



Altham Parish Council

Minutes

Minutes of the Altham Parish Council Meeting held on: Tuesday, 2nd March 2021, at 2.00pm, No venue- Virtual Meeting via Zoom.

Present: Parish Councillor Rennie Pinder (in the Chair) & Parish Councillors;
John Halstead, Gary Monk and Joe Threlfall.

In attendance: APC Clerk.

Other: None.

A001: Housekeeping

The Chair, Councillor Rennie Pinder welcomed everybody to the meeting and checked on the virtual housekeeping arrangements so all present online could hear and view the meeting remotely.

A002: Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been submitted in advance of the meeting from Parish Councillors Tom Fearon and Christine Lingard.

A003: Declarations of Interest

The Chair and Councillor Threlfall declared an interest in any discussions on Hawthorn Bank and the vicinity of that area due to their home address being in that location. The Chair also declared an interest in any matters relating to Altham Primary School as he was a Governor.

No other declarations of interest were submitted.

A004: Minutes from the Last Meeting

The minutes of the APC virtual meeting held on the 19th January 2021 were attached to the agenda and submitted for approval.

Resolved - (1) That the minutes of the virtual APC meeting held on the 19th January 2021 be approved as a correct record.
Proposed by Councillor Halstead and seconded by Councillor Monk

A005. Matters arising from the Last Minutes (Not listed on the agenda)

The Chair reported that the agenda under the relevant heading listed most matters arising since the last meeting.

A006: Public Participation

No local residents were in virtual attendance at the meeting.

As stated earlier in the meeting Councillor Threlfall had declared an interest in matters relating to Hawthorn Bank. As a local resident he brought to the attention of the Council an issue about a property being converted into multi occupancy use at that location. Numerous telephone calls had been made to the planning department at HBC and the enforcement officer about this development although no reply had been received.

Councillor Monk would make enquiries on behalf of Councillor Threlfall as a local resident in relation to this matter once he had received all the information.

A007: Chairman's Action

The Chair provided a report on items which had been undertaken by himself and the management committee over the last few weeks.

A meeting with the local MP, Sara Britcliffe had taken place to discuss transport infrastructure of the borough in relation to the local road network which impacted upon the Altham area. The aim was for all East Lancashire MPs to work together as one collective voice for the East of the county to have improvement work undertaken on local roads which were known for traffic problems.

The issue of Hyndburn BC being merged into a joint authority with Blackburn and Darwen was now on the backburner. Regular updates with the local MP would be undertaken around every six weeks with APC. It was hoped that she would list these meetings on her social media communications so the local electorate was aware she was working with the Parish Council in Altham.

A008: Parish Councillor Updates

Councillor Halstead provided a verbal update on the FOI policy which had been updated and circulated to Members.

Resolved - (2) That the updated FOI policy be approved and adopted by APC.
Proposed by Councillor Monk and seconded by Councillor Threlfall.

A009: Correspondence

Councillor Halstead reported on the letter from Luke Hall MP that had been received by Sara Britcliffe MP in relation to business rate collections.

The rates retention system was introduced in 2013-14 and prescribes the basis upon which business rates income collected by billing authorities is distributed between principal authorities at the local level. Councillor Halstead enquired into the potential for parish councils to receive a proportion of locally raised business rates income as a part of this system. Local government does retain 50% of business rates revenue, however that does not mean that individual authorities necessarily retain half of rates revenue collected locally. Whilst the other half, the 'central share,' is paid to the Government, it is used exclusively for the funding of local Government. Further to this, rates income is redistributed between local authorities across England, according to their assessed level of need. Prior to 2013-14, all business rates income was collected centrally and returned to principal authorities through the Local Government Finance Settlement. Business rates income retained by principal authorities, in this case Hyndburn Borough Council and Lancashire County Council, are used to provide local services. The current system encourages billing authorities such as Hyndburn to grow business rates income in their local area and by doing so, to keep at least 50% of this growth in income to be spent according to local priorities. Parish councils have the ability to levy a parish precept on Council Tax bills in order to fund their activities and therefore do not receive any income from business rates. The Government has no plans to change these current funding arrangements.

A lengthy discussion took place in response of the letter received and it was suggested to bring this matter up again at the next meeting with the MP for Hyndburn although it could take a change in law to precept businesses. The Chair would also try and speak with the Leader of HBC and Deputy Chief Executive at HBC about this topic.

A010: Finance

Any remaining payments for the financial year 2020-2021 should be processed before the end of March to aid with the preparation of the annual accounts.

A011: Planning Applications

The Chair handed over to Councillor Monk who reported on this agenda item.

No new applications had been submitted although a verbal update was communicated to Members on applications previously submitted.

There was no update to report on Moorside View other than the sides of the building should be covered in natural stone.

There was also little progress to update on the agricultural building development off Burnley Road since the letter from LCC dated the 15th January was issued.

The fencing at Barn Croft Bungalow would be moved back a short distance which would make it exempt from planning permission. A request had been made to HBC for the Council to receive copies of letters sent in cases like this but APC was classed as a third party so the request was declined.

Councillor Monk had compiled a number of questions for Simon Prideaux in relation to planning law when they next meet.

A012: Updates on:

A- Road Safety (Spids)

There had been reports of boy races in their vehicles along Whalley Road and Burnley Road in Altham

B- Moorfield Industrial Estate

Reports had suggested that there may be people living on the site and activities taking place in the evening. A reply was still awaiting from the Environment Agency into various matters.

C- Parish Lengthsman

The contract had not yet been returned although no problems were anticipated with this. A request had been made to attend a piece of land opposite the Walton Arms Public House before the mowing season starts if the weather remained dry.

D- Crime Figures

Data revealed a reduction from last year most probably due to Covid and people staying at home. There had been a reported break in of a shed in Altham during the last month with a mower being stolen.

E- Allotments

Condition of Livingstone Road site & new tenants

The state of the Livingstone Road site was discussed following a potential tenant being shown the location and being appalled at the condition and thus withdrawing their interest in taking on an allotment plot.

Following a full visual inspection, vacant plots had been used for storing piles of manure with rubbish also dumped on the land and the fencing around the plots in a bad state.

Previous communications sent to tenants concerning a number of issues seemed to have been ignored and a decision was required on the future of the site.

Following lengthy discussions, it was felt that a temporary closure be ordered with the required 12 month notice period given to tenants which would then enable the Council to research and investigate funding opportunities into a refurbishment programme for the whole of the site. A detailed letter would be produced with all the required information including a rent-free period for the start of 2022 only until expiry of the plot. Even though there were interested allotment tenants on the waiting list, no new tenancy agreements would be issued for the remainder of the year or early part of 2022.

Resolved

- (3) That the Livingstone Allotment site be closed on a temporary basis from March 2022 and a recorded delivery letter be sent to all current tenants on the site.

Proposed by Councillor Threlfall and seconded by Councillor Monk.

A013: Clerks Report

The Clerking service allowance had been looked at to update the role and bring it in line with the NALC national banding awards for a substantive range applied to a Clerk. This would only take affect from the 1st April 2021

Resolved

- (4) That the Clerking allowance be increased from the 1st April 2021 to meet the NALC banding awards.

Proposed by Councillor Monk and seconded by Councillor Threlfall.

A014: Christmas Review

No Christmas event update was available at this moment in time due to the continued government restrictions. Initial enquiries with schools would be made after the easter holiday half term period to investigate how much interest there would be in taking part later this year.

A015: Any Other Late Business

No other late business was reported at the

Date(s) and Time of Next Meeting

The date of the next APC council meeting was set virtually for 2.00pm, Tuesday the 13th April 2021.

Signed:

Date:

Chair of the meeting
at which the minutes were confirmed.