

**Minutes of the Alderholt Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2015  
at 6.30pm, in the Village Hall, Station Road, Alderholt**

**Present**

**Alderholt Parish Council;**

Cllr R McCrudden (Chairman), Cllr A Hibberd, Cllr S Lane, Cllr K Mason, Cllr J Simcock, Mrs M Humby (Clerk) Mrs K Brooker (Assistant Clerk)

**Speakers;**

Mr Hugo House- Good Energy

Reverend Philip Martin –Chair of Governors St James' First School

Inspector Wayne Nock-Dorset police

**Stands;**

Good Energy Solar Fund and Community Chest

Alderholt Scouts- Rifle Range Working Party

Alderholt Recreation Ground Rebuild Working Party

Parish Council Elections

Alderholt Surplus Site Development Plans

Alderholt Youth/skate park Facilities-survey results

Cllr Ian Monks (Alderholt South Ward District Councillor and Leader East Dorset District Council)

District and County Councillor S Butler (Crane ward)

Approx 100 members of the public

**Apologies**

Apologies were received from Cllr J Briddick, Cllr G Logan and Cllr Walker.

Refreshments and handouts of the agenda and minutes from last year's meeting were available on arrival.

**Welcome from the Chairman**

Cllr Roy McCrudden welcomed everyone to the meeting. The minutes of last year's meeting were agreed and signed.

**Annual Report from the Chairman**

Chairman of the Parish Council, Cllr Roy McCrudden gave an update of the activities of the Parish Council over the last year. His report is detailed below;

It is hard to believe that yet another year has passed and here we are again at the Annual Parish Meeting. It has been a very busy year and one where we have closed successfully a number of items from our agenda some of which I will give further detail within this report, however some of the key points are, our new website, new machinery for the ARA, volunteer car scheme to name but a few.

In Alderholt we are in a fortunate position where we receive fantastic support from both our District Councillor **Ian Monks** and County Councillor **Steve Butler** both of who ensure that we here in Alderholt continue to have our local issues raised and well represented whenever required at both District and County level, my thanks to them both.

I sincerely hope that both are standing again in the upcoming elections and will continue to serve our village as they have done so in the past

Over the last year a boundary review took place and Alderholt will now be a single ward; this was supported by your Parish Council. This means that now all 9 councillors are under the same ward

Within this council we are extremely fortunate to be looked after by a clerk who not only has a depth of knowledge that seems to know no bounds but also one which keeps both me and my fellow councillors on track both in terms of legal compliance but also ensuring meetings

are conducted in a format where discussion is open, honest, representative, fair and where possible with a little humour, with that can I thank you Maria.

Maria has over the last year has been assisted by Kerry Brooker who came on board within this last year and what an asset she is proving to be already so once again my thanks must go to Kerry.

When I took over as chairman, I was determined to close down some of the agenda items which for whatever reason never seemed to be off our agenda and this has been achieved with the help and support of all councillors, for that support and help I thank you all, let's keep moving forward.

On a sad note one of our long standing councillors has decided to stand down this year so that she may pursue one of her ambitions to further her educational aspirations, can I say a huge thank you to Kate Mason for the knowledge you passed on to us all, the help, support and sheer determination you showed at times when it was required. Kate, thank you.

In addition Shelley Lane has also decided that she no will stand as a councillor. Shelley wishes to devote more time to her other interests. With that I wish to thank Shelley for her valued contribution over the years she has served our village

So what have we been doing for the last year?

**Website;**- we have a brilliant new website that is available to all villagers interested in understanding what is happening locally, read council minutes or simply find information that would otherwise require a visit or phone call to the office.

**Volunteer car scheme;**- our old scheme closed down and some were left with no means of getting to local GP, hospital or other appointments. Cllr Logan stepped up to the plate and took on this task; the end result is a great. We are now part of Two Bridges car scheme which works very well, some of our previous drivers work on this scheme and all is well and once again those who require this valuable assistance are able to call upon Two Bridges for help, well done Gina.

**New machinery for ARA;**- well where do I start? This agenda item was never going to be an easy one with at one point the two sides seemingly at an impasse and no way forward, however both sides continued to meet and eventually a solution was achieved which gave both parties satisfaction. We continue to have the grass and Rec maintained by ARA to the usual high standard, my thanks to Cllrs Hibberd and Lane for the hard work and determination on this item.

**Allotments;**-another agenda item which never seemed to go away and whether it was drainage issues or boundary fencing we seemed to have ongoing problems, so what has happened? For many a year the allotments have suffered with water drainage issues and with the weather we had last winter this became the top item to resolve, Cllr Logan and Walker met with local residents and users to discuss the boundary ditch, eventually we discovered who owned the ditch and had it cleared, let's hope we can get the water off the land now. Then we had lots of overhanging trees lopped to let more sunlight into the allotments culminating in a huge tree on plot one being felled, much to every ones delight. Next was our local 4 legged friends, the deer and how to keep them out, we have now agreed to replace nearly 100m of fencing and the top gates to keep the deer out and this work will be completed in the next few weeks.

**Rifle Range;**- we have ongoing discussions with our local Scout group to see if they can take over the old Rifle Range and these continue to take place whenever there is new information available which will help push this project closer to a successful conclusion. I am being assisted on this project by Cllrs Hibbard and Briddick and without Adrian's local knowledge we would still be on the starting block, so a huge thank you to Adrian for this help. We will complete this project this next year and at the next AGM the chairman will be able to present plans and maybe even show off the new building.

**New Sports and Social Club and Pavilion:** - work continues to investigate and discuss how best to move forward with the replacement of the Sports and Social Club and Pavilion at the Rec. this is chaired by Cllr Mason who has pulled pushed and generally forced this project to where it is today, Kate you have done a great job and I am not sure who can take this forward in the same style and with the gusto which you have shown.

**Planning;**- this continues to be an active part of this council and is led very well by Cllr Briddick who chairs this to an exemplary standard.

In the past year we have seen numerous planning applications for and including:-

- 7 new houses in Ringwood Rd (next to the CO OP)
- CO OP extension which is now up and running
- A new pharmacy in Alderholt
- Solar Farm
- 89 houses on surplus land (ongoing)

Plus many others which all receive individual attention from a local Cllr. We really do try to get the best result for our village.

Planning committee continues to meet every three weeks if applications are submitted, my thanks to all those who sit on this valuable committee

We are getting ever closer with the plans and very soon will submit a planning application to EDDC, once again we are very fortunate to have the support of both our district and county councillors, Ian Monks and Steve Butler.

If that is not enough we have also;-

- Fencing at children's play area, this will complete the fencing and should be installed over the next few weeks
- New signs at the entrance to the play area, again installed at the same time as the fencing
- Taken part in the boundary review
- Donated £3000 to the 30-4-30 appeal
- Assisted the village hall and will fund the front door replacement to the council offices
- Carried out a village survey to understand youth requirements for the future
- Continue to help the ARA with an annual grant to help maintain the rec
- Pay for a dog warden to keep our village clear of unwanted waste
- Support various organisations that in turn offer support and help to our residents (CAB etc.)
- Entered and won two awards at the Dorset Best Kept Village Competition, this year we came joint runner up in the large village competition and won the environmental award for the restoration of the village pond.

There are other things which I could inform you on such as the great success of the Speed watch, the benefits our village will get from the solar farm but these will be covered by others in the AGM.

It remains of me to thanks once again Maria and Kerry for their help so far and hopefully their ongoing support over the next year to the new chairman.

I wish to thank all councillors for the time effort and knowledge they have imparted selflessly over the last year and ask that they stand again to continue the projects and good work.

Roy McCrudden  
Chairman  
Alderholt Parish Council

**Speaker: Mr Hugo House Senior Project Developer, Good Energy**

Mr House thanked the Parish Council for the opportunity to once again talk to the community and update on the status of the Solar Farm. He recapped that planning consent had been given in November 2014 for a 5mw Solar Farm to be located in fields at the back of Blackwater Grove. Good Energy are currently complying with the planning details such as the Traffic Management Plan in liaison with the Planning authority (EDDC). They have made a change in how to route traffic to the site and a recent planning application has been submitted proposing access from Ringwood Road via a farm track in order to divert construction traffic from Blackwater Grove.

They hope to start building on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2015. The target is a 12 week construction programme (by the end of June majority of the construction should be completed). They will hand deliver letters to Blackwater Grove residents and will arrange a Question and Answer session.

The Community will benefit from a £5k annual community fund (will rise with inflation) to be spent on village projects. They need volunteers to organise the spending of this community chest and welcome the names of any volunteers tonight who may be interested in this.

Questions were then taken from the floor;

Q/How will the energy be utilised?

A/Electricity will be supplied to the local electricity grid. Good Energy is an electric supplier of 100% renewable energy

Q/ Will you divulge the subsidy that good Energy will receive

A/Good Energy will receive approx 6p per unit of energy generated

Q/Will you give a guarantee that there will not be an increase in traffic along this road as horse and riders use Ringwood Road?

A/There will be an increase of traffic. The number of vehicle movement is 170 across the programme which equates to approx 5 per day into the site.

A discussion then took place as to whether this route is suitable with the following concerns being raised;

Ringwood Road is narrow and cars will not be able to pass the large lorries

Can the route be diverted along Station Road?

Can the speed limit be reduced along Ringwood Road during this time?

Can a timetable of when construction traffic will be using the road be given?

Mr House advised that it was very valuable to hear residents concerns which will be considered. Good Energy will act in the best interests of the village as a whole.

The Chairman then thanked Mr House and advised that residents could speak to him after the meeting with any further concerns they may have.

### **Speaker: Reverend Philip Martin Chair of Governors St James' First School**

Revd Martin advised that he was delighted to be invited to speak at this meeting about St First James' School. He thanked the Parish Council and others in the community who have contributed to the 30-4-30 School Appeal which celebrates its 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Dorset is the poorest funded County in the country and therefore help from the community is always welcomed.

He gave a brief outline of the school's history until present day. When the comprehensive system was introduced, Children of Aderholt went to St James' School, followed by Cranborne Middle and then finally onto Queen Elizabeth in Wimborne. Now with parental choice there are approx 50 children in the village that do not attend St James' First School. This is primarily believed to be so that the children do not have the long journey to the middle and upper schools at Cranborne and Wimborne. The school is a good school, verging on outstanding with great leadership and experienced staff. It is the geography of the school rather than the quality of it that is encouraging this change. They would like St James' to be the default school for all parents in the village; by changing to a primary school, more children could be encouraged to go to St James' School and then feed into Fordingbridge School (Burgate) at year 6 or continue with the Cranborne/QE route if they wish.

He advised that without St James' School the village as a community will be diminished.

Questions were then taken from the floor;

Q/How quickly can this be achieved?

A/There will be some objections to this and therefore a debate will be held - a timeframe of 18mths/ 2yrs possibly. They first need to gauge support from the existing and potential parents so a meeting will be held after Easter.

Q/Do you know there is an upper school planned for Verwood and forms part of the local plan?

A/That would be welcomed but it is believed that it is more of an aspiration

Q/Have other factors other than geography been considered that might account for the low intake?

A/They would be grateful to receive feedback particularly on any concerns being experienced.

The Chairman then thanked Revd Martin and advised that he had recently been invited to the School which had been a wonderful experience and he believed it was a great school.

### **Speaker; Inspector Wayne Nock Dorset Police**

Inspector Nock introduced himself as the Neighbourhood Inspector for East Dorset. He is based in Ferndown and supports the rural Safer Neighbourhood Team for Alderholt which is based in Verwood and consists of PC Nick Lee, PC Tom Clements, PCSO Andy Flanagan, PCSO Steve Willis and PCSO Louise Hamilton. The local teams are vital to provide the community link. Dorset police are the lowest funded in the country.

Anti-social behaviour has improved with only 12 reported calls for Alderholt in 2014 and none as yet for 2015.

Non dwelling burglary (sheds and outbuildings) is however a problem in this area and the police would request that any suspicious behaviour to be reported to help with their intelligence gathering.

Alderholt is a trailblazer for Community Speedwatch the number of vehicles whose details were taken for exceeding the limit dropped from 80% in July 2014 to 20% by the end of the year which shows its success. Their role is not to enforce but to educate drivers and make them aware. Persistent offenders are followed up and the no excuses team talk to residents. He gave his thanks to all the volunteers involved with this. East Dorset officers often work closely with Fordingbridge officers and also are involved in operation Midas which shares intelligence between Hants, Wilts and Dorset officers. Residents are encouraged to always report crimes and suspicious behaviour.

Questions were then taken from the floor;

Q/ How can we encourage drivers to be safer towards horse and riders?

A/ Details can be passed on to an officer who deals specifically with these issues. Officers now attend training on how to deal with rural issues.

Q/Can you help with safety advice against speeding drivers when children are crossing Daggons Road into the forest from the Nursery?

A/ Please report any incidents that occur as this will help when looking at problem areas. Community Speed Watch (CSW) are unable to monitor this area as there is no safe place where they can be located. Martin Smethers (speedwatch volunteer) advised that they are looking into whether they can overcome this issue. He also requested that the Parish Council consider purchasing a laser or radar gun on behalf of the CSW team. Inspector Nock advised that this equipment is for the police not for the CSW team as they are not there to enforce but to educate.

The Chairman thanked Inspector Nock for attending and confirmed that he would be available after the meeting for residents to discuss any other issues.

### **Open Questions:**

The Chairman invited open questions from the floor which included the following;

1. Had a planning application been received for houses at the back of Blackwater Grove to which the response was no.
2. There is still a problem with the County council not knowing where the county boundary is between Gold Oak and the Hampshire Boundary. To be discussed with County Cllr Butler
3. Cyclists can also be a problem on the road at times. All road users need to be educated.
4. Lots of rubbish chucked out of cars particularly along Daggons Road. District Cllr Ian Monks is carrying out a Keep Britain Tidy volunteer litter pick on Sat 21<sup>st</sup> March and hopes to include Daggons Road within this.

The Chairman thanked everyone including the speakers, those manning the stands and residents for attending the meeting which had received a fantastic turnout. He encouraged everyone to peruse the stands and ask any further questions they may have. Further refreshments were also available.

Meeting ended 8.40pm