

# DRAFT MINUTES OF ALDERTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held in Alderton Village Hall on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> November at 19:00

**Present:**

**Chair** Jeff Hayward (JH)

**Vice Chair** Mal Ward (MW)

**Councillors** Joanne Butler (JB), Anne Jessup (AJ), Bob Loughlin (BL)

**Parish Clerk** Vanessa Austin (VA)

**Members of Public:** Chris Green (CG), Diana Loughlin (DL)

1. **Apologies for absence:** Councillor Alan Austin (AA)
2. **Declarations of member's interests in any items on this agenda:** BL – regarding Thirsty Thursday joint venture with Alderton PC for Seniors Xmas Lunch in December 2025. BL is the Treasurer for this group and abstained from the voting on grant request.
3. **Requests for Dispensations:** None.
4. **Approval of minutes of meeting:** The minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> August 2025 were a true and correct record and were approved and signed.
5. **Public Participation session :** DL and CG were representing Thirsty Thursday Club who will jointly run the Seniors Xmas Lunch with support from APC. They reported 35-40 seniors in the village were eligible and that invitations would be hand delivered to them. Their plan was to provide a two course hot lunch but wanted to know what funding would be provided from APC to assist with this activity. JH said that the council were very pleased that they had agreed to take on this project and that the APC contribution would be finalised after discussion had taken place later in the meeting.
6. **Clerk and Chairs Report.** –JH advised of the following:
  - i. Judy Foulger is now in charge of the Parish website and is working with Suffolk Cloud to have an online Village Hall booking system. This should be complete by the end of November 2025.
  - ii. AJ agreed to provide pick up any meet and greets for the VH bookings. VA to update AJ when VH booked (from manual system.)
  - iii. We have been accepted for an In-Post parcel service. It will be located behind the Pavilion on the Rec. All costs and responsibilities are with them, but electric is provided by APC. Net profit is expected to be in the region of £1000 pa.

- iv. Charging points – Still to be confirmed as SCC is having discussions with a new provider but there is no decision to date.
- v. Remembrance day - The service this year was at the Ramsholt Church and JH thanked Andy Bowen for representing the council and laying our wreath. The cost was £20 which will be donated to RBL.
- vi. Jim Wylie from Bawdsey Yacht Club and others are working on the footpath deterioration by the quay, and is looking for financial support from local councils. They are running a 'GoFundMe' for this project and JH advised Jim other bodies he could approach and that he could submit a grant request which would be paid in May 2026.
- vii. JH has bought new chair cushions, kettle and toaster for the Village Hall

**7. Allotments – Proposed by JH and seconded by BL**

- i. All allotment holders have paid their 2025/26 ground rent.
- ii. T&C's have been to be revised and now include allotment holders, where applicable; that it is their responsibility to keep any hedges neat and trimmed as part of their rental conditions. Up to date GDPR notices are to be sent out for signing.
- iii. JB commented that the condition of some allotments were below the standard required and those not maintaining the correct standards will be removed from the allotment and the plot reallocated by JB.
- iv. Pricing policy for 2026 /27 was discussed and councillors agreed to a 50% increase per annum on all plot sizes:
  - a. £20 becomes £30pa
  - b. £15 becomes £22.50pa
  - c. £10 becomes £15pa
  - d. £5 becomes £7.50pa
- v. One large plot is to be split into two plots – size and price to be determined once split.
- vi. Hedge cutting – Jim Collins to be invited to trim outside of the allotments with hedges being cut once per year. Quote to be provided by JC for this work

**District Councillor James Mallinder joined the Meeting.**

James was welcomed to the meeting and provided with an agenda.

- i. Closure of Melton railway – Melton and Woodbridge Councils were consulted, the Peninsula was not. This was regarded as a failing by Network Rail and they will include the Peninsula in consultation going forward.
- ii. Grants available from Sizewell C but only to 5km from the site. JM is pushing for this area coverage to be extended given the impact to other villages on the Peninsula.
- iii. JJM has asked SCC that there should be no more Peninsula planning approvals for large housing developments due to the lack of Infrastructure available.
- iv. Reverse vending – East Suffolk have refused to support this.
- v. East Suffolk have spent £350k to replace bin lids on recycling. There is an environmental and financial cost to fit these lids and it is not acceptable to squander money in this way.
- vi. Unitary Council election on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2026 to be able to blend Suffolk and Norfolk.

- vii. Peninsula Emergency Plans to be collaborated between all villages on the Peninsula.
- viii. JM to ringfence money for Xmas 2026.
- ix. VA to message JM the new APC telephone number with her Parish Clerk email address as the invitation was not received and may have gone to his junk folder.

#### **8. Recreation Ground –**

Alan Austin was absent from the meeting but provided a report which was forwarded to all councillors and is attached in full as an addendum.

##### **Pump Track**

JH clarified the background to how this started, where the location of the area was that may be made available by Mr Mann and that the children had already raised £300 towards the cost. There were 3 locations possible, firstly the recreation field, secondly where the allotments are situated and thirdly on Mr Mann's land. The first and second being council land. If the track was to be located in the area provided by Mr Mann, then this could become an independent project. Councillors rejected the allotment location.

JH felt that with the social media comments being made by parents and dialogue he has had with residents that there was an impression that this was going to happen and Council needed to discuss this to provide clarity. but we must remember that the Recreation Ground is for all residents.

- a. A vote was taken regarding should the Pump Track be located on the Recreation Ground – The result was 3 Against and 1 Abstention
- b. A vote was taken regarding should Mr Mann grant the location it would be Classed as an independant project and APC will it support it with grant applications.  
The result was 3 For and 1 Abstention
- i. **Basketball ground repairs quote** – Provided by Sovereign but this was rejected by Councillors as too expensive. Further investigation required by MW and AA on how to resolve this issue.

#### **9. Village Parking & Highways –**

- i. AJ and MW reported that road and path vegetation had been cut back. Photographs had been taken and forwarded to Andrew Reid, James Mallinder and Jackie Abbott – no update noted. APC should create a 'polite notice' to any households in the village to ensure on-going safety.

#### **10. Village Hall and Pavilion –**

- i. JH advised that the ground work for the storage shed had been completed and shed erection was imminent. He suggested we purchase two bike racks costing £41.99 each to ensure all visitors to the village hall have somewhere secure to leave their bikes and there is no obstruction to the driveway. A vote was taken regarding should the Two racks will be purchased which was proposed JB and seconded by all Councillors.

- ii. JH asked for the Council verify its acceptance of the contract and proceed with 'In-Post' lockers being located to the rear of the Pavilion on the Recreation Ground off Watson Way. Proposed by JH, Seconded by all Councillors

## 11. Finance –

The Clerk reported that she does not have access to any of the Bank accounts currently and so the Chair reported amounts:

- i. In Barclays Bank there is currently £3749 in the current account and £2062 in the savings account. In the Rugby & Hinckley Building Society there is £ 17,000 on deposit for reserve and £ 5000 on deposit for community.
- ii. Expenditure v Budget was reviewed with summaries distributed for councillors' attention. It was noted the interest on our building society deposits is added on the 30<sup>th</sup> November.
- iii. JH presented an income and expenditure review up as at the 4<sup>th</sup> November. Which indicated a smaller reduction from reserves than planned.
- iv. 2026/27 Precepts –
  - a. JH advised that he had received correspondence regarding our 2026/27 precept. Our amount must be submitted before year end and that our payment will be paid in two instalments April and September.
  - b. Large budget figures need to be advised and all councillors should send to Parish Clerk and cc Chair/Vice Chair details of any projects and estimated amounts.
  - c. It is anticipated that our Precept figure will increase to cover inflation and increased costs.
- v. Auditor for 2025\_26 accounts needs to be engaged and VA has been asked to approach Peter Caldicott
- vi. Expense Rates – proposed BL, seconded MW
  - a. Councillors reviewed our 'out of pocket' Expenses policy, which applies to clerk and councillors and it was agreed to accept the SALC recommendations.
- vii. Grant Applications –
  - a. To be submitted by middle of December 2025.
  - b. Updates to be put in the shop, hub, website, notice board, facebook and VV if time.
- viii. Financial Regulations updates –
  - a. JH proposed some amendments to the Financial Regulations and this was voted on with all councillors approving. Revised copies to be sent to all councillors.
  - b. Two large payments were authorised**
- i. Renewal of Insurance - £1,769.84
- ii. Electrical work to VH - £1,572.25

## 12. Xmas Activities –

- i. Xmas tree ordered and delivery date is 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2025. VA away so volunteer will be needed to take receipt of the tree when it is delivered.

- ii. Xmas tree switch on is Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> December with BarMann providing food. MW to advise. plus we will have crafting, children's boxes JB . MW/JH to look into wine/beer – Proposed JB, Seconded MW
- i. An amount of £300 was proposed to be given to the 'Thirsty Thursday' group to support them to provide an invited number of senior residents to a Xmas celebration. Proposed by JB, seconded by MW
- iii. Children's Xmas party – Due to grant allocations being cancelled from ESCC and in view of other activities being carried out this was to be cancelled for this year.

**13. Items for consideration for inclusion on next agenda –**

- i. Grants to be rolled forward to next meeting
- ii. Pump Track update on location

The meeting was allowed to extend to 21:15

**14. Date of next meeting –**

To confirm the date of the next meeting is scheduled for 9<sup>th</sup> March 2026

The meeting closed at 21:15

Signed...Vanessa Austin.....

Dated...26<sup>th</sup> November 2025.....

## **Council Minutes Addendum**

Report By Alan Austin For Parish Council Meeting

Good evening,

Sorry I am not able to be with you tonight, but currently back at work with Tesco's.

### **Update on the pump track**

Both Jeff and I met with local farmer Alex Mann as he may be able to offer a piece of land on the Drs field at the rear of Mill Hoo near to the allotments for the use of a pump track for the local young people. He does have to investigate whether he can move the area designated as a wildlife area to another part of the farm and I am awaiting a response.

If this is achievable then Alex does have some requirements that need to be met, these include securing the park at night and having correct liability insurances in place.

I will keep the council updated with progress.

Dirt Track who is the modular pump track company are aware that we wish to do a fund raising day in the spring. We discussed pricing and it was confirmed that there will be very little or no change in the pricing of the hire of the pump track and supporting staff and equipment. When we have an agreed date, they will book it in for us but will require 50% of the cost in advance.

### **Recreation ground**

Recently the equipment on the recreation ground was inspected and some recommendations were made, particularly the raised area of the basketball hoop.

I attach a copy of the report and a quote for the repair of the basketball hoop area.

There are some concerns that if the repair is not carried out that this will remain a trip hazard.

I have also had some quotes for a slide for the recreation ground which are between £6500 and £13000 pounds.

New goal nets have been purchased and fixed to the goal posts with the help of John Mann – many thanks to him for his time.

There is currently a mole issue also on the recreation ground and I am currently trying to get a pest controller to come and assess the situation and provide a quote.

### **Melton railway crossing closure**

During the recent closure of the crossing one of our parishioners had reason to call an ambulance in the early hours of Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> October. The Ambulance was not allowed to use the crossing and had to travel the full route of the diversion to get to our village.

I have raised a formal complaint with Network Rail and have made James Mallinder and Andrew Reid from the councils aware and also emailed Mrs Jenny Riddell- Carpenter MP. To date I have received emails from both James, Andrew and Network Rail to advise that they have been in touch with the patient.

**AOB –**

- i. JB requested to hire the Marquee for no fee as she is running a fund raiser for Elizabeth Hospice. APC agreed but any repairs were JB's responsibility. Proposed BL, Seconded AJ
- ii. BL requires that the Defibrillator location and use instructions should be made public via the new Alderton website. JH to discuss with Judy Foulger
- iii. Councillor vacancies need to be filled. VA has advertised on the Notice board and on facebook. This needs to be followed up and a recruitment drive put in place.

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