

Minutes of a meeting of the Alcester Town Council held on Tuesday 2 August 2011 at Globe House, Alcester

Present

Councillors L Cumberbatch (Mayor), Y Hine (Deputy Mayor), M Gittus, S Adams, J Bunting, C Gough, J Kenyon, N Knapman, C Neal-Sturgess, A Brown, M Cargill, J Styles, W Malin, Mrs P Haggerty (Assistant Clerk).

Public Participation at Discretion of Mayor

Four residents were in attendance, with one member of the press. Mr Muddyman of Oversley Mill Park asked two questions about the sewerage replacement works due to start in August. The first concerned the sluice gate and river levels and the second was about how the road closure would affect the residents of Oversley Mill Park, and many were elderly. Mr Muddyman asked if consideration could be given to opening up the end of Mill Lane onto the roundabout, and if something could be done about the speed of traffic on the A46 as it would be very dangerous trying to turn right onto the bypass. Cllr Gittus replied that he had asked for temporary access through the Severn Trent sewage works on Mill Lane to be considered and also for temporary speed limits on the A46. He would investigate all matters raised and report back to residents.

District and County Councillors' Reports

The following reports were received from Ward District and County Councillors:

Cllr Adams reported that the District Council was keen that old catalogues such as Argos were placed in recycling bins and not the general refuse bins.

Cllr Gittus reported that Warwickshire County Council was still looking at its budgets but he had managed to get High Street resurfacing to be done on 10 and 11 September. He was looking at preferred options for the budget and prioritised the footpath along Stratford Road but was open to other suggestions. Flooding at Kings Coughton was proposed as a minor project and also new lamp standards as some of the old ones don't conform any more. Cllr Bunting to identify the ones that needed replacing. Cllr Gittus asked councillors to look at the Community Development Fund grant form he had circulated and asked for ideas for new community schemes. Small drainage grants were also available and again ideas for areas that could benefit were asked for, by 29 September.

Apologies - 010711

Apologies and reasons for absence were received from E Payne, Y Morrison, P Carr, C Wright (Clerk).

Minutes of previous meeting - 020711

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 5 July 2011, having been circulated, were proposed to be accepted by Cllr Malin, seconded by Cllr Styles and approved by Council.

Declarations of Interest - 030711

Members are asked to declare personal interests in any item on the agenda. No interests were declared.

Mayor's Report - 040711

The Mayor reported on recent his recent activities, which had included attendance at 6 events, including the High Sheriff's garden party, three church services and other events for a children's hospital and Acorns. The Mayor had attended with the clerk to receive a Market Town Award for the Conway Fields project. We also won the top project in the west and have been put forward for the national award to be awarded in October. The Mayor had also recently attended a conference where Alcester's project was congratulated.

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Community Committee - 050711

The following reports were received from the Community Committee

Cllr Gittus gave an update on Emergency Planning, reporting that the work would continue from August on the Severn Trent Scheme. Consent had been given for the application for the tank project including removal of three mature chestnut trees. Assurance has been given that they will try to keep the trees or replace them two to one. This requires input from the Town Council – he would circulate the details, and also keep Mrs Carroll from Oversley Green informed re the flower beds and trees on the splitter island. Cllr Cumberbatch stated that regarding the new health centre he had written a formal letter to the Chair of NHS Warwickshire and senior heads of service and our MP, asking for an urgent response from the Secretary of State. He has a meeting on 8 August with the local doctors and NHS Warwickshire.

Cllr Cumberbatch stated there was nothing to report on Business Support.

John Hodges sent a report that the DWP statistics has shown that there will be a further 150,000 people living on pensions this year and volunteers are critical in providing care to vulnerable people. Recruitment of volunteers is to be looked at in the autumn. The new Warwickshire CC strategy which aims to connect older people's services has funding to support older people's groups. Talks are taking place to set up an Alzheimers Support Group in Alcester.

Cllr Adams reported that a Town Development Working Group was due to meet on Thursday 4 August at 10.30am.

Cllr Neal-Sturgess reported that there had been 28 anti-social incidents. Following a meeting with the Police and Neighbourhood Watch, incidents are often not being reported by residents of Malt Mill Lane, and they are being encouraged to attend the Community Forums and Surgeries. There was a problem at the bottom of Bleachfield Street next to Willow Close with speeding motorbikes and cars and he was working with Cllr Gittus on this.

Cllr Styles had met Jenny Theobald and been brought up to speed with youth issues. She had attended the Youth Project meeting on 10 July and would attend the Youth Council in September. The Celebration of Youth event was on 29 August from 2-8pm and support was needed. A final organisation meeting was being held on 3 August. Communication was needed to advertise the good things the young people do in the town. Alcester High School was the only school exhibiting against universities on a renewable energy project. Cllr Gough proposed that the Mayor writes to congratulate them, which was agreed.

Cllr Cumberbatch gave an update on Community Facilities, stating that regarding Globe House he intends to ask the surrounding parishes for a meeting, and thanked the councillors who had volunteered on reception. Visitor statistics were currently being prepared. Budget statements would be prepared for the September Council meeting or as soon as possible.

Cllr Malin gave an update on Communication issues stating the dates for the next council surgery. The August surgery has been cancelled and the next one would be on Saturday 3 September at Globe House. Surgeries would all be at Globe House in the future. The deadline of articles for the next newsletter is Friday 19 August for delivery first week in September. Articles to be included so far were the Market Town awards, two councillors' profiles, opening times for the museum and new surgery dates and litter bins.

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Proposal to Council that £1000 match funding be provided for improvements to the alcester.co.uk website subject to identifying town council funding. Proposed Cllr Gittus, seconded by Cllr Neal-Sturgess and approved.

Recreation & Open Spaces Committee - 060711

Cllr Bunting gave an update on Recreation facilities, stating the Pavilion extension was due for completion in two weeks. CCTV was to be installed which was outside the contract. Orbit was to decorate inside and contribute towards installing a kitchen. The official opening was on 29 August. The community room was a shell and work will be done when funds are available. A grant was being sought for walks and exercise areas and the paths needed work. The community use of the building should now be promoted by the town council.

Cllr Hine reported that a Toddlers Group was interested in using the Pavilion, we already had the lunch clubs, and she had arranged a meeting with childminders to prepare a wish list. Alcester Youth Project had 27 volunteers and St Nicholas Church was to provide a youth worker for two years.

Cllr Knapman reported that the first meeting of the Environment sub committee would be arranged when the clerk returned from holiday.

Cllr Hine reported that she had visited all three allotment sites – two were not being worked and letters were to be sent. One tenant had requested a half plot. A meeting had been arranged with allotment holders regarding the use of soot. Vouchers had been purchased for the allotment awards.

Cllr Brown reported that we had received notification that re-burying can start on the old cemetery, where there was a possible 1000 spaces.

Proposal to Council that the grass-cutting contract be extended for one further year, and to extend the period of the contract to four years to ensure the period of review occurs only once during a period of a council between elections was proposed by Cllr Bunting, seconded by Cllr Kenyon and approved.

Planning Committee - 070711

Cllr Gough reported that re Stratford Road, a proposal would be put forward to the next council meeting. The Severn Trent sewerage project had been covered previously.

The Design Statement was to be put forward to Presidium.

One property on the High Street was being repaired.

Proposals to Council: That approval be given to the appointment of a Deputy Chair for the Planning Committee was proposed by Cllr Gough, seconded by Cllr Gittus and approved.

That delegated powers be given as necessary to the Clerk and Deputy Clerk to reply to routine planning applications in consultation with committee members by email was proposed by Cllr Gough, seconded by Cllr Neal-Sturgess and approved.

Presidium - 080711

The Mayor said a meeting would be held when the clerk returned from leave.

Scrutiny - 090711

There was no report from Scrutiny Committee.

Payment of Accounts - 100711

Following clarification on two items the accounts for July 2011 were proposed to be accepted by Cllr Malin, seconded Cllr Gittus and approved by council.

Correspondence - 110711

All e-mailed information was now cascaded to councillors.

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Notification of Future Visitors - 120711

Bloor Homes had been invited to speak at a Forum meeting on 15 August.

Notification of any further business for future meetings - 130711

No further business was offered and the Mayor made a request to councillors for agenda items to be received by the Clerk no later than 7 days prior to next meeting.

Dates of future meetings - 140711

Councillors were asked to note the following dates for future meetings:

Planning Committee Tuesday 9 August at 7.00pm & Tuesday 23 August at 7.00pm

Forum meeting Monday 15 August at 7.00pm

Community Committee Monday 8 August at 7.00pm

Recreation & Open Spaces Committee Monday 23 August at 7.00pm

Scrutiny Committee TBA

Presidium meeting TBA

Council Tuesday 6 September at 7.00pm

All the above meetings to be held at Globe House