councils to form a list of suitable contractors to carry out this work and JH will follow up.

8. Village Hall –

(i) JH handed out a sheet comparing the prices of the 3 estimates received for painting the interior of the village hall. It was unanimously agreed to accept the quote from Adrian Smith in Hollesley.

(ii) A discussion followed regarding further works which need to be carried out, namely: replacing the current wall mounted electric heaters; installing electrically wired smoke and gas detectors; installing a sensory light in the porch and setting up a security system. BL agreed to get a price for these. NR agreed to get a price for replacing broken floor tiles in the lobby. LG stated that an up to date fire risk assessment needs to be in place – the clerk will follow this up.

9. Recreation ground – (i) To discuss management of grass cutting and general upkeep – It was agreed that JCG Services should be responsible for cutting the grass and ongoing maintenance of the play area plus general upkeep on the recreation ground. No decision could be made regarding cutting the main area as not all quotes have been received.

10. Community Assets – (i) To discuss renewal of community asset order on The Swan public house

(ii) To consider application to make Alderton Stores a community asset – It was unanimously agreed to renew the community asset order on The Swan but eh Alderton Stores was rejected.

11. Village Fete – To appoint committee to organise fete in 2024 – It was decided to hold an open village meeting on Thursday 15 February at 7p.m in the Village Hall to obtain help to organise this. LG offered to design a flyer, clerk to print and organise distribution to every house in the village. Refreshments to be provided.

12. To agree dates of meetings for 2024 – JH and clerk to set these and present for agreement at the next meeting.

13. Matters to be brought to the attention of the Council - (i) JH to have a consultation with the Alderton Bowls Club with a view to draw up a formal agreement regarding use of facilities on the recreation ground. **(ii)** JH put forward a proposal to install adult fitness equipment on the recreation ground. **(iii)** TG stated that a request for a water supply on the allotments has been received and he will contact Anglian Water. **(iv)** LG stated that it should be made clear that no vehicles should be driven on the recreation ground.

14. Date of next meeting – 11 March 2024

The meeting closed at 9.05p.m

These are draft minutes which will be verified at the next meeting