

LUCKINGTON & ALDERTON PARISH COUNCIL

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Draft Minutes of the Meeting of Luckington and Alderton Parish Council Held on Wednesday 17th April 2024 at 7.30pm in Luckington Village Hall

Present:

Chair: Richard McCraith (RMC)

Vice Chair: Nigel Neale (NN)

Councillors

Mr John Buckley (JB)

Nic Johnson-Greening (NJG)

Parish Clerk: Dr Sheona Beaumont (SB)

2108. Apologies for Absence

Sue Godwin and Martin Smith

2109. Declaration of interests

There were none.

2110. Members of the public are invited to address the Council on agenda items

There was no discussion.

2111. Public Question Time

There were no questions.

2112. To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 13th March 2024

The Minutes were approved by all and signed by RMC.

2113. Matters arising from the Minutes

There were none.

2114. Correspondence received

- a) Martin Smith, response re. Lime Down Solar Park (10/04/24). Martin has shared the following public statement with regards to his position:

“The Lime Down Solar Park is not the way to do renewable energy. It is a prime example of industrialisation of the rural landscape using farmland that we can ill afford to lose, given the heightened need to provide food security for the UK. The main beneficiaries of such a scheme are a few large landowners and an energy company working out of an offshore tax haven. This will do nothing for the energy costs inflicted on local people.

*I’m a great supporter of **community** energy schemes involving renewables, which would be an alternative way of generating more sustainable electricity, but why is the Government blocking the Local Electricity Bill, which would make these schemes so much easier? This bill would give small-scale renewable energy a massive boost by empowering communities to sell their energy directly to local people, thus lowering their energy bills. This would enable the use of all those empty roofs on residential, commercial and public buildings.*

Why is the Government still delaying in making it mandatory for all new houses and commercial premises to have solar panels fitted, which would reduce energy bills for the occupants? Why are local electricity grids not improved so that they can cope with additional solar panels on houses, offices and public buildings? Why is there no battery storage being proposed at local sub-stations to balance out energy demands on local grids?

If this scheme is approved by the Secretary of State, the government will be prioritising incomes for large landowners and corporations over the need to reduce high energy bills for hard-working residents."

2115. The following planning applications were considered:

- a) [PL/2024/02376](#): The Old Police House, The Street, Luckington, Chippenham, SN14 6NP (Variation of condition 2 of PL/2023/05254 (approved plans)). There were no objections.
- b) [PL/2024/02835](#): Former Methodist Chapel, The Green, Luckington, SN14 6PB (Change of use to office accommodation). Council considered that intended use of this building is welcome, there were no objections.

2116. Update on Financial Issues

- a) To agree payments as follows:

Ryan Russell (grass cutting March): £380

Clerk expenses (6-month travel and Weebly/Brunel website subs): £120.25

The payments were approved, RMC and JB to sign. RMC reported that Luckington School and Playing Field Committee now have grass cutting in hand.

- b) To approve the end of year accounts for 23/24.

SB had previously circulated the accounts, and the relevant sections of the AGAR were distributed at the meeting. Section 1's Annual Governance Statement and Section 2's Accounting Statements were reviewed and approved. RMC and SB signed.

- c) To consider the quotation from Community First for insurance renewal for 2024/25: 1-year term £570.17 and 3-year term £541.67.

Council approved the three year term, SB to respond.

2117. Social media/village communications

JB shared correspondence from Tim Guard with respect to Community Matters (re. list compilation and data selection/retention). JB advised that Council do not disseminate information via CM, and confirmed set-up of Facebook account for 'Luckington and Alderton Parish Council', to be used exclusively for all Council communications. Councillors encouraged to post and point people towards it.

2118. Lime Down Solar Park

JB requested Council approval to continue as Council lead for Lime Down communications. Council approved. JB proposed the Council adopt Martin Smith's response as our response, SB to communicate this (wording as per correspondence above) to Lime Down. Councillors individually encouraged to respond too. JB confirmed open offer to Lime Down to rearrange meeting in June, tbc.

2119. Cemetery

Gates and grass cutting looking good. New commemorative bench on the Back Green also in hand (with Norbert Mak), to be completed soon.

2120. Highways update

JB reported ongoing attention to local potholes, especially Rathole (Luckington). Reporting continues to be encouraged via the MyWilts app: www.wiltshire.gov.uk/mywilts-online-reporting.

2121. Report from Outside Meetings

JB reported on Sherston, Hullavington and Malmesbury meetings re. Lime Down, extremely well-attended. Flood meeting report (Operational Flood Group, Wiltshire Council), JB giving a presentation at the next meeting.

2122. Items for next meeting Agenda and any other business, for information only

Water flooding behind Luckington Church, RMC local report. Council advised contacting Footpath Warden (Stephen Leonard at Wiltshire Council) and/or landowner, RMC to follow up.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm.