

ALVINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly meeting held on Thursday 6th April 2023, 7.30 p.m. at Alvington Memorial Hall

PRESENT: Cllr Alan Haslam (Chairman)
Cllr Richard Heys (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Nick Powell
Cllr Nathan Burlton

ATTENDING: Alec Davis, John Wood, Chris Shill, Gary Baseley,
Keith Haylock, Cllr Chris McFarling (District and County
Councillor), Meg Humphries (Clerk)

No/Ref	Item/Notes	A
APA 01 23/24	1. To receive apologies for absence. Cllr Thompson sent her apologies. Accepted.	
APA 02 23/24	2. Welcome. Cllr Haslam welcomed everyone to the 2023 Annual Parish Assembly. He also took the opportunity to officially announce his retirement from parish council work as he would not be standing again in the May elections.	
APA 03 23/24	3. To approve the accuracy of the 2022 Annual Parish Assembly Minutes. Approved unanimously and signed by Cllr Haslam.	
APA 04 23/24	<p>4. Parish Council Chairman's Annual Report. Cllr Haslam gave the Chairman's Annual Report for 2023 as follows.</p> <p><u>Chairman's Annual Report Parish Meeting April 2023</u></p> <p>Firstly it is my duty to inform you that after a little over 7 years as a Parish Councillor and 6 years as the Chair of the Council I have decided to step down as a Councillor and, therefore, will not be standing for re-election in May.</p> <p>I have enjoyed my time on the Parish Council immensely and I believe we have achieved much within this time. I have many other interests and responsibilities outside of the Parish Council which are taking up more and more of my time and I do not believe I can devote the time and effort needed to continue as an active Councillor. It is time for the younger members of our community to take up the reigns. I must add that I have found the last year rather frustrating particularly with the District Planning Department over the construction of the new houses in Clanna Lane and with Gloucester Highways with regard to the proposed Zebra crossing. Both issues, I am sure, will continue to receive the attention required by the remaining council members.</p> <p>Throughout the last year your Parish Council has continued to work hard to maintain and improve the various assets in the village and the council itself has been stable with no changes of personnel during this time. We have a good team that work well together, and I want to express particular thanks to Richard who in the position of vice-Chair has been a tremendous support to me particularly during this last year as I have begun to step back. I also want to express special thanks to Meg as Clerk to the council who has been by my side during much of my time as a councillor.</p>	

During 2022/23 we were able to raise further funds towards both the Pavilion project and the proposed Zebra crossing. We are continually grateful to REACR (the Wind Turbine fund) and various private enterprises for their support of these projects. Special thanks to our County Councillor (Chris McFarling) for his support and contributions from various funds that he controls. All of this has allowed us to make real progress with both these very large projects and I am sure Richard Heys will give more information on progress on the Pavilion project within his report as Chair of the Sports Field Committee.

A number of work days were organised through the year to expand the car park at the Sports Field in preparation for work to commence on the pavilion. My thanks to all those involved, particularly those members of the Cricket Club that turned up to help. A special mention to Nick for the grass cutting at the Sports Field, since the Cricket Club took over the responsibility for keeping the grass mowed a few years ago it has made a real difference and it saves us money! I would also like to make a special mention of our dog bin specialist, Nathan, who is always available for work days and has done a great job in replacing, repairing and repositioning the dog bins in the village.

There has also been considerable work done to keep the Church yard looking tidy and my thanks to Chris Shill and John & Gail Woods particularly for all the work they have done in clearing the hedge rows. I am aware many others have helped with this and forgive me if I don't mention you all by name but I would like to mention John and Heather Rogers who are always willing to haul away all the trimmings and dispose of them.

It wouldn't be right to forget all the effort Alec has put in to help us get a lot of work done on the footpaths around the village. His continually updated report on the state of the footpaths has been invaluable.

Finally, a note of thanks also to the trustees of the Memorial Hall for their work in maintaining this facility on behalf of the village, particularly the long standing and hard-working duo of Jonathan and Terry. Without their continued support of the Memorial Hall, it would not be the asset to the village that it surely is.

The Fun Day organised by the Parish Council was once again a very successful event in 2022 and plans are already underway for 2023. We were also able to hold another Quiz and Pudding night and for the first time a Craft Fair in 2022 which were also well supported. All proceeds from these events are ring fenced for the pavilion project. To mark the coronation of King Charles on May 6th we will be lighting the Beacon and hope to have food and drink available to make an evening of community celebration.

Looking forward to 2023/24 four key areas remain the focus of the council: -

1. Work on securing a truly safe pedestrian crossing in the village.
2. Despite some work by Severn Trent Water to alleviate sewage discharge and flooding more work is necessary and we will continue to press for a more permanent solution. Repeated discharge of untreated sewage which ends up in the River Severn is also a major concern.
3. We should see some real progress on the construction of the pavilion during the coming year. Having secured planning to build in two stages the initial focus will be on bringing power and water onto the site. Funds are available and quotations for the work have already been requested.
4. Work continues with Highways, Police and the owners of the Globe to come up with a lasting solution to the anti-social and often dangerous parking associated with visitors to

	<p>the Globe Public house. An application for double yellow lines from the junction of Clanna Lane and Main Road up to Garlands Road is going through public consultation along with other Highways projects in Gloucestershire and it is hoped this work will be finally completed during the coming year.</p>	
<p>APA 05 23/24</p>	<p>5. Reports from local organisations.</p> <p>Scouts: Mark Westwood, Group Scout Leader for Aylburton & Lydney, attended in person and gave a report. He highlighted that the group was now the oldest and now biggest in the Forest of Dean. It has over 120 members aged 4-14. There was a trip to Belgium last year, and plans for a Netherlands trip this year. All adults are volunteers, and the group don't get any funding; everything is funding through subscriptions.</p> <p>Cllr Powell gave a report on Alvington and Woolaston Cricket Club: Only 1 game was cancelled in 2022. AWCC won 8, lost 8, and tied one. The tie was exactly 200 runs, 40 overs. They beat all the teams that the club felt they should be beating. Cllr Powell thanked Cllr Heys for turning up and helping out. He commented on how much paperwork was required to run the club this year, and that it got worse every year. The hunt for new players continues, and the club are hoping for a decent season in 2023.</p> <p>Memorial Hall report: Jonathan Thompson (Chairman of the committee) sent a report by email: "Bookings are few and far between. The Facebook page is now more active which has led to some bookings for children's parties. We have felled 5 dead trees and planted new walnut trees to replace them. Work is ongoing to tidy up the car park. I would like to thank the village hall committee for all their hard work over the year."</p> <p>Woolaston Primary School: Cllr Heys gave a report. In 2022 the school completed its federation with Tutshill. The relationship has grown and is going very well. Cllr Heys reported that he intends to stand down from Chair of the Governors in July. The previous Ofsted was in 2019 and the result was "requires improvement", so the school is anticipating an inspection in 2023. It's very clear that the children who were young during lockdown are facing more of an uphill struggle, and Cllr Heys anticipates that the results won't be as strong as all the school's efforts might usually result in.</p> <p>Alvington bellringers: Practice takes place on Monday nights. Alvington is a "surprisingly youthful" band. A Forest of Dean band was recently formed, with Alvington making up about 50% of it. The group are now ringing on Sundays.</p> <p>St Andrews Church: Sue Rickards (Church Warden) sent the following via email: As Church Warden I would like to thank the parish council and volunteers for the upkeep of our very pretty Church Yard, I appreciate it and I know visitors and village folk do too. If you see me wondering through from time to time I like to discard flowers and wreaths that have gone over particularly from graves where people come from afar just to keep it all tidy.</p> <p>Cllr Heys gave a report on the pavilion project: Inflation and the economic situation has created challenging fundraising conditions. The Jubilee event in 2022 raised £321, and the fun day raised £826. The quiz night raised £186, and the craft fair raised £59. Various generous donations have also been received. This means the total received in donations and grants stands currently at £67,185. While impressive, Cllr Heys acknowledged that the quantity surveyors had estimated build costs at around £300k. Cllr Heys announced that the buildings regulations first draft documents were now ready to review. Cllr Heys reminded the meeting that the 2023 fun day is on Sunday 23rd July, and he is looking</p>	

	forward to seeing everyone there. Currently the committee are pursuing works to connect electricity and water, along with the necessary legal agreements.	
APA 06 23/24	<p>6. To receive the financial report for 2022/23.</p> <p>Cllr Heys presented the key figures from the Year End reports to the meeting. The council is in a strong financial position. (The figures can be found at https://alvingtonvillage.org/finance-assets-and-transparency/)</p>	
APA 07 23/24	<p>7. Open forum.</p> <p>Cllr McFarling gave a report, although he advised that it was smaller than his usual report due to being in the pre-election period for the district council. He wished Cllr Haslam the best and remarked that Alvington Parish Council meetings were very well run, being easy to come to, easy to contribute to. He commended Cllr Haslam for his contribution to this, and also the solid relationship between clerk and chair and that cascades to all members.</p> <p>Cllr McFarling expressed that he shared the frustration in lack of progress on matters in the village.</p> <p>Tudor Cottages sewage overflow: £38,000 has so far been spent on an overflow pipe to help prevent overflow onto the land, but the pipe is only as good as the number of times Severn Trent clean it up. Flow monitors have now been installed. Cllr McFarling acknowledged that the sewers are a Victorian system trying to deal with modern demands.</p> <p>Bloomery Court: Cllr McFarling reported that a FoDDC Enforcement officer will ensure that the overlooking windows are fixed closed before signing off. The developer has applied to vary conditions regarding gas storage, and they have installed two dropped kerbs.</p> <p>Alec Davis asked about flooding, and Cllr McFarling advised that the flood risk should now is similar to flooding before development, but that the Enforcement team planned to engage a flooding expert to check.</p> <p>Finally, regarding the zebra crossing. Cllr McFarling agreed that there had been unacceptable delays and lack of response from Gloucestershire Highways. Some of the officers seemingly responsible had now left the council. He noted that the parish council had sent a letter to Pete Bungard. He remarked that he felt the way forward would be to challenge national guidance to benefit rural communities, who currently don't have the numbers but do have a right to cross the roads safely. Cllr McFarling noted that he wants to work with officers, not fight them.</p>	
APA 08 23/24	<p>8. To consider the 2024 parish assembly date.</p> <p>The date of the 2024 Annual Parish Assembly was provisionally agreed as Thursday 4th April 2024.</p>	

Meeting ended: 8.08 pm.

Signed:..... (Chairman)

Date:.....