

**Minutes of the Alconbury Weston Annual Parish Meeting  
held on Monday 13 May 2019 at 7.00pm in Alconbury Memorial Hall**

**Present:** 5 Councillors, Vice Chairman and Parish Clerk

**1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from the Chairman.

**2 MINUTES**

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 10 May 2018 were confirmed as a true record of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman

**3 CHAIRMANS REPORT (appended to the minutes)**

The Chairman's report was circulated and noted

**4 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT**

No report was received from District Cllr White.

**5 COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS (appended to the minutes)**

County Cllr Gardener's report was circulated and noted

**6 OPEN FORUM**

No resolutions had been received by the Clerk in advance of the meeting and there were no residents present who wished to discuss any issues.

The meeting closed at 7.06

## Chairman's Annual Report for Alconbury Weston Parish Council

Year Ending April 2019

Four parishioners put their names forward to serve on the council during this year's election; three had been serving during the previous year and one, Philip Baker was a new candidate. All were uncontested. Subsequently, 3 more parishioners were subsequently co-opted, so creating a full complement of councillors.

Each Councillor has accepted a lead role in specific areas, including footpaths and highways, flood alleviation and emergency planning, communication with villagers, the children's' play area, bidding for project funding from various charitable bodies and for liaising with the developers on Alconbury Weald.

The following were some of the issues addressed during the year.

**Budget.** In recent years, there has been a policy of using accumulated capital to make up shortfalls of routine expenditure over income from the annual precept (the element of council tax allocated to the parish). Hence the precept had been kept artificially low over recent years by running down reserves - in short, we were not paying for in-year spending from in-year income, a situation that was not viable indefinitely. Consequently, it was decided to balance the in-year budget by increasing the precept to a level that would protect our capital. The subsequent impact on council tax bills this year was of the order of an extra £1.50 per month for a Band C property and the parish element of overall council tax still only represents about 2.7% of the total council tax bill. Hopefully, future years should see increases revert to no more than annual inflation.

**Footpath.** Parts of the footpath between the 2 villages of Alconbury Weston and Alconbury were beginning to deteriorate, raising the issue of who was responsible for its upkeep. Parts of the path are respectively in each of the parish boundaries and so activity is coordinated with our sister parish. Astonishingly, Cambridge County Council advised that part of the path was not officially a public right of way, so throwing doubts on responsibility for its maintenance. We have since been given verbal assurance that the whole path is the responsibility of Cambridgeshire Highways; however, we continue to pursue confirmation of this in writing, together with the indicative maps being updated.

**Flooding.** Fortunately, we have again had no serious flooding this year. However, an emergency flood plan has been put in place, although there is an ongoing discussion with Cambridgeshire Highways and The Environment Agency over arrangements for road closures during flooding. The Council is also in ongoing liaison with The Environment Agency over flood alleviation measures.

**Communication.** The Nextdoor website, introduced and monitored by one of our councilors, has proved to be a popular mode of communication within the village over the past year.

**Tour of Cambridgeshire Cycle Race.** A Grand Funday was organised to coincide with the cycle race passing through the village in June. The Funday was well attended and the cycle race organisers were very appreciate of the consequent support and encouragement for the riders. Next year, knowing that another event will be organised by the village, the cycle race organisers are planning to arrange a pit stop in Alconbury Weston, so putting the village well on the map.

**Speeding.** Speeding by motorists continues to be an issue, especially along North Road and Vinegar Hill. A SpeedWatch initiative has been set up with new dedicated equipment and is now in operation to act as deterrent. Nevertheless, there is no easy answer to the problem and the council continues to consider other actions, such as finding funding for the introduction of chicanes.

Bob Powley  
April 2019

**Report by Cllr Ian Gardener, County Councillor**

**Outlined below are some of the main areas of my work on the County Council. I am always available to discuss County Council issues with residents or Parish Councils and to try and assist with the issues. I can be contacted on 07970 613498 or by email at [Ian.Gardener@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:Ian.Gardener@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)**

The make up of the County Council remains the same following the By -Elections in Soham North & Isleham & Trumpington .The Conservatives hold 36 seats, Liberal Democrats 15, Labour 7 and the Independents 3

The new Alconbury and Kimbolton seat covers 30 villages and 24 Parish Councils From Hail Weston in the south, to Great Gidding in the north and out to the County Boundary in the west and the A1 in the east excluding the villages of Southoe & Grafham .

I currently sit on the Highways & Infrastructure Committee and I am the Vice- Chairman of the Pensions & Planning Committee's. I also sit on the Fire Authority where I am the Vice Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny committee

The County Council are relocating from Shire Hall In Cambridge to a new Civic Hub at Alconbury Weald. This will be the Hub of the Hub and spoke model for our offices across the County. All other offices will be existing office space.

Smart Energy Grids will provide renewable energy to facilitate the charging of buses,cars and freight and allow for the selling of surplus energy to local customers via power Purchase Agreements. The sites where Smart Energy Grids are being implemented at are St Ives, Trumpington & Babraham Park & Ride Sites

The County Council has agreed a Plastics Strategy, which is aimed at reducing/removing the Councils use of Single Use Plastics. The Council will influence its supply chain provision of goods and services by setting standards on plastics via procurement.

At the end of 2018 Cambridgeshire Fire & Rescue Service was named as one of the best two performing Fire & Rescue Services of the 14 inspected. The inspectorate found that the service was GOOD across the entire inspection process and is now held as an example to other authorities.

With regard to East West Rail there are 5 proposed routes for the line between Bedford & Cambridge, two of which are to the north of Sandy. The preferred route is the route via Sandy & Bassingbourn as it avoids the route of the Mayors Cam Metro between Cambridge & St Neots

Ofsted undertook an unannounced two week inspection of Children's Services in January and their report highlighted the fact that the County Council had put the foundations in place to deliver positive change and a much improved service.

To protect services within Cambridgeshire the County Council agreed to increase its proportion of Council Tax by 2.99%, plus an additional 2% for Adult Social Care. This increase is to protect services within Cambridgeshire. No Libraries are being closed in fact 3 new libraries are to be built and 2 new replacement mobile libraries are being delivered.

On completion of the A14 work is expected to commence on the duelling of the A428 between the Black Cat & Caxton Gibbet. The route will be the orange route , with Option C for the Black cat roundabout, which will allow a continuous flow of traffic in both directions.

As your County Councillor I will work with the Parish Council & Residents to address the issues that affect them, such as Bus Routes ie Route 46a which has been kept running after HACT stated they could no longer run the service due to a lack of Drivers. The County Councillor were able to get a driver from Whippet to operate the service. The service is now up for retendering as HACT have stated their intention to cease the service at the end of July.

Cllr Ian Gardener

County Councillor Alconbury & Kimbolton Division