**ALRESFORD PARISH COUNCIL**

**Parish Council Meeting**

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the** Wednesday 7th of February 2024.

**Held at 7.30pm the Pavilion, Ford Lane, Alresford**

**Cllrs. Present:** Cllr. F. Belgrove (Chairman), Cllr E. Osborne (Vice Chairman), Cllr L Belgrove, Cllr A Broom, Cllr J Claremont-Brown, Cllr. A. Wiggins.

Also present: The Clerk, county councillor A Goggin, Members of the public x10

**Meeting opens:** 19.30 hrs transacting the following business:

**Minutes from the Published Agenda**

**02.24.016 Announcements -** Chairman makes an introduction to the Essex County Council minerals and waste local planning review, and of particular local concern are sites A67 Church Farm, and A71Lodge Farm. The sites proposed are close to residential areas, 2 schools, residential care, areas of biodiversity, and historic significance. Cllr E Osborne points out that this matter affects every home in the village and every resident. He mentions how homeowners amenity and investments will be impacted significantly. Cllr J Claremont-Brown agrees 100% with Cllr Osborne and adds that the manner in which extract is to be removed of major concern with the inadequacy of the haul road for purpose and the inability to bring it up to current regulation. Cllr Osborne adds that Alresford is an Island surrounded by mineral extraction sites. Cllr L Belgrove adds a note of positivity that residents are already in receipt of the councils letters and information, and that residents within the consultation zone have also been informed by Essex County Council. She adds that as a village, the residents and council have faced this before and are equipped to face it again. Essentially council and residents need to be persuasive and evidence why it is inappropriate at the proposed village sites.

Cllr F Belgrove proposed under standing order 10 section 9, that an informal vote be taken of those who oppose the proposals. This is carried unanimously. Cllr F Belgrove proposes the prior 2011 action group be reformed as a council sub-committee comprising Cllr F Belgrove, Cllr E Osborne, Cllr S Clark and Member of the public Mr C Sanderson, with delegated powers to formulate councils collective response. Seconded Cllr A Broom, carried. Action Committee now formally convened. Cllr Osborne proposes a generic letter be prepared for delivery to households in the village. Cllr F Belgrove agrees and this will be part of the surgery.

Cllr A Broom and Cllr J Claremont-Brown express an interest in involvement over site a71 Lodge Farm, highlighting its proximity to their already impacted addresses, and the fact that they were not sent consultation letters. Cllr J Claremont -Brown asks for the proposal maps to be distributed.

Cllr F Belgrove announces a residents surgery to be held in the Village Hall with councillors to advise on framing the collective response. This will be held Saturday February 17th from 10am until 2pm.

**Action:** Clerk to upload documents to the Parish Council website.

Cllr F belgrove announces the final deadline for submissions to the consultation review will be March 19th. Action: the Clerk to upload Maps, Response documents and links to the Parish Council website.

Cllr F Belgrove announces that a casual vacancy will be advertised by the 20th of the month for co-option of a councillor. 2 CV’s have already been received into the Parish Office.

Cllr F Belgrove announces the receipt of residents thanks for the council installing paving slabs at the bench adjacent to the bus stop on the Wivenhoe Road. Likewise expressing thanks from other residents in regard to the kerbstones replaced and extending those thanks to County Councillor A Goggin for his support.

**02.24.017 Apologies for Absence.**

Cllr V Dalzell, Cllr G Scott, Cllr B Swash, Cllr S Clark.

**02.24.018 Minutes of the last monthly meeting:** To review and consider the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 3rd of January 2024.

Proposed Cllr J Claremont-Brown, seconded Cllr A Broom, Carried, 1 abstention.

**02.24.019 Declarations of Interest.** Councillors present to declare pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in agenda items. No declarations of interest from members present

**02.24.020 Public Forum** This council is committed to community engagement and welcomes members of the public to contribute in this part of the meeting. Time limit 3 mins per person. Item limited to 10 minutes.

**During the public forum:** Members of the public and guests can address the Council on matters presented on the publicised agenda. Council can only take decisions on agenda items. Matters raised that are not on the agenda can be carried forward for a response later. Any questions not presented to the council far enough in advance may be noted and responded to at another time.

**After the public forum:** Members of the public are asked to respect that this is a meeting to conduct council business and interruptions during the remainder of the meeting are not permitted.

A first member of the public speaks suggesting that the VAS sign is now being ignored and speeds are increasing. Can the sign be relocated? Suggesting that the PCSO in discussion agreed with their summary.

The same member of the public asks if a central collection point for letters of objection can be arranged. Cllr F Belgrove responds informing the speaker that there is a freepost address for responses.

The member of the public then states that the signs on station road require attention. Cllr Belgrove highlights the agenda item relating to this.

A second member of the public speaks, asking why the neighbourhood plan and local plan do not mention minerals and waste restrictions. Cllr F Belgrove states that doing this would have been scrutinized further by Planning authorities. Cllr L Belgrove states that quarrying falls under planning exemptions and can fall under compulsory purchase orders, which prevent councils from creating restrictive covenants, offering council no choice as a statutory consultee. Quarries and essential identified services cannot be restricted through adopted policies such as a neighbourhood or local plan. The member of the public then asks to what extent there is a financial contribution to the community from extraction. Again it is stated by councillors that such covenants cannot be put into place by adopted plans.

A third member of the pubic speaks to inform all present that the Swimming pool project has raised £47,000 so far and there is more fund raising ongoing.

A fourth member of the public offers to help co-ordinate, take, collate and collect letters to elderly and disabled residents who wish to have their say on the consultation. Cllr L Belgrove thanks the resident for their kind generosity.

The second member of the public who spoke adds that the Village Hall committee had discussed solar panels and that there are insurance implications for battery storage. Cllr F Belgrove adds that there is an agenda item and that battery storage will not be a consideration of any system fitted to the Pavilion.

A fifth member of the public asks if all house holds were informed and consulted over the quarry proposals, and cllr F Belgrove responds to inform them that it is only specific residences within a specified radius that were informed by Essex County Council. Indeed he goes on to explain that the District Councillors, and the Parish Council did not receive any email to their inboxes informing them of the proposal prior to the letters received by those within the 250m radius. The member of the public then suggests that the proposals will impact transport significantly and that this could and should be a primary focus of objection.

They add that the site work on the Alresford Viaduct (railway bridge on the B1027) which are due to be in place for up to four more years will also add to the disturbance residents of the village would endure.

The chairman draws the public forum to a close.

Cllr A Wiggins arrives from another meeting 19:45hrs

* + 1. **Finance Matters.**

January 2024 Finance Report - Council to review and consider. Cllr F Belgrove announces an item to add of 1500 letters printed at a cost of £135.00

Proposed to accept Finance Report, Cllr L Belgrove, seconded Cllr J Claremont-Brown, carried.

* + 1. **Sunnymede Quarry (Tarmac**) - Chairman to report on the new quarry site and the implications for transport in the area. Cllr F Belgrove reads a statement from Essex County Council Planning received in regard to Sunnymede Quarry to those present. He states that 2 x County Councillors will be liaising and reporting back to impacted parish councils (Elmstead Market and Alresford).
    2. **Playing Field Hard Court,** repairs and re-surfacing with "safe" surface materials. Council to consider the obtaining of quotations. (S106 grant funding to be sought). Cllr E Osborne suggests quotes for a 4G or 5G surface may be prohibitive, Cllr F Belgrove responds that such surfaces are not good for Tennis or Basketball and that a specific wet pour soft surface may be more appropriate. It is proposed to seek quotes: Cllr L Belgrove, seconded Cllr A Wiggins, Carried.
    3. **Cockaynes Lane:** Update on the progress and process for obtaining Quiet Lane status. Cllr F Belgrove introduces and discusses the proactive and productive online meeting held with Essex County Council Highways, and an agreement in principle to not object to the proposal.
    4. **Mobile Phone Signal** problems experienced by some residents in Alresford. Council to decide on any further actions. (chairman to read OFCOM response). Cllr F Belgrove goes on to state that the OFCOM response indicates that if there are issues with broadband or mobile phone providers individuals or the Parish Council should approach the specific companies who provide the service(s).
    5. **Council to appoint Auditor for end of year AGAR submission**. The clerk recommends to council the appointment of Jan Stobbart for the second year. Cllr A Broom advises not to let an auditor get too comfortable and that it is good practice to change auditor frequently. It is agreed that in the 25/26 audit Council should make an effort to consider options and that in this financial year 24/25 council will accept the clerks recommendation.
    6. **Noise disturbance in the community**. Council to consider what actions may be taken to ensure businesses comply with planning requirements to limit noise.
    7. **Updates:** Bus Stop Lighting, Toilet block.
    8. **Utility Contracts:** Council to review received quote(s), discuss and approve action(s). The clerk reports on the Responsible Financial Officers findings and recommends to council that council remains with Octopus energy given their commitment to buy back from solar generation with lingering questions remaining over alternative providers commitment to purchasing excess energy generation. This recommendation given in light of the project covered in item 30. Proposed to take the RFO Advice, Cllr F Belgrove, seconded Cllr A Wiggins, Carried.
    9. **Council considered** the three quotations for the installation of Solar Panels on the Pavilion roof and installation of supporting electrical supply equipment. Cllr F Belgrove introduced the item. Cllr F Belgrove clarified that there is to be no battery storage, that excess production will be sold back to the grid. Cllr A Broom identified the best solution on cost per KwH. Sunlite group is recommended by the chair as the best option. Grant and match funding to be sought. Proposed Cllr L Belgrove, Seconded Cllr E Osborne, Carried unanimously to award the contract to Sunlite Group Ltd (subject to funding).
    10. **Use of playing field** by non-affiliated sports groups. Council to consider the matter.

Cllr E Osborne is vehemently against these for[profit trainers using our facility. How do we identify and stop the issue though? Cllrs discuss the issue and advise a kindly and gentle initial approach to those identified offering training for reward as it is possible they do not know. Situation to be monitored and liaise with ACRFC as stakeholders.

* + 1. **Additional Floodlight(s)** requested for night-time use of playing field training area.

Council to consider a suggested expenditure of £250 (possible match funding and/or S106 funding to draw upon). Cllr F Belgrove introduces, and suggests a budget of £250 to be provided by council towards the project. Proposed Cllr A Broom, seconded Cllr J Claremont-Brown. Carried.

* + 1. **Council to consider** renovating two road signs warning of low power cables at the approaches to the Coach Road railway level crossing. Suggested budget of £75 to refurbish two signs. Proposed Cllr A Wiggins, seconded Cllr J Claremont-Brown, carried.
    2. **Council to approve** poster design for engine "switch-off" at Coach Road level crossing. (Suggested design received from Greater Anglia). Cllr F Belgrove introduces and informs those present of the approved Network Rail and Greater Anglia poster design. Next step to apply to Network Rial for installation permission. Proposed to accept design and seek permission by Cllr L Belgrove, seconded Cllr E Osborne, carried
    3. **Council to Approve:** The purchase of Trees before the end of the financial year in order to utilise, the Tendring District Council grant money of £1000. Cllrs discuss the project and a suggestion is made that the haul road is considered for planting of trees. Proposed to purchase tree specimens by Cllr E Osborne, seconded Cllr J Claremont Brown, carried unanimously.
    4. **District Councillor’s report (Written Report)** and 5 min verbal report. Cllr A Wiggins gives verbal report of both district councillors work over the last month.
    5. **Essex County Council Public Notice** of 30mph and 40mph speed limits, order 202 for Alresford. Councillors to review, and invite County Councillor Alan Goggin to speak on the matter. Cllr Goggin discusses the review of speed limits and signage along the B1027 a 7-8year project in the making, focussing on the impact on Alresford. Cllr E Osborne thanks the county councillor for his efforts.

* + 1. **Essex County Councillor Report (Written Report)** and 5 min verbal report. County Councillor Goggin offers advice to council and members of the public present in using the Red Amber Green consultants reports in framing responses to the proposed aggregate extraction sites in the minerals and waste draft consultation for the land proposed for banking for building material extraction.
    2. **Parish Council to consider** making representations to Essex Police in relation to a failure to stop, road traffic collision (RTC) on the B1027 on July 29th 2023. It is proposed Council writes to Essex Police District Commander, Essex Police, Crime, and Fire Commissioner, and the head of operational policing that deals with Traffic. Cllr L Belgrove agrees that the incident could have led to an increased fatality number on the B1027. Cllr F Belgrove states that the incident was not logged as a failure to stop, remaining as an RTC. Cllr L Belgrove states that this matter needs raising by letter to request a meeting with operational team, and Cllr F Belgrove suggests that an invitation is made to the deputy police crime and fire commissioner Jane Gardner. Proposed Cllr F Belgrove, seconded Cllr L Belgrove, Carried. **Action:** Clerk to write to the Deputy Police Fire and Crime Commissioner and the head of Essex Police Operations division.
    3. **PCSO/Police Report**. Policing update and PCSO crime report. Cllr F Belgrove mentions British Transport Police have been in contact relating to station issues and operations.
    4. **Clerks Report.**
    5. **Meeting Ends 21:24hrs**

Prepared by the Clerk/Proper Officer: Matt Cooke. 21.02. 24

Chairman’s signature: