

OLD ALRESFORD PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE OLD ALRESFORD PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL
PARISH ASSEMBLY HELD ON THE 26TH APRIL 2022 AT 7.30.P.M.

PRESENT:

COUNCILLOR B. TUCKER CHAIRMAN OLD ALRESFORD PARISH COUNCIL
PARISH COUNCILLORS MRS. S. CORNFORD AND MRS. J. TICKNER
CITY COUNCILLORS MS. M. POWER AND MS F. ISAACS

Together with 19 parishioners.

Mrs. R. R. Smith. Clerk to the Parish Council.

WELCOME The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

APOLOGIES: Apologies from 7 Parishioners, County Councillor Mrs. J. Porter and City Councillor R. Gordon-Smith.

MINUTES OF THE ZOOM ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON THE 29th APRIL 2021.

Minutes of the meeting held on the 29th April 2021 having been circulated were approved and signed.

CHAIR'S REPORT AGM 2022

I've been presenting my annual report every year since 1996. This time it's a bit different since it's my last one.

I often explain to people that I've continued to be on the Parish Council since 1994 because no one else wants to do it. It's almost like that this year since only four parishioners nominated themselves. I'd rashly expected an avalanche of offers – especially since we've seen a number of houses change hands in the village.

I've been very grateful to Sandra and Julie for supporting me these last months since Tim Walker Arnott and Lynsey Robinson regrettably had to resign on moving from the village. Special thanks to Sandra and Julie for organising the refreshments tonight.

I'm also grateful to the 18 fellow parish councillors who have served with me over the years. And a particular mention of Clive Hancock who served 16 years on the Parish Council.

Above all, we could not have continued without the wise and expert help of our Parish Clerk Bobbie Smith MBE has been in post for 19 years and we always rely on her for guidance and a thoroughly efficient delivery of agenda, minutes and all the other things the parish clerk has to do. Sadly, she is retiring in September and will be very much missed. She has generously delayed her resignation until then in order to help the post-May new Parish

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As always, we have had the expertise and help of our County Councillor Jackie Porter and the three City Councillors Margot Power, Russell Gordon Smith and Fiona Isaacs. One or more of them have attended our meetings and made themselves available to smooth the link between us and city and county.

Hugo Fox Company provide us with a free website where Parish Council Minutes are posted and where messages are often sent for the Parish Council. We also have a list of 118 email addresses which we circularise with news and information.

I'm summing up briefly I hope the reports on Environment, Highways and Planning on the agenda

We are responsible for the two play areas on the Green and in Kiln Lane; we ensure that the Green and surrounds are cut regularly, the stream cleared, the footpaths kept clear of vegetation.

The Christy Hall is owned by the PC and the Hall Committee is responsible for its upkeep and for overseeing its use. It is also responsible for the car park and the Hall exterior. Sandra is our representative on that Committee and will report on it.

The Parish Council is asked for its views on planning applications. We usually try to contact any neighbours likely to be affected. We can only make a comment – decisions are made by Winchester City Council.

I'm sure we were all happy to see the demise of Alresford Salads. For years their artics and other vehicles have thundered along the Bighton Road. Rumour has it that the site has been bought. In recent months we have objected to the application to construct two buildings on the site and supported the restoring of two cottages there to domestic use.

We are still being unsuccessful in getting the road surface along the Great Weir repaired. We can only suggest that motorists continue to report the various potholes via the HCC website. We can perhaps wear down Hampshire Highways.

We are still waiting to hear what is happening at Old Alresford Place. The house dates from the seventeenth century, originally the rectory of the church, then a private house and more recently the offices of the Diocese of Winchester and a conference centre. It would be disastrous if it did not become a conference centre, care home or a hotel for example. It is one of the historic buildings in the Parish.

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It's good to be able to report that, after many months of dragged out negotiations and delays in deliveries, the new speed camera has been installed and we have three places where we can put it to avoid motorists getting used to any one position.

Ewan Gardner has been an enormous help, having kindly taken on himself the job of assembling the camera and getting it going. We need volunteers to take on the task of putting the camera in position every fortnight or so.

Unfortunately, the camera currently languishes on its post near the flagpole since we are still waiting for HCC to give us the final permission to switch it on.

After this Annual Parish Assembly there will be the final ordinary Parish Council meeting. Then the Parish Council will come out of limbo for its first meeting on 24 May when the four elected members will need to start the process of co-opting a fifth member.

CHRISTY HALL

Councillor Mrs. S. Cornford gave a report on the work of the Committee which runs and manages the Hall on behalf of the Parish Council. Despite two difficult years when the Hall was closed it was pleasing to note that the hall is now very busy with bookings. These are vital for the running of the facility as the income is needed to keep the facility in good working order. She thanked everyone who supported the facility and making gifts and donations to the Hall Committee.

FINANCIAL REPORT

The Financial report for the year to 31st March 2022 had been distributed. The accounts are presented subject to both internal and external audit. There will be an opportunity for Parishioners to comment to the External Auditor during the Audit in June/July 2022. A notice to this effect will appear on the noticeboard and website. The major cost this financial year had been for the new speed camera and work that had to be carried out to ensure that the posts on which it is mounted were safe – some had to be replaced. Once all the costs have been met the final cost will be around £3,800.00

APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR

The Council appointed Mr. M. Thwaites as Internal Auditor.

COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

County Councillor Mrs. Jackie Porter had submitted a written report.

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CITY COUNCILLORS' REPORT

City Councillor Margot Power said that major issues relating to the cost of living and the health services continue to be major items being of concern to the City Council.

City Councillor Fiona Isaacs reported on the work she had been involved in recently particularly in relation to the Ukraine refugee situation and the work of settling those who had come to the Winchester area particularly in supporting them in finding work in the area.

PARISHIONERS QUESTION TIME.

A question in relation to the Accounts was raised and the Clerk confirmed that in the previous financial year the Council had requested an increase in the Precept by £21,000.00. Unfortunately this meant that the Council Accounts had shown an income over the Audit regulations of allowing a lighter Audit when the income was less than £25,000.00. With an income of over £36,000.00 the Council had to have a full audit which incurred a fee of over £200.00. In previous years the Council had kept the annual income under £25,000.00. The increase in the Precept had not been used and remained in the Council's increased reserve. When the budget was set in November 2021 the Council agreed to keep the Precept as low as possible and therefore the figure of £16,000.00 had been set.

PRESENTATION

Former Parish Council Clive Hancock then spoke on behalf of everyone at the meeting to thank the Chairman, Councillor Bernard Tucker for his exceptional service to the Parish Council since 1991. He had been an amazing Chairman during his 28 years of service to Old Alresford and wished him a long and healthy retirement. He spoke of his support of TOADS and his work on issues in the Parish on Planning, Flooding and his knowledge of issues in the Village. He had proved himself to be an excellent bar manager on many social occasions. Clive then presented gifts of a silver tankard and an Ireland Rugby Shirt to Bernard. Bernard thanked everyone for their good wishes, kind remarks and gifts.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The AGM of Old Alresford Parish Council will take place on the 24th May 2022 when the new Council will take office

Date

Chairman.