

# ALDERLEY EDGE PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on Monday 13th June 2011

**Present:** Cllr M H Williamson (Chairman), Cllrs D G Herald, F Keegan, M J Connor  
J D Bergin, S Joseph

**In attendance:** 1 representative from the press (alderleyedge.com)  
No members of the public, but Sgt Andy Miller from the police for point 6 (which was taken first)

### Meeting

**Commenced:** 8:03pm

#### 1. Apologies for Absence

Received from Cllrs M D Lloyd and M W Maczkowiak.

#### 2. Minutes of the meeting held on 9th May 2011

Approval was proposed by Councillor F Keegan, seconded by Councillor D G Herald and carried.

#### 3. Matters Arising

None.

#### 4. Traffic Matters

##### a) Street Parking Review

The current situation was discussed under Policing (point 6) below.

Councillor M H Williamson had received a response from Andy Buckley at Cheshire East Council regarding village traffic issues. The next meeting is suggested for early July. Yellow hatched markings are to be established near to the schools to deter parking. The "birdcage" structures along Wilmslow Road are to be removed. There is Section 106 money totalling £59,000 to spend on traffic measures. CEC has scheduled further traffic surveys for the autumn, but some traffic counts will take place in July. The previously provided suggestions regarding junctions in the village are being enhanced and should be available at the next meeting. Finally, the shared space concept (as is being installed in Poynton) is to be investigated.

#### 5. Non-Traffic Matters

##### a) Festival Hall

Nothing to report.

##### b) Byelaws

The clerk had issued a summary of the current situation prior to the meeting.

As the Parish Council does not own the Park or Beech Road Playing Field as yet (which were the areas being considered for the introduction of byelaws) there was a discussion as to whether any further investigation/work on this topic was needed at present.

Before such legislation can be set up, the asset needs to be owned, however it was decided that Councillor D G Herald would look into the matter further over the coming months with a view of at least getting a draft document together in readiness for when the assets are owned. The required byelaws could then be in place soon after the transfer takes place. Councillor S Joseph will assist in drawing up the requirements.

Councillor M H Williamson raised the topic of devolvement of assets/services by Cheshire East Council. It had been intended that Alderley Edge would participate in the “second wave” of activity, letting other councils “put their toe in the water” first to see how the idea would work.

However, correspondence from Cheshire East Council now suggests that a proposal is being put to the Cabinet in August whereby certain services will become the responsibility of the Parish Council from next April (or those services will cease to exist). Some of the services will be funded (although by how much has not yet been established) and some will not (requiring a likely increase in the precept levied by the Parish Council for the 2012/2013 year).

The services initially being considered are:

- Allotments (not funded)
- Benches and Street Furniture (not funded)
- Christmas Trees (not funded)
- Grass Pitches (funded)
- Parks and Play Areas (funded)
- Public Conveniences (not funded)

Councillor M H Williamson, with the support of the other councillors, agreed to send a letter to Cheshire East Council regarding this subject to request a meeting to discuss the proposals further.

Councillor F Keegan mentioned bus stops/shelters, but these are not part of the transfer arrangements at present. However, if any councillors are aware of any areas of land or other assets that should be considered for transfer, please advise the clerk.

Moving on to other topics, Councillor M H Williamson advised that he has been contacted by the Parish Plan Group chairman with a view to meeting to discuss how the Plan may now be taken forward. This meeting will be arranged over the next few days.

Both he and Councillor F Keegan are also to meet with Andy Anson, from the local football club, regarding the future of Chorley Hall Playing Field.

The Post Office service is moving to within the Co-op store on The Parade. A consultation is currently being held by the Post Office regarding the move and Councillor M H Williamson will send a letter providing support for the change which will retain a Post Office counter service in the village.

The subject of barbeques in the park was raised following various e-mails seen over the last few weeks. Some people support them as it is seen as encouraging people into the park, but others see the smoke and debris left afterwards as a nuisance. It seems that in one of Knutford’s parks there is a designated area which is kept tidy by the users. It was decided that the subject would be discussed again once ownership of the park moved to the Parish Council.

## **6. Policing**

Sgt Andy Miller attended the meeting to discuss policing issues in the village. He talked about parking and mentioned that he had attended the recent public meeting at the Festival Hall.

The PCSO and Councillor M H Williamson were in the process of visiting businesses to establish the numbers of employees and therefore the likely numbers of vehicles which needed to be parked somewhere in the village during the day/evening. Councillor M H Williamson advised that the businesses seen so far were supportive of the initiative, but the numbers being suggested means that well over 100 spaces may be needed which exceeds those available at the Festival Hall. Accordingly, other sites may need to be found to accommodate them.

Following the public meeting, several residents had sent in observations and all these have now been responded to by the Chairman. Councillor M H Williamson has also contacted Paul Burns at Cheshire East Council regarding a public consultation on the findings of their parking survey work. A couple of proposed residents parking schemes are ready to be discussed too.

Returning to the sergeant, he advised that the police only deal with obstructions caused by vehicles, not infringements of parking “rules” e.g. ignorance of road markings or overstaying in parking spaces. These are

covered by the wardens who are only employed from 9-5, although they can be asked to patrol in the evenings, but have to be paid overtime.

The police are eager to educate before legislate, and prefer to try to get the offenders to think about their actions and inconvenience to others. However, if this fails then they will take action and it has been known that cars have been towed away in some circumstances.

Unfortunately, locally, many offenders do not worry about receiving a parking ticket as the cost is seen to be an insufficient deterrent when compared with their wealth. The local restaurants are unable to resolve the problem as they do not wish to force their customers away, thus losing business.

He mentioned that Cheshire East Council were considering re-surfacing the Festival Hall car park and installing lighting for greater security, but at an estimated cost of £90,000. This has not progressed to date.

Councillor M H Williamson also cited the problem whereby people knowingly move to houses with no parking and then try to establish localised parking schemes which affect other parts of the village.

Councillor S Joseph mentioned that the “customers” of the village must not be forgotten. The village would not exist if it didn’t attract paying customers and these should not be put off from visiting if they can’t park anywhere or can only park for too short a time. Visitors should be encouraged to linger – limited short time parking does not support this.

Returning to Councillor M H Williamson, he explained that parking outside the schools remains a problem. Hopefully some yellow hatching markings are to be installed to try to stop this.

Councillor F Keegan mentioned speeding in and around the village – several roads being quoted. The police do have access to Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) and Sgt Miller will contact the Parish Council when they are returned from repair regarding siting one around the village. There are 2 sorts, one of which collects data (not number plate details), and a cheaper version which merely flashes at the motorist. He agreed that they do have an impact. Councillor M H Williamson is to write a letter requesting the data collecting version and Sgt Miller will endorse the request.

Asked if the councillors had any other matters to discuss, Councillor J D Bergin raised the matter of anti-social behaviour in relation to fencing panels near his own property which had been damaged. The policeman agreed that there had been problems in the Beech Road Playing Field area, but he had not seen reports of any untoward activity elsewhere. He suggested that any incidents giving cause for concern should be reported to the police so that as patterns of activity emerge the police can focus on them.

Burglaries are at an all time low, but owing to the wealth of residents attracted to the Alderley Edge area there is always the likelihood of this type of activity and people should constantly take steps to ensure their property is secure.

## **7. Licensing**

Nothing to report.

## **8. Communications**

Nothing to report.

## **9. Reports from Councillors**

Councillor M J Connor advised that as the Queen is celebrating her Diamond Jubilee next year numerous events are being arranged around the country to commemorate the milestone.

Particular emphasis is being made over the first weekend in June and she hoped that something could be arranged locally, perhaps on the Saturday evening and a “Big Lunch” street party on the Sunday. She will return to a future meeting with more details and went on to advise that she hoped to resurrect the Village Enhancement Committee or something similar.

Councillor D G Herald advised that the park continues to be well used, but there have been complaints that the flower beds have more grass than some of the grassed areas..!

Councillor J D Bergin wondered if some signage could be erected around the village indicating its history and possible “twinning” was mentioned by some of the councillors. Lisa Reeves from alderleyedge.com mentioned that Prestbury had recently held an exhibition of historical items related to the village which had proved popular.

Finally, Councillor M H Williamson advised that he would be contacting all the councillors regarding an emergency plan for the village. Councillor F Keegan indicated that he would be interested in assisting one of the other councillors in drawing up such a plan.

**Meeting Closed:** 9.25pm

**ACTION SUMMARY**

| <b>Undertaken By</b> | <b>Detail</b>   | <b>When For</b>        |
|----------------------|---|------------------------|
| MHW                  | Arrange next meeting with Andy Buckley                                  | Early July             |
| DGH/SJ               | Draft byelaw document(s)  | Autumn                 |
| MHW/Councillors      | Meet with CEC regarding the transfer of assets/services                 | As soon as possible    |
| MHW                  | Arrange to meet Parish Plan Group chairman                              | By end of June         |
| MHW/FK               | Meet with Andy Anson from local football club                           | By end of June         |
| MHW                  | Write letter of support to Post Office regarding proposed move          | 21/6                   |
| MHW                  | Send request for SID to police for endorsement                          | As soon as practicable |
| MHW                  | Contact councillors regarding a proposed Emergency Plan for the village | As soon as practicable |

**Councillor M H Williamson**  
**CHAIRMAN**