

## ALVINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the meeting held Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2023, directly, Alvington Memorial Hall

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllr Richard Heys (Chairman)  
 Cllr Gail Thompson (Vice Chair)  
 Cllr Nathan Burlton  
 Cllr Rachel Macharg

ATTENDING: Alec Davis, Alex Turner, Chris Shill, Laraine George,  
 Cllr Chris McFarling (District and County Councillor),  
 Meg Humphries (Clerk) (plus apologies from John  
 Wood, parishioner)

Min. Ref	Item and details	Action
060. 23/24	<b>1. To receive apologies for absence.</b> Cllr Powell sent his apologies due to illness. Accepted.	
061. 23/24	<b>2. To note any declarations of interest relating to the agenda.</b> None.	
062. 23/24	<b>3. To approve the accuracy of the draft minutes of the Full Council Meeting on 06.07.23.</b> Cllr Thompson proposed approval, Cllr Burlton seconded, approved unanimously and signed by the Chairman.	
063. 23/24	<p><b>4. Public forum.</b> Laraine George asked about the status of the proposed Zebra crossing, which Cllr Heys confirmed would be discussed under Highways, item 10.</p> <p>Alec Davis provided the following updates, remarks and questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locations for potential kissing gates have been identified but gates not yet installed. Cllr McFarling will look into this.</li> <li>• Japanese knotweed has worsened and gone to seed; Cllr McFarling advised that he would cover this in item 5.</li> <li>• An incident at Bloomery Court resulted in a police call on Sunday.</li> <li>• Gratitude expressed to Chris Shill for his work on the village notice board site.</li> <li>• Construction crews were summoned back to Bloomery Court to address issues such as clearing blocked private drains, possibly caused by teabags.</li> <li>• Cllr McFarling clarified that the Bloomery Court attenuation pond 'land bridge' has not been deemed problematic by the local flood authority. While acknowledging shouldn't be there, they believe it will still function as one attenuation pond.</li> <li>• At the end of Church Lane, where changes to a property have reduced the available turning space for large vehicles. Mr Davis asked whether there are plans to resolve this new issue. Cllr McFarling is actively engaging with Highways and planning departments on this matter.</li> <li>• Highways conducted maintenance work in August, including opening all manhole covers, cleaning surface drains, and pressure washing pipes on Swan Hill, with plans for much-needed resurfacing at this location.</li> <li>• Drain clearance has taken place near Globe and on Court Lane.</li> <li>• Potholes on Sandford Hill were repaired today.</li> <li>• Many footpaths are currently overgrown, as is common at this time of year.</li> <li>• Clanna parking issues persist, with another car damaged on Clanna;</li> </ul>	

	<p>improvement is anticipated with the installation of double yellow lines. Farm vehicles are obstructed regularly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The issue of rubbish in the parish remains unresolved, although the new wastebin on Clanna straight has improved the situation in that location.</li> <li>• Mr Davis asked for a progress report on potentially adding a sixth councillor. Cllr Heys advised that this was still in progress and the next step is to supply evidence of need to FoDDC.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>064. 23/24</b></p>	<p><b>5. To receive/note any reports from county and district councillors for the parish.</b> Cllr McFarling gave his report which included the following.</p> <p><b>Forest of Dean District Council:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The District Council cabinet meeting on September 14th, 2023, at 5:30 pm will discuss various topics, including:</li> <li>• An updated service level agreement (SLA) for Forest of Dean and Wye Valley Tourism (FDWVT) to allocate additional funding of £10,000 for supporting the visitor economy.</li> <li>• The potential implementation of a 100% premium for second homes and reducing the term for charging empty properties.</li> </ul> <p>Public participation and attendance at the council offices are encouraged.</p> <p><b>Gloucestershire County Council:</b> GCC Full Council meeting on September 13th, 2023, at 10 am, will address five motions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Urgent summit on flood prevention and resilience.</li> <li>• Restrictions on hunting with dogs on council land.</li> <li>• Foster carer recruitment efforts and the need for more foster parents.</li> <li>• A thank-you event for hosts and organizations supporting refugees.</li> <li>• Inquiry into train ticket pricing structure.</li> </ul> <p>Meeting recordings will be available online, and outcomes of approved motions will be reported in the next meeting if relevant.</p> <p><b>Highways/Footpaths:</b> Ongoing projects and issues include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Garlands Road pavement refurbishment (first phase in progress, funded by HLF).</li> <li>• Double Yellow Lines on Clanna Road, near A48 junction.</li> <li>• Japanese Knotweed (JK) eradication cost challenges; consideration of a parish council precept of £500 and possible matching funds.</li> <li>• Pipework cleared on Swan Hill, resurfacing expected soon.</li> <li>• Cleared blocked Clanna culvert.</li> <li>• Assessment pending for the pavement from Swan Inn towards Woolaston.</li> <li>• Urgent repair needed for the exposed pipework on Court Lane.</li> <li>• Follow-up on Garlands Rd white lines; Cllr McFarling suggested Highways use longer-lasting paint.</li> </ul> <p><b>Questions for Chris:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AD: raised the statistic of 10,000 socially inactive people in the Forest of Dean district.</li> <li>• Mystery cable in a layby on Clanna remains a mystery and it continues to deteriorate, with more metal exposed. After some discussion, the council</li> </ul>	

	<p>requested that Cllr McFarling to take the matter back to Highways.</p> <p><b>Contact Information:</b>  Parishioners are encouraged to contact Cllr Chris McFarling with any issues or queries at:  Email: <a href="mailto:chris.mcfarling@gloucestershire.gov.uk">chris.mcfarling@gloucestershire.gov.uk</a>  Phone: (01594) 5312255 (answerphone)  Email: <a href="mailto:chris.mcfarling@fdean.gov.uk">chris.mcfarling@fdean.gov.uk</a></p> <p><i>Cllr McFarling left the meeting.</i></p>	
<p><b>065. 23/24</b></p>	<p><b>6. Planning.</b>  <b>a) To receive any planning updates.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>P1015/23/TPO: 27 Clanna Country Park, Clanna: Fell 1 x Lime tree covered by W1 of DFTPO 195, due to excessive shading of the garden. To be replaced with ornamental acer.</b> This was withdrawn.</li> <li>• <b>P0908/23/FUL: Clanna Caravan and Camp Site, Clanna Country Park, Clanna, Alvington: Variation of condition e) of DF4054/B to amend the wording to allow for 46 caravans on site (1 additional caravan).</b> Parish council objected to the application due to insufficient information, concerns about the accuracy of details provided, visibility issues, unclear location of a park home, potential impact on vehicle access and safety, and sewage disposal problems, emphasizing the need for comprehensive plans from the applicant.</li> <li>• <b>P1063/23/TCA: Severn Lodge Church Lane Alvington: Remove large eucalyptus from over driveway, due to it dropping large branches over recent months and the house being used as a holiday venue and hence high usage of the drive. The tree will be replaced with a beech in order to create an 'avenue' approach to the house.</b> No comments submitted. The application has now been approved.</li> </ul> <p>It was agreed for the Clerk to automatically request extensions for applications received in 'no-meeting' months (i.e. August and January) to ensure they receive proper attention.</p>	<p><b>MH</b></p>
<p><b>066. 23/24</b></p>	<p><b>7. Village.</b>  <b>a) To consider the winter action plan and how to improve.</b>  This item was deferred until the October meeting to allow for full consideration and discussion. Cllr Burlton intends to map out the parish's grit bins soon.</p> <p><b>b) To note updates on village/parish improvement matters (see meeting pack).</b>  Dog Bins: The dog bin contractor raised the issue of Garlands Rd dog bin falling apart.</p> <p>Memorial Hall: Hourly booking fees at Memorial Hall to increase to £9/hr from Nov 1. Memorial Hall are launching a website and will contact the Clerk about hosting arrangements. The committee has agreed for a neighbour's sewage pipe to cross the hall's car park to connect to the mains.</p> <p>Notice board: The meeting expressed thanks to John and Chris for their work around the notice board.</p> <p>Village Planting: Discussion on planting, particularly daffodils. Some daffodils are</p>	<p><b>MH/ NB</b></p>

	<p>already planted near the sports field and opposite the Blacksmiths. Some concerns about tree health at sports field. Clerk to look into applying for more stock from the Woodland Trust or Gloucestershire County Council; planting to use larger stakes/protectors.</p> <p>Allotments: Cllr Heys discussed improving water access with a nearby landowner Rogers; ongoing.</p> <p><b>c) To assign the safety checks (play equipment / general) for Q3 (1/10-31/12).</b> Cllr Thompson volunteered to undertake the Q3 checks.</p> <p>Cllr Thompson presented the Q2 check results, including the following matters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The trim trail's deterioration</li> <li>• A broken post near the beacon.</li> <li>• Allegedly younger children avoid playing at the Garlands Road play area due to teenagers playing football there.</li> <li>• The signage at the Garlands Rd play area needs replacing.</li> <li>• There are nettles in the matting of both play areas.</li> <li>• An unofficial stile in the sports field was noted and will be removed.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>067.</b> <b>23/24</b></p>	<p><b>8. Sports Field.</b></p> <p><b>a) Alvington Summer Fun 23/7/23: post-event report.</b> Cllr Heys presented the post-event report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takings of approximately £1,248 were recorded on the day, along with additional income from pitch bookings, making it a successful event.</li> <li>• Despite losing a marquee to wind, they acquired a larger, more durable marquee and white plastic chairs.</li> <li>• Given that July is very busy for local events, the event committee had considered moving the event to the final week of the summer holidays, and this received widespread support. This change would also address the issue of families leaving for holidays early and potentially enhance the horticultural show entries. It was agreed to plan next year's event on this basis.</li> </ul> <p><b>b) Autumn events: To consider.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was agreed to begin planning the Quiz and Pudding Night on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> November. Clerk to advertise the event on Facebook as part of the planning process.</li> </ul> <p><b>c) Pavilion project: to receive any updates.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cllr Powell has made progress with Western Power Network and is now preparing forms. They need to know the site's electrical requirements. It was agreed to consult an electrician for advice, which was unanimously agreed upon. Cllr Powell will reach out to an electrician.</li> <li>• Water access (across Court Farm) is moving forward and the solicitor's work has been very good so far. The owners of Court Farm are interested in setting up an easement across the sports field during snowy weather; Cllr Heys will re-circulate the proposed wording for consideration.</li> </ul> <p><b>d) Pavilion project: To consider construction quotes.</b> This was deferred until October to allow full consideration.</p> <p><b>e) Sports field registration: To review the solicitor's letter of engagement and terms of business (as circulated to all members via email).</b> The solicitor has provided a quote for registering the sports field, but noted inconsistencies in the location plans. The Clerk will request a new quote that includes registering a small piece of land initially left out.</p> <p><b>f) To receive an update on the historical 'playing field' bank account</b></p>	<p>MH</p> <p>NP</p> <p>RH</p> <p>MH</p>

	<p><b>discovered recently.</b></p> <p>Recently Cllr Heys was alerted to a bank account in the name of 'Alvington Playing Field Trust'. Former committee members weren't able to shed any light, so Cllr Heys approached Lloyds Lydney staff and was able to establish account is empty and essentially dormant. However, it was noted that the current parish council could potentially be liable for any fees accrued in future and therefore it was agreed to request that the account's signatories close down the account. Cllr Thompson will approach one of the signatories to make the request.</p> <p><b>g) To receive any other reports on the sports field.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alec Davis asked whether there were any photos of the old pavilion. In a brief discussion, the cricket club was identified as potentially having some as it was formed in 1984, when the old pavilion was still standing. Clerk to ask Cllr Powell.</li> <li>• Cricket club report from Cllr Heys: The final match was conceded, so the team ended up on level with St Briavels; the team will be relegated.</li> </ul>	<p><b>GT</b></p> <p><b>MH</b></p>
<p><b>068.</b> <b>23/24</b></p>	<p><b>9. Churchyard.</b></p> <p><b>a) To receive updates on any churchyard matters.</b></p>	
<p><b>069.</b> <b>23/24</b></p>	<p><b>10. Highways.</b></p> <p><b>a) Road safety: to receive any updates including partnership work with Aylburton Parish Council.</b></p> <p>Cllr Burlton gave a report on the walkabout meeting with Highways officials, which took place on 17<sup>th</sup> August 2023:</p> <p><b>Speed limits and enforcement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village entrance improvements discussed, including better signage, zig-zags and red paint.</li> <li>• Confirmed existing speed camera is not in use.</li> <li>• Acknowledged challenges with enforcing existing speed limits due to lack of parking for mobile cameras. Sign and light distances need a survey.</li> <li>• Considering reducing speed limits to 20mph via Parish request. Limit likely possible only up to the brow of Swan Hill as the hill itself is classified as 'rural.' Discussion about relocating the 30mph sign closer to the Netherend turning.</li> <li>• Explored the benefits and possibility of Community Speedwatch. Noted that Minchinhampton has an average speed check zone.</li> <li>• Potential for designating the parish's 'back lanes' as a 20mph zone.</li> </ul> <p><b>Pedestrian safety:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with The Globe Inn to improve pedestrian safety progressing with a footway on highways land alongside their wooden posts. Best position for the path to continue to dropped curb is across the back edge of the grass.</li> <li>• The crossing island (near garage) could stand to be improved, potentially increase its size.</li> <li>• Maintenance of vegetation along roadsides was discussed.</li> </ul> <p><b>Cycling safety:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cycle route between Alvington and Aylburton – advised unlikely to happen in the foreseeable future.</li> <li>• Advised it was doubtful that the speed limit between Alvington and Aylburton will be reduced, but officials suggested they could re-examine.</li> </ul>	

**Driver safety:**

- Suggested measures to improve visibility splay at Church Lane.
- Proposal to add a solid yellow line along the bus stop opposite Swan and designate the bus stop on the road. No parking in front of Swan Tea Rooms.
- Street Lighting: This could be analysed in the aforementioned survey.
- Village gateway signage near garage: Officials agreed this could be improved.

**Parking:**

- Landowner identified as Two Rivers. Doubts about planning approval for In and Out dropped curbs. Suggestion to approach Two Rivers to ask them to consider paving with concrete 'mesh' slabs.

RH proposed pursuing the following measures:

- Improving the crossing island
- Improving visibility splay at Church Road/A48 junction.
- Solid yellow lines on Swan Hill westbound layby 'bus stop',
- Formalising the footway around the Globe Inn
- Applying for 20mph limits - queried whether this would include Garlands Road.

**b) To note any updates on Highways matters (see meeting pack).**

Noted – see also related updates in items 5 and 10a.

**068.  
23/24**

11. Finance.

**a) To ratify the payments made in August 2023:**

Ratified as follows.

M Humphries	Clerk Pay July 2023	£337.98
R Morgan	Churchyard grass July 2023	£228.00
R Morgan	Garlands Rd grass July 2023	£40.00
Alvington Mem. Hall	Hall hire for meetings 22-23	£176.00
Community Heartbeat T.	Defib battery – replacement due to expiry	£357.54
M Humphries	Reimbursement for stamps & envelopes	£8.35
R Heys	Reimbursement for Multisolve	£14.54
G Thompson	Reimbursement for fun day rosettes	£21.00
M Humphries	Reimbursement for fun day flyers	£53.43
N Powell	Reimb. for coconut shy stock for fun day	£60.60
N Powell	Reimbursement for fun day event stock	£380.96
R Heys	Reimbursement for postage for solicitor docs	£7.65
CASH	Fun day floats	£280.00

**b) To approve the payments for September.**

Approved as follows. Cllrs GT and NB to authorise online.

Meg Humphries	Clerk Pay August 2023	£337.98
Richard Morgan	Grass – Churchyard August 2023	£114.00
Richard Morgan	Grass – Garlands Rd August 2023	£20.00
Forest Equipment Svcs	Dog bins Q1 of 23-24	£158.40
GAPTC	Internal Audit 22/23	£180.00
FoDDC	Election costs – May 2023 (uncontested)	£211.80

**c) To note the receipt of income received since the last meeting.**

Noted as follows.

03/07/2023	Fun Day pitch hire – EW	£10.00
10/07/2023	Bank interest	£23.04

	17/07/2023	Fun Day pitch hire – LL	£10.00	
	17/07/2023	Fun Day pitch hire – LC	£10.00	
	17/07/2023	Fun Day pitch hire – BD	£10.00	
	24/07/2023	Fun Day pitch hire – ED	£10.00	
	25/07/2023	Fun Day takings + return of floats	£1459.15	
	27/07/2023	Fun Day pitch hire – JP	£22.50	
	07/08/2023	HMRC – VAT reclaim	£1387.58	
	09/08/2023	Bank interest	£24.23	
<b>068. 23/24</b>	<b>12. To note correspondence for information.</b>			
	Noted.			
<b>068. 23/24</b>	<b>13. Council</b>			
	<b>a) To receive the Clerk’s Report.</b>			
	Noted.			
	<p>The Clerk announced that she intends to leave the role at the end of December 2023, in order to focus on her main job role. The remaining months should allow ample time for finding a suitable replacement, with flexibility to adjust the timeline if a great fit is found sooner.</p> <p>She expressed her gratitude for the support and good humour of the councillors. A short discussion about the transition and related details took place.</p>			
	<b>b) To receive councillors’ reports and items for future agendas.</b>			
	None at this time.			
	<b>c) To note the date of the next full council meeting: Thursday 5th October 2023 at 7.30 pm.</b>			
	Noted.			

Meeting closed: 9.27 pm.

Signed: ..... (Chairman)      Date: .....