**MINUTES OF ALDERTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

Held in Alderton Village Hall on Monday 12 December 2016

**Present**: Christopher Langley (CL) Chairman, Nick Rose (NR), Will Palmer (WP), Alex Mann (AM), Ruth Clark (RC), Bill Vaudrey (BV), Darren King (DK), Robin Gilbert (RG).

**In attendance**: Joy Andrews (JA), clerk:

**Members of public**: Three

1. **Apologies for absence**: District Councillor Christine Block (CB)
2. **Declarations of member’s interests in any items on this agenda:** None
3. **Approval of minutes of meetings**: The minutes of meeting held on 12 September 2016 were approved and signed.
4. **Matters arising from minutes**: (1) A container has been installed on the Recreation Ground and the bottle banks have been relocated. (2) A Pollinator Patch has been created and it was agreed that a stretch of grass approx. one metre wide should be left uncut along one side of the Recreation Ground. (3) The question of the hedging along the verge outside The Pastures has been referred to SCC Highways and HQ Development Management Team but no help has been forthcoming. This is to be referred to DC Christine Block.
5. **District Councillor’s Report:** No report – CB unable to attend**.**
6. **Finance:** The clerk had emailed a reconciliation of the accounts to 30 November 2016 to all councillors before the meeting (copy attached) which shows a total bank balance of £11,086.35. The clerk had emailed a Budget forecast to all councillors (copy attached) which showed that the current precept of £5000 would not cover the expenses of the council next year. After discussion it was proposed by the chairman and agreed unanimously to raise the precept for 2017/18 to £6000.
7. **External Audit report on accounts for 2015/16:** The clerk reported that the only issue raised by BDO was that “The accounts were approved after the commencement of the inspection period of the exercise of electors’ rights” and that the recommendation is that “The Smaller Authority must ensure in future years that the electors’ rights inspection period commence after the statements are approved.” No other matters were raised.
8. **To authorise payments**: The items listed below were authorised for payment.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Payee | Description |  Amount  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| BDO | External Audit | 156.00 |  |
| Eon | Electricity in Village Hall  |  92.69 |  |
| SALC | Payroll admin |  18.00 |  |
| Play Inspection Co | Annual safety check of play equipment |  75.00 |  |
| Billie Box Ltd | Container for storage on Recreation ground | 1516.80 |  |
| Anglian Water | Water rates at village hall | 44.59 |  |
| R Warne | Hedge cutting | 30.00 |  |
| D King | Hedge and grass cutting | 36.00 |  |
| Suffolk Coastal Norse | Recreation ground grass cutting | 638.40 |  |
| C J Andrews | Clerks November salary and admin expenses | 121.95 |  |
| C J Andrews | Clerks December salary  | 100.00 |  |

 C J Andrews Clerks January salary 100.00

 C J Andrews Clerks February salary 100.00

1. **Recreation Ground:** i) DK agreed to cut the grass on the play area and the hedge adjoining Beach Lane and will invoice accordingly ii) Estimates for repairs to play equipment have been received from Collins Property Maintenance and Suffolk Coastal Norse. These are very similar in price (copies attached). After discussion it was decided that as this will be an ongoing problem it may be better to consider replacing the equipment as it becomes necessary. RG agreed to investigate this. iii) A proposal has been received from the owners of Beach House to build a wall on the boundary between Beach House and the Recreation Ground. Councillors had been sent details of the proposal and agreed that if these were adhered to there is no objection. iv) The chairman proposed that the charge to the Football Club for use of the recreation ground, pavilion and storage container should be raised to £250 per annum. This was not agreed by all councillors and it was felt that the secretary of the club should be invited to attend the next meeting to discuss this. v) The chairman felt it would be advantageous to form a sub-committee to oversee the Recreation ground, Play area and Pavilion and asked RG to chair this. RG will consider.
2. **Bawdsey Coastal Partnership:** The coastal protection project will be community led in the future and there is a need for an independent engineering study to pull previous reports together and suggest a way forward. Councillors agreed that Alderton PC would contribute £1000 towards the cost of this.
3. **Emergency Planning Questionnaire:** NR produced copies of a questionnaire which has been sent out to all Bawdsey parishioners. It was agreed that a similar questionnaire should be distributed around Alderton. BV agreed that the village shop could be used as a collection point.
4. **Village Hall: i)** NR and RC agreed to join a sub-committee to oversee the village hall. The clerk will approach Diana Loughlin to see if she is agreeable to chair this committee. ii) NR reported that due to a faulty part there has been a loss of gas from two of the gas cylinders. A representative from The Gas Shop in Felixstowe has installed a new part and the clerk will write to ask for compensation for this loss.
5. **Closure of Post Office:** Due to the resignation of the postmaster and withdrawal of the premises Alderton Post Office is now closed. BV stated that the Post Office is hoping to supply a facility for customers to have access to post office services on one morning per week. The clerk advised the meeting that there is an online survey regarding rural post offices and everyone should complete this and encourage others to do so.
6. **Christmas lunch/ Christmas Coffee morning –**CL stated that both events had been enormously successful and gave a vote of thanks to RC and DL for all their hard work. A special vote of thanks was also extended to The Swan public house for their help in cooking the Christmas meal. **Fete for 2017** – The date is set for 5 August 2017 but RC proposed that it should be held in July in future years as not so many people will be on holiday. CL offered the use of his grounds for this event in the future, this will be considered after insurance implications have been investigated.
7. **Allotments –** There is one full size plot still available and it was agreed this should be offered to a Sutton resident who has requested an allotment. DK reported there has been an incident of fly-tipping near the allotments and the clerk was instructed to report this to the authorities.
8. **Planning application – 6 The Pastures, DC/16/4012/FUL**- This matter had been dealt with by email, and ratification was given to the decision agreed that the PC has no objection to this application.
9. **Matters to be brought to the attention of the Council –** CL stated that the owners of The Swan have purchased the land adjoining the public house and car park so the previous issues of improper use no longer exist. WP stated that the Santa’s Grotto at the Christmas Coffee morning was very well received by all the children and extended his thanks and congratulations to RC and DL. RG wishes to arrange a date for next year’s litter pick with a view to get more people to help. The clerk reminded councillors that Stage 2 of the Public Consultation on the proposal for a new nuclear power station at Sizewell is now under way and there is an exhibition at the Community Hall in Woodbridge on Tuesday 13 December.
10. **Date of Next meeting –** Monday 27 March 2017 at 7p.m

The meeting closed at 8.30p.m

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