

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on

Wednesday 3rd August 2022, 8pm, at the Parish Room.

Present: Councillors Cath Connolly, Ian Duffy, Vinny Hall, Martin Hoffman, Graham Lee (Chairman), Norton Mahy (Vice-chairman) and David Sims. Two councillors joined the meeting on Zoom; Cllr Gemma Allan (child-care commitment) and Mark White (other commitment).

Also in attendance: Clerk (Jane Porter). County Councillor Steve Jarvis. District Councillor Tom Tyson had given his apologies. Seven members of the public were present and one also joined on Zoom.

Following a request from a parishioner it was agreed that the meeting could be recorded.

Note: The AGM for the Recreation Ground charity 'Allotment for Exercise & Recreation' for which the Parish Council is the sole trustee was held at 7.55pm, ie immediately before the Parish Council meeting -please see separate minutes.

27 **Apologies for absence from parish councillors.** *See above for those joining on Zoom. Cllrs David Sims and Martin Hoffman left at 9.15pm due to other commitments.*

28 **Declarations of interest.** Item 32.2.1 Cllr Gemma Allan (applicant and landowner).

29 **Proposal to approve and sign the minutes of the meeting 6th July 2022.**

It was resolved that the proposal be accepted. **Action: Clerk/Graham**

30 **OPEN FORUM - VILLAGE MATTERS, REPORTS FROM OTHER BODIES, ETC**

Standing Orders suspended to allow members of the public to speak.

30.1 Items from members of the public.

30.1.1 Voneus Broadband proposals for high-speed fibre internet. Parishioner Al Jacoutot reported that there was no further update; the supplier was active in other local villages and Ashwell would follow.

30.1.2 Kite event in support of Afghan refugees/request for use of the Rec. It was agreed that this could go ahead assuming there was no clash with cricket fixtures, there were no objections from the insurer and a suitable risk assessment was undertaken by the organisers. **Action: Clerk**

30.1.3 BBQ's at the Springs. A parishioner reiterated her concerns. Chairman Graham Lee responded that new signage had been installed emphasizing site rules including the ban on BBQ's and the local police had been requested to increase patrols.

30.1.4 Watering of the Accies football field at Small Gains. A parishioner reported his concerns that this was inappropriate during the current water shortage. It was agreed that the club be contacted. **Action: David**

30.2 **Items from our district councillor Tom Tyson.** Reports on the following were noted.

30.2.1 NHC consultation on waste and recycling services. Cllr Tyson had supplied details of the street cleansing and litter bin emptying specification for Ashwell. It was agreed that residents would be encouraged to respond to the consultation (deadline 22 August 2022). **Action: Clerk**

30.2.2 Bygrave Solar Farm. Land West of Ashwell Road, Bygrave NHC ref. 22/00741/FP. Nothing further to report.

30.3 **Items from our county councillor Steve Jarvis.**

30.3.1 New footway in Station Road as a condition of planning permission for Townsend Close. The technical details of the new footway were now agreed. The next step was for the County Council and developer's lawyers to complete the necessary legal agreement.

30.3.2 Safer routes to the station. There would be a public consultation on the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) commencing in September. Following questions from parishioners present it was clarified that the landowner of the preferred route for the Cambridgeshire section, Mr Christopher Fordham, had agreed during his attendance at the May Parish Council meeting that whilst he was prepared to offer the land required he would not take on any obligation for maintenance or liability. Cllr Jarvis reported that the Hertfordshire section was in the primary category, although at the lower end of priority. He had been in contact with the relevant Cambridgeshire county councillor; the

involvement of two county councils obviously made the situation more complicated. It was understood that parishioner Guy Reed continued in his efforts to liaise with the landowners. A parishioner present voiced his concern that the Parish Council was not taking advantage of funds from developers given planning consent to support this kind of project. It was noted that all funds available through this route were currently fully allocated for other specific projects. It was noted that the appeal inspector had not awarded any section 106 funding for the recent permission for land off Station Road.

It was agreed that the consultation commencing in September would be publicised as widely as possible.

Action: Clerk

30.3.3 The Ruddery/request to HCC rights of way for a change of status to improve safety. A parishioner voiced his thanks for the details sent to him on the incident that had been reported to Herts Highways. In response to his concerns that the information was not as he had recalled, Chairman Graham Lee responded that in any case this had by no means been the only evidence presented to Herts Highways in support of safety improvements. Many parishioners as well as the Parish Council had expressed concerns going back many years and local residents were all supportive of restrictions on access for four-wheeled vehicles. County officers had acknowledged the need for the safety measures proposed and these had been progressed through their system. Further progress was pending the appointment of a new officer for the area.

30.3.4 Drainage issues in Hodwell. County Cllr Steve Jarvis reported that Herts Highways had completed the improvement works that were their responsibility. It was understood that local residents were in the process of determining who had responsibility for keeping clear the ditch into which the road drains emptied.

30.4 Items on general village matters from parish councillors.

30.4.1 Village transport matters. It was noted that Cllr Ian Duffy had raised his concerns at the closure of the taxibus service to the station. County Cllr Steve Jarvis reported that he had investigated possible amendments to the Lynx bus service that might provide an alternative. Although other

enhancements to the Lynx service had been made, at present it was not deemed viable to extend the hours that would benefit early morning commuters. Demonstration that there was a demand was required and a village survey would be helpful in achieving this.

It was agreed that local residents previously involved be contacted to progress this. **Action: Gemma**

30.4.2 Village Hall trustees/re their proposal to change to an Incorporated Charitable Organisation and the future involvement of the Parish Council. Nothing further to report.

30.4.3 Community Land Trust. Chairman Graham Lee reported that the solicitor had responded to the questions on the draft FCA application. These would be circulated to parish councillors with a request for comments in the next two weeks. A proposal was made that, assuming there were no issues, that the solicitor be given the go-ahead to submit to the FCA.

It was resolved that the proposal be accepted.

Action: Clerk/Graham/Norton

In response to questions from a parishioner Chairman Graham Lee reported that once the draft had been approved by parish councillors the document could be shared with others. Also that the initial members were now in place and membership would subsequently be widened. The process was open and defined. In response to a further question from the parishioner for details of the qualifications of the initial members chosen for the role, Chairman Graham Lee requested that he put his requests in an email as taking time in the meeting for this level of detail was not appropriate.

30.4.4 NHC consultation on their review of the Ashwell Conservation Area (deadline 12th September). Chairman Graham Lee reported that the Parish Council would be drafting its response to the NHC proposals in advance of its September meeting. This would take account of public comments made.

Concerns were expressed that the NHC online response system was not working. It was agreed that this would be chased up with them. **Action: Clerk**

Parishioner David Short (leader of the earlier working group) reported that he had identified some factual inaccuracies in

the NHC report and would send these, along with his personal response, to NHC. He would share this with the Parish Council. He had also raised the possibility of local listings with NHC officers.

In response to questions from a parishioner Chairman Graham Lee reiterated that the Parish Council would take parishioners' views that it was aware of into account when considering its own response. It had publicised this through its usual channels and had individually leafletted all the households that might henceforth be included within the conservation area.

Cllr Martin Hoffman expressed his concerns at the amount of time taken up in responding to ongoing questions on this topic and the motive behind it. Other councillors also expressed a desire to limit the time devoted to one item. The parishioner expressed his concern that insufficient time had been allowed to answer questions. Chairman Graham Lee noted that this was now a matter for NHC. He encouraged the parishioner to take his concerns to NHC if he was not satisfied.

30.5 Defibrillators/siting of two new units obtained by the Accies. It was reported that the new unit at the Rec had been installed. The unit for Small Gains was pending sourcing an electricity supply. The importance of calling 999 for ambulance assistance whilst accessing the defibrillator was noted.

30.6 Council meeting start times. As the majority view was in favour of an earlier start time it was agreed that as from next month meetings would start at 7pm but this would be kept under review.

30.7 Items from working groups.

30.7.1 Trees and Hedges Group (leader Cllr David Sims). Cllr David Sims was again praised for his ongoing watering of the new planting at the Rec and Small Gains. Concern was expressed at whether the new trees in Dixies Close planted by HCC were being watered sufficiently. It was agreed that this would be investigated and local residents encouraged to water as they were able. **Action: Clerk**

End of Open Forum/Standing Orders reinstated.

31 MONTHLY REPORTS ON PREMISES/OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES FROM PARISH COUNCILLORS.

Signed	Date
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- 31.1 Recreation Ground/new equipment for older children. Cllr Gemma Allan gave an update on her further discussions with potential suppliers.
- 31.2 Pavilion upgrade project. Chairman Graham Lee reported that the latest draft plans had been circulated to parish councillors and the user groups would now be asked for further input. Cllr Cath Connolly reported that, having done some research into possible grant funding sources this was going to be challenging. She was of the view that an individual with relevant skills and time should be identified to progress any applications as these required a lot of detailed input. It was agreed that all possible funding options should be investigated and the creation of a community Jubilee project be considered.
- 31.3 The Springs. The new litter bins and signage were noted.
- 31.4 Dog waste bins. The new unit pending installation at the west end of Ashwell Street was noted.
- 31.5 The recent break-in to the Old Pavilion and theft of some Cricket Club equipment was noted. The police were investigating.

32 PLANNING MATTERS

32.1 New consultations received from North Herts Council.

32.1.1 Land to the East of 35 Ashwell Street. 22/01847/S73

Variation of condition 2 of planning permission 20/02309/FP granted on 08.12.2020 - Erection of 1 x 3 bed detached single storey dwelling including basement and light-well as shown on plans.

Standing Orders suspended to allow a parishioner to speak.

It was noted that the application was to amend the original plans to include a height increase of 0.5metres that had become apparent due to incorrect measurements during the build process. The neighbouring resident was thanked for attending and giving their views. Their objections were based on the increased adverse impact on their property that this proposed amendment would cause.

Following discussion a proposal was made to object to the application on the grounds that the original application should be adhered to. Also that, should the planning officer be minded to grant permission, this amendment should not set a precedent, ie in any subsequent planning application in the vicinity the land levels in the original application should be applied as guidance. **Action: Clerk**

32.2 Tree consultations (Conservation Area and TPO) received from NHC

32.2.1 **50 Gardiners Lane 22/01913/TCA.** Goat Willow x 2 - Crown reduce by up to 3m to leave viable growth points.

A proposal was made to give a 'no objections' response to NHC.

It was resolved that the proposal be accepted. **Action: Clerk**

32.3 Updates on previous planning applications, developments ongoing.

32.3.1 Telecoms mast. Land Opposite 41, Ashwell Street.

NHC ref. 22/01395/TD. The refusal of permission by NHC was noted.

33 **FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE MATTERS.**

33.1 Monthly summary of accounts.

It was proposed that these be accepted.

Action: Clerk

33.2 Yearbook 2023 tender for design and page layout, and printing. Cllr Norton Mahy reported that, in line with financial regulations, he had prepared a draft document and had identified three potential suppliers. This was presenting additional challenges in the current financial climate. The draft would be circulated to parish councillors for their input prior to issuing.

The meeting was closed at 9.32pm

Forthcoming meeting dates: Next monthly Council meeting - Wed 7th September 2022 at the revised time of 7pm

APPENDIX A: Accounts Summary

ACCOUNTS - Summary for 1st to 31st July 2022						
RECEIPTS					£	
32	Nevilles Funeral Services	Rent for Chapel of Rest (July)			68.75	
33	Dignity Funerals (Crouch Baldock)	Cemetery CW 22.19 Rights purchase and burial			810.00	
34	Daniel Robinson (Newlings of Royston)	Cemetery CW 22.21 and 22.22 burials			490.00	
35	Santander	Reserve Account Interest			1.70	
				Total	£1,370.45	
PAYMENTS				£ less VAT	VAT	£ inc VAT
74	Duo Creative Services Ltd	Website monthly fee (July)	25.00	5.00	30.00	
75	Edwards Cleaning & Maintenance	Toilets cleaning and consumables Inv No 2401	190.00		190.00	
76	Gill George	Electrical works and fitting of defib at the Rec inv 2070	290.00		290.00	
77	Wrigleys solicitor	Legal advice re CLT Invoice - 523347	2,000.00	330.00	2,330.00	
78	The Blue Tree Company	Works at St Marys Churchyard Inv 1421	245.00	49.00	294.00	
79	D J Granger Grounds Maintenance Ltd	Treatment of box hedges at the cemetery inv no 22733	120.00	24.00	144.00	
80	D J Granger Grounds Maintenance Ltd	Grounds Maintenance Worksheet no 14, inv no 22707	424.00	84.80	508.80	
81	D J Granger Grounds Maintenance Ltd	Grounds Maintenance Worksheet no 11, inv no 22668	696.00	139.20	835.20	
82	D J Granger Grounds Maintenance Ltd	Grounds Maintenance Worksheet no 13, inv no 22705	220.00	44.00	264.00	
83	Ruggles Plumbing & Heating	Works at public toilets inv 1937	60.00	12.00	72.00	
84	B Lohoar	Jubilee street party expenses reimbursement	1,030.24		1,030.24	
85	M&J Oakley Ltd	Springs -Fencing and other works Invoice INV-1087	2,975.00	595.00	3,570.00	
86	M&J Oakley Ltd	Works to brick wall at the Springs Invoice INV-1097	500.00	100.00	600.00	
87	EON Next	Electricity for Public Toilets inv 01/06 -30/06	13.16	0.66	13.82	
88	North Herts District Council	Recreation Ground trade waste bin (July-Sept)	111.80		111.80	
89	North Herts District Council	Streets Support trade waste bin (July-Sept)	126.10		126.10	
90	North Herts District Council	Springs trade waste bin (July-Sept)	126.10		126.10	
91	Cllr David Sims (reimbursement)	Porous hose for tree/hedge planting at the Rec	58.32	11.66	69.98	
92	Cllr David Sims (reimbursement)	Pegs for porous hose for tree/hedge planting at the Rec	14.12	2.82	16.94	
93	D J Granger Grounds Maintenance Ltd	Grounds Maintenance Worksheet no 12, inv no 22756	394.00	78.80	472.80	
94	HMRC accounts ref 321PF00003624	tax&NI to Inland Revenue	532.28		532.28	
95	HCC Pensions-LGPS Account	Clerk & Deputy Clerk Pension to LGPS	775.47		775.47	
96	ECO (A Beddall)	Environmental Cleansing Officer salary	256.80		256.80	
97	Deputy Clerk (L Brookes-Payne)	Deputy Clerk Salary	920.73		920.73	
98	Grounds Officer (M Chandler)	Grounds Officer salary	175.60		175.60	
99	Clerk (J Porter)	Clerk salary	1,457.98		1,457.98	
		Sub-totals	13,737.70	1476.94		
				Total	£15,214.64	
	Bank transfer	HCT grant: transfer from current to reserve account			£32,095.48	
	MONEY AT BANK	Current Account 31/07/2022	£17,411.78			
		Reserve Account 31/07/2022	£52,804.95			

APPENDIX B: Planning Summary

Full documents are available on the NHC website. Put the NHC ref. no. into the planning search box <https://pa2.north-herts.gov.uk/online-applications/>

Address	Application ref. Number	Brief description	Ashwell PC response to NHC consultation	North Herts Decision
Land to the east of 35 Ashwell Street.	22/01847/S73 (see also below)	Variation of condition 2 of planning permission 20/02309/FP granted on 08.12.2020 - Erection of 1 x 3 bed detached single storey dwelling including basement and light-well as shown on plans	PC to NHDC: Objection August council, 32.1.1	Pending
Land to the west of 35 Ashwell Street.	21/02650/FP (amendments to original -see below)	Erection of two detached dwellings (1 x 2-bed and 1 x 4-bed) including alterations to existing vehicular access (amended plans received 16.06.2022).	PC to NHDC: Objection July council, 25.1.1	Pending
Slip End Farm, Royston Road	22/01541/FP	Replace existing entrance gates with acoustic gates, decommission existing vehicular access and install protective landscape bund to boundary.	PC to NHDC: No Objection July council, 25.1.2	Pending
91 High Street	22/01326/FPH and 22/01327/LBC.	Single storey rear extension, erection of detached store and erection of rear garden boundary wall following demolition of existing detached outhouses.	PC to NHDC: No Objection June council, 18.1.1	Pending
Land east of 35 Ashwell Street.	22/01191/S73	Variation of Condition 2 (layout and external alterations) of planning permission 20/02309/FP granted 08.12.2020	PC to NHDC: No Objection June council, 18.1.2	Pending
Land Opposite 41, Ashwell Street.	22/01395/TD	Telecommunications Determination: Proposed 5G telecoms installation including H3G high street pole c/w wrap-around cabinet and 3 further additional equipment cabinets.	PC to NHDC: Objection June council, 18.1.3	Refused 12/07/22
Land West of Ashwell Road, Bygrave SG7 5EB.	22/00741/FP	Full Planning Permission: Ground mounted solar photovoltaic (PV) farm including battery energy storage; continued agricultural use, ancillary infrastructure, security fencing, landscaping provision, ecological enhancements and associated works.	PC to NHDC: Objection June Council, 18.1.4	Pending
87 Back Street	22/01126/FP & 22/001127/LBC	Replace existing garage doors with a window to facilitate conversion of garage into habitable accommodation and refurbish existing front elevation door.	PC to NHDC: Objection May council, 11.5	Pending
Land Adj to 4 Ashwell Street	22/00880/FP	Erection of a detached 3 bedroom dwelling, and detached car port; ancillary works and new vehicular access onto Ashwell Street	PC to NHDC: No objection May Council, 11.1	Permission Granted 28/6/2022
Land to the West of 35 Ashwell Street	21/02650/FP	Erection of 2 detached dwellings (1 x 2 bed & 1 x 4 bed) including alterations to existing vehicular access	PC to NHDC: Objection October council 2021, 50.1.1	Pending