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Salford Priors Parish Council

Minutes of the One Hundredth and Eighteenth Annual Parish Meeting held in the Memorial Hall, Salford Priors, on Wednesday 5th. April 2012 at 7.30pm.

Present: Parish Councillors J R Stedman (Chairman), L Wright, A.W.Wolfe, L Robinson, and A Quiney, the Clerk, Mr M.J. Philpott, and twenty four parishioners.

1. Apologies for absence were received from Ray Stanley, Pat Dare, and Cllr. M Howse.

2. Minutes of last meeting

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 7th. April 2011 had been circulated and were taken as read. There were no corrections and Cllr. Wright proposed, Cllr. Quiney seconded, and it was agreed, they be accepted as a true record. The Minutes were signed by the Chairman.

3. Mr Richard Ward, Alamo

The Chairman introduced Mr Richard Ward, Managing Director at Alamo who was accompanied by two colleagues. Mr Ward gave an interesting presentation regarding the Alamo Group which is an American company with its headquarters at Alamo, Texas and with significant operations based in the UK and France. The offices at Salford Priors also act as the European headquarters of the Group. Mr Ward said that the Group had grown by acquisition and this was reflected in the very large number of brands and products owned by the Group in the USA and Europe. He showed photos of many Alamo products including different mowers, snow clearance vehicles, agricultural machinery and tankers. Mr Ward said a particular strength of the company was the development of power arms which were getting longer and with more sophisticated control systems. He also said that many agricultural products were getting larger to give greater economies in food production. Turning to activities in the UK, Mr Ward said that the Group came to the UK in 1991 and acquired Bomford Turner in 1993. The plant at Salford Priors covered 30 acres, contained 90,000 sq. feet of buildings, and employed 223 staff. The main activity at the plant was the production of power arms with 42% of the products being branded Bomford Turner and 41% being Spearhead products.

Mr Ward said that the Group was planning to re-develop the site by adding another 28,000 sq. feet of factory space including a new paint shop which alone was costing £1.4 million. He said this development would protect existing jobs and probably mean that the number of persons employed would increase. He expected building to commence in July 2012 and take nearly a year to complete. In response to questions Mr Ward said that they would consult the Parish Council in advance of the application going to the Planning Authority; that there would be no additional office space, that the Bomford name would continue, and that part of the redevelopment would include re-branding with new signs.

Finally, Mr Ward introduced the company's finance director Mr Ted Maddon who said that since he joined the company 22 years ago the Salford Priors plant had been transformed into the European Headquarters of the Group and all group personnel were now based in this office.

There being no other questions, the Chairman thanked Mr Ward for his presentation. He said that the Parish Council was supportive of the plans to develop the site and particularly

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because of the enhanced employment opportunities. He also thanked Mr Ward for the Group's generous contribution to the Jubilee event.

4. Cllr. D Pemberton and Jenny Murray, Community Forums

The Chairman welcomed Cllr. D Pemberton and Jenny Murray to speak about the work of the Community Forums. Jenny Murray said she was employed by the County Council but she worked with all partners in the public sector. The forums had now been working for over two years and were an attempt to engage with local communities. Daren Pemberton said that there had been a desire to find a mechanism by which communities could get to meet all the public bodies such as the Police, NHS, District Council, and enforcement agencies such as Trading Standards. The hope was to achieve a more joined up approach. He said there were four meetings each year and they all started with a "market place" where people could discuss their issues on a one to one basis with the various bodies represented. This part of the meeting was then followed with presentations and recent subjects had included the Core Strategy and NHS plans.

Mr Fenlon said he had attended some Forum meetings and said he found it reasonably useful but wondered if much was actually achieved. Cllr. Pemberton said that he wanted to use the forums to enable the public to set priorities and he was also looking for some budget powers. Both Mr Beamish and Cllr. Wright said that they had found the presentations useful. Jenny Murray mentioned a forum at Henley where cross boundary problems between the Worcester hospital and the Warwickshire social services were identified.

Cllr. Pemberton reminded the audience of the meeting on 5th. December at Salford Priors and also the next meeting at Aston Cantlow on 27th. June starting at 6.30 pm.

There being no other questions, the Chairman thanked Cllr. Pemberton and Jenny Murray for their presentation.

5. Parish Council - Annual Report

The Chairman invited the Clerk to read out his Annual Report for the year 2011 – 2012. A copy of the Annual report is attached to these Minutes.

The Chairman said there had been many activities during the year and thanked all Parish and Ward councillors for their hard work and commitment. He particularly thanked Cllr. Quiney for his work in inspecting the Playing field and footpaths, Cllr. Maude for his work in running the web site, and Cllr. Wright for his interest in the gravel operations at Marsh Farm. The Chairman thanked Cllr. Wolfe for his 8 years of service to the Council and also Cllr. Robinson as both were leaving the Council. The Chairman then read out the list of persons nominated to represent the Parish and the Ward and finally thanked Karen Littleford for her work chairing the Jubilee Group.

Mr Bradfield thanked the Chairman for his reference to the work of the TOPs Management Committee in his Annual Report and urged the Council to seek a five year extension to the current lease.

6. Open Forum

The Chairman declared the meeting open to questions from the audience.

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Mr Stokes asked if the Council would consider the use of microphones at meetings as it was sometimes difficult to hear what was said. He also said there was a problem with a drain next to Jasmine Cottage. The Chairman said he would consider the use of microphones and asked the Clerk to refer the problem drain to Severn Trent.

Mrs Stokes asked if the A46 island could be made more attractive but was told that it was the responsibility of the Highways Agency and they considered that any planting would be a distraction.

Mr Bailey said that there were very few dropped kerbs in the village and this created problems for the infirm and those with wheelchairs or prams. The Chairman said there might be funding available through DDA provisions and suggested this could be a Forum issue. He agreed to put it on the next Parish Council agenda.

Mrs Joan Hunt said she pushed her daughter in a wheel chair and found the length of pavement down School Road very dangerous as it was narrow and the HGVs were intimidating.

Mr Beech, supported by Mrs Band, raised the issue of the junction of Tothall Lane with School Road and said it was very dangerous. The Chairman agreed to consult with the WCC traffic unit.

Mr Bradfield said that the reinstatement of the footway at Abbots Salford had been most unsatisfactory. The meeting noted that similar work at Hillers on the B4088 had also been unsatisfactory and it was recognised that it was unlikely that under current financial constraints any further improvement would be made.

Finally, Cllr. Wolfe said the meeting should not be closed without an expression of thanks to the Clerk for his work throughout the year and this was endorsed by the Chairman.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and there being no other business closed the meeting at 9.10 pm.

Signed.....

Date.....