

Abbots Langley Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 11th July 2022 at 7.00 pm in Council Chambers, Abbots Langley Parish Council, Council Office, Langley Road, Abbots Langley, WD5 0EJ.

Those Present:

Chairman: Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst

Councillors: Councillor Jon Andrews
Councillor Sara Bedford
Councillor Ruth Clark
Councillor Jane Lay
Councillor David Major
Councillor Robin Powell
Councillor Owen Roe
Councillor Jon Tankard

Officers: Isabel Montesdeoca - Chief Officer & Clerk to the Council

Police:

Others: Mr Peter Warman - Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

The meeting opened at 7:30 pm.

78. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received, accepted and recorded from Councillors Liz Burns, Simon Stanley, John Swallow, and John Wyatt (all unavailable).

79. Declarations of Interest

None.

80. Public Participation

None.

81. Chairman's Report

Chairman thanked all Parish Council officers and staff for their efforts on the Queen's Jubilee events. The Jubilee events were seen as a huge success by residents and have been much commented on and appreciated by residents.

Chairman's engagements, 9th May to 11th July, 2022

- 13th May: Abbots Langley Scouts AGM
- 18th May: Tough Ten Charity Cricket Match; Kings Langley. Presentation of new trophy donated by the Chairman 'The Chairman's Platinum Jubilee Trophy'.
- 19th May: Jubilee Working Party
- 19th May: Allotment Society AGM and presentation of awards
- 26th May: Jubilee Working Party
- 1st June: Jubilee Shop Front judging and awards
- 2nd June: Abbots Langley Platinum Jubilee Celebration Event including Beacon Lighting
- 2nd June: Attended Follett Drive Jubilee Party
- 3rd June: Attended Tudor Manor Garden Jubilee Party
- 4th June: Jubilee Service St Lawrence's Abbots Langley and afternoon tea
- 5th June: Abbots Langley Big Jubilee Lunch hosted by Watford Lions, awarded medals
- 8th June: Watford North Scouts AGM at Abbots Langley
- 9th June: Jubilee events Working Party review
- 11th June: Abbots Langley Carnival, judged floats and lead parade

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- 2nd July: Leavesden Hospital Staff Reunion, YMCA
- 2nd July: Leavesden Hospital Service of Thanks and Remembrance East Lane Cemetery
- 7th July: Chaired Joint Parish's meeting
- 9th July: Tanners Wood, Abbeyfield West Herts Society - 50 Years Party
- 10th July: Furtherfield Summer Social

In addition, Chairman has chaired disciplinary hearing, and presented ALPC Staff with a Jubilee coin in a presentation pack (with thanks to the Facilities Manager).

82. Hertfordshire Police

(update provided in advance via email by PS 488 Jon Brown)

In the absence of the Police, the Chairman read out the written report from Sgt Brown as follows:

"Below are some crime statistics for April, May and June compared to the same period in 2021. It is worth noting that during the same period in 2021 we were in lockdown due to Covid for a significant period of that time so a slight increase was to be expected. That said, we are keen to ensure that the crime figures do not rise further and have a number of on-going operations and projects within the local area to prevent crime and to deter any potential offenders.

- Criminal Damage

39 this year compared to 38 the previous year.

- Burglary (Business and/or residential)

17 this year compared to 11 the previous year. In response to this additional patrols were put in place and we have begun to see a decrease again.

- Possession of weapons

2 this year compared to 1 the previous year.

- Theft (not vehicle related)

51 this year compared to 44 the previous year. We had a spate in April around one store and those offences have now also decreased.

- Vehicle crime

28 this year compared to 25 the previous year.

- Anti-Social Behaviour incidents (across the whole of Three Rivers as these figures are not specific to AL)

331 this year compared to 464 the previous year - a fairly significant reduction.

- All Crime

ALL CRIME for this year is at 280 compared to 269 the previous year so overall not a significant increase.

The Safer Neighbourhood Team priorities have been reviewed and changed accordingly to target matters that the community have indicated their concerns around via our ECHO feedback platform along with any increase in crime / ASB that we have identified.

The priorities are now:

- Speeding - Bedmond Road in towards Abbots Langley. We will continue to conduct speed enforcement across the whole of our area rather than just this one location.

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- ASB / Drugs - Manor House Park. There have been a few incidents that we have been made aware of or identified ourselves and ahead of the summer months we want to ensure that this does not become a significant issue in the local community.
- ASB / Theft - School Mead. There had been an increase in theft offences and anti-social behaviour and we are increasing our patrols and working with relevant partners to tackle these issues.

The priorities will be reviewed again in three months time."

Members requested the Clerk write to Sgt Jon Brown to thank him for the statistics and to make him aware of the following issues members would like to bring to the police's attention:

- Parking on the Pavement - Members continue to hear about this and see this as a serious issue for residents with disabilities or young children. They understand it is not on the police's priority list but want the police to be aware that it remains high on the list of priorities for residents.
- Low-level Anti-Social Behaviour - Some residents of Bedmond village recently shared with members they have been experiencing low level anti-social behaviour on their doorsteps, eg plants being damaged, trees being broken, and notice boards being smashed. Members have encouraged these residents to report these incidents to the police and believe this has been done.
- Damage to Parked Cars - Members have become aware of a few incidents of cars parked on the street being hit by cars during the night and seriously damaged. Members want to know if the police have any local statistics on this type of crime.

83. To confirm the Minutes of the Parish Council Meetings

It was proposed by Councillor Ruth Clark, seconded by Councillor Jane Lay and RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 9th May 2022 and 22nd June 2022, copies of which had been sent to all members of the Parish Council prior to the meeting, be taken as read and were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

84. Minutes for adoption

The following committee minutes were adopted, approved for publication on the Council's website and passed to the committees for resolution.

Planning & Highways Committee - 18th May, 8th June, 29th June 2022

Staffing Committee - 15th June 2022

Leisure Committee - 22nd June 2022

85. Appointments to Other Bodies

i. HAPTC Executive Committee

No members volunteered for this appointment. Members asked the Chief Officer & Clerk to keep this item on the agenda for the next Parish Council meeting.

86. Breakspeare School Site

(Member submitted motion - Councillor Sara Bedford)

Councillor Sara Bedford described the purpose and process for registering a property as an asset of Community Value and highlighted the potential benefits of registering Breakspeare School as such, as described under Part 5 Chapter 3 of the Localism Act 2011. Councillor Bedford also highlighted the application process would require research into the historical use of the school by the community.

It was proposed by Councillor Sara Bedford, seconded by Councillor Jon Tankard and RESOLVED that the Chief Officer & Clerk should submit an Assets of Community Value Nomination Form to Three Rivers District Council for Breakspeare School.

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A vote was taken and agreement was unanimous.

87. Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan

- i. Members noted the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Report from the Chairman of the Steering Group. The work schedule is proceeding as per his last report.

Members thanked Peter Warman for his work on the Abbots Langley Village Master Plan and coordination and delivery of the Abbots Langley Village forums.

- ii. Members noted the presentation made by Peter Warman on the Abbots Village Master Plan and work schedule.

88. Queen's Jubilee Beacon Event

Members noted the final budget report for the above. The Chief Officer & Clerk confirmed £400 in pitch fees collected from the vendors at the event were donated to the Tough Ten Charity by ALPC on behalf of vendors, as per written instructions received from the vendors.

Councillor Sara Bedford expressed huge thanks to all the ALPC staff who put in immense time, effort, imagination, skill and graft in the planning and execution of the event. They went above and beyond and it would not have been such an amazing event without their efforts.

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst also thanked the Facilities manager and Chief Officer & Clerk for the time and effort it took to organise the shop front competition. Councillor Giles-Medhurst also congratulated the Facilities manager and the Manor House Bar staff on the venue's most successful sales event to date.

89. District and County Council Member's Reports

Councillor Ruth Clark

Councillor Ruth Clark noted the parking consultations that have been run in her ward. Although the number of responses received was lower than normal, all responses were unanimous in their desire to see something done to alleviate the parking issues. TRDC is now investigating what parking control measures can be recommended TRDC for adoption.

Councillor Clark also noted there had been some confusion over the upkeep and maintenance of verges in her ward. This has now been clarified and the said verges are once again being mowed.

Councillor Jon Tankard

Councillor Jon Tankard noted the TRDC rewilding program has started. Officers are now entering in a period of observation waiting to see what where there is more / less fertile growth before adjusting plans. Progress is due to be reviewed in the autumn.

Councillor Tankard stated the Warner Brothers planning application will go through to council in Sep or Oct. Concerns have been expressed by residents regarding the excessive traffic that will be caused by the development should it go ahead but there has also been support from residents for the project. Councillor Tankard confirmed he plans to attend the application meeting.

Councillor David Major

Nothing to report.

Councillor Sara Bedford

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Councillor Sara Bedford noted Parkrun will be launching a weekly event at Leavesden Country Park in September. Many volunteers are needed but every volunteer need not come along every week. If there are enough volunteers, each person is typically only needed once a month.

Most of the vegetation has been cut back by HCC on Bedmond Road. They have also cut back the vegetation on several footpaths in the area as well.

Due to the road closure signage for Toms Lane (4 weeks ago) being placed at either end of the road rather than closer to the location of the work (at the S-Bend) lorries were unable to access their business premises in Tom's Lane.

Councillor Bedford also noted there had been a successful fly-tipping prosecution in Abbots Langley and Bedmond School received a 'Good' OFSTEAD rating. She also is continuing to push Katherine Place to get them to take a more proactive approach to waste management and purchase bins with lids on them.

Councillor Bedford joined a tour of Leavesden Country park to see the progress made at the new rewilding sites and new growth / plants appearing there, including orchids and a dawn redwood. She is trying to get an interpretation board funded by the council to sit alongside these new areas to point out the new plants to visitors.

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst noted the Waterdale planning application is now in for the shredding plant. This application will be decided by HCC as the waste disposal authority, with ALPC as a statutory consultee. There will be subsequent applications submitted for a waste disposal plant on that site. Residents on Bucknall Lane have expressed concerns over the application, however, Councillor Giles-Medhurst shared the application is not to expand what is there but only to vastly improve on what is currently there.

90. Chief Officer & Clerk's Report

- i. Parish Council Vacancy Notice
Members noted TRDC's Election Officer has informed the Chief Officer & Clerk requests for an election have been received from at least ten electors in the Bedmond Ward. A bi-election must be called before 12th September 2022. Parish has put forward preferred date of 8th September 2022. This has not yet been confirmed.
- ii. Committee Terms of Reference
Members noted the Chief Officer & Clerk's recommendation that each Committee review its Terms of Reference at their next meeting.
- iii. Members Attendance - Six Month Rule
The Chief Officer & Clerk advised that no members were at risk of breaching the "six month rule" until October 2022.
- iv. Absence from Office
Members instructed the Chief Officer & Clerk to move all notices regarding staff annual leave to the weekly report to Councillors for reasons of safety.

91. Monthly Statement of Accounts

It was proposed by Councillor Sara Bedford and seconded by Councillor Jane Lay and RESOLVED that the Statement of Accounts for April, May and June 2022 as notified to the Council be approved and published on the Parish Council's website.

The Chief Officer & Clerk agreed to invite interested members to a discussion regarding issues relating to unauthorised play on Council pitches. The meeting is to be held prior to the next Leisure Committee meeting.

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92. Exclusion of the Press and Public (Part II)

It was proposed by Councillor Jane Lay and seconded by Councillor Robin Powell and RESOLVED that as the following matters related to on-going claims by the Parish Council, the press and public be excluded from the discussion, under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and the Local Government Act 1972, s100m and 102.

93. Henderson Hall - Shared Boundary Damages

Members noted the verbal report from the Clerk.

Members instructed the Chief Officer & Clerk to seek further legal advice and if found to be necessary, pursue a small claim on behalf of the Council for the cost of repairs to the alleyway between Henderson Hall and 38 High Street, Abbots Langley and associated legal costs.

A vote taken and it was unanimous.

The meeting closed at 8:58 pm.

Signed: _____

Dated: _____