**ALRESFORD PARISH COUNCIL**

**Parish Council Meeting**

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the** Wednesday 3rd of April 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 S Clark, Cllr J Claremont-Brown, Cllr. A. Wiggins, Cllr. G. Scott, Cllr. V. Dalzell.

Also present: The Clerk, County Councillor A Goggin, Members of the public x6

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

**Minutes from the Published Agenda**

**04.24.066 Announcements -** Chairman to introduce.

Cllr F Belgrove announces that the first instalment of the precept has been received.

He also announces the resignation of Cllr A Broom.

The Chairman calls on the Clerk to clarify the process in regard to co-option and the resignation, as instructed by the Elections Officer at Tendring District Council.

He thanks all involved in the recent litter picks.

Announcements are then made to remind those present of the 2pm April 9th deadline for the representations on the quarrying proposals to Essex County Council.

He mentions the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community hearings sessions to be held at Colchester Community Stadium between Tuesday the 7th and 10th of May, starting at 1pm. Documents and a programme in the can be viewed online in the matters issues and questions section of the TCBGC website. A finale version of the programme will be published two weeks ahead of the hearings sessions beginning.

Starting on April 16th there is a local public enquiry to discuss the A120 A133 link road at the Chicano Room Kingsland Church and reminds councillors we have an item (04.24.73) requiring immediate debate and submission ahead of these dates.

Finally the Chairman announces that there is a targeted consultation ongoing in relation to the North Falls power project and that council should consider a targeted response.

**04.24.067 Apologies for Absence.** Cllr R Swash. Cllr J Claremont-Brown will be 15-20mins late

**04.24.068 Minutes of the last monthly meeting:**

To review and consider the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 6th of March 2024.

Cllr L Belgrove asks for some small typographical corrections.

Cllr V Dalzell asks for clarification on the bar bill in the finance report minute, asking if it is acceptable use of public funds?

Cllr Dalzell is reminded that the item is to accept the minutes as an accurate record of the meeting, not for further debate on the items within the minutes (Standing Order 12 b).

The clerk agrees to expand the minute to explain it better.

Proposed to accept as an accurate record by Cllr G Scott, seconded by Cllr L Belgrove, Carried. 4 x votes for, 2 x abstentions (2x Councillors were not present at the meeting).

**04.24.069 Declarations of Interest.** Councillors present to declare pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in agenda items.

Cllr G Scott declares an interest in the awarding of the Grants (Item 77), the District Councillors report (Item 79), and the finance report as chairman of the Autumn Centre.

Cllr F Belgrove declares an interest in item 81, and that he has a granted dispensation to the end of the term of council (2027) to debate and vote on allotment matters.

This is confirmed by the Clerk.

**04.24.070 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 member of the public compliments the Council and its contractors for the maintenance of the grass verges, public spaces and gardens, stating that the village looks wonderful.

A second member of the public mentions the “astounding” development within the Tendring District. He mentions the water tower at Horsley Cross, development at Mistley and asks if the PC has any say in the development of areas.

The Chairman clarifies that the Parish Council is not the principal planning authority, that rests with Tendring District Council and its planning officers. He also states that the Parish Council is a statutory consultee on matters within the Parish Settlement and abutting. He also states that this is where policies such a neighbourhood plan become important.

Cllr G Scott clarifies at length the procedure of planning within the District Council. He states that decisions are informed by the National Planning Policy Framework, The Local Plan and Neighbourhood plans (such as the one covering Alresford). If Planning is refused it is open for the applicant to go to appeal ultimately being decided by the Secretary of State or their appointed inspector.

Cllr Scott also states that Tendring District has a commitment to build 550 houses every year, and that this may increase to 770 per year from 2033.

The resident asks how this is sustainable with no increase in infrastructure, such as doctors, schools, pharmacies, libraries etcetera. There is general agreement in the public area to this.

A final member of the public mentions that the sign for Coach Road is covered in Ivy at the junction with Wivenhoe Road. It is agreed by council that the Clerk will instruct the Handyman to clear this.

The chairman brings the public forum to a close.

* + 1. **Finance Matters.**

March 2024 Finance Report - Council to review and consider.

The chairman reports that the finance committee met in March and reports that expenditure is at 71% of the budget for the first three quarters of the financial year. He then states that the finance committee will meet either in April or May ahead of the Audit for the final quarter review. That the committee recommended allotment rent increases and allocated £5000 of grants.

Cllr Scott seeks clarification on the VAT reclaimed, and the clerk clarifies the VAT with the amount from the Play Area accounting for more than 25% of the reclamation,

Proposed Cllr L Belgrove, Seconded by Cllr V Dalzell, Carried.

* + 1. **Planning matters** Council to consider:

**A:** [24/00375/FUL | Planning Application - The erection of 7no supported living bungalows, designed for adults with complex needs. Single storey staff office for tenant carers and visitors. All with associated parking and private amenity areas. | Sherbro House Boarding Kennels Colchester Main Road Alresford Colchester Essex CO7 8AP (tendringdc.gov.uk)](https://idox.tendringdc.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=SA8TW9QB0OT00)

Mr Daniel / Thomas Lane / Daw - T&D Contractors (Essex) Ltd, Planning Application - The erection of 7no supported living bungalows, designed for adults with complex needs. Single storey staff office for tenant carers and visitors. All with associated parking and private amenity areas.

Location: Sherbro House Boarding Kennels, Colchester Main Road, Alresford, Colchester, CO7 8AP.

Cllr F Belgrove introduces the item and defers to the Chairman of the Planning Committee Cllr E Osborne.

Cllr A Wiggins arrives at 19:50 hrs from another Parish meeting.

Cllr Osborne suggests that it is an important addition and falls under the neighbourhood plans need for sheltered and warden assisted living. Cllr S Clark agrees that this is an important plan policy to free up family homes for sheltered and assisted living. He asks how council can require that occupants of the proposed scheme are reserved for those from the village.  
  
Cllr J Claremont Brown arrives to the meeting 19.52 hrs.

Cllr F Belgrove highlights the mention of those with complex needs in the planning application, and Cllr Clark highlights that crossing the road is a significant issue with the development adjacent to the settlement boundary. He wonders if this can be highlighted as a concern.

Cllr Osborne mentions a similar arrangement in Elmstead Market, with a site office and Cllr Scott also expands on this and expresses concern over the proposal’s location and the issues with the highway, visitor spaces, and the issue of people going out and requiring safe passage, as well as the speeds of vehicles as they transition from a 40 mph to 50 mph zone.

Cllr F Belgrove also suggests that council should take a decision based on the safety grounds. He suggests that council would otherwise agree that this is a good idea for the community, other than for safety reasons.

The chairman clarifies that the council can either support, object or remain neutral. If a condition is suggested it is better applied to a neutral rather than a support response, as the support response will outweigh the comment.

Cllr E Osborne proposes a Neutral Response with a comment made on the road safety aspect and access and egress for the new assisted living residents.

Seconded Cllr S Clark.  
Carried, 1 Abstention from Cllr A Wiggins.

Cllr L Belgrove highlights that the new residents may not necessarily be solely elderly and their access is paramount consideration.

**B:** [24/00274/VOC | Application to vary condition 7 of application for 18/00114/FUL -(Working hours). | Tenpenny Farm Main Road Alresford Essex CO7 8DH (tendringdc.gov.uk)](https://idox.tendringdc.gov.uk/online-applications/simpleSearchResults.do?action=firstPage)

Location: Tenpenny Farm Main Road Alresford Essex CO7 8DH.

Application to vary condition 7 of application for 18/00114/FUL -(Working hours).

Cllr F Belgrove introduces. Clarifies that original conditions specified by Tendring District Council insisted on opening hours as 08.00 to 18.00hrs and the applicant seeks an 07.00 to 19.00 opening hours. As well as Saturday hours extended for a gymnasium equipment repair business.

Cllr Osborne speaks to highlight the impact on a neighbouring home.

Cllr Dalzell, clarifies that the business is gym equipment repair and that the change of use has already been allowed. However other councillors highlight that 07.00 start means vehicles will be arriving earlier than 7am. Cllr L Belgrove asks if we could propose that the start time remains at 08:00 but suggest that they are allowed to remain open until 19:00hrs Monday to Friday and on Saturday at 08:00 to 13;00 as exists.

Cllr G Scott agrees this is important that council support the retention of the Saturday opening hours as they exist. Cllr L Belgrove suggests that we propose a compromise to allow the applicant an extra hour each working day.

Cllr Clark asks for the reasons for objection. Cllr Clark suggests that loss of amenity would be a significant and policy based issue.   
  
Cllr Dalzell comments that the conditions are imposed by Tendring District Council but enforcement is woefully lacking.  
  
Cllr S Clark proposes that council objects on the grounds of loss of amenity.

It is also raised that comments should include a compromise suggestion of staying open an hour later but retention of the existing opening time on weekdays, and existing operating hours on a Saturday .

Proposed Cllr S Clark

Seconded by Cllr L Belgrove. Carried 1x Abstention.

* + 1. **Tendring and Colchester Borders, Garden Community Development Plan**

1: Council to decide on content of the Alresford Parish Council submission for the Public Examination of the Development Plan. Hearing scheduled to commence May 7th at Colchester Football Club Stadium.

Cllr F Belgrove introduces and reads out our previous comment on the proposals.

Council agree to re-submit the comments of the previous objections as these have not changed.

Cllr F Belgrove also reads out the issue over link roads and traffic movements.

Cllr V Dalzell asks if the traffic has been modelled. He agrees to review the proposal online.

Cllr F Belgrove also reads out a commentary on the development of infrastructure within the proposal.  
Cllr G Scott agrees that the Housing Infrastructure Provision Fund (HIPF) was meant to ensure that infrastructure was put in place ahead of the housing project. He expresses the District Councils disappointment in the change of approach.

2: Council to decide on the content of the Alresford Parish Council submission for the Public Inquiry relating to the A133/A120 link road. The inquiry to commence April 16th. (Councillors to note that APC written submission must be made by the clerk on April 4th).

Cllr F Belgrove introduces and thanks Cllr G Scott for explaining this aspect fully. Cllr S Clark asks about where the planning agreement expressed that infrastructure would come ahead of house building. He asks where this is as he couldn’t find it online.

Cllr F Belgrove responds with a prepared statement, supporting a link road but objecting to the phasing of the development of the link road.

* + 1. **Quarries update** – Essex County Council Minerals Local Plan Review Consultation. Report on actions taken by Alresford Parish Council.

Cllr F Belgrove introduces, and reviews the actions undertaken.

He catalogues the process and the timeline in responding. He says it is now a waiting game.

Cllr G Scott expresses his appreciation for everyone’s efforts in responding, mentioning Mrs King and Mr Butcher. He also thanks the subcommittee for all their hard work.

* + 1. **Staunton Gate:** New Allotments report. Tree planting. Report on land acquisition (Staunton Gate North Site)

Cllr F Belgrove hands over to the Clerk to report to council on the above.

Handover is in hand and awaits TDC legal completion.

Allotments will provide 18 plots to eliminate the waiting list for allotment.

A purchase order has been placed with a landscape company on trees, including a living Christmas tree.

* + 1. **Public Realm**

Report on tree purchase/planting.

Cllr F Belgrove states that this was covered in the previous item.

* + 1. **Grant Awards:** Council to be notified of grants awarded by the finance committee.

Cllr F Belgrove clarifies the applicants and sums granted under the finance committees delegated powers.

Beavers: £300 the full amount.

Autumn Centre: £2000.

Alresford Primary School PTA: £1000.

ACRFC Women’s football £425.

ACRFC Children’s football £425.

ACRFC Walking football £425.

ACRFC Senior’s football £425.

A total of £5000 awarded.

* + 1. **May 2024 meeting dates:**

Parish Council Annual Meeting to be held Wednesday May 1st.

Annual Parish Meeting to be held Wednesday May 15th at 7.30pm, at the Pavilion.

Cllr F Belgrove introduces, clarifying the above.

* + 1. **District Councillor’s report (Written Report)** and 5 min verbal report.

Cllr A Wiggins reads out their report listing the attendances at committees and events. Highlighting the matter that the Planning Portal will be unavailable 18-23rd of April.

Cllr G Scott brings a complaint to council from a resident on parking on station road, received as a text message in the afternoon ahead of the meeting.

* + 1. **Essex County Councillor Report (Written Report)** and 5 min verbal report.

County Councillor Alan Goggin reads his report.

Highlighting the quarry consultation taking up so much of each Councils time.

He states that responses have so far been under the 1000’s expected and currently still in the 100’s. He suggests it is imperative the public respond.

He also introduces the new member led pothole initiative, describing a new process to be implemented.

* + 1. **Allotment rentals.** Following review and a recommendation from the Finance Committee it is resolved that Council Allotment Rental be increased from £20 to £25 per annum for renewals, commencing February 2025.

Cllr Osborne asks the Clerk for Clarification. The clerk expands and clarifies.

Proposed Cllr L Belgrove, seconded Cllr G Scott, Carried unanimously.

It is noted that review of rental should occur on a basis to be determined by council.

* + 1. **Overnight Parking** It is resolved that Alresford Parish Council erects a sign with wording that prohibits overnight parking at St Peters Church/War memorial.

Cllr F Belgrove introduces, stating that a sign used to be there to deter overnight parking but was vandalised and removed.

Cllr Dalzell asks if it can be enforced and asks if it is a sign for the sake of sign? That signs in various other locations fail to deter selfish behaviours.

Cllr S Clark agrees and asks what would happen if there was a sign in place?

Cllr L Belgrove reminds council that there used to be a sign there, and that the sign gave the PCSO or Councillors some legitimacy to ask people not to do something that is a nuisance to the residents and those whose loved ones are buried in the church graveyard.

Cllr V Dalzell also states that this is a civil matter, and that the police have no jurisdiction.

Cllr G Scott declares an interest in the item. He then asks who owns the land.

Cllr F Belgrove states that the gravel path and War memorial are areas under the Parish Councils stewardship.

Cllr S Clark, clarifies rhetorically that the Parish Council has the jurisdiction?, and Cllr F Belgrove states that the control of the land was provided by Essex County Council to Alresford Parish Council. Cllr F Belgrove clarifies that the Parish Council has the precedent in law to erect a sign and manage the area.

Cllr L Belgrove indicates that most people are law abiding and non-confrontational. When they are asked to move on, they usually do. She reminds council that it is residents of the village who are concerned and have raised the matter with the Parish Council.

Cllr S Clark suggests a gate is installed. Cllr G Scott does not support a gate but supports a sign. He expresses concern over how the matter will resolve.

Cllr S Clark states that the building is a church with an active graveyard and people need to be deterred from considering it as an overnight camp site.

Cllr L Belgrove states that it is the same vehicles repeating the behaviour and council has a duty to listen to local residents concerns.

Cllr E Osborne proposes that a sign is placed to ask people not to park.

Seconded Cllr V Dalzell.

Carried unanimously.

**Action:** Council to procure a new sign.

* + 1. **Council to consider**: Alresford Village Hall, request partial use of the Pavilion flat roof for solar panel installation, by their installer Orton and Wenlock.

Cllr F Belgrove introduces the item with a visual presentation on screen, the clerk clarifies for those present the councils installation and space to be utilised.

Cllr E Osborne states that this is something that cannot be decided upon whilst the lease and ownership of the pavilion is clarified. Suggesting a delay on taking a decision. Cllr L Belgrove agrees that there is a need to delay the permission on use of the flat roof by the Village Hall.

Cllr V Dalzell, also asks about checks on the ethical sourcing and supply off solar panels.

Cllr L Belgrove states that the council has made an agreement and instructed a contractor after competitive tendering, where council reviewed, took and made a decision, so the review is a technical exercise.

Cllr F Belgrove clarifies the proposal from Cllr E Osborne is to delay council giving any permission to the village hall to use the flat roof for solar panel installation. Seconded Cllr G Scott. Carried.

* + 1. **PCSO/Police Report**. Policing update and PCSO crime report.

Cllr L Belgrove reads the report and expands on the details of six recorded crimes in the village, highlighting Assault, Criminal damage, Domestic abuse and GBH. As well as the other reported incidents.

She highlights the Tru-Cam deployment and the numbers including top speeds of 44mph in a 30mph zone.

Cllr L Belgrove goes to the 4th page and discusses the use of E Scooters and that the PCSO is aware and is dealing with the matter. Highlighting the road traffic act that will be used.

Cllr L Belgrove asks the Clerk to request the PCSO officially informs the Police Bulletin of the St Andrews Church Book Café of the dates that the PCSO will be in attendance.

Cllr F Belgrove invites questions, clarifying that he has been speaking with District Commander Ella Latham, who reports that UK wide crime has increased by 14.7%, however in Tendring crime has reduced by 11.3%, whilst shoplifting is up by 25% in the district.

Cllr V Dalzell asks if there has been a full cost to benefit analysis performed on the PCSO? He introduces various statistical considerations for councillors to consider to the conversation. He offers alternative considerations to council over the use of the funding, asking for council to review and reflect on the cost of the contract.

Cllr S Clark responds that it is very interesting to listen to Cllr Dalzell speaking as he has. He asks if council think that the PCSO’s have adequate powers to perform their function suitably and make a difference?

Cllr F Belgrove states that PCSO’s have the power to perform their duty and what is needed by the community, but it would of course be of benefit to have their powers increased.

The chairman puts the question to an informal vote, as to whether council should not fund a PCSO. Cllr Dalzell twice states, that is not what he is proposing. The chairman asks for a show of hands. One councillor raises their hand.

Cllr G Scott asks a question. He understood that council were debating the Crime report and that there is no vote on the agenda.

The chairman Cllr F Belgrove repeats that it is an informal vote, which the chairman is allowed to call under the adopted standing orders.

Cllr G Scott asks whether those present in the public would understand how an agenda item which does not include a vote could be voted upon.

The chairman clarifies that it is not a formal vote with a resolution but is an informal vote which is allowed under the adopted standing orders.

Cllr G Scott then comments on how serious the scam and fraud issue is becoming. He asks what can be done and suggests a publicity and leaflet drop within the Alresford Advertiser to raise awareness. He suggests that this should be a priority for the PCSO.

Cllr L Belgrove clarifies that it is not an education matter but is about government taking the issue seriously. The scams originate in most cases from outside the UK and it is not just the vulnerable or elderly who are falling for them. Cllr L Belgrove states that the issue highlighted by Cllr Scott is a much bigger issue than the Parish Council or the PCSO can address.

Cllr E Osborne suggests that Cllr Dalzell’s idea for a district nurse would be beneficial to the community and that council ought to follow up to see if this is possible.

Cllr F belgrove draws the item to a conclusion, and thanks councillors for their input.

* + 1. **Clerks Report.** The clerk delivers his verbal report for the actions and activities undertaken on behalf of council in March.

The clerk highlights the work of the handyman Mr. J Spurgeon in restoring the allotment shed at Wivenhoe road saving the council between £800-900, and the litter Picker Mr. S Davies whose efforts have been recognised on social media and in online fora.

He also highlights to council that the Wivenhoe road allotments are now fully let and the waiting list has been cleared for that site, and most of the 18 plots rentals have been received; with the hope that the remaining waiting list for Staunton Gate allotments may also be cleared in this financial year.

He thanks the volunteers and sub-committee for their work on the quarry submission which was sent in by e-mail and recorded post.

Finally the clerk reads a letter from Alresford Colne Rangers thanking us for the Grant we awarded them.

Cllr G Scott commends the works undertaken and asks for a sign on the allotment shed to state that it was repaired reused and recycled.

Cllr J Claremont Brown asks for time restricted parking item to be on a future agenda.

* + 1. **Meeting Ends** 21.29hrs

Prepared by the Clerk/Proper Officer: Matt Cooke. 24.04.24

**Signed:** Chairman

**Dated:**