

**Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the
Albrighton & District Civic Society
held on Tuesday 7th November 2023 at 2pm
at 32 High Street (PW's house)**

Present :

Dave Slatcher – Chairman
Rod Smith – Secretary
Mike Pitchford - Treasurer
Peter Illes
Roger Rudman
Peter Woodman

1. Apologies Dave Williams, Mike Bolton, David Beechey (ex-officio Donington-with-Boscobel PC)

The Chairman nominated Roger Rudman to be co-opted onto the committee and this was seconded by the Secretary and unanimously agreed by the committee.

[Note for the record. At the October AGM the Chairman thanked Mike Pitchford who had offered to carry on as Treasurer until a replacement is appointed and he was co-opted onto the committee]

2. Minutes of Meeting of 2nd October 2023 were approved.

3. Treasurer's Report. – MP reported that the bank balance was £1864.17.

4. To consider progress in regard to following main issues

a. Public Meeting/AGM. Many residents had commented that the meeting at the Air Ambulance HQ had been one of our best meetings. The committee felt that the event had been a great success.

b. 2024 Calendar. DS reported that about 80 copies had been sold and that about 100 copies were with the four outlets and PI and that some of these would have been sold by now. RS reported that he had sent a complimentary copy to the RAF Museum to thank them for their photographs and that he had asked if they were able to sell any on our behalf. RS and MP had sold 9 copies at the Historical Society meeting last evening and they would take some to their December meeting. PW had arranged for the Harp to sell some and had given them 10 copies. PI would take some for sale to the forthcoming Red House event.

c. Future Meeting Dates/Times.

The best time to suit all was discussed and it was noted that DW could not attend today as he was working. It was recognised that most of our work is carried out between meetings and that it was not necessary for all members to attend all committee meetings. However, we would review again this matter and **ACTION: DS** would seek views from all members.

It was agreed that the AGM would remain at the second Monday each October at 7.30pm at the Red House. **ACTION: RS** would ask the Red House secretary if she could make this an annual booking.

d. Review of Planning Applications. To cut down on the amount of work here it was felt that it would be helpful if a member was allocated to review all the applications for the four parishes and to then bring any relevant ones to the committee for review and to decide if the Society should send any comments/objections etc. When Sharon Downes had attended a previous committee meeting, she had expressed interest in the Applications and as a former parish clerk she had relevant expertise.

ACTION: MP would ask her if she would be willing to make a first review of Applications.

RR suggested that we should encourage ordinary Society members to join us with some of our tasks/projects without expecting them to join the committee as some people do not wish to commit to joining a committee. This was agreed by all.

MP and PW also expressed an interest in being part of the group reviewing Planning Applications. We would need to have the Notifications from SC forwarded to this group.

e. Parking in Albrighton. Many of the Society's members have expressed disappointment regarding vehicular parking in Albrighton. Initially West Midlands Trains reduced car parking spaces at the Rail Station and then imposed parking charges. This has clearly driven motorists to park in

nearby roads which has a great impact on the traffic safety close to the Surgery and St Mary's C of E School. We are now faced with parking problems on the Crown car park, effectively the main village car parking area. This issue came about since the Brewery would not renew the Lease of the car park to Shropshire Council. The Brewery then imposed parking charges which has resulted in a great reduction of vehicles using the car park. The one-hour free car parking does not give sufficient time for those wishing to spend longer using the village amenities. The ability of residents from our four villages and beyond to visit shops and businesses has been greatly affected which in turn will no doubt damage the future viability of Albrighton as a vital community hub.

Shropshire Council's Plan states: "**Albrighton will act as a Key Centre** & contribute towards strategic growth objectives in the east of the County, delivering around 500 dwellings and 5 hectares of employment development. New housing and employment development will respond to local needs."

So, SC has responsibility to maintain the viability of Albrighton and a village needs its shops and businesses, and their "key centre" it is not just a collection of houses.

f. The lack of repairs to roads and footpaths including those where pedestrians have suffered falls and serious injury remains concerning. The Society and Parish Council have repeatedly sought information from Shropshire Council, promises have been made but not kept.

Committee discussed at length the matters in items 4e and 4f and decided that we need to take action to avoid more deterioration of the village and considered options. PI reported that APC had also felt that action was needed, and Cllr Derek Merrick had surveyed shops many of which reported a reduction in business since the change at the Crown car park. PI would advise APC that ADCS were concerned and would see if APC would set up a Working Party of 2 or 3 cllrs and 2 or 3 ADCS members (council rules allow WPs to also include non-cllr members). A Plan would then be agreed, evidence gathered, and good preparation made prior to meetings being sought with SC Chief Executive and the Brewery.

5. Matters Arising

a. A member of Campaign for Rail had come to our Fayre Stall and asked to meet us to understand what had happened to the Pedestrian Ramp Project. Two CfR members had met DS, RS and PW in October and they were updated and given the 5-page summary (the article which was in the Parish Magazine which told the whole story).

6. Any Other Business

a. The committee asked the Secretary to write to the new tenants of the Sorella Italian Restaurant to welcome them to the village. *[Post Meeting Note. MP has provided a copy of the Special BH Edition of the Parish Magazine which will be enclosed with the letter]*

b. Recruiting and Subscriptions. We will set up our Stall/gazebo to ask members to renew subscriptions and seek new members on a Saturday morning in December. This to be outside the Methodist Church as we have done previously. PI will ask for permission for us to do this.

Items to bring: PW Gazebo, MP register, cash box, Joining Forms etc, RS table. Meet at 9.30am to set up. Who can bring a few chairs?

*[Post Meeting Note. The Methodist Church was happy for us to do this but advised PI that they preferred us to be there on the **9th December** rather than the 2nd as they had an event that day – this was agreed.]*

7. Next meeting: - 5.30 pm on TUESDAY 12th December 2023 at 31/32 High Street

Following Meeting will be at 5.30pm on Tuesday 9th January 2024. <<<<???
(Second Tuesday due to New Year).

Note for your Diary

Public Meeting & AGM is at 7.30pm on
Monday 14th October 2024 at the Red House

All future AGMs are on the second Monday of October