

Minutes of Ashwell Parish Council Meeting Wednesday 3rd December 2025 at 7pm in the Parish Room

Present: Councillors: Graham Lee (Chair), Norton Mahy (Vice Chair), Joan Yates and Martin Hoffman.

Also in attendance: Clerk, Sally Roberts, Deputy Clerk, Nicky Forrester and Cllr Jarvis. The meeting was recorded on Zoom, for access to the recording please contact the Clerk clerk@ashwell.gov.uk.

Please see website for appendices issued with agenda and referred to in the minutes. [Ashwell Village - 2025 Meetings Minutes and Agendas](#).

91 **Apologies for absence** To receive and accept apologies for absence. Apologies were received from Cllrs Sims & Hoffman who are unwell and Cllrs Duffy & Button, unable to attend due to personal commitments. Cllr Tyson also sent his apologies.

92 **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 involved the Chair, the meeting to agree an alternative individual to take the Chair for that item(s). No interests were declared.

93 **Parish Issues and Public Participation** [Protocols for Public Participation in Council Meetings](#)

94 **Minutes Proposal** to approve draft minutes of the Parish Council meeting on **5th November 2025**. It was proposed that the Minutes were passed as a true account of proceedings and resolved that the proposal be accepted.

Action: Clerk/Chair

Standing Orders to be suspended

To hear any new matters raised (members of the public and councillors can raise any Parish related matters).

94.1 To receive reports from representatives from outside bodies, local authorities and agencies.

A parishioner raised the speed and safety of the A505, referencing the recent fatal accident. Cllr Jarvis gave a report, see below.

94.1.1 To receive a report from County Councillor Steve Jarvis – The A505 road safety and speed is being reviewed by Highways following the fatal collision in November at the Slip End junction. Highways are considering what steps to take in the short and long term. Potholes in the tunnel area of the A505 will be repaired shortly.

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) – the District Council voted for a 4 unitary council whilst County Council voted for a 2 unitary council. The Secretary of State decides and may propose an alternative.

94.1.2 To receive a report from District Councillor Tom Tyson – A written report from Cllr Tyson covered the LGR and the Maltings Management's hope to erect post and rail wooden fence following the felling of the Cypress tree in Station Road.

Standing Orders to be reinstated

95 **Zoom Recordings** – to note and discuss regular connection problems. Internet connection at the Parish Room has been investigated by BT with no solution found. Cllr Yates proposed that we discontinue using the Zoom meeting software, this was seconded by Cllr Mahy. Cllrs resolved to discontinue Zoom meeting software until a better solution can be found.

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

96.1 Planning Advisory Working Group - To note, any further information regarding S106. To note [**correspondence between APC and NHC Planning**](#). NCH have extended the time period for APC to submit their S106 should the extension to Senuna Park go ahead.

96.2 Access to Ashwell station includes the cycle/footway route and car parking. To note any update to [**communications between APC and MP Chris Hinchliffe \(Cllr Lee\)**](#) It was established that some years ago Guilden Morden PC objected to the suggestion of a carpark and cycle/footpath to Odsey. Discussions ongoing.

96.3 To receive update - Zero Carbon Ashwell (ZCA) Group. (Cllrs Lee & Duffy). Energy consultants visited Ashwell in November and have pulled information together to create a baseload demand for energy consumption in the village. This is a comprehensive study and there are economics and costs to consider. Further information is hoped to be available by the next meeting.

97 **Trees and Hedges (Cllr Sims) – To note any updates.** Nothing to report.

98 **Planning matters: to include new and existing applications.** To see full details of applications on the [**NHC website**](#) enter the reference number into the planning search box.

99 **Current Applications:** any updates:

99.1 24/01444/FP: Land Between Huntsridge and Ashwell House 5 High Street Erection of 14 dwellings (including affordable housing), (Hunts Close). APC are awaiting confirmation of the number of affordable homes to be available, and remain in favour of prioritising to those with a connection to Ashwell.

99.2 25/02571/OP Growing Baldock – To note meeting with Planning Consultant and [**draft response to Urban & Civic**](#). The whole transport issue has been very poorly addressed favouring cycling and walking and has not catered for other forms of transport. APC resolved to approve the proposed submission to NHC.

99.3 25/02547/FP : Residential development of 36 no. dwellings including creation of vehicular access off Station Road. [**To note and agree draft response**](#). Cllrs discussed amendment to state that installing gas central heating into new homes is in conflict with the Neighbourhood Plan and the Design Statement, referencing correspondence from an Ashwell ex-resident's correspondence to NHC. Following these amendments, Cllrs resolved to approve.

100 [**Planning Summary**](#)

101 Footpath at Townsend Meadow - To note any updates from [letter to North Herts Council](#). It is unsafe and we are in consultation with NHC representative but no update.

102 Tree consultations (Conservation Area and TPO) received from NHC. To agree responses to any received.

102.1 25/02849/TCA : T1. Large Cypress, fell to ground : Land adjacent To Bus Shelter, Green Lane. No comment made as APC are contributing to the cost of removal. Outcome is to be decided by NHC.

103 Tree Planning Summary

104 Reports from Committees

104.1 HR Committee. To receive oral reports and agree any actions. To note the council are providing Polo shirts and Sweatshirts for the Clerk and Deputy Clerk.

105 Reports from parish councillors on premises and other responsibilities. To receive oral reports and agree any actions needed.

105.1 The Springs Report from Cllr Hoffman. See item 106.2.1 proposed tree works.

105.2 St Mary's Churchyard Grounds Maintenance. Report from Cllr Hoffman. The grass has been mowed.

105.3 Recreation Ground including the playground, pavilion and public toilets. To receive any updates from [Pavilion Working Party](#). The group consulted with leaders of other village meeting facilities and will widen their consultation to include other user groups. Final revisions can be made and a public consultation carried out prior to applying for outline planning permission to NHC.

105.4 Small Gains and Track – To note any updates from Cllr Sims. No updates to report.

105.5 Cemetery – To note any updates from Cllr Mahy. The last cemetery tidy-up resulted in bulbs planted near the seating area by the carpark and clearance of growth near the Chapel of Rest that has improved the areas. A further tidy-up to be scheduled soon.

105.6 Street furniture - To note any updates Cllr Mahy. To note the request of a memorial bench by the war memorial. The British Legion have been in contact with Highways. Cllr Jarvis to follow up.

105.7 Ashwell Village Trust – To note Trustee position. Following the resignation by Vinny Hall the AVT PC position has been filled by Joan Yates. Thank you to Joan.

106 Finance and Governance

106.1 Budget tracking and the monthly summary of accounts and bank reconciliation. To note the information up to month end to be 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. To note any variances of actual expenditure compared to budget.

106.2 Budget 2025/26 Update – To note any updates.

106.2.1 Sycamore Trees at The Springs - To note and approve fell to the ground of nine multi-stem sycamores and eco plug. To fell and eco plug all self-set Sycamores adjacent to the steps on the bank in front of the Springs, [click here for quotes](#) Assessment by Natural

England identified a number of self set sycamores to be removed. Cllrs resolved to approve Quote 1 as this company holds the records and map of trees at the Springs and have served the village well in other jobs undertaken. Funds for the project will come from the budget and allocated reserves for the Springs.

106.2.2 To receive an oral update on proposed licence agreement. Use of Small Gains and licence agreement is under review by a village lawyer. To then be presented to the ACCIES for their consideration.

106.3 **Annual Audit 2023/24 & 2024/25** – To note any updates. No further updates.

106.3.1 Annual Audit for the 2023/24 financial year.

106.3.2 Audit for the 2024/25 financial year – Internal Auditor has authorised the 2024-25 audit and all documents have been sent to the External Auditor.

Date of next meeting : 7th January 2026 at 7pm in the Parish Room. (The Parish Council Office will be closed from 22nd – 30th December 2025, the Clerk will be working and contactable by email clerk@ashwell.gov.uk).

Meeting ended at 20.10hrs.