

 Akeley Parish Council

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Parish Clerk Helen Butcher

Minutes from the General Meeting held on 14th November 2022

64/22 **Public Open Forum (under adjournment);** for members of the public to bring issues to the Council's attention. Any issues not on the agenda cannot be discussed but will be noted and discussed at the next meeting if appropriate. Issues relating to the agenda will be taken into consideration when the item is discussed in the meeting

There were five members of the public present

65/22 **Attendance and apologies;** In attendance were Councillors Holland (Chair) Hockley (Vice Chair) Goodger, George, and Jones. Clerk Helen Butcher

Richard Watkins Buckingham AED Project

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillor Coxall and County Councillor Mordue

66/22 **Members Interests;** Members are invited to declare disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests in items on the agenda as required by the Akeley Parish Council Code of Conduct for Members and by the Localism Act 2011.

Councillor Hockley declared an interest in the Akeley Churchyard planning application

Councillors Holland and George declared an interest in the items on the village hall

Councillor George declared an interest in the proposal re the Scout Field

67/22 **Approval of Minutes;** Council **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes from the planning meeting held at Akeley Village Hall on Wednesday 26th October 2022.

68/22 **ADMINISTRATION**

- a. The Council received and noted the Clerks report including email to residents re footpath by The Bull & Butcher pub
- b. The Council is still looking for a new Councillor, there has to date, been no response to the Facebook posts or posters.
- c. Council **RESOLVED** to adopt the new Standing Orders policy, proposed by Councillor George, seconded by Councillor Goodger
- d. The Civility & Respect policy - need to look at the required training to compile a plan. The link for this will then be emailed out by Councillor Holland. All agreed they are willing to take the pledge
- e. To set a date for the clerks appraisal – Councillor Holland will email the feedback forms to all Councillors to be returned by the end of December, then a date will be set for the appraisal in January
- f. Options for the Coronation celebrations 2023 were discussed, a bank holiday has been declared for Monday 8th May. Council **RESOLVED** to conduct a Facebook survey to see what villagers would like to do & what memento they would like, if any, for the children of the village.

69/22 **FINANCES;**

- a. The financial statement: to end October 2022 current balance £14805.31- refund still due from EON and payments from Community Board still outstanding

- b. Invoices to be paid in November 2022 see list below
Council **RESOLVED** to approve all payments listed
- c. Internal Controls Officer – Council discussed role and audit. The Officer would need read only access to bank account & Scribe.
- d. Spending to end of October 2022 was reviewed – need to double check allotment payments and check if trimming back of footpaths has been done
It was noted that some extra expenses are due to payments slipping into this year rather than last.
- e. The budget proposed for 2023/24 will be emailed out to all councillors to check to ensure nothing has been missed
- f. Internal auditor for 2022/23 – Council **RESOLVED** that Deborah O’Brien be reappointed as IA as her feedback was so useful this year.
- g. The Clerk’s pay increase was discussed and Council **RESOLVED** to keep in line with the national pay scales with this year’s increase backdated to 1st April 2022 Payment frequency to be discussed in January. The agreed increase is £1 per hour
- h. Update on payments from Community Board - Zoom call has been booked to deal with outstanding issues
- i. Rents for scout field and 1 acre field to remain the same for now £50 & £175 respectively. Need to check notice period needed for increase in the future.
- j. Council **RESOLVED** to approve £500 payment to Village Hall for 2022/23 & 24 plus £20 for lighting contribution- proposed by Councillor Hockley seconded by Councillor Jones

70/22 ENVIRONMENT;

- a. Recreational Field; to receive any updates. Grass cut last week
 - To receive the quotes for concrete bases for the new picnic benches
Community board will accept applications for the concrete bases.
2 quotes received third expected, cost of materials may increase Council **RESOLVED** lowest quote to be accepted as long as meets same specification and as long as quote received by end of week otherwise go with lowest of two.
- b. Play Park
 - Update received on re-establishing the working group looking at the play area refurbishment – awaiting revised quotes from contractors
 - The quotes for refurbishing the play area one received two more awaited
 - Update on Section 106 money & Community board – we can apply for the Sec 106 money once we have agreed a scheme with final costs. We can apply to the Community Board for up to £15,000 for the project.
A volunteer to monitor the condition of the playing field is to be sought, Councillor Goodger will do if necessary but it would be beneficial to get more people involved if possible.
- c. Scout Field; the proposal to add another container into the field for storage was discussed
Plan received with no dimensions was explained by Councillor George. Council **RESOLVED** to approve but to advise the Scouts to check if planning permission required
- d. Grass Cutting; to receive any reports and discuss any issues, no issues
 - To review the new devolved services process. There will be no increase on the payment we receive for next year. Clerk will look at the contract with Councillor Goodger
- e. Wildflower area no updates
- f. Trees: To receive any quotes for the tree work identified - still waiting for quotes
- g. Wildlife conservation defer till January
- h. Roads and traffic; Road diversion causing issues school buses reversing into the square, Council **RESOLVED** to put a notice on Facebook to be mindful of parking on Church Hill whilst roadworks underway ensure enough space for emergency vehicles at all times

- i. Community Speedwatch update - still awaiting device being listed, once this is done by TVP we can arrange for speed monitoring to start.
- j. Footpaths no updates received
- k. Allotments;
 - To consider quotes & funding for renewing the fence. Council **RESOLVED** to ask E-Scapes and Greensleeves to revisit quotes. The quote to completely replace the fence is unfortunately too high for us to include in the budget for next year. We will ask for repair of existing fence including replacing posts where necessary & ensure it includes to clear the shrubs growing in the fence line. Review in Jan & budget for next year.
 - Council was informed that the wasp nest reported in the allotment area has been dealt with
- l. Maintenance of Parish notice boards - Andy to restore the board outside the school
- m. Bus shelter; To consider cleaning the bus shelters – **RESOLVED** to ask Andy what he would charge for cleaning the bus shelters quarterly
- n. AED- to receive an update on the lighting & signage to improve visibility of the defibrillator
Richard Watkins explained about the issue of lighting & resolution with LED solar powered light, need to sort fixing
Signage - discussed plastic options for above AED & at top end of Church Hill
Check if any restrictions on signage in Conservation area, check re planning permission
Council **RESOLVED** to commit to improving signage review options at next meeting
More training to be arranged for January.

71/22 **PLANNING;**

a. **New Planning applications –**

Ref. No: 22/03452/APP Akeley Burial Ground The Square Akeley Buckinghamshire

John Hockley informed Council of the details of application and how the proposal has evolved & rationale for low level wall to offset the heat gain

Council **RESOLVED** to support the need for a building on the site and like the mix of old and new design

Ref. No: 22/03491/APP Lodge Fields Akeley Wood Lodge Road Akeley

Council **RESOLVED** to approve the objection drafted with the amendments discussed on the night. Revised response attached below. An email from the planning consultant was read and noted.

Ref. No: 22/03585/CPE Woodland Cottage Akeley Wood Lodge Road Akeley

Council **RESOLVED** to record “no comment” Councillor Goodger wished to record his support for this application.

b. **Decisions made by Bucks CC Planning Dept no new decisions**

c. **Other planning Consultations –**

Ref. No: 22/03402/VRC Land Adjacent To Leckhampstead Road Akeley - To be discussed in more detail at planning meeting next week

72/22 **Date and time of next meeting; Planning meeting arranged for 21st November 2022**

General meeting Monday 9th January 2023 at 7.30pm - Date to be confirmed

Pursuant to the 1960 Public Bodies Act (amended), the Chairman advises that the participants & proceedings of this meeting may be reported upon (filmed, recorded, photographed, blogged, tweeted or streamed) but verbal reporting may not take place whilst in session. Non-participating attendees not wishing to be subject to such media should indicate this by sitting to one side.

Clerks Report November 2022

Environment

The ornamental cherry tree has been planted outside the village hall to mark the Queens Jubilee. This tree has been registered as part of the Queens Green Canopy. At the same time a holly tree was also planted by the Wayleave at the edge of the wildlife near Chapel Lane

Quotes have been obtained for placing concrete bases for the picnic benches to be placed upon. The new park bench has now arrived and is awaiting assembly and fixing.

A new quote has been received for the plat area refurbishment which is from a company who make all the wooden equipment themselves so they can adapt them to our requirements. Two of the original companies have been asked to resubmit quotes based on our more specific brief.

The Parish notice board outside the school is due to be cleared to enable it to be restained after the PC meeting.

The lamppost poppies have arrived and have been put up around the village as a lovely Remembrance tribute.

The sign cover still needs to be ordered for the basketball post.

A wasp nest on the allotment has been dealt with as advised by a pest control expert. It was likely to have been formed by a new queen and whilst would have remained relatively dormant over winter the wasps would have become very active in the spring and it was considered too close to an allotment and highly likely for someone to get stung.

A discussion was had with the Pest Control expert about moles on the recreational field. These are best dealt with in February/ March and could take up to four visits to clear costing £260 for 4 visits. this would be best repeated annually due to the close proximity of the wildlife area.

A problem has been reported with Street lamp no 10 which used to light up the path from the car park through to the flats in Manor Road but now shines on the grass instead. This has been reported to Zeta with the hope that they can alter the direction of the light.

A tree surgeon is looking at the trees identified as needing work this week

Community Speedwatch

The locations for the speedwatch surveying have been approved. We are currently awaiting our device to be logged onto the system then we can go ahead and select dates to start.

Roadworks in Leckhampstead Road

The roadworks for the Leys Field development are now underway leading to Leckhampstead Road being closed from the Buckingham end and open for access only from the Leckhampstead end. This has necessitated in changes having been made to the school bus provision with all children now being picked up & dropped off at the bus stop outside Coronation Cottages. There is

some concern with this as the children have to cross the main road but the County Council have stressed that it is the parents responsibility to supervise their children until they are collected and as soon as they are dropped off by the bus companies.

It is imperative to continue to watch the run off from the development as this work nears an end as in theory this should resolve the problem. Obviously the weather is likely to be much colder as the work reaches conclusion and therefore if the drainage problems are not resolved they will need reporting straight away as there will be an increased risk to the road users in freezing weather.

Akeley Parish Council response to Planning Application Consultation 22/03491/APP AKELEY- Lodge fields Akeley Wood Lodge Road

Akeley Parish Council objects to the above retrospective planning application on the grounds detailed below.

The original planning application was uncontested as it appeared to be within the remit of permitted agricultural development. The design and access statement stated that the straw would be transported to the site from within the local area using tractor and trailers. There appeared to be no reason to stand in the way of a farmer simply putting a barn on their land nor indeed any real option to object as it fell under permitted development. However the reality has been very different.

The owners of the land would have known at the outset that the quantity of hay and straw they had contracted for would necessitate a larger barn than that allowed under the permitted agricultural development. In fact their own Planning Consultant has stated that “the decision was made to build the barn larger than permitted in one operation rather than extending it at a later date” and that “the scale of the building is justified by the scale of straw needing to be accommodated and the scale of the overall agricultural (haulage in our opinion) operation”. However had the original, or an amended application, been submitted it would have fallen outside the scope of permitted agricultural development and thus been subject to full public consultation and scrutiny. The local residents would have had the opportunity to contest the development and this opportunity was denied.

With reference to the Design and Access statement from Whitehead Planning the Parish Council disputes the statement 4.1d that the use of the building does not unreasonably harm any aspect of the amenity of nearby residents. The road the site is situated on is the only access to five properties. Other than that it was used by dog walkers, horse riders and ramblers. Now the local residents have had to amend their families use of the road due to the heavy goods traffic and the state of the road which was never intended to withstand the frequency of the weight of vehicles used to transport the straw. The road surface has been badly affected by the heavy use in just one harvest season. The road has also been blocked on occasion by articulated lorries arriving before the site is unlocked posing potential risk to these residents should an emergency vehicle need access, not to mention inconvenience in getting to and from their properties for work and school.

The Parish Council disputes the description of the building as a “modestly larger building” 4.10 as it is one third larger and as stated before falls outside of the scope of permitted development.

Section 4.13 wrongly states that “the transport impacts of the use are limited”. The straw is not just brought in from the local area, it is also brought in from Bedfordshire, and other areas, on large artic lorries which the local roads are not built to take. Akeley is an old, small village with narrow roads and overhanging trees. The lorries regularly hold up the flow of traffic, shed straw along the road and break branches off the trees which residents have been left to clear. This shows a lack of respect for the local

community and the safety of the residents. The site itself is situated on an awkward bend in a road which is in constant use, especially at school drop off and pick up times as it is en route between the two sites of the local school.

Akeley is a rural community and as such is used to increased farm traffic during the harvest season however there was not typical agricultural traffic connected with this site. Large artic lorries were transporting the hay and straw through the village at frequent intervals throughout the day and night. There is usually limited large vehicle movements through Akeley as the roads are too narrow so the impact this site made was dramatic and very obvious. It was certainly not the use of the odd tractor and trailer alluded to in the original application.

Akeley Parish Council disputes Section 4.36 which refers to the fact that “the development is close to the farms providing straw which reduces the travel distance and hence fossil fuel use”. This site is further away from many of the farms covered i.e. in Bedfordshire than the family’s previous site in Milton Keynes. Therefore the mileage and use of fossil fuels has in fact increased.

The Ecology report states in section 2.2.13 that the scale of traffic generated should be appropriate for the function and standard of the roads serving the area. This is not the case. Some significant damage to the road surface has already been repaired by the County Council and this will be an ongoing issue due to the weight and frequency of the vehicles transporting the straw to and from the site. Damage has already been caused to residents cars and workmen’s vehicles by the effects on the road surface of the increased heavy vehicles using the road. Whilst it is acknowledged that the family business is a mixed business including some agriculture, Akeley Parish Council considers the current use of this land to be primarily a storage depot for the haulage operation and draw attention to the companies website [D J Wills Haulier - Home](#) to see the scale of the business and size of their vehicles.

Section 4.22 states that the building would be screened to some extent by trees and would not be in a prominent position. However due to the size of the building and the size of the additional stacks of straw this is definitely not the case. It can be seen from some distance along the roads, footpaths and from the houses along Buckingham Road. The attached photos clearly demonstrate that the site is not close to any other agricultural buildings and is not in keeping with the surrounding Stowe Area of attractive landscapes.

The bales stacked outside of the barn pose a potential health and safety risk as the stacks tilt badly. Should this development be allowed to continue there will no doubt follow applications for more barns as the photos show the scale of the straw stored far exceeds the current storage capacity even taking into account the larger than permitted barn having been built. There will also be the additional impact should the appeal be permitted for the accommodation on site.

In summary Akeley Parish Council objects to this retrospective planning permission as the scale of the operation is totally unsuitable for the site which does not have the infrastructure to support the volume of heavy goods traffic. It is not an industrial site which is what this enterprise requires. Had the original application truly reflected the scale of the business proposed it would have been strongly contested from the outset.

Should the County Council be minded to approve this application some consideration needs to be given to applying restrictions on weight, speed and type of vehicles used, the route they take and time of operation. Plus some restrictions on the further industrialisation of this rural site.



