

ALDERLEY EDGE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on Monday 12th December 2011

Present: M H Williamson (Chairman), Cllr F Keegan , Cllrs M J Connor, M W Maczkowiak, S Joseph, MD Lloyd, N Schofield

In attendance: 2 representative from the press
2 members of the public
Hall Manager

Meeting

Commenced: 7:43pm

1. Apologies for Absence.

Received from Cllr DG Herald, JD Bergin

2. To receive disclosures of personal and prejudicial interests from councillors on matters to be considered at the meeting.

None.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 7th November 2011.

Approval was proposed by Councillor MJ Connor , seconded by Councillor S Joseph and carried.

4. Matters Arising

Cllr Williamson had a meeting with Wilmslow Police to discuss the ant-social behaviour incident. He was told it is impractical for the police to brief every Parish Council about every incident and that the PCSO should be the first point of contact. The Cheshire Police website has a page for each area that notes issues and it was suggested that the Parish Council put a link from their website onto this, thereby giving residents easy access. It was agreed to invite the new inspector to a pre-meeting of the Parish Council for an informal discussion. Cllr Williamson will follow up the issue of painting in the park by Streetscene.

Cllr Williamson contacted Highways for advice on the hanging of promotional banners and is awaiting a response.

The Dog Warden has been in contact and taken note of points raised. The Parish Council will continue to monitor the situation until they are satisfied there has been an improvement.

A request was put into Cheshire East for a salt box at the top of the steps leading down into the park. The reply stated that Grounds & Cleansing would ensure the steps were gritted and therefore there was no need for a salt box.

Cllr Williamson is in discussions with the caretaker about purchasing a Grit-Spreader.

Cllr Williamson sent a letter to Mrs Munro regarding the Christmas Market in Alderley Edge. He will have further discussions with her and report back.

Cllr Maczkowiak was upset that Cheshire East did not clean the war memorial in time for Remembrance Day as promised and wants guarantees that the same thing does not happen again next year. Cllr Williamson agreed to communicate all this to Cheshire East with a strongly worded letter and report back. Cllr Keegan said "On Thursday it is the Full Council meeting where they are setting the Council Tax base for next year. Alderley Edge represents 1.8% of this so we need to keep asking them how much they are spending on this particular issue. We ought to be claiming 2% of their expenditure on things like this as there are services we're not getting that the other councils are getting." Cllrs Williamson and Keegan will liaise on a strategy to progress this.

It was highlighted that the cemetery is also in a state of disrepair and needs attention.

5. Transfer of Hanging Baskets and Planters

Cllr MJ Connor read a report from Cheshire East in response to her request for information about the transfer of Hanging baskets and planters to the Parish Council. A discussion followed and it was agreed that the best way forward is to contact the Community Garden Centre based at West Park and set up a meeting with them. It was suggested we should ask them to quote both on both a full service and just the flowers for the hanging baskets and the tubs separately. Before the meeting we need to establish how many hanging basket points we have and if they are in reasonable condition. Cllr Keegan agreed to set up a meeting for January.

6. Progress and costs for the Northern Gateway and Ben HB

Cllr Joseph wanted an update on the progress of this project. Cllrs Williamson and Herald attended a meeting with Ben Hamilton-Baillie and were alarmed to discover that almost 25% of the budget has already been spent. It transpired that Cheshire East Council has charged them £15,000 for work their officers have put into the project with no obvious progress being made. The other £10,000 has been paid to Ben Hamilton-Baillie. Cllr Williamson will put a request in writing to Cheshire East for a detailed breakdown of the costs so far and will circulate all further correspondence.

Cllr Mike Williamson confirmed that CEC had engaged Ben Hamilton-Baillie to carry out a research project and draw up ideas of how the parish might address issues around London Road. The Parish Council are trying to establish a date when Ben HB and Cheshire East are free for a meeting so the project can be moved forward to public consultation.

7. Reports from Councillors.

Cllr Connor reported on plans for the Diamond Jubilee Event and will discuss further at the January meeting. She is hoping to have a big presentation about Alderley Edge in the past and hopes people will contribute through the alderleyedge.com website.

It was reported that the new 20mph signs near the schools are in place and are waiting for the lights to be switched on and Cheshire East are looking to action a yellow-hatch area on Eton Drive at the back of the school.

Cllr Maczkowiak had a meeting with the PCSO and he has agreed to increase his presence in the village. He wants local residents to be vigilant and report any suspicious activity. Cllr Lloyd asked about the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme and the Parish Council agreed to look into this.

Cllrs Williamson and Joseph missed the last Wilmslow LAP meeting but hope to attend the next one and have re-issued their invitation for a representative to come and talk to the Parish Council.

Cllr Lloyd raised the issue of safety at the Christmas Lights switch on. He felt it was dangerous as it was very busy and there was no crowd control. Cllr Williamson asked for volunteers to confer with village traders to discuss next years arrangements, including the possibility of closing London Road and combining the lights switch on with a Christmas market, traders staying open late and fireworks.

Cllr Keegan also raised safety issues surrounding the Christmas Market and the fact that pedestrians had to step onto the road at times, as there was no room on the pavement. The issue of Public Liability insurance was also highlighted. Cllr Williamson will discuss this with Mrs Munro and Cheshire East. Cllr Keegan said "If it was a community event we could have got the road closed for free but because it was a profit making event we couldn't". Cllr Williamson said, "I think it is a fantastic idea to make it a bigger affair, we need to get a couple of councillors to approach traders to make it a better event."

Cllr Schofield raised the issue of bad car parking and it was confirmed that the PCSO does carry out evening patrols. Cllr Williamson has discussed this problem with Andy Miller and he has alerted his officers to the problem and asked that they take action when driving through the village. The Parish Council feels there is a need for a sustained campaign to control the problem.

8. Any other Business

Progress has been made on the plans for a new medical centre at Alderley Edge Festival Hall. There have been a number of meetings with doctors and Emerson. Cllr Mike Williamson confirmed that preliminary meetings have been held with both parties who are nearly ready to submit a planning application to Cheshire East Council. He told fellow councillors "The doctors will hold a public consultation in January, with the help of Emerson and the PCT, where the doctors will present why they need a new medical centre. Residents living in the immediate area of the Festival Hall will be invited but the meeting will be advertised widely and it will be open to all." Cllr Williamson said "The original target was for remedial works to start in the new year, enabling the Alderley Edge Festival to happen and then Emerson will move onto the site to start demolition of the hall. "We might need to submit a separate planning application for the enabling works for the side entrance and relocation of the toilets."

Cllr Melanie Connor said, "It is important that we get funding for the enabling works to be done so we can start work on the medical centre. We need to sit down with the doctors and Emerson to discuss this". Cllr Williamson added, "The medical centre stands as a project in its own right and it will happen, I'm determined."

Cllr Matthew Lloyd said "I think residents should be told about the plans before a planning application is submitted. They know nothing about the plans, the scale of it and what it looks like."

The History Society are moving out of the Festival Hall and the Parish Council plan to redecorate the whole area so the new hall manager can move into offices upstairs.

Cllr Williamson reported on an email received from Cheshire East about the review of Town Centre Management provision. The proposed changes are a cause for concern and Cllr Williamson intends to contact other Parish Councils to gather opinion and see if anything can be done to prevent the changes. He will circulate all the relevant emails.

The Sustainable Towns Network is offering training and it was suggested that some Cllrs should attend some of the sessions.

Cllr Williamson reported on an email about the 'Rural Issues Summary Document'. He has attended some of the sessions and feels there is a need to get more involved. He would like councilors to go onto the Local Development Framework (LDF) website and look at the areas covering consultation. Cllr Williamson would like the Parish Plan Group to have an input.

Meeting Closed: 8.35pm

ACTION SUMMARY

Undertaken By	Detail	When For
Cllr Williamson	Contact streetscene re painting in the park	As soon as practical
Cllr Williamson	Contact Mrs Munro	As soon as practical
Cllrs Williamson and Keegan	Contact CEC re war memorial and cemetery	As soon as practical
Cllr Keegan	Contact the Community Garden Center re hanging baskets	As soon as practical
Cllr Williamson	Contact CEC re costs for the Northern Gateway project	As soon as practical
Cllr Williamson	Invite the new inspector to pre-meeting of the Parish Council	As soon as practical
Cllr Williamson	Look into the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme	As soon as practical
Cllr Williamson	Contact other Parish Councils re changes to Town Centre Management provision	As soon as practical

Councillor M Williamson
CHAIRMAN