

**Ashwell Parish Council Meeting to be held on Wednesday 01 November 2023,**

**in the Parish Room at 7pm**

**To Councillors: Chris Button, Ian Duffy, Vinny Hall, Martin Hoffman, Graham Lee (Chair), Norton Mahy (Vice Chair), David Sims.**

Councillors are summoned to attend this meeting for the transaction of business in the agenda below.

The meeting is open to members of the public and press unless a resolution for a particular agenda item decides otherwise. The meeting can be attended in person or via Zoom. Please sign up on the website ([www.ashwell.gov.uk](http://www.ashwell.gov.uk)) to be sent login details and to receive regular communications on village matters, or contact the parish office direct.

District Councillor Tom Tyson and County Councillor Steve Jarvis routinely attend meetings.

*Appendices to the agenda are available on the website or by request.*

*<https://www.ashwell.gov.uk/parish-council/meetings/full-council/2023-meeting-minutes/>*

## **Agenda**

### **75 Apologies for absence**

To receive and accept apologies for absence.

### **76 Interests** a) To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda, b) To receive written requests for dispensations for declarable interests, and c) To grant any requests for dispensation as appropriate. Where any declaration of interest involves the chair, the meeting to agree an alternative individual to take the chair for that item(s).

**76.1** To note a Declaration of Interest by Cllr Graham Lee; item 81.1.4 (relative of applicant).

### **77 Minutes**

**77.1** Proposal to approve the draft minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 04 October 2023 as an accurate record of proceedings. *Draft minutes in appendix A.*

**77.2** Proposal to approve the draft minutes of the Finance Committee meeting on 19 October 2023 as an accurate record of proceedings. *Draft minutes in appendix B. See also item 84.3 below.*

### **78 Public Issues and Public Participation**

*Standing Orders to be suspended.*

- 78.1 To note various requests/questions received from parishioners and the responses to these.
- 78.1.1 Miscellaneous questions, concerns and comments from a parishioner re the Parish Council's policies and procedures, 'Request for further information' and 'Co-option update and suggestions for next council meeting'; responses were sent.
  - 78.1.2 Concerns re a street vendor van in Lucas Lane; passed on to the local police and our district councillor Tom Tyson (both responded).
  - 78.1.3 Concerns re illegal parking around the village; passed on to the local police and our district councillor Tom Tyson as an enforcement matter (he responded).
  - 78.1.4 Concerns re speeding; passed on to the local police and our county councillor Steve Jarvis (both responded).
  - 78.1.5 Concerns re trees in Station Road; passed on to our district councillor Tom Tyson as a planning matter (he responded).
- 78.2 To consider the proposal by the village Greening Ashwell group re temporary signage 'to involve people in caring about our green environment'.
- 78.3 Police Neighbourhood Watch and the OWL scheme. To note the ongoing input from a parishioner and PCSO Chris Braybrook. *See minute 67.3 October council meeting.*  
<https://www.ashwell.gov.uk/news2/police-neighbourhood/>
- 78.4 To consider any further matters raised. *(Members of the public and councillors can raise any matters and ask questions)*
- 78.5 To receive reports from representatives from outside bodies, local authorities and agencies.
- 78.5.1 To receive a report from County Councillor Steve Jarvis.
  - 78.5.2 To receive a report from District Councillor Tom Tyson.

*Standing Orders to be reinstated.*

## **79 Village Matters**

- 79.1 North of Baldock extension and communications with Urban & Civic. To note any updates and agree any further action. *See also 78.5.2 report from District Councillor Tom Tyson.*

## **80 Reports from Working Groups. To receive updates from relevant leaders/members and agree any actions that require Parish Council input/approval.**

- 80.1 Trees and Hedges (Cllr David Sims). To receive an oral report on planting at the Recreation ground.
- 80.2 Affordable Housing.
- 80.2.1 To receive an oral report from Cllr Chris Button. *See minute 58.2 September Council and 34.3 05 July 2023 Council.*
  - 80.2.2 Housing Needs Survey. To note the response from the NHC Housing Supply Officer that further information would be sent following their next rural housing partnership meeting. *See minute 69.2.2 October Council.*

<https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/housing-need-north-herts>

- 80.3 Section 106. To receive an oral report from Cllrs Norton Mahy and Chris Button and agree any actions.
- 80.4 Green Energy & EV Charging Infrastructure. To receive an oral report from Cllrs Ian Duffy and Graham Lee and agree any actions.
- 80.5 Yearbook. To receive an oral report from Cllr Norton Mahy and agree any actions.
- 81 **Planning matters: to include new and existing applications** *See summary in appendix C.*

*Enter the NHC reference number into the planning search box for full application details:*

<https://pa2.north-herts.gov.uk/online-applications/>

- 81.1 New consultations received from NHC. To note any correspondence and agree responses.
- 81.1.1 Properties 1 And 2 Scarp Close, Ashwell Street. NHC ref. 23/02355/FP. Full Planning Permission : Erection of two detached double garages.
- 81.1.2 Land Between 40 Gardiner Lane And Chain Cottage. NHC ref. 23/01984/FP. Full Planning Permission : Erection of one 3-bed dwelling, with vehicular access and parking.
- 81.1.3 Kirby Manor Farm, Northfield Road. NHC ref. 23/02338/PNQ. Prior Approval Class Q Agric to Dwelling: Conversion of existing agricultural barn to provide 4 residential units (one 2-bed, and three 3-bed) with all associated building works.
- To note the previous application now withdrawn.
- 81.1.4 85A Back Street. NHC ref. 23/02364/FPH. Full Permission Householder : First floor front extension and single storey rear extension. Relocation of front door and installation of entrance canopy above. Alterations to fenestration including insertion of first floor side window.
- See Declaration of Interest, 76.1 above. To note that the Clerk is a neighbour.*
- To note the Planning Committee meeting scheduled for 21 October 2023 had been cancelled due to the lack of a quorum.
- To receive an oral report from Cllrs Norton Mahy and Vinny Hall following their site visit.
- 81.2 Tree consultations (Conservation Area and TPO) received from NHC. To agree responses.
- 81.2.1 35 Station Road. NHC 23/02452/TCA. Leylandii Hedge - Reduce in height by 15ft, to trim sides to tidy.

## 82 Reports from Committees

- 82.1 HR Committee. To receive an oral report and agree any actions. To receive an update on the vacancies advertised for the positions of Clerk and Deputy Clerk.
- <https://www.ashwell.gov.uk/news2/vacancies-for-clerk/>
- 82.2 Finance Committee. *See 77.2 above (minutes) and 84.3 below (budget setting).*

## 83 Reports from parish councillors on premises and other responsibilities

- 83.1 The Springs. To receive an oral report from Cllr Martin Hoffman.
- 83.2 St Mary's Churchyard Grounds Maintenance. To note the works to the two trees adjacent to the property in Swan Street now scheduled. To note the concern of a neighbour re ivy on her house wall being handled by St Mary's.
- 83.3 Parish Clock. To note the routine service scheduled and any issues re the malfunctioning of the chimes to be addressed.
- 83.4 War Memorial. To note any update on the professional valuation sought.
- 83.5 Cemetery. To note any update on the professional valuation sought for the Chapel.
- 83.6 Recreation Ground including the playground, pavilion and public toilets. To receive an oral report from Cllr Graham Lee and agree any actions needed.
- 83.7 Street furniture.
  - 83.7.1 Litter bin survey. To receive an oral report from Cllr Norton Mahy.
  - 83.7.2 Seats. To receive an oral report from Cllrs Chris Button and Vinny Hall.
- 83.8 To note that a date scheduled for the Highways Liaison meeting (Monday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2023).
- 83.9 To receive any other premises/responsibilities reports.

## 84 Finance and Governance

- 84.1 Budget tracking and the monthly summary of accounts. To note the information up to 31 October 2023 circulated to parish councillors after the end of the month. Proposal that the summary of receipts and payments be issued with the draft minutes and the two nominated parish councillors sign off the accounts in accordance with internal control procedures.
  - 84.1.1 Proposals to approve payment/accept quotes for the following items not specifically detailed, or above the sum allocated, in the set budget.
    - 84.1.1.1 Request from Royston & District Community Transport for a grant to support their work (previous grants made from the section 137 budget/community support). *See appendix D.*
    - 84.1.1.2 Proposal to approve a grant of £10 from the section 137 budget to the Recreation Ground charity 'Allotment for Exercise and Recreation', for which the Parish Council is the sole trustee, in order to maintain the separate bank account (an audit requirement).
- 84.2 To agree a response to the request from NHC Electoral Services for views on their proposal 'to introduce an uncontested fee, which would be effective from the elections in May 24, and would be banded dependent on the number of seats on the parish' The cost to Ashwell 'over 10 seats' would be £650. *See appendix E.*
- 84.3 Budget setting for 2024-25.

To note the discussion and outcomes from the Finance Committee meeting. *See 77.2 above.*

To consider and agree the next steps for the preparation of a final version to be proposed to the December Council meeting.

84.4 Council documents: Ongoing review of Policies and Procedures following the election of the new Parish Council in May 2023.

84.4.1 Complaints Procedure. *See minutes and appendices 74.5.2 October Council.*

To note that, following the proposal agreed at the October meeting ('model with amendments be adopted assuming that the amendments were endorsed as acceptable by HAPTC (Hertfordshire Association of Town & Parish Councils)), HAPTC had informed that the proposed amendments to the SLCC model were not generated by HAPTC or covered during any of their training.

To consider whether to replace the current procedure, based on the NALC model, and adopt one based on the SLCC model; this to include the agreed 'provision to refer' included in all relevant policies and procedures ('The option to refer to external parties for advice and/or determination where this is appropriate. The default being HAPTC and/or the body that created the model document'). *See draft in appendix F. See link below for the current policy and the SLCC model including their guidance notes.*

<https://www.ashwell.gov.uk/parish-council/roles-and-responsibilities/>

*Issued by Jane Porter, Acting Clerk to Ashwell Parish Council, 26 October 2023*