

Minutes of a meeting of the Ashwell Parish Council held on Wednesday 1st August 2012 in the Parish Room at 8.00pm

Present: Councillors Martin Hoffman (Chairman), Mike Berry, Jane Buxton, Bridget Macey, Daniel Mathews, Christine Schwick, Mark White.

The Clerk was also in attendance.

Members of the public: One.

41. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Cllrs John Connolly (work commitment),

David Cook (family commitment), Peter Long (family illness).

42. MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING 4th July 2012

It was *resolved* that these be approved and signed.

43. MATTERS OF REPORT From previous meetings:

43.1 (July Council 32.1) Localism Act/Code of Conduct. It was noted that further correspondence had been received from NHDC, HAPTC and SLCC, and that NHDC had now agreed and published its code.

It was noted that, at the May Council meeting it had been agreed, pending publication of others, to maintain the current code but with amendments in line with the new legislation, (i) to narrow the definition of prejudicial interests to 'disclosable pecuniary interests', (ii) to amend the requirement for those with disclosable pecuniary interests to leave the meeting; this would be at the discretion of the chairman, (iii) whilst repetition of interests existing in the register was no longer required, where it would be of merit, such as where members of the public were present, and in particular at planning meetings, declarations would continue to be made as previously, (iv) the register of members interests would be placed on the website.

The options now available were discussed.

It was *resolved* that the NALC version be adopted as this would permit the inclusion of the items agreed at the May Council meeting; this would be communicated to the Monitoring Officer at NHDC. **Clerk**

It was *resolved* that the Ashwell Parish Council Standing Orders be amended and clarified where necessary to reflect the procedures agreed at the May Council meeting (see (ii) and (iii) above). A final draft of these would be circulated and agreed at the September Council meeting. **Clerk**

It was *resolved* that all councillors would, as required by the Localism Act, complete the new form for the Register of Interests; copies would be forwarded to the Monitoring Officer at NHDC and placed on the Parish Council website. **Clerk**

43.2 (July Council 32.2) Request from the North Herts Association of Parish, Town and Community Councils for agenda items for NHDC/Town/Parish Conference in October. Proposals included section 106 funds, planning enforcement, parking (ability of parish councils to appoint traffic wardens); it was agreed that these be forwarded. **Clerk**

43.3 (July Council, 33.2) HCC consultation on Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (www.hertsdirect.org/services/envplan/greenissues/climatechange/floodriskmgt/herts1frmscons/ Deadline 7th September). It was reported that further information had been received. It was agreed to request the input of local expert Trevor James as to whether there were any implications for the Springs. **Clerk**

43.4 (July Council, 33.4) Merchant Taylors Close. The Chairman reported that information had been sought from the residents' association re use of the adjacent green area (owned by the Parish Council and maintained at parishioners' expense) as a builder's yard for storage of bricks, bags of sand, spoil etc. The residents responsible having been identified, a letter had been sent requesting that all material be removed immediately. The cost to the public purse of repairing damage had been highlighted and notice given that claims would be made for any necessary repairs. Cllr Christine Schwick, as member responsible for the area, reported that no response had been received and proposed that a second letter be sent giving a deadline for repairs to be implemented by 1st September at the resident's expense. **Clerk**

43.5 (July Council, 33.5) 'Connected Counties'; Herts and Beds County Councils joint campaign for superfast broadband coverage. Cllr Daniel Mathews reported that residents and business owners were being encouraged to vote in order to make a case for implementing superfast broadband in their area. www.superfastforherts.org/

44. OTHER CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

44.1 Email re consultation from HCC on survey to 'explore closer ways of working with Parish and Town Councils in order to further pursue joint aspirations for localism'.
www.hertsdirect.org/websurveys/surveys/GK5TW2/ Deadline Friday 3rd August.

44.2 Email from a resident of the Foresters Cottages in the High Street with a request for bollards to protect the listed buildings from damage caused by high-sided vehicles mounting the pavement; report of another recent incident when a lorry hit the overhang to her cottage. It was agreed that this request be put to Herts Highways as the authority responsible. Cllr Mike Berry, as Chairman of the Streets & Environment Committee, reported that a meeting with the local highways officer and County Councillor Tony Hunter was scheduled and this request would be included. **S&E**

44.3 Email from parishioners Sylvia and Martin McBeal re the junction of Station Road/Lucas Lane by the War Memorial with proposals for engineering works to improve safety. It was noted that many proposals had been made with the objective of improving the safety of the junction particularly since the fatal accident in 2007 when a resident of Station Road had been killed. The Parish Council had pursued various options with Herts Highways, the authority responsible, but many had been rejected as they did not meet the county council's required criteria. Some residents also objected to some of the proposals. The installation of yellow lines and a raised white-painted area had been achieved after much lobbying of Herts Highways and, it was felt, had improved the safety of the junction. The Parish Council, through the Streets & Environment Committee, continued to pursue the matter (see 44.2 above re next scheduled meeting). **S&E**

45. REPORT FROM PLANNING COMMITTEE

(next meeting scheduled for Wednesday 15th August)

45.1 Decisions by NHDC as Planning Authority

45.1.1 Application no. 12/01004/1HH Westbury Farm House, West End. For Mr Rick Willmott
Full Permission Householder: Vehicular and pedestrian entrance gates to existing brick piers.
Standard conditional permission.

45.1.2 Application no. 12/1005/1HH 2 Westbury Barns, West End. For Mr Rick Willmott
Full Permission Householder: Replace flat roof of rear extension with monopitch roof with four rooflights.
Standard conditional permission.

45.1.3 Application no. 12/01491/1TCA 87 Back Street. For Ms C Winning
Reduction of canopy of 1 English Oak tree by 30% and fell Laburnum tree.
No objection.

45.1.4 Application no. 12/01463/1TCA Lane Side 5 Green Lane. For Mr P Gates
Remove one Blue Atlas Cedar.
No objection.

45.2 Application no. 12/01356/1 Land rear of 48 Ashwell Street. For Alexandre Developments
Full Planning Permission: Increase in roof heights to plots 1 and 2 and set deeper into slope of land. Insertion of two rear dormer windows, replacement of pitched roof over first floor front window with monopitch roof and insertion of two rooflights to front roof elevation to plots 1 and 2 (as a variation to Planning application 02/01927/1 granted 21/10/2003).

It was reported that the NHDC Planning Officer had responded to questions re the conditions of the 2003 permission, ie, (i) protection of the hedge on the boundary with the school, (ii) required archaeological site assessments/reports.

It was reported that the application had been called in by District Councillor Andrew Young, in support of the Parish Council's objections and those of the school, and it would thus be determined by the NHDC Planning Control Committee on Thursday 16th August. Details of the Parish Council's objections (see Planning Committee minutes 4th July 2012) would be forwarded to all NHDC committee members in advance of their meeting. **Clerk**

45.3 Section 106 funds for Ashwell held by NHDC. It was reported that further correspondence had been received from the NHDC Officer re the Tennis and Sports Club claim, informing that (i) minor items, eg balls and bibs, were not permitted, (ii) fuller details of items were required, ie not just a web link. This had been passed on to the club.

45.4 Application no.12/00812/1 35 High Street and Whitby Farm, Silver Street. For Logan Homes Ltd. It was noted that copies were awaited from the NHDC Planning Officer of the developer's submissions re (i) drainage and flooding risk, (ii) on-street parking of contractors' vehicles during the build process.

46. REPORT FROM STREETS & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

(Committee Chairman Cllr Mike Berry)

(Next meeting scheduled for Wednesday 12th September)

46.1 Highways. Cllr Berry reported that a meeting with the local highways officer and County Councillor Tony Hunter was scheduled.

46.2 Street cleansing. The Chairman reported that the Environmental Cleansing Officer, Mick Fox, had given notice of his resignation. It was agreed that he be formally thanked for all his good work. It was agreed that the position be advertised in the village.

Clerk

47. REPORT FROM RECREATION & FACILITIES COMMITTEE

(Committee Chairman Cllr Daniel Mathews)

(Next meeting scheduled for Tuesday 28th August)

Nothing further to report.

48. REPORT FROM CHARACTER AREAS COMMITTEE

(Committee Chairman Cllr Martin Hoffman)

Re the Springs.

48.1. Cllr Hoffman reported that the St Mary's Church 'Noise' project 'involving youth in community service' had carried out good work in cutting back vegetation. A letter of thanks had been sent to the Rev'd Chris Ball and those who organised and supervised.

48.2 Cllr Hoffman reported that concerns re dogs not being kept under control had again been raised; a parishioner had reported a recent incident involving children playing in the area. It was agreed that the policy on dogs be tightened and only dogs on leads be allowed; site notices would be amended accordingly.

Clerk

48.3. Cllr Hoffman reported that the RoSPA inspection had been booked; a date for the site visit was awaited from the supplier. The next committee meeting would be scheduled once the report had been received.

48.4 Cllr Hoffman reported that a proposal had been made to include improvements to the surface of the path that was a right of way in the next P3 (Parish Paths Partnership) bid.

49. REPORT FROM FINANCE COMMITTEE

(next meeting scheduled for Monday 22nd October)

49.1 2011-12 audit. It was reported that responses to verbal questions from the External Auditor had been made by the Clerk.

49.2 Approval of August Accounts and Bills for Payment.

It was *resolved* that these be approved and paid.

Clerk

50. REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

50.1 Website Group Nothing to report.

50.2 Yearbook Group Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 18th July were noted.

50.3 Design Statement Review Group Nothing to report.

50.4 Community Housing Group Concerns were expressed that there was no progress to report from Howard Cottage Housing Association.

50.5 Olympics 2012 Group It was agreed that the celebrations on Sunday 8th July had been a great success and that Margaret Budgen and her team be formally thanked.

Clerk

51. PARISH AFFAIRS, REPORTS FROM OTHER BODIES AND OPEN FORUM

Item taken at 8.30pm

51.1 Church Clock. Cllr Christine Schwick reported that a solution to the problem with the chimes was still being sought; the original supplier had been requested to re-investigate.

51.2 Parking. Cllr Christine Schwick reported further complaints from parishioners and her own personal concerns re vehicles parked dangerously on bends and on pavements. She encouraged all to send photos of offending vehicles to the police. She was of the view that this anti-social behaviour was a significant hazard for pedestrians particularly those pushing children in buggies and prams and for elderly residents

with zimmer frames and walkers. Other councillors concurred. It was agreed to progress the proposal for notices to be placed prominently on offending vehicles. **MWB**

51.3 Speeding

51.3.1 Volunteer patrols. Cllr Martin Hoffman reported that (i) he had attended the police training course and was now permitted to access the relevant police computer database, (ii) there was now a need to recruit more volunteers to the team, (iii) equipment used was currently loaned by the police and any proposals for purchase of equipment would only be made once it's worth was proven.

51.3.2 Parishioner's request for a 20mph speed limit. Cllr Martin Hoffman reported that this had come via District Councillor Andrew Young who had also forwarded it to County Councillor Tony Hunter. Cllr Mark White reported that he had been involved with the Herts Highways 'travel plan' some years ago. Proposals for a 20mph limit had met with problems due to the County Council's requirement for it to be self-policing, ie, including the installation of speed bumps, chicanes and new high intensity street lighting. It was noted that reports in the media would suggest that rules, at least in some areas, were now more relaxed. Cllr Mike Berry reported that it was on the list of items for discussion with Herts Highways and County Councillor Tony Hunter at their scheduled meeting (see also 44.2 and 44.3).

51.4 Ashwell Village Trust. Cllr Mark White reported that the Cottage Garden Working Group had recently held a meeting; he had not attended.

Meeting closed at 8.45pm

Appendix 1 – General material received

Hard copy

1. North Herts District Council 'Members Information' w/e 6, 13, 20, 27 July.

By Email

2. HAPTC Briefings and Bulletins.

3. *Rural News* from PC Marina

APPENDIX 2								
ACCOUNTS AND BILLS FOR PAYMENT -August 2012					Date	1st August 2012		
	Proposed by Cllr White	Seconded by Cllr Mathews		Declared interest - None				
				£	£	£	£	
	Receipts			Grants	Precept	Other	Total	
44	Ashwell Cricket Club	rent for rec/pavilion				650.00	650.00	
45	Mrs D P Hankin	cemetery reservation				160.00	160.00	
46	Archant Ltd (Royston Cro	yearbook advert				40.00	40.00	
47	NHDC	toilets funding		8000.00			8000.00	
48	Santander interest a/c	bank interest					2.42	
49	Neville Funeral Service	chapel rent July				68.75	68.75	
50	M Fathers Tree Care	yearbook advert				40.00	40.00	
51	Ms H Doran	allotment rent				5.00	5.00	
	Total			8000.00		963.75	8966.17	
				Committees				
	Payments		A&O	CA	S &E	R&F	VAT	Total
	By Direct Debit							
77	British Gas (30/07/12)	pavilion electricity				49.30	2.47	51.77
78	NHDC (29/07/12)	streets waste			78.65			78.65
79	NHDC (29/07/12)	pavilion waste				52.00		52.00
	By cheque							
80	J C M Porter	Clerk's salary	1069.4					1069.44
81	M Fox	Environmental Cleansing		48.65	183.13	48.65		280.43
82	M Fox	reimbursement expenses			4.78			4.78
83	M Chandler	Duties at Pavilion and Rec				70.12		70.12
84	N Karen	Groundskeeper duties				58.50		58.50
85	Post Office	tax&NI to Inland Revenue	280.60		35.80			316.40
86	The Liberty Corporation L	cleaning toilets July				80.00	16.00	96.00
87	CGM Landscapes	Pitch mowing at Rec and Small Gains				110.30	22.06	132.36
88	Pete Moore Decorating Se	Pavilion exterior				2228.79		2228.79
89	East Herts Signs	ROW signposts installation and refurb			320.00		64.00	384.00
90	Phil Kirk Landscaping	Arbury Banks panel collation and installation			250.00			250.00
91	Mrs Joanna Adams	reimbursement olympics celebrations	45.00				9.00	54.00
92	D J Granger	grounds maintenance (worksheet no.6)				703.00	140.60	843.60
93	D J Granger	grounds maintenance (worksheet no.7)		55.00		305.00	72.00	432.00
94	M Fathers	tree work at Springs and cemetery		150.00		150.00		300.00
95	M Budgen	reimbursement olympics celebrations	8.33				1.67	10.00
96	D J Granger	grounds maintenance (worksheet no.8)		55.00		215.00	54.00	324.00
	Total		1403.37	308.65	872.36	4070.66	381.80	7036.84
	Outstanding Accounts							
	Yearbook 2012 adverts -misc						1,485.00	
	Football Club	rec/pavilion rent Q3 and Q4					450.00	
	Total							1935.00
	Money at bank		23rd July 2012					
	Current Account						33112.69	
	Deposit Account						29513.79	
	Total							62626.48
	Cheques banked after/BACS transfers after							860.00
	Cheques drawn but not cleared/DD's outstanding							1,452.80
	Total							62,033.68
	Total after paying this months cheques							54,996.84
	Total in current a/c after paying this months cheques							25,483.05