



## Aldworth Parish Council Minutes of the Full Council Meeting

Monday 19th November 2024, 7.30pm at Aldworth Village Hall  
Minute ref: 004/191124/PCM

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**Members Present:** Cllr. Kate Walters, Cllr. Ilona Herbent, Cllr. Graham Rutter, Cllr. Bill Bennetts, Cllr. Coyle (21.00-21.30pm)  
**Members Absent:** 0  
**Officers Present:** Mrs Faye Bates (Clerk & RFO)  
**In Attendance:** 0  
**Meeting Start Time:** 19.35pm

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	Action
Cllr. Walters welcomed all to the meeting and quorum was achieved.	
<b>10 Minute Open session:</b> No members of public in attendance	
<b>Declaration of Interests:</b> None. <b>Apologies:</b> Cllr. Coyle advised the clerk via email she will be late for the meeting. <b>Minutes:</b> The minutes of the September meeting were agreed. Clerk to pass printed copy to Cllr. Walters for signing.	Resolved
<b>Councillor Coyle Update (21.00)</b>	
<b>WBC Budget</b> Unfortunately, due to the continued pressure on the financial resources of all local authorities, in particular due to the rising cost of the Adult Social Care and the SEND budgets, further cuts are going to be required to spending in the coming year. The proposed spending cuts are in the following areas: Explore options to deliver Adult Social Care (ASC) Resource Centre services through an alternative provider or in a different way Turn off streetlights in residential roads between midnight and 5am Increase some Adult Social Care (ASC) fees and charges above the rate of inflation Discontinue the mobile library service Create a voluntary charitable contribution (via Council Tax payments) scheme Reduce the number of winter gritting routes Cease providing the Adult Respite in the Community (ARC) Service Remove Downland Sports Centre from the Leisure Management Contract Feedback is requested by 23 <sup>rd</sup> December 2024 - <a href="#">Balancing our budget for 2025/26 - West Berkshire Council</a>	
<b>District Parish Conference</b> This was held earlier this month and the key item for discussion was plans to offer additional devolved services, including gully and ditch clearing, sign cleaning, dog waste bins and pop up libraries to Parishes where they consider there is a need beyond what is currently provided by West Berks. It would be good to discuss with Aldworth members if there is any interest in any of these areas, I have certainly had many representations myself around gully clearing from residents for example.	
<b>Member's bids</b> The deadline for these is 3 <sup>rd</sup> January 2025 but I will need to submit prospective bids to departmental officers in early December to get sign off on these.	

Aldworth Parish Council Clerk – Faye Bates

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<b>Matters Arising</b>	
<b>Councillor vacancy:</b> There is one seat available to be filled by co-option at the earliest convenience. Clerk to distribute new poster with vacancy on noticeboard and facebook.	FB FB
<b>Community Noticeboard:</b> Clerk to send suggestions of noticeboard to councillors and then on to the village hall committee for approval. Councillors would like a covered, double, wood effect noticeboard to keep in with the village.	FB
<b>Annual and Monthly Playground Inspections:</b> Councillors have agreed to go on to a rota for a monthly playground check, clerk to send out rota and inspection form. The annual health and safety inspection has been approved to be carried out by RoSPA Ltd costing £80 exc VAT. It was noted that the park is currently covered in leaves, clerk to organise maintenance to clear leaves in 2 to 3 weeks.	FB
<b>Purchase of Local Council Administration Book:</b> Approved for the clerk to purchase, total £163 from SLCC.	FB
<b>Tree Survey:</b> Clerk informed the council that a tree survey is to be carried out every 3 years on trees that are located on PC land. Clerk to seek advice from WBC and obtain a quote for this work. Trees located at Shoulder of Mutton and Parsonage Green.	
<b>New Councillor Training:</b> All councillors to attend this online training on 14 <sup>th</sup> and 21 <sup>st</sup> January, clerk to book. Fees are included in the BALC membership.	
<b>Members bid:</b> Deadline is the 3 <sup>rd</sup> January. It was decided not to apply for the footpath revamp due to time constraints on spending the grant money.	
<b>Ongoing projects update:</b>	
<b>Access ramp to the village hall:</b> Clerk trying to obtain grants and funding for this project.	FB
<b>Village pond restoration project:</b> Long term ongoing project.	FB
<b>Land ownership map:</b> Volunteer from village required who has knowledge of local land ownership. Cllr Herbent to enquire.	IH
<b>Parish plan:</b> Volunteers needed (2 Councillors and 3 members of public) to put together a questionnaire. Cllr Walters to look into.	KW
<b>Planning- Three applications came in on the 19<sup>th</sup> November.</b>	
➤ 24/01931/LBC Replace all the windows to the front of the building with bespoke like for like. The Bell, Aldworth. <b>NO OBJECTIONS</b>	
➤ 24/02408/LBC Erection of single storey extension and internal alterations. Westridge Manor, Aldworth Road. <b>NO OBJECTIONS</b>	
➤ 24/02406/HOUSE Erection of single storey extension and internal alterations. Westridge Manor, Aldworth Road. <b>NO OBJECTIONS</b>	
<b>Matters for future consideration or suggestion cards from members of public:</b>	
None	

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Clerk Report to include finances, correspondence received and matters for attention:		
<b>Finances:</b>		FB
<b>Monthly Finance Report:</b> Clerk presented to the council, Cllr Walters signed forms for September and October. Clerk to file.		
<b>Current account balance on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2024:</b> £20,324.02		
<b>CIL Balance on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2024:</b> £3,635.06 (included in the current account balance).		
<b>Payments due:</b> Clerk expenses for ink, noticeboard key and sterile dressing for defib total £65.69 and TEEC website hosting £259.20 inc VAT. Microsoft 365 subscription is due to be renewed by the 25th November at £59.99 inc VAT for the year, clerk to purchase and claim expenses.		
<b>Bank Charges:</b> £6.00 per month		
<b>VAT Return:</b> Has now been paid in to the bank on 25th October, total of £680.30		
<b>Payments and receipts made since the September meeting:</b>		
27/09/2024	HMRC PAYE Tax	BACS £ 194.40 £12,816.69 HMRC Tax
27/09/2024	Clerk Wages	BACS £ 816.35 £12,000.34 Clerk Wages & Payroll Admin
30/09/2024	Service charge	BACS £ 18.00 £11,982.34 Bank Charges
07/10/2024	West Berkshire Council	BACS £ 6,750.00 £18,732.34 Precept
30/04/2024	West Berkshire Council	BACS £ 1,817.53 £20,549.87 CIL <span style="background-color: #d4edda;">CIL Payment made with Precept in April 2024</span>
24/10/2024	HMRC	D/D £ 194.40 £20,355.47 HMRC Tax
25/10/2024	HMRC VAT Return	BACS £ 680.30 £21,035.77
28/10/2024	Public works loan Aldworth VH	D/D £ 603.63 £20,432.14 Loan
31/10/2024	Service charge	£ 5.40 £20,426.74 Bank Charges
06/11/2024	Farm Signs Ltd- No parking sign	BACS £ 85.60 £ 17.12 £20,324.02 General Maintenance
<b>Budget update for current year:</b> Clerk presented the budget to date to the council. The precept/budget will be set at the January meeting for financial year 25-26. Add a budget line for one gully clean.		
<b>Clerk Training:</b> Minute taking course for the clerk was approved. £20.00+ VAT held by BALC.		
<b>Clerk salary closed session:</b> NALC have released the agreement on rate of pay for 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2024- 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2025. Clerk is on scale point 17. Back dated pay and hourly rate rise was approved. Clerk to inform the payroll services.		
<b>Matters for attention and correspondence received:</b>		
<b>Village Green (Shoulder of Mutton):</b> WBC have confirmed this has been transferred to Aldworth PC.		
<b>Finance software:</b> Cancellation confirmed and approved.		
<b>Bell Lane signage:</b> Signs have been delivered.		
<b>Portrait of the King:</b> Unfortunately the free scheme to provide portraits of His Majesty The King is now closed. We have been notified that portraits of The King and Queen and joint portraits of Their Majesties will be available commercially from Royal Images soon.		
<b>The Downs School:</b> Invitation to the Community forum held by the head boy and girl, being held on 27th November 6pm-7pm.		
<b>Communication from HALC regarding remote meetings:</b> As you may have seen the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government are holding a consultation on enabling remote attendance, and		

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<p>proxy voting at local authority meetings, including parish &amp; town council meetings. For those of you that were around at the time of Covid the Government made temporary changes to legislation for meetings to be held remotely and they operated successfully during this time. Unfortunately, unlike Wales where the legislation was extended, the legislation was not extended in England, meaning councils are currently unable to hold meetings remotely, or even allow an individual councillor to attend remotely. The consultation does not appear to be about mandating remote meetings, but rather allowing councils the choice to hold these if they so wish and similarly allow individual councillors to attend remotely. Giving councils the power to decide what works best for their own circumstances is welcome and will also hopefully lead to an increase in terms of diversity of councillors, allowing for people who can otherwise not easily attend council meetings due to reasons such as caring commitments, the opportunity to serve their community. We did see an increase in diversity during Covid as meetings could be held remotely.</p> <p><b>Communication from HALC regarding Impact on local councils after the budget announcement:</b> As you may have heard in the budget last week there were some changes announced that will have an impact for local councils. The first is around National Insurance contributions and the second is around changes to national minimum wage. The changes will come into effect from April 2025. The purpose of sending this document out now is to raise awareness so that councils can take account of these changes when preparing their budgets and precept submissions for 2025/26. National Insurance Contributions: The employer rate of national insurance contributions will increase to 15% (currently 13.8%). The tax free employer band for national insurance is reducing to £5,000 per employees (currently £9,100) meaning councils will be paying additional National Insurance contributions on the £4000 worth of salary per employee. You may have heard the government say that some of this would be offset by changes to the employment allowance. Whilst this is true for most small businesses and also charities, under current legislation local councils are not able to claim the employment allowance and therefore they will be liable for the full increases in terms of National Insurance as outlined above.</p>	
<b>To receive further questions or comments from members of the public:</b>	
None	

**Meeting closed at 21.40pm**

**The 2025 meetings will be held:**

**7<sup>th</sup> January, 4<sup>th</sup> March, 6<sup>th</sup> May (APM), 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2<sup>nd</sup> September and 4<sup>th</sup> November at 19.30pm.**

*Signed: F Bates 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2024*

**Approved by:**  
**Position:**  
**Date:**

Aldworth Parish Council Clerk – Faye Bates

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