

## **Aldwinckle Parish Council Minutes**

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 13 January 2015

### **Present**

Robert Blakeman (RB) (Chair), John Lawrence (JL), Bernard Lowe (BL), John Foster (JF) and Brian Penney (BP) (together, the Councillors)

Two members of the public in attendance

### **1. Public Open Time**

No matters were raised

### **2. Apologies for absence**

Tim Hankins, Fiona Williams (clerk)

RB confirmed that the clerk has resigned because of her need to be away from the village frequently, effective from 28 February.

JL agreed to take minutes for this meeting.

### **3. Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest

### **4 Minutes of previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on Tuesday 2 December 2014 were approved and signed by RB.

### **5. Matters arising**

There were no matters arising

### **6. Village Play Area**

6.1 RB presented 3 proposals and cost estimates relating to the plan to refurbish and improve the village play area. .

6.2 Costs ranged from £19250 to £22000 (all plus VAT) although the highest quote included replacement of the gate at the top of the play area. All included similar new equipment plus safety surfacing, seating and signs. It is expected that any VAT would be recoverable by the Parish Council.

6.3 The survey of users carried out by RB had produced 16 responses covering 34 children using the Play area. These were positive about the area and indicate its frequent use.

6.4 Potential grant aid is available from the Big Lottery Fund (maximum £10000) and the Mick George (landfill tax) fund where there is no maximum amount per project but a limited total amount per grant period. For the latter a "donation" to the fund would have to be made by

The Parish Council if a grant was awarded. This would be approx £2200 for the proposed project.

6.5 Barry Watts (BW) joined the meeting at this point

6.6 It was agreed that an application should be made to the Mick George fund to include the proposed works plus the gate and wall rebuild (see below). RB explained that it was not necessary to submit details of the contractor to be used at this stage so this could be decided later. **Action RB**

## 7. Finance

7.1 Works required to wall at play area

BW declared an interest in this matter and was excluded from discussions.

RB/BL reminded the meeting that the wall adjoining the car park needed attention as it had been damaged by children climbing on it and pulling out stones. Three quotes for remedial work had been obtained for £1890, £3750 plus VAT and £7400.

It was agreed that the quote of £1890 from B J Watts be accepted and this cost be added to the grant application (see above). It was also agreed that as the work could be carried out in stages if necessary and 50% of the cost (£900) should be included in the 2014/15 budget and the balance in 2015/16 as grant funding could not be guaranteed.

7.2 Replacement street lamps.

It was agreed that 2 replacement lamps (cost estimate based on last purchases £350 inc VAT each) to be purchased immediately from the 2014/15 budget. A further 2 lamps to be included as potential expenditure in the 2015/16 precept budget.

7.3 Precept for 2015/16

JL presented a proposed budget following discussions at the previous meeting. It was agreed that the current under spend of the 2014/15 budget be utilised as in 7.1 and 7.2 above. This would take the current year's expected expenditure to approx £7400, with £400 to come from cash reserves which would stand at approx £6500 at March 2015.

The draft budget for 2015/16 indicated expenditure of £7145 (including £500 for election costs). The additional proposed expenditure noted above took this to £8845.

It was agreed by a majority that the precept for 2015/16 should be set at £7500. Decisions on expenditure on street lamps and the play area wall could be taken when the outcome of the grant application was known and in the light of the then existing cash position.

JL was authorised to report this precept request to ENC.

7.4 Invoices for payment

£140 Francis Hale Final grass mowing bill for 2014 season

£43.76 E-ON Maintenance – quarter to 31/12/14

£106.18 E-ON Supply – quarter to 31/12/14

£62.50 H G Watts and Son Christmas tree and wreath

£27.50 B T Lowe Re-imburement for refreshments at carol concert

It was resolved that these payments be made. **Action JL**

## **8. Highways update**

BP reported that all works agreed by the NCC contractor (Thorpe Rd raised pathway, whitelining etc) were still outstanding. He continues to chase. **Action BP**

JF reported that he had made preliminary enquiries about costs for refurbishing part of the village hall car park. The material alone would be at least £700. It was agreed that this was excessive and it was agreed to fill potholes with tarmac bought in bags. Work to be done by JF. Cost c£100.

## **9. Planning**

No new applications pending.

## **10. Pocket Park**

10.1 A discussion took place about the possible renewal of the pocket park lease in preparation for a meeting with the Merchant Venturers' land agent the following day (14 January)

10.2 The consensus was that the pocket park was little used at present and that there were potential financial risks for the Parish Council of having the responsibility of its upkeep.

10.3 There was a reluctance to get involved in another expensive lease renewal in these circumstances but it was agreed that no decision could be made until the landlord's intentions were known

## **11. Parish Council Elections – 7 May**

11.1 There was a discussion about how to encourage involvement and to get people interested in standing as parish councillors. It was agreed that information should be circulated to parishioners by email and possibly a mail drop. In the past guidance has been available from NCALC.

11.2 RB pointed out that it was very likely that the Parish Council would have no clerk in the run up to the election. ENC are holding an information evening for clerks on February 5 which it was hoped a councillor would attend.

## **12. Defibrillator for Aldwinkle**

In the absence of TH it was agreed to carry forward this item to the next meeting

## **13. Correspondence**

BL noted that the Village Hall committee had received notification that government funding for ACRE was to be cut. An online petition is available to lobby against this.

**14 Reports from other bodies**

BL reported that the Village Hall Committee had obtained a full grant for the refurbishment of the kitchen and toilets at the village hall plus full redecoration. Work is expected to take place during the summer.

**15. Date of next meeting**

Tuesday 24 February at 7.30pm in Aldwinckle Village Hall

**16. Points for noting**

None

The meeting closed at 9.22pm

.....

Approved

.....

Date