

**Minutes of the Ashwell Parish Council meeting held on
Wednesday 1st November 2017 in the Parish Room**

Present:

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

Deputy Clerk (Annie Clifford) was also in attendance. It was noted that the Clerk was on annual leave.

Members of the public: Five parishioners.

62. Apologies for absence None.

63. Minutes of previous meetings

Proposal for approval and signature of the minutes of the Council meeting 4th October 2017. Cllr Martin Hoffman requested amendments, to add clarification, to agenda items 55.9 and 56.1.2.

It was *resolved* that the minutes, with the amendments, be approved and signed.

64. Matters of general report from previous meetings

64.1 (October Council, 54.1) 1st Ashwell Scout Group project for a Public Access Defibrillator (PAD).

The Chairman reported that he had now registered to carry out the required routine equipment checks; the minimum for this was monthly but he had agreed to do it weekly. He had determined from the organising charity that no one had organised any training sessions. He was of the view that although the instructions were very easy to follow without training, it would be advantageous to accept the offer of the free training session. It was agreed that a public training session be organised and publicised as widely as possible. The Chairman agreed to keep the Scouts informed.

64.2 (October Council, 54.2) Superfast broadband. It was noted that no further information had been received; the supplier's deadline for the Ashwell area was March 2018.

64.3 (October Council, 54.3) Rear wall of the Rose & Crown in Silver Street. Cllr Martin Hoffman reported that he was continuing to monitor the repairs being carried out by the brewery.

64.4 (October Council, 54.4) Proposals for new entrance signs for the village. Cllr David Short reported that he had not been able to progress this any further as he had been away on holiday.

64.5 Village Hall (October Council, 54.5) see item 70.1.8 in Parish Affairs.

65. 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)

65.1 Cemetery (Cllr Madeleine Legg) Chapel of Rest tenancy/new lease. Cllr Madeleine Legg reported, (i) the side letter had been agreed with Nevilles, and was pending a response from the Parish Council's solicitor, (ii) the agreement re the rent had been clarified. It was noted that further tree works were to be scheduled for this autumn/winter; budget provision for this would be clarified.

65.2 Recreation Ground and Pavilion (Cllrs Mark White and Madeleine Legg) Cllr Madeleine Legg reported, (i) quotations for minor tree works and surfacing by the kissing-gate were pending, (ii) a meeting with the new Chairman of Cricket Club had been scheduled to discuss the proposed developments to the Pavilion and the Recreation Ground in general.

65.3 Playground (Cllr Madeleine Legg). Cllr Madeleine Legg reported on the proposals for signage and protective netting following the bespoke RoSPA report on the proximity of the cricket pitch. The Cricket Club had been requested to investigate options and quotes for netting/fencing; once these were in hand the Parish Council could make decisions.

65.4 Public toilets at the pavilion (Cllr Madeleine Legg) See 68.1 below re enhancement project/claim to NHDC from planning obligations/section 106.

65.5 The Springs (Cllr Martin Hoffman) Cllr Martin Hoffman reported, (i) quotations for minor tree works were pending, (ii) co-opted member Martin Lush had organised three working parties, two of which had already taken place; if contractor input was required in the future there was funding available in reserve, (iii) the Environment Agency had commissioned surveys as part of its responsibility to maintain the flow of the River Rhee; the Parish Council would continue to engage with them on this.

65.6 Small Gains (Allotments, Accies sports field & shared car parking area) (Cllr David Sims) Nothing to report.

65.7 Misc. Amenities (To include: The Lock Up, Merchant Taylor's Green, Carters' Pond)

65.7.1 The Lock Up. Cllr David Short reported that, following expert advice, some minor works required had been identified; quotations had been sought.

65.8 Street furniture (Cllr Bridget Macey) Cllr Bridget reported that two replacement litter bins had been installed in the High Street. The Chairman reported that an email had been received from one of the residents who lived adjacent to the twitchel running from the High Street to Silver Street opposite the dentists. This had expressed various concerns and requested that the bin be removed. (see also item 70.2.1 below). It was noted that the new bin was a replacement for an existing smaller one that had frequently been reported as overflowing. Cllr Madeleine Legg reported her concerns that dog walkers were putting dog faeces into the ordinary litter bins rather than the dog waste bins. The Chairman reported that he had conducted a 'smell test' on all the village litter bins; neither of the two new bins, in his view, were at all offensive. It was agreed that signage would be installed to clarify that dog faeces, suitably bagged, should be placed in the dog waste bins not into the ordinary litter bins.

65.9 St Mary's Churchyard grounds maintenance (Cllr Martin Hoffman) Cllr Martin Hoffman reported that tree works identified in the latest survey were to be progressed shortly; budget provision for this was sufficient.

65.10 Parish Clock (Cllr Mark White) Nothing to report.

65.11 War Memorial Proposed works to the hedge and two fastigate Beech trees. Cllr David Short reported that advice had been received from a suitably qualified parishioner; she had put forward various options. It was agreed that action should be progressed this winter; the British Legion would be consulted again. It was agreed to thank the parishioner for her advice.

66. Items re other authorities/organisations

66.1 Hertfordshire Highways (October Council, 56.1)

66.1.1 Speed Indicator Device (SID). An update on the new, second device was requested.

66.1.2 Damaged wall at the telephone exchange. Cllr David Short requested that BT be contacted again for information on when it would be repaired.

66.1.3 Overgrown hedges, (i) Station Road opposite the garage; Cllr David Short asked that the previous request that it be cut back be reiterated, (ii) Beech hedge in Silver Street; Cllr David Short asked that a request be made for it to be cut back.

66.2 Hertfordshire Highways/Rights of Way

66.2.1 (October Council 61.4) Twitchel from Ashwell Street, crossing at Dixies Close, to Back Street. The information received from the HCC Countryside Access Officer was noted.

66.2.2 Shire Balk on the county boundary. Cllr David Short reported that Cambridgeshire County Council had put additional surfacing material on the Shire Balk from the Ruddy spring to the rear of Sunnymead including the junction of Shire Balk and Ashwell Street which had been ‘in a dreadful state’.

66.3 North Herts District Council

66.3.1 (October Council, 56.3.1) It was noted that no further update on the proposals for restricted parking spaces outside retail outlets had been received from the NHDC Strategic Planning & Projects Manager.

6.3.2 (October Council, 56.3.2) NHDC new contract for waste and recycling, and street cleansing services. It was noted that NHDC had awarded the contract, from May 2018, to a new supplier. Charges would be made for brown bins to collect compostable waste and food waste would be collected separately; few other details were as yet available.

67. Planning matters

Details of applications are sent from NHDC as the Planning Authority to the Parish Council as a consultee. If any objections are raised either by a parishioner or a parish councillor an on-site meeting of the Parish Council’s Planning Committee is convened to consider those items. See the notice board, website or contact the office for the agenda.

67.1 New consultations received from NHDC.

It was noted that the following applications would be considered at a meeting of the Planning Committee on Sunday 12th November.

NHDC Case Ref No: 17/02593/1HH. Baldwins Corner, Green Lane.

Full Permission Householder: Two storey front and side extensions and single storey side and rear extensions.

NHDC Case Ref No: 17/01807/1 Land adjacent to Townsend House, 24 Lucas Lane
(amended plans and re-consultation)

Full Planning Permission: Erection of 4 x 3 bed terraced dwellings with creation of new vehicular access off of Lucas Lane.

NDHC Case Ref No: 17/02636/1 Bluegates Dairy, Dick Smiths Walk

Full Planning Permission: Installation of Slurry Lagoon.

67.2 Works to Trees in the Conservation Area (TCA) or Tree Protection Orders (TPO).

The following notifications to NHDC were reported.

NHDC Case Ref No: 17/02478/1TCA St. Mary’s Church and Rectory.

NHDC Case Ref No: 17/02445/1TCA United Reformed Church.

Concerns were reiterated that a significant number of trees in Ashwell were insufficiently protected and should have TPO’s. (see also 70.1.3 below)

67.3 Applications pending NHDC decisions.

The following were noted.

67.3.1 NHDC Case Ref No: 16/01797/1. Land rear of 4-14, Claybush Road

Full Planning Permission: 33 dwellings together with associated access, parking, amenity and open space. Applicant: Croudace Homes.

It was noted that the statement of the Parish Council’s objections had been drafted in preparation for the NHDC meeting at which it would be considered.

It was noted that a request for a representative to speak at the NHDC Planning Control Committee meeting would be made.

Cllr Graham Lee reported that he had received information that consideration by the NHDC Planning Control Committee had again been delayed, maybe until March 2018.

67.3.2 NHDC Case Ref No: 17/01515/1. 8 Green Lane.

Full Planning Permission: Erection of four bed dwelling with detached double garage/gym/store following demolition of existing dwelling.

67.3.3 NHDC Case Ref No: 17/01766/1HH. 8 The Rickyard.

Full Permission Householder: Single storey front extension.

The correspondence from the neighbours was noted.

67.3.4 NHDC Case Ref No: 17/001807/1HH. Land adjacent to Townsend House, 24 Lucas Lane See 67.1 above.

67.3.5 NHDC Case Ref No: 17/02200/1. Land East Of 35, Ashwell Street.

Full Planning Permission: Erection of 1 x 2 bed detached single storey dwelling including creation of new vehicular access off of Ashwell Street.

67.4 NHDC Decisions on applications.

The following were noted.

67.4.1 NHDC Case Ref No: 17/01406/1. Land development off Station Road.

NHDC decision: Refused.

67.4.2 NHDC Case Ref No: 17/002047/HH. 6 Fordham Close.

NHDC decision: Conditional Permission.

67.5 District Local Plan 2011 – 31

Receipt of the timetable from the National Inspector for the Public Examination was noted.

Acknowledgement from the National Inspector of the Parish Council's statement and the request to be heard at the Public Examination was noted.

68. Reports re Finance matters

68.1 Planning Contributions/Section 106 claims. It was noted that no further communication had been received from the NHDC Community Development Manager.

68.2 Pavilion Upgrade. It was reported that this would be discussed at the meeting scheduled with representatives of the Cricket Club.

68.3 Proposed changes to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. The information received from NHDC was noted.

68.4 Proposal for approval of monthly Accounts and Bills for Payment.

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

69. Reports from working groups

69.1 Neighbourhood Plan (leader Cllr David Short) Cllr David Short reported that the plan was getting close to completion and he was to meet with the planning expert used previously to hand it over to him for his advice.

69.2 Website (leader Cllr Graham Lee) Cllr Graham Lee reported that, as a result of little progress being made by the current developers to address the complaints and issues brought to their attention, he had started looking at potential alternative suppliers. It was noted that part of the payment for the new site was still being held pending fulfilment of the agreed specification.

69.3 Yearbook Group (leader Cllr David Short) It was noted that the minutes of the last meeting had been distributed. Cllr David Short reported that the 2018 edition was in the process of being compiled. Reports from Councillors were requested by the beginning of December.

69.4 Local business support (leader Cllr Graham Lee) See 66.3.1 above.

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

These items taken at 8.30pm; Standing Orders suspended to allow public participation

70.1 Items raised by parish councillors.

70.1.1 Moss Cottage Homes. Cllr Madeleine Legg (Parish Council nominated trustee) reported on a recent meeting of the trustees. Carole Moore would be resigning as a trustee. It was agreed to write and thank her for her dedication and to look into the procedure for recruitment.

70.1.2 Museum. Cllr Martin Hoffman (Chairman of the trustees in his own right) reported that an expert had been commissioned to obtain tenders for the works to the walls and timbers where damp problems had been identified; costs were predicted to be significant.

70.1.3 Tree Protection Orders (see also 67.2 above). Cllr David Sims reiterated his concerns that few trees in the village, despite many of significance, were covered by TPOs. The need for a comprehensive tree survey was agreed.

70.1.4 Sewage problems in Station Road. Cllr David Sims reported recurrence of previous problems. It was agreed that the relevant authority should be contacted.

70.1.5 Dog fouling. Cllr David Sims reported problems in Small Gains Lane; the NHDC Enforcement Officer had again been requested to investigate and would monitor the situation. Cllr Bridget Macey reported problems in Station Road by Sunnymead Orchard; NHDC posters had been put up and households leafleted.

70.1.6 Ashwell 1100. Cllr David Short reported that there was to be a film show; this would include the History of the Merchant Taylors', and John Morris and Ashwell.

70.1.7 Sewage farm at Donkey Common. Cllr Graham Lee reported that he, and others, had raised concerns at the significant increase in the number of tankers visiting the site and the damage to the highway/verges/property caused during these movements. It had been determined that failure of the plant had necessitated the high number of tanker movements whilst repairs were in hand. Changes to the route used had been made following the complaints. County Councillor Steve Jarvis was thanked for his input.

70.1.8 Village Hall (October Council, 54.5) Nothing further to report.

70.2 Items raised by parishioners.

70.2.1 Replacement litter bin in the twitchel from the High Street to Silver Street opposite the dentists.

(see also 65.8 above).

The Chairman agreed to schedule a site meeting to discuss the parishioner's concerns.

Forthcoming meeting dates:

Monthly Council meeting Wednesday 3rd January 2018, 8pm in the Parish Room.

Annual Parish Meeting Wednesday 28th March 2018

ACCOUNTS AND BILLS FOR PAYMENT -November 2017			Declarations:None		1st November 2017	
Proposed (i) Cllr Hoffman		(ii) Cllr Lee				
			£	£	£	£
			Precept	Grants	Other	Total
74	Neville Funeral Service	chapel rent			68.75	68.75
75	Personal cheque	cemetery reservation (CW17.30)			315.00	315.00
76	Eon credit	electricity			72.22	72.22
77	Santander	bank interest			2.50	2.50
78	James Pepper Memorial Mason	memorial fee (CW17.37)			130.00	130.00
79	Personal cheque	cemetery reservation (CW17.34)			580.00	580.00
80	Jeremy Rule Funeral Service	cemetery interment (CW17.33)			130.00	130.00
Total			0.00	0.00	1,298.47	1,298.47
Payments			Admin, office costs & Other Misc	Management of Parish Assets & Amenities	VAT	Total
By Direct Debit						
163	Anglian Water (16/10/2017)	pavilion sewerage				153.13
164	NHDC (20/10/2017)	trade refuse bin (6A Back Street)				100.49
165	NHDC (20/10/2017)	trade refuse bin (Rec charity)				90.48
By cheque						
166	J C M Porter	Clerk's salary	1181.25			1181.25
167	HCC Pensions-LGPS Account,	clerk's pension	401.57			401.57
168	Mrs Annie Clifford	Deputy clerk's salary	260.00			260.00
169	M Chandler	Duties at Pavilion and Rec (inc overtime)		141.40		141.40
170	A Beddall	ECO salary		219.20		219.20
171	Post Office	tax&NI to Inland Revenue	331.26	68.40		399.66
172	Mr K Clifford	premises duties		30.00		30.00
173	ESE Direct Ltd	Office cupboard	223.40		44.68	268.08
174	Arena Business Supplies	office consumables	127.14		25.42	152.56
175	D J Granger Grounds Maint. Ltd	grounds maintenance worksheet 16		417.00	83.40	500.40
176	D J Granger Grounds Maint. Ltd	grounds maintenance worksheet 17		180.00	36.00	216.00
177	M Huggins	bin installation		120.00		120.00
			2524.62	1176.00	189.50	3,890.12
Outstanding Accounts						
None						-
Total						-
Money at bank						
Current Account			20 October 2017		48,304.50	
Deposit Account			02 October 2017		30,471.32	
Total						78,775.82
<i>Cheques banked after/BACS transfers after</i>						-
<i>Cheques drawn but not cleared/DD's outstanding</i>						835.60
Total						77,940.22
<i>Total after paying this months cheques</i>						74,050.10
<i>Total in current a/c after paying this months cheques</i>						43,578.78