# **ALRESFORD PARISH COUNCIL**

# **Parish Council Meeting**

# **MINUTES**

## **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 6th of November 2024**

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

**Cllrs. Present:** Cllr. F. Belgrove (Chairman), Cllr E Osborne, Cllr V Dalzell, Cllr S Clark, Cllr. G. Scott, Cllr J Claremont-Brown, Cllr C Muller, Cllr G Scott, Cllr K Doulai, Cllr A Wiggins.

Also present: The Clerk, County Councillor A Goggin, Members of the public x7

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

**Item:**

**10.24.208 Announcements.** Chairman makes the following announcements.

A: Reminder that Monday 11th of November, 11am Armistice day, a memorial wreath will be laid on behalf of the council in remembrance and two minutes silence will be held at the war memorial at the old St Peters church.

B: In December there will be the opportunity to socialise after the December meeting with eats and drinks. Hope to have the bar open and invite people to stay and enjoy a Christmas drink.

C: There is an important licencing application which requires a response, but the item is not on the agenda. Chairman proposes that council suspends a standing order and implement another, which will be implemented at the appropriate planning section of the agenda.

**11.24.209 Apologies for Absence.** Cllr B Swash, Cllr L Belgrove, Cllr A Wiggins and Cllr K Doulai to arrive later.

**11.24.210 Minutes of the last monthly meeting:** To review and approve the minutes of the meeting of the 2nd of October 2024. Proposed Cllr E Osborne, Seconded Cllr G Scott, Carried

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

Cllr G Scott declares interest in items 224 District councillor report, 213 as Luncheon Club Trustee

Cllr A Wiggins declares interest (when she arrives ) in item 224, 215

Cllr A Wiggins arrives 19.40hrs Cllr K Doulai Arrives 19.42hrs.

**11.24.212 Public Forum** under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, Section 1 (1) 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. The Council can only take decisions on agenda items. Matters raised and 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 raises concerns over air quality when there is low wind and low lying cloud, indicating that coal and wood burning fuels are responsible. He states that this causes issues for those with Asthma and Lung/Breathing conditions and asks if this has been raised before. He asks whether it could be raised with Tendring District Council and asks if 4/four aspects could be considered:

1: Action taken to voluntarily raise local awareness. 2: Tendring District Council are informed and asked for statistics on monitoring air quality. 3 Local monitors are implemented to check on air toxicity, particulates and states that rural air pollution is as bad as motorways when there is low cloud and low wind. 4: Whether notices on such days can enforce a no use of wood and coal burning fires and heating.

Councillors thank the resident for their concerns and remind him that in rural communities wood burning, oil fired and coal burning heating are more common and can be some residents sole source for heating and hot water. Councillors ask the resident to write to the clerk with their concerns so that further investigation can be undertaken, and representations to the district and county council can be made Cllr G Scott suggests that the resident make contact with Cllr A Smith at Tendring District Council whose portfolio is environmental services.

A second member of the public raises three points.
1: Extra charges on excess weight of the wheelie bin. Would it be better value to order a bigger bin?

The clerk responds that the excess charges are not unreasonable per kilo and are only charged if and when the bin is over weight. The bin sizes are specific sizes and there is a significant jump in cost for the next size up. It is more cost effective to pay the excess charge as and when this occurs.

2: Makes a request for hedge cutting to take place on Heath Road.

Is this something the Parish Council can look at as Essex County Council are not doing their part.

He also mentions the issue with Little Acres on the B10927 and the hedgerow, ditch and weed management, asking if this is a Parish Council or Highways issue.

Cllrs clarify that the centre of the ditch to the highway is Essex County Councils responsibility, but that the residents of little acres are responsible for the hedge and to the centre of the drainage ditch. This was raised by council at the time of the development. for the council to take over from the developer, but the developer sought an application that made the residents undertake the work themselves. It was foreseen that this would cause issues within the management committees members (formed of residents of little acres) and the Parish Council, as it would not be done and is not the responsibility of the Parish Council. The resident states that this matter is to the detriment of the village and its safety and tidiness on the B1027.

3: Asks if the District Councillors could make more reference to the things they do for Alresford in their report, which generally lists what committees they have attended rather than what they do to represent their village.

A third resident raises two issues. Asks for an update on how long the diversion over “Alresford Viaduct” will be in place. Will the work be done and can a representation be made as the diversions are having an adverse effect day and night on the residents of Coach and Station Roads.

They also ask that the bells over the crossing on Coach road be repaired and network rail are informed of the damage being done to their warning system.

Cllrs respond and acknowledge the concerns.

Finally another resident makes a comment for all to be aware and vigilant of scams in the village. There have been individuals in high visibility equipment with hard hats and buckets purporting tyo be front he water company. Cllrs agree that [people should remain cautious and ask for ID at all junctures of stranger approaching their residences.

The forum is closed at 19.50hrs

**11.24 213 Finance Matters.** October finance report - Council to review and approve.

The clerk reports a tranche of income from recycling credits.

The chairman states that council have received a payment of precept monies from the District Council.

Proposed to accept the Finance Report: Cllr J Claremont Brown, Seconded Cllr V Dalzell, Carried

**11.24 214 Finance Committee Report** Initial report on finance committee meeting and recommendations on setting the 2025/26 budget and precept. Cllr F Belgrove reports. He states that the draft budget for 25/26 sees an increase and the precept is likely to be increased, but it will be minimised wherever possible as the tax base will have increased. Next meeting set for December after taxbase is announced.

**11.24.215 Planning Matters:** Cllr A Wiggins declares interest at this juncture as recorded above**.**

Cllr F Belgrove adds that there will be a proposal to suspend standing order 9B under section 10a 15.

Cllr E Osborne Proposes to suspend Standing Order 9B and this is seconded by Cllr C Muller, carried, with 1 abstention.

Cllr F Belgrove introduces the licensing application **REF: 24/00581/PREMGR** Application from Wyvernwood Ltd, St Osyth Road, Alresford CO7 8ES. Wyvernwood seeks to apply for a 9am -9pm license 365 days per year, to sell alcohol. He opens the matter to councillors.

Cllr S Clark seeks clarification on the relationship to the applied hours, compared to the operating hours granted in planning permission granted for the facility. The clerk reads out the application to all councilors present. Cllr Clark asks if Wyvernwood had made any representations to council? It is clarified that no contact or discussion has taken place.

Cllr E Osborne asks why would a site whose target market is children require an alcohol licence. He states that this is a matter to strongly object to.

Cllr C Muller states that she has researched comparable events locations offering alcohol for sale and licensed to do so, but their demographic is more multi-age ranges, whereas Wyvernwoods Website states it is aimed at 2yrs to 12yrs. She also comments that the transport links of bus and/or from the train station make it a venue mostly driven to, and so it potentially encourages drink driving on what is also a very dangerous stretch of road. Cllr K Doulai also agrees saying it is a very strange request for such a venue. She rhetorically considers if there is an agenda further behind the application?

Cllr Clark suggests that there are schemes such as designated drivers which minimise the risk of drink-driving, and that with events running into the evening it may suit the business to have an alcohol licence. His concern is the blanket approach to 9am-9pm timing and the impact on the residential amenity of those nearby.

Cllr V Dalzell suggests that the 9-9 timing leads the venue into the public house territory of Wetherspoons franchises and agrees with comments made thus far. He does though temper the arguments made that it is a local business that adds to the local economy, and that council could seek a compromise for events or licensing from later times.

Cllr G Scott makes a point that in the objection timing is an issue and council should perhaps seek a compromise as suggested by Cllr V Dalzell, and that this should form a part of the objection such as 2pm – 9pm. There is general agreement to this.

Cllr E Osborne suggests that we omit any suggestion of specific timings in our objection. He finds it strange that the venue haven’t consulted with the council and suggests the objection may bring them to the negotiating table.

Cllr Clark agrees that the lack of dialogue is strange given the clear channels of communication throughout the development of the facility.

Cllr G Scott suggests that without mentioning a compromise on timings, if the matter goes to appeal then it may not be seen in time to object to and if we don’t add compromise then the matter may be passed in full at appeal. He urges all present to include the mention of compromise.

**Proposed** Cllr E Osborne to object to the application as presented. Seconded Cllr S Clark, Carried, with 1 abstention. **Action:** Clerk to formulate the response from the recorded debate and submit by Friday November 8th (draft to be shared with chairman ahead of submission).

**A: Application number:** [24/01489/FUL](https://idox.tendringdc.gov.uk/online-applications/simpleSearchResults.do?action=firstPage)

Mr D Lane, & Mr T Daw **Location**: Land adjacent to Sherbo House Kennels. Colchester Main road, Alresford **Proposal** Development of 1.5 storey residential healthcare facility (Class C2)) providing 7 in number self-contained apartments with communal area at ground level and staff facilities for tenant carers at first floor level. All with associated parking and shared amenity areas.

Cllr F Belgrove introduces. Mentions that the application has no statement relating to nature of residents additional needs, of NHS or private care facility, GP capacity or availability in the village, parking for residents, visitors or carers, bus stops or accessibility capacity.

Cllr G Scott highlights the above issues and agrees that the issues prevent approval. Cllr S Clark states that the lack of a safe pedestrian crossing or footpath and the issues with the speed of traffic on the B1027 put the application in conflict with the neighbourhood plan.

Cllr E Osborne says that the principle is well liked but the lack of clarity and definition of the specifics render it incomplete.

Cllr G Scott proposes to object, seconded Cllr K Doulai Carried with 1 abstention

**B: Application number:** [24/01556/FULHH](https://idox.tendringdc.gov.uk/online-applications/simpleSearchResults.do?action=firstPage)

Mrs Hazel Martin **Location:** 87 Wivenhoe Road Alresford Colchester **Proposal:** Householder planning application, two storey rear extension with hipped roof to match existing dwelling. Existing first floor window in hallway to be replaced and reduced in size.

Council discuss and ask the proposal to consider the window overlooking be obscured.

Proposed a neutral response by Cllr G Scott, Seconded Cllr V Dalzell, Carried, 1 abstention.

**C: Application Number**: [24/01587/FULHH](https://idox.tendringdc.gov.uk/online-applications/simpleSearchResults.do?action=firstPage)

**Location:** 16 Ford Lane Alresford Colchester **Proposal:** Householder planning application, two storey rear extension partly over existing.

Proposed to offer a neutral response Cllr C Muller, Seconded Cllr G Scott, Carried 1 abstention.

* + 1. **Locality Fund**: Councillors to bring ideas relating to criteria laid out in levelling up fund for an application to be made. Deadline to be applied, approved and spent February 2025.

Council discuss what to propose as an application.

Cllr C Muller proposes a local dance school being supported in raising funding through the scheme to support children in a dance school traveling to represent the community abroad.

Cllr A Goggin reminds councillors that the application must meet the criteria of the locality fund and all councillors need to read the rules and criteria to make a decision on what to apply for; but reminds all present that application has to be in approved and spent by February 2025.

Cllr V Dalzell asks does the project benefit all in the community?

Proposed to Apply for the project discussed by Cllr E Osborne, Seconded Cllr K Doulai, Carried

* + 1. **Increase of hours for the proper officer**: It is proposed that an extra three contractual hours each week, are allocated to the proper officer.

Cllr J Claremont-Brown declares that she sits on the personnel committee, and that the clerks duties on behalf of council with the increase of the village mean that the hours and demands of the clerks duties will require an increase of hos hours. Cllr S Clark agrees. Cllr V Dalzell suggests it is a cost effective way to manage the clerks hours rather than incurring overtime. Proposed Chairman Cllr F Belgrove, Seconded Cllr V Dalzell, Carried unanimously.

* + 1. **DBS Checks:**  It is proposed that both the Handyman and Litter picker with their agreed consent have Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.

The clerk indicates it would be good practice for his staff who have public facing roles to be enhanced DBS checked and councillors agree. Proposed Cllr F Belgrove, Seconded Cllr J Claremont-Brown, Carried

* + 1. **Hard court renovation:** Working Party report, and a resolution to resurface the hardcourt, all equipment to be upgraded, and working party suggestions be implemented as set out in the report. **Action:** Quotations/Tenders to be sought. Cllr F Belgrove introduces and clarifies the working party report, the extensive works required.

Proposed to seek quotes and tenders. Cllr E Osborne, Seconded Cllr S Clark, Carried.

* + 1. **Wall Plaque**: Resolution to install a commemorative wall plaque within the pavilion with the statement made by Sir Trevor Brooking. Wording as follows “The opening of the new sports and social pavilion in Alresford marks an incredible achievement by a large number of dedicated individuals. The vision and effort made by all the volunteers from Alresford Parish Council, Alresford Colne Rangers Football Club and the Alresford Village Hall Committee demonstrates the sheer commitment this community has, to providing safe and quality sports facilities for the local people. Everyone Can benefit from this building, and it is hoped that in the future it inspires many whether they are aspiring footballers, athletes, or those putting on events in this fabulous new venue. You can all be immensely proud of what you’ve achieved and what you can now fully enjoy**.” Sir Trevor Brooking CBE**

Proposed to obtain a plaque: Cllr C Muller, Seconded Cllr J Claremont Brown, Carried**.**

**Action:** Prices to be obtained**.**

* + 1. **Electric Vehicle Charging Points** – It is proposed that bays for Electric Vehicles are clearly marked out on the car park surface.

Cllr C Muller asks who will mark out and what will be the cost?

Cllr G scott suggests the markings are in green and clearly state EV. Cllr F belgrove suggests the handyman can perform this at minimal cost. Proposed Cllr C Muller Seconded Cllr A Wiggins, Carried.

**Action:** Clerk to obtain suitable paint and stencils for Handyman to mark out bays.

* + 1. **Consultation for Remote Meetings and Proxy Votes:** NALC have welcomed the deputy prime ministers announcement that the government is committed to hold remote council meetings.

Since temporary COVID 19 Powers ended in May 2021 NALC have been at the forefront of a national campaign, working closely with the association of Democratic Services Officers and Lawyers in Local Government, supported by other bodies such as the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC).

In her [**speech**](https://emea01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nalc.gov.uk%2Fe%2Ft%2Fc%2FE9E970A5-28CE-4177-AE4FB395C8AABA5A%2F%3Flink%3D37246CF0-D5A2-455F-A3A15974133F9F31&data=05%7C02%7C%7Cb00a51acc5a84140787608dcf782a099%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C638657387609338851%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=jnMbzZffP3wOt85tSOTGIEVgSnb6Hoy%2BLJ%2FMRa4noGA%3D&reserved=0) to the Local Government Association Conference on 24 October, Angela Rayner MP said, "It's not our place, for example, to decide whether councillors should attend your meetings remotely or use proxy votes when they need to." She then announced a consultation to "let councils make the decision for themselves."

The government has published the [**consultation paper**](https://emea01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nalc.gov.uk%2Fe%2Ft%2Fc%2FE9E970A5-28CE-4177-AE4FB395C8AABA5A%2F%3Flink%3D99577C32-82A5-458C-84540B0E138A4632&data=05%7C02%7C%7Cb00a51acc5a84140787608dcf782a099%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C638657387609363038%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=hXrjbGo3r5rYNKq3UNwoVT0YF%2FLxsVci%2FWOgT4vCXqs%3D&reserved=0), which closes on 19 December 2024. We will respond and encourage all parish and town councils, county associations, and individual councillors and clerks to participate in this essential consultation. Your responses are vital in demonstrating the strong support for this flexibility, building on the momentum from the previous call for evidence

Cllr G Scott thinks this proposal by the NACL could be abused. **Action:** Clerk to forward email from NALC re the proposal to all councillors.

* + 1. **Fire Safety Audit:** New information bringing last months fire safety inspection and audit back to council. Costs, Offers and legal responsibility of landlord.

Clerk Clarifies research undertaken in the month since council last sat.

Cllr C Muller and Cllr A Wiggins declare interest as trustees of the Village Hall.

**Action:** Clerk to liaise with Village Hall committee to obtain the correct certification.

* + 1. **District Councillor’s report (Written Report)** and 5 min verbal report. Cllr A Wiggins delivers the monthly district councillors report.
		2. **Essex County Councillor Report (Written Report)** and 5 min verbal report. Cllr A Goggin delivers his county councillors report with a focus on his work for Alresford.
		3. **Respect for Staff:**
1. In line with new legislation a standalone policy to be prepared dealing with the issue of Sexual Harassment in the workplace.
2. Role of the Proper Officer. A document to be prepared and distributed to Councillors from existing legislation setting out the role and status of the Proper Officer (Parish Council Clerk)..

For information item distributed by NALC. Chairman introduces and states that this is something all councils are being asked to implement.

**Action:** Draft policy to be created, and document on clerks role to both be distributed to all councillors in due course.

* + 1. **White Ribbon Day 25th of November.** It is proposed that the Council marks this day by publishing on notice boards it's continued commitment to supporting the White ribbon movement that is pressing for an end to male behaviours that contribute towards violence and a to a fear of violence on women. For information. Council are supporters and will promote the event.

Cllr G Scott fully supports the event, but also reminds councillors and those present that violence does occur to men from women as well. **Action:** Posters to be placed on notice boards. Clerk as ambassador to undertake online training.

* + 1. **Update on Christmas Preparations:** Cllr F Belgrove clarifies and updates. Cllr C Muller asks for event to be inclusive as last year and for children and families to be involved.
		2. **Council to consider:** obtaining a quote from contractor to cut back hedges on Heath road**.**

**Action:** Clerk has instructed village handyman to cut back the fir tree at T junction on Heath road as part of the mitigation.

* + 1. **Council to discuss association with the “Sunshine Coast Greenway” project** to create orbital walks around Tendring, and locally. Cllr G scott declares an interest in the item.

Proposed by Cllr F Belgrove that council in principle supports the initiative, seconded by Cllr K Doulai, carried.

* + 1. **Update on meeting with TDC director of Planning:** regarding the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Cllr F Belgrove introduces and appraises council of meeting held with Mr G Guiver head of planning at Tendring District Council and the impact of the emerging NPPF on the revised and emergent Local Plan for Tendring District Council as well as the potential to review the Neighbourhood Plan and strengthen that in conjunction with the other two policies.

* + 1. **History Boards:** Request to add public walks and footpaths to the boards being prepared. Council to discuss and propose. Cllr C Muller to expand. It is suggested that local walks (as per item 230) are provided by way of a QR code within he boards prepared by volunteers. Councillors all agree that a QR code is more readily adaptable to take visitors to the website and any resources. Cllr E Osborne asks for site of the boards and then money will be released
		2. **Allotment update:** Staunton Gate. Clerk informs all present that the site has full occupancy and tenants are beginning to work the soil
		3. **PCSO/Police Report**. Cllr F Belgrove delivers a brief summary of the printed PCSO report.
		4. **Clerks Report**. The clerk delivers his report on actions taken on behalf of council and of correspondence received.
		5. **Meeting Ends: 21.31hrs**