

**Minutes of the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of Ashwell Parish Council held on  
Wednesday 04 May 2016 in the Parish Room at 8.00pm**

**Present:** Councillors Mark White (Chairman), Martin Hoffman (Vice-chairman),  
Bridget Macey, Graham Lee, Madeleine Legg, David Short, David Sims.

The Clerk was also in attendance. Members of the public: Six parishioners. For item 13.1 Mr Stuart Izzard, NHDC Community Development Manager. District Councillor Janine Paterson sent her apologies.

**1. Election of Chairman** A proposal was made and seconded to re-elect Cllr Mark White.

It was *resolved* that the proposal be accepted (unanimous).

**2. Election of Vice-Chairman** A proposal was made and seconded to re-elect Cllr Martin Hoffman.

It was *resolved* that the proposal be accepted (unanimous).

**3. Code of Conduct**

**3.1** The following were noted: - the Ashwell Parish Council Code of Conduct adopted 1<sup>st</sup> August 2012, the arrangements for the grant of dispensations, declarations of interests and the provisions for publicity. A proposal was made and seconded to re-adopt.

It was *resolved* that the proposal be accepted (unanimous).

**3.2** The following was noted: - ‘Openness and transparency on personal interests: A guide for councillors’ published by the Department for Communities and Local Government, March 2013.

The Chairman reminded all to ensure that their register of interests was kept updated and to declare any relevant interests as necessary at meetings.

**4. Proposal to re-adopt Standing Orders** (version dated 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2013).

It was *resolved* that the proposal be accepted (unanimous).

**5. Proposal to re-adopt Financial Regulations** (version dated 5<sup>th</sup> March 2008; preferred supplier amendments November 2015).

It was *resolved* that the proposal be accepted (unanimous).

**6. Appointments and nominations**

The following memberships, appointments and responsibilities were agreed to continue as previously.

**6.1 Committees**

**6.1.1 Management Committee** (all parish councillors)

**6.1.2 Planning Committee** (all parish councillors)

**6.1.3 Finance Committee** (Cllr Mark White (Chairman), Cllr Martin Hoffman (Vice-Chairman),  
Cllr David Short (Leader Neighbourhood Plan Working Group), Cllr Graham Lee)

**6.2 Management responsibilities**

**6.2.1 Cemetery** (Cllr Madeleine Legg)

**6.2.2 Recreation Ground and Pavilion** (Cllrs Mark White and Madeleine Legg)

**6.2.3 Playground** (Cllr Madeleine Legg)

**6.2.4 Public toilets at the pavilion** (Cllr Madeleine Legg)

**6.2.5 The Springs** (Cllr Martin Hoffman)

**6.2.6 Small Gains** (Allotments, Accies sports field and shared car parking area) (Cllr David Sims)

**6.2.7 Miscellaneous village amenities**

(The Lock Up - Cllr David Short. Merchant Taylors’ Green and Carters’ Pond - Cllr Martin Hoffman)

**6.2.8 Street furniture** (Cllr Bridget Macey)

**6.2.9 St Mary’s Churchyard grounds maintenance and PCC liaison** (Cllr Martin Hoffman)

**6.2.10 Parish Clock** (Cllr Mark White)

**6.2.11 War Memorial and liaison with Ashwell Royal British Legion** (VACANT)

**6.3 Parish Council Working Groups currently active**

**6.3.1 Neighbourhood Plan Group** (leader Cllr David Short, Cllrs Graham Lee and Madeleine Legg)

**6.3.2 Website Group** (leader Cllr Graham Lee)

**6.3.3 Yearbook Group** (leader Cllr David Short)

**6.3.4 Speed Watch Group** (leader Cllr Martin Hoffman)

**6.3.5 Ashwell Village Sports** (leader Parishioner Martin Talks)

**6.4. Representatives for liaison with other authorities**

**6.4.1 Hertfordshire Highways** (Cllr David Sims, Cllr Bridget Macey and Cllr Mark White for street lighting)

**6.4.2 Hertfordshire Highways/Rights of Way** (Co-opted member Martin Lush and Cllr Graham Lee)

**6.4.3 North Herts District Council re street cleansing** (VACANT)

**7. Appointments to other bodies and representatives for other bodies**

**7.1 Ashwell Village Trust** It was noted that the AGM of the trust would be held prior to the June Council meeting on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2016.

**7.2 Allotment for Exercise and Recreation** It was noted that the AGM of the trust would be held prior to the June Council meeting on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2016.

**7.3 Moss Cottage Homes** (April Council, 117.5) The proposal made at the last meeting for a new trustee was noted; confirmation of the appointment was pending the charity's AGM.

(Current trustees, with dates of appointment were noted: - Mrs Carol Moore (2012), Mrs May Cook (2012), Ms Madeleine Legg (2014), Dr Reno Coladangelo (2014).

**7.4 Representative(s) for Ashwell Museum**

(Cllr Martin Hoffman; Chairman of the trustees in his own right)

**7.5 Representative(s) for Ashwell School**

(Cllr David Short a governor in his own right)

**7.6 Representative(s) for the Village Hall**

(Cllr Mark White)

**7.7 Representative(s) for the Henry Colbron Trust** (Cllr David Short)

It was noted that a parishioner, Mrs Jo Adams, was consulted on any youth matters arising.

**7.8 Representative(s) for police matters**

(Cllr David Sims, Cllr Bridget Macey)

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**8. Minutes of Council meeting 6<sup>th</sup> April 2016**

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

**9. Matters of general report from previous meetings**

**9.1** Cricket Club correspondence. The Chairman reported that a letter had been received concerning (i) a bar at the pavilion and (ii) the funding for a new specialist mower for the cricket square. The club had considered the Parish Council's earlier concerns re their proposals for a bar. They had now put forward plans for security improvements and storage provision. They had also identified an individual to take on responsibility for the management; a designated person would be in charge when the facility was in operation. It was agreed that these earlier concerns had been addressed. It was agreed that the Parish Council would now (i) investigate the insurance situation; any additional costs would have to be borne by the club, (ii) take expert advice on the licensing situation in particular with regard to its liabilities as owner of the premises. **MNW/Clerk**

See item 13.1 below re the funding for the mower.

**9.2** (April Council, 111.1) Post office services in the Parish Room. Cllr Martin Hoffman reported that a response had been received from the Public Affairs Manager Post Office Ltd, 'I would like to apologise again for any inconvenience caused to our customers by the recent disruption to post office services in Ashwell, we have now investigated the problem and I can advise that the service is now operational again'.

**9.3** (April Council, 111.2) 1<sup>st</sup> Ashwell Scout Group fundraising for a Public Access Defibrillator (PAD). The Chairman reported further correspondence. The current proposals were for the Parish Council to take on responsibility for the unit to be housed in the old red telephone box adjacent to the Rose & Crown. BT would be requested to retain the power supply; it was understood that they would continue to fund the electricity costs for a number of years.

It was *resolved* that the proposal be accepted (unanimous). **MNW/Clerk**

**9.4** (April Council, 113.1.4) Parishioner proposal for a layby in Ashwell Street to provide parking at the rear of the school. Cllr David Short reported that discussion with the school to determine their views was pending.

**10. Parish management reports** (current responsibilities shown in brackets)

*(Routine matters concerning the management of parish assets and amenities are usually not discussed or reported to full council meetings; some are dealt with by the Management Committee, others directly by parish councillors and/or the Clerk)*

**10.1 Cemetery** (Cllr Madeleine Legg) Cllr Madeleine Legg reported on the latest correspondence with the tenant, Neville of Luton. Their proposals had included refurbishment and the installation of new heating units, to be funded by Nevilles. They had requested a 20-year lease with security of tenure and exclusive use for funerals; there would be provision for allowing other use by agreement. It was agreed that a 5-yearly review of the terms and rents should be included as well as some control over the charges made for other use. It was agreed that advice would be taken from the Parish Council's solicitor. So that matters could be progressed, it was agreed that any further details would be communicated and confirmed via email.

**10.2 Recreation Ground and Pavilion** (Cllrs Mark White and Madeleine Legg) Cllr Mark White reported that he had received details from the User Group of the proposed new storage unit to replace the existing one behind the pavilion. It was agreed that the group be given the go-ahead for installation; they would be responsible for painting the unit a suitable green colour.

**10.3 Playground** (Cllr Madeleine Legg) Cllr Madeleine Legg reported that installation of the new wet-pour surfacing was pending a date from the supplier.

**10.4 Public toilets at the pavilion** (Cllr Madeleine Legg) Cllr Madeleine Legg reported that she had briefed a couple of suppliers on the requirements for upgrading and enhancement of the facilities and was awaiting their responses.

**10.6 Small Gains** (Allotments, Accies sports field and shared car parking area) (Cllr David Sims) Cllr David Sims reported that enhancement of the facilities, particularly the car park, was pending further discussion re section 106 funding (see item 13.1 below). All the allotments were now let.

**10.7 Misc. amenities** (The Lock Up - Cllr David Short. Merchant Taylors' Green and Carters' Pond - Cllr Martin Hoffman). Cllr David Short reported his concerns (i) at the poor state of the information board outside the Lock Up; Cllr Mark White agreed to re-paint it as soon as possible, (ii) re the need for re-lime washing; he agreed to progress this.

**10.8 Street furniture** (Cllr Bridget Macey) The Chairman noted that the bench refurbishment had now been completed; they were looking good. It was noted that refurbishment of the village sign on Carters Pond was pending advice from the original supplier.

**Clerk**

**10.9 St Mary's Churchyard grounds maintenance** (Cllr Martin Hoffman) Cllr Martin Hoffman reported that a meeting with the PCC representatives was to be scheduled.

**10.10 Parish Clock** (Cllr Mark White) The Chairman reported that NHDC officers had completed further testing of the overnight sound reducing device. The readings taken had confirmed that the device was continuing to work at the same level, ie there had been no deterioration in its efficiency. The NHDC officers had thus recommended that no further testing would be scheduled. There had been some concerns raised by the PCC following a routine electrical check; these had now been addressed.

**10.11 War Memorial** It was noted that proposed works to the hedge and trees were pending.

**11. Items re other authorities/organisations**

**11.1 Hertfordshire Highways**

**11.1.1** (March Council, 101.1.1, 101.1.3 and 103.1.4) Proposals for Station Road safety improvements. Cllr David Sims reported further email exchanges with County Councillor Tony Hunter's highways officer following the site meeting. In response to a question from Cllr Martin Hoffman he clarified the situation re the proposed flashing speed device.

**11.1.2** (February Council, 92.1.5) Northfields Road/agreed drainage maintenance works to address the severe flooding issues (funded from County Councillor Tony Hunter's Highways Locality Budget). It was noted that grips had been cut on the section of road nearest to the village that had never suffered from flooding but no works on the length where it was needed. Resident Nicki Holmes was again commended on her efforts to get action; her regular communications over several years with County Councillor Tony Hunter, Sir Oliver Heald, MP, and various HCC officers were noted. It was agreed to write again demanding prompt action.

Cllr Graham Lee reported that there were seven locations on roads in the vicinity that regularly flooded.

## 11.2 North Herts District Council

**11.2.1** (April Council, 113.3.2) Street naming consultation/new development at Sunnymead Farm. The Chairman reported that the NHDC officer had raised some concerns with the Parish Council's proposal. It was agreed to propose an alternative, 'Shire Baulk Close, Ashwell'. This would reflect the proximity to the county boundary that ran alongside the site. **Clerk**

## 12. Reports re planning matters

### 12.1 Consultations received (from NHDC as Planning Authority to Parish Council as consultee)

*(If any objections are raised either by a parishioner or a parish councillor an on-site meeting of the Planning Committee is convened to consider those items; see notice board or contact Clerk for agenda)*

#### 12.1.1 Case Ref No: 16/00863/1HH, 5 Philosophers Gate.

Full Planning Permission: Single storey rear and side extensions and front entrance porch.

It was noted that no concerns or objections had been received either from parish councillors or members of the public.

It was **resolved** that a recommendation be made to the Planning Officer to grant approval. **Clerk**

#### 12.1.2 Case Ref No: 16/00245/1HH, 94 Station Road.

Full Planning Permission Householder: First floor rear extension.

It was noted that no concerns or objections had been received either from parish councillors or members of the public.

Cllr David Sims declared an interest (next door neighbour) and did not participate.

It was **resolved** that a recommendation be made to the Planning Officer to grant approval. **Clerk**

#### 12.1.3 It was agreed that the following applications be referred to the meeting of the Planning Committee to be held on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> May, 7.00pm.

Case Ref No: 16/00681/1HH, 21 Dixies Close.

Full Planning Permission Householder: Two storey side extension, single storey front & rear extensions.

Case Ref No: 15/03014/1, 22 and 24 Hodwell.

Full Planning Permission: Two replacement 2 bedroom dwellings following demolition of existing dwellings and ancillary works (as amended by plans received 5.4.16).

Case Ref No: 16/00783/1HH, East Lodge, 22 Lucas Lane.

Full Planning Permission Householder: Conversion of garden store to two-bedroom annexe. New garden store.

Case Ref No: 16/01034/1HH, 55 Back Street.

Full Planning Permission Householder: Single storey rear extension.

#### 12.1.4 It was agreed that the following application be referred to the meeting of the Planning Committee to be held on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> May, 9.00am.

Case Ref No: 16/00992/1. J Cooke Engineering, Ashwell Street

Full Planning Permission: Residential development comprising of 1 x 4 detached bed dwelling, 4 x 3 bed semi-detached dwellings and 4 x 4 bed semi-detached dwellings following demolition of existing factory building.

## 13. Reports re Finance matters

### 13.1 (April Council, 115.1.1) Section 106 claims to NHDC.

*Standing Orders suspended for this item; taken at 8.05pm following agenda items 1 and 2.*

NHDC Community Development Manager, Stuart Izzard, provided clarification re the eligibility rules and procedures to be followed. He also supplied the latest figures for funds held in the various categories for Ashwell. He emphasised that funds could only be released for capital expenditure. Project proposals should clearly demonstrate that participation would be increased or that there was enhancement of amenity value. Cllr Martin Hoffman expressed his continuing concerns at the rejection of the proposal, and the subsequent appeal, to fund a new specialist mower for use on the cricket square at the Recreation Ground.

It was agreed that claims for currently identified projects would be collated and drafts communicated to the Community Development Manager for his advice before formal submission to NHDC.

It was agreed that, in future, a more pro-active approach would be taken. Where a planning application was subject to a section 106 planning obligation, the wishes of the Parish should be clearly communicated to the planning officer as part of the consultation response so that they were taken into account when negotiations with developers took place; the Community Development Manager would be copied on this.

**13.2** Audit 2015-16. It was noted that all documents would be prepared for review prior to proposals at the June Council meeting and subsequent submission to the External Auditor.

**13.3** Proposal for approval of monthly Accounts and Bills for Payment.

It was *resolved* that these be approved and paid (see appendix).

**Clerk**

#### **14. Reports from working groups**

**14.1** Ashwell Neighbourhood Plan Group (leader Cllr David Short) It was agreed that, given its importance, the draft document would be reviewed and proposed for approval at a separate meeting. It was agreed that this be an agenda item for the Planning Committee meeting to be held on Wednesday 11th May.

**14.2** Website Group (leader Cllr Graham Lee) Cllr Graham Lee reported that a meeting to progress the new site was scheduled for next week.

**14.3** Yearbook Group (leader Cllr David Short) Cllr David Short reported that the group had held a debrief meeting; this had been positive. Proposals for new individuals to be involved were being progressed.

**14.4** Speeding Watch Group (leader Cllr Martin Hoffman) Cllr Martin Hoffman reported that a skeleton service was continuing to operate. He was unhappy that a flashing speed sign was being progressed for Station Road but not for Newnham Way; the recordings taken by the group had demonstrated the need for the latter.

**14.5** Ashwell Village Sports (leader Parishioner Martin Talks) It was noted that this event was scheduled for Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> May at the Recreation Ground. Some concerns were expressed re the advertising signs around the village; these were small in comparison to those for the Music Festival and At Home.

#### **15. PARISH AFFAIRS, REPORTS FROM OTHER BODIES AND OPEN FORUM**

*Standing Orders suspended for this item; taken at 8.30pm*

**15.1** Ashwell School Governing Body. Cllr David Short reported that the Head, appointed only last year, was to leave in August; procedures for a new appointment had commenced.

**15.2** Proposal for appointment of a deputy to the Clerk. It was agreed that the matter be an agenda item for the June Council meeting.

**Clerk**

**15.3** Parking concerns. Cllr David Short reported concerns at vehicles parked all day outside the Ashwell Stores; drivers were apparently taking the taxibus to the station. He felt that this was not a good situation for shop customers who needed to park. Parishioner Joan Ridley reported a car left at the junction of High Street and Church Lane for many months; it was noted that this should be reported to the PCSO for investigation.

**15.4** Waste and recycling bins left on the footway and highway. Parishioner Jo Aukland expressed her concerns at bins left permanently outside properties by residents. It was noted that this should be reported to NHDC who would investigate.

**15.5** Planning and listed building applications. It was noted that NHDC was the Planning Authority for this area. The Parish Council was a statutory consultee and was informed of all applications in the Parish by NHDC.

#### **Meeting closed to the public at 10.10pm for an *in camera* item**

*Standing Order item 62.*

*That in view of the special nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw.*

**Item 16.** To be considered at an *in camera* session on the grounds that it included personnel matters.

#### **Forthcoming meetings**

Next monthly Council meeting, and the AGMs of the Ashwell Village Trust and the Allotment for Exercise and Recreation, Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2016, 8pm in the Parish Room.

## Appendix 1 – General material received

### Items routinely forwarded to parish councillors by email

- North Herts District Council -weekly ‘Members Information’
- HAPTC -Briefings and Bulletins.
- SLCC -updates and newsletters.
- Police OWL/Rural News/Neighbourhood Watch bulletins.
- Sunnymead Park Homes newsletter

## Appendix 2

ACCOUNTS AND BILLS FOR PAYMENT -May 2016			04 May 2016		
			Declarations:		
	Proposed (i) Cllr Short (ii) Cllr Macey		Item 38 Cllr M White		
			£	£	£
	<b>Receipts</b>		Precept	Grants	Other
					Total
9	Neville Funeral Service	chapel rent			68.75
10	Santander	bank interest			11.58
11	NHDC	precept 1st installment	27,250.00		
12	Mrs K Bowles	allotment rent plot 3			15.00
13	Mr C Jenkinson	yearbook sale at Flea market			2.50
14-16	various	yearbook adverts			160.00
	<b>Total</b>			0.00	257.83
					27,507.83
			Admin, office costs & Other Misc	Management of Parish Assets & Amenities	VAT
					Total
21	R Smith	carpentry at pavilion (new lockers)		895.00	
22	R Smith	carpentry at pavilion (fire doors)		200.00	
	<b>By Direct Debit</b>				
23	E.ON (02/05/16)	toilets electricity		8.55	0.43
24	E.ON (02/05/16)	pavilion electricity		30.56	1.53
25	E.ON (03/05/16)	chapel electricity		11.00	
26	Herts & Midd Wildlife Trust	annual membership	40.00		
27	NHDC (01/05/2016)	trade refuse bin (Rec charity)		87.62	
28	NHDC (22/04/2016)	dog waste bin emptying (01/04/15-31/03/16)		875.16	175.03
	<b>By Cheque</b>				
29	J C M Porter	Clerk's salary	1089.71		
30	HCC Pensions-LGPS Account.	clerk's pension	398.00		
31	M Barden	Environmental Cleansing		202.58	
32	M Chandler	Duties at Pavilion and Rec		73.20	
33	Post Office	tax&NI to Inland Revenue	224.25	52.20	
34	K Clifford	Premises duties		261.62	
35	Liberty Co Ltd	toilets cleaning (01/03-27/03)		100.00	20.00
36	Liberty Co Ltd	toilets cleaning (28/03-01/05)		100.00	20.00
37	Parkes Print & Design	Yearbook printing	2799.97		
38	M N White	reimbursement lock replacement at Rec		12.49	2.50
39	D J Granger	grounds maintenance worksheet 2a		367.00	73.40
40	D J Granger	grounds maintenance worksheet 03		288.00	57.60
41	D J Granger	grounds maintenance worksheet 04		306.00	61.20
	<b>Total</b>		4,511.93	1,763.09	234.70
	<b>Outstanding Accounts</b>				
	Yearbook 2016 adverts (x5)				865.00
	<b>Total</b>				865.00
	<b>Money at bank</b>				
	Current Account		03 May 2016		61,961.93
	Deposit Account		04 April 2016		30,381.01
	<b>Total</b>				92,342.94
	<i>Cheques banked after/BACS transfers after</i>				-
	<i>Cheques drawn but not cleared/DD's outstanding</i>				126.00
	<b>Total</b>				92,216.94
	<i>Total after paying this months cheques</i>				85,707.22
	<i>Total in current a/c after paying this months cheques</i>				55,326.21