

**Minutes of the Ashwell Parish Council meeting  
held on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2019 in the Parish Room**

**Present:** Cllrs Mark White (Chairman), Martin Hoffman (Vice-chairman), Gemma Allan, Norton Mahy, Graham Lee, David Sims.

The Clerk (Jane Porter) and the Deputy Clerk ( Laura Brooks-Payne) were also in attendance.

Others present: Six members of the public, County Councillor Steve Jarvis and District Councillor Tom Tyson.

**76.** Apologies for absence. None.

**77.** Declarations of Interest. Cllr Graham Lee item 84.2 (resident of Ashwell Street) and item 84.1.1 (re air source heat pump). Cllr Martin Hoffman item 84.4 (neighbour).

**78.** Proposal to approve and sign the minutes of the previous meeting, 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2019.

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

*Standing Orders to be suspended to allow members of the public to speak if they wish.*

**79.1 Project to replace the existing pavilion at the Recreation Ground with enhanced facilities for sports and community use.** The Chairman reported that now some funding had been assured from several sources the Parish Council was keen to form a working group to progress plans and undertake further fundraising. Cllr Gemma Allan reported that consultation with users was ongoing and it was hoped that individuals willing to step forward for the working group would be identified shortly. It was noted that the Parish Council had already secured some funding for replacement of the public toilets; this would now be progressed in conjunction with the whole pavilion replacement. The Chairman reported that some funding to support design and planning work had already been included in this year's budget and more would be allocated in the next financial year. Consultation with users would continue and used to inform the design brief; it was hoped to get this drafted as soon as possible. Support from local groups such as the Ashwell Show had been discussed informally; this would now be formalised.

**79.2 Ashwell and Morden Station/proposals** by the local landowner (Mr Jeremy Fordham of Odsey Properties Ltd) for a car park, footways and housing development near the station; this to include an improved footway/cycleway with Ashwell. Cllr Martin Hoffman reported that he had spoken to the landowner who had confirmed that discussions with South Cambridgeshire planning authority were ongoing but there was no new information available. When the Parish Council did receive further information this would of course be forwarded to anyone interested.

**79.3 Village hall/update** on the transfer to the Parish Council of the holding (or custodian) trusteeship. (*see February Council 2018, minute 98.1 for details*). The Chairman reported that the solicitor had finally been in contact and details of relevant persons supplied to them for ID checks; this was apparently a requirement before the matter could be progressed.

**79.4 Henry Colbron Trust/public notice** from the trustees, the Merchant Taylors' Company, requesting proposals re the future use of land off Gardiners Lane currently leased to HCC/the school. Cllr Gemma Allan reported that a group of local residents, including herself, had submitted a proposal to the trustees.

**79.5 Luton Airport/consultation** on proposals to expand the airport and increase the number of flights. It was noted that this had been widely publicized including dates/venues for public exhibitions.

**79.6 Items raised by parish councillors.**

*(including any matters on other village groups and local organisations)*

(i) School. Cllr Gemma Allan reported that works to improve the early years' facilities were ongoing.

(ii) Museum. Cllr Martin Hoffman reported that all was good, the scaffolding was to be taken down shortly and completion of the works was imminent. (iii) Police. The Chairman reported that further complaints re a vehicle blocking the pavement in Gardiners Lane had been passed to the PCSO, (iv) Arbury Banks. Cllr Martin Hoffman reported that the Beacons of the Past project were still analysing the data.

## **79.7 Matters re other authorities and organisations.**

### **79.7.1 North Herts District Council (NHDC)**

District Councillor Tom Tyson reported on the following: (i) Parking restrictions outside the school. He had requested more officer input to enforce these. It was noted that the school had also requested this and the Head had written an item in the Ashwell Village News. (ii) Drainage and flooding issues. He had co-ordinated with the County Councillor re this (*see 79.1.2 below*).

*See also item 84 below re Planning matters.*

### **79.7.2 Hertfordshire County Council (HCC)/Highways**

County Councillor Steve Jarvis reported on the following: (i) Drainage and flooding issues. He had been in communication with Flood Risk Management officers who had carried out site investigations; he and District Councillor Tom Tyson had also undertaken site visits. It had been determined that issues were not just down to blocked gullies and they were looking at broader problems. (ii) Tree works in Bear Lane on the bank adjacent to the school had been agreed and would be scheduled in this financial year. (iii) 20mph zone. Signage had been agreed and almost all would be located on existing posts. Installation would likely take place next March. (iv) Timed parking spaces outside retail outlets. These were still pending installation and he would continue to chase this up. (v) A505 safety improvements. He had been involved in the latest meeting with Highways officers. More research had been undertaken and design work completed for all the major junctions between Baldock and Royston. Not all works identified could be funded and it had been agreed to progress with what was achievable within available budgets. Priority had been given to the Litlington junction as this had the highest accident record; traffic would be prevented from turning right. This had been identified as a significant cause of incidents at all the major junctions. At the Odsey junction a new roundabout was the preferred option but there was insufficient budget to undertake this; speed restrictions were again being considered. A significant cause of concern identified in the research for this junction was that an average of one vehicle per day was turning the wrong way down the dual carriageway; the police were undertaking work to determine the reasons why drivers do this.

County Councillor Steve Jarvis responded to questions. Cllr Martin Hoffman was keen to understand the reasons why this topic had been discussed over so many years without agreement on what should be done and action taken to make the road safer. It was noted that budget restrictions prevented implementation of many of the works proposed. Each junction was different and there were different reasons for each accident at each of the junctions; turning right was, however, a common factor in many cases. Reports from the public, including any dashcam footage, was useful.

## **80. Items raised by parishioners.**

**80.1 The Big Climate Fightback.** The Chairman reported that parishioner Ken Coyne had approached the Parish Council with a request for some funding to support a tree planting initiative that he was organising. It was noted that none of the sites that he was currently proposing were on land owned by the Parish Council. It was agreed that once he had identified suitable sites in the village where landowners had given their permission, the Parish Council would be pleased to consider a detailed request for funding. It was noted that another parishioner had emphasized the need to plan, and budget for, the long-term maintenance of any trees planted.

## **81. Working Groups reports.**

*(Those currently active are listed. Members include volunteer parishioners as well as parish councillors. Offers to join or start new groups welcomed)*

**81.1 Neighbourhood Plan Group** (leader Cllr Graham Lee, deputy Cllr Norton Mahy) Cllr Graham Lee reported that he and Cllr Norton Mahy had had a lengthy telephone conference with the consultant. She had made a number of useful suggestions and proposals. These would be discussed further at the next meeting of the group. The view was that progress of the plan should be accelerated with a target deadline of January/February for the next submission to NHDC.

**81.2 Yearbook Group** (leader Cllr Norton Mahy) Cllr Norton Mahy reported that the next meeting of the group was to take place shortly. It had been agreed to use the same supplier as previously for design and page make-up. Following the copy deadline of 24<sup>th</sup> November the first batch of material would be forwarded to them.

**81.3 Local business support** (leader Cllr Graham Lee) Cllr Graham Lee reported that premises identified as community assets would be identified in the Neighbourhood Plan. Following recent publicity on the viability of all three of the village pubs the Parish Council had been encouraged to formally apply to NHDC for them to be registered as 'Community Assets'. It was agreed that the benefits of this be looked into. The Chairman noted that purchase of a pub was not the intention.

**81.4 Protection of valued trees** (leader Cllr David Sims) Cllr David Sims reported on the following:

(i) Chestnut tree on land being developed in front of Townsend House. The Parish Council had objected to the request made to NHDC by the developer to fell the tree. NHDC had imposed a temporary Tree Preservation Order whilst an alternative expert opinion was sought on the health of the tree. *See also 84.6 below.*

(ii) Trees on land at the Claybush development site. Work was ongoing to compile the necessary documentation to submit a request to NHDC for a Tree Preservation Order to cover the whole site. Although there was a planning condition imposed as part of the permission granted this was not considered to be sufficient to effectively preserve the trees in the long term. The tree report included as part of the planning application was noted. *See also 84.6 below.*

*See 83.5 below re the Springs volunteer working group.*

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*Standing orders reinstated from here.*

## **82. Matters of report from previous meetings.**

**82.1** New village map. Cllr Graham Lee reported that the supplier had not responded and it was believed had gone out of business. Alternative suppliers were being investigated.

## **83. PREMISES MANAGEMENT REPORTS** To include updates on the following:

*(individual parish councillor's responsibilities shown in brackets)*

**83.1 Cemetery.** It was reported that: (i) issues with NHDC emptying of the trade waste bin had hopefully been resolved. (ii) A quote for the regular tree survey had been received and agreed.

**83.2 Recreation Ground & Pavilion.** (Responsible: Cllrs Mark White and Gemma Allan)

*See also item 79.1 above.*

The Chairman and Cllr Gemma Allan reported on the Accies request to use portable floodlights to enable sessions on dark winter evenings. It was noted that, (i) the hours of use, ie early in the evening, should not cause any nuisance to neighbours, (ii) the Accies would be responsible for insurance and safe storage of the units. It was agreed that the Parish Council had no objections, would give permission for the batteries to be charged in the pavilion and would make no charge for this.

**83.3 Playground.** (Responsible: Cllr Gemma Allan) Cllr Gemma Allan reported that initial thoughts for improvements had been discussed with a possible supplier.

**83.4 Public Toilets.** (Responsible: Cllr Gemma Allan) *See item 79.1 above.*

**83.5 The Springs.** (Responsible: Cllr Martin Hoffman) Cllr Martin Hoffman reported: (i) A working party had been scheduled for the end of the month. (ii) A quote for the regular tree survey had been received and agreed.

**83.6 Small Gains.** Allotments, Accies sports field and shared car parking area.

(Responsible: Cllr David Sims) Cllr David Sims reported: (i) hedge cutting by relevant parties responsible was to be progressed. (ii) co-ordinated action had been agreed to deal with some of the worst potholes; the objective was to maintain the track in a state that was passable but acted as a speeding deterrent.

**83.7 The Lock Up.** (Responsible: Cllr Norton Mahy) The new sign was expected from the supplier and would be installed shortly.

**83.8 Merchant Taylors' Green.** (Responsible: Cllr Martin Hoffman) Refurbishment of the seat plaque was in progress.

**83.9 Carters' Pond.** (Responsible: Cllr Martin Hoffman) Refurbishment of the seat had been delayed by issues with the supplier but it was understood that materials had now been procured.

**83.10 Street furniture.** Nothing to report.

**83.11 St Mary's Churchyard grounds maintenance.** (Responsible: Cllr Martin Hoffman)

Cllr Martin Hoffman reported that a quote for the regular tree survey had been received and agreed.

**83.12 Parish Clock.** (Responsible: Cllr Mark White) The Chairman reported that a fault had been reported following the hour change. He had sought advice from the supplier and had been able to turn the mechanism

off. The supplier subsequently attended to replace the faulty component. A spare had been purchased so that he could take rapid action if the fault recurred.

**83.13 War Memorial.** The volunteer who maintained the ornamental planting was commended for keeping it looking so good. The couple of plants in the new yew hedge that had failed would be replaced over the winter.

## **84. PLANNING MATTERS**

*See appendix below with a summary of recent consultations and their status.*

**84.1** New applications received from NHDC for consultation.

**84.1.1 No.51b High Street.** NHDC Case Ref. 19/02306/FPH.

Full Permission Householder: Air Source heat pump within 1 metre of boundary.

It was noted that the neighbour living adjacent to the boundary wall on which the unit was to be installed had submitted objections to NHDC. These included concerns about noise and pollution as the location was immediately beside their patio area that they used for recreation and working.

*Standing orders were suspended for them to convey their concerns.*

Cllr Graham Lee reported that he had a device at his property and was able to give his personal experience that there was little, if no, nuisance. He invited the neighbour to view his device in action. It was agreed that any response to NHDC be delayed pending the outcome of this visit.

**84.1.2 No.48 Station Road.** NHDC Case Ref. 19/02427/FPH.

Full Permission Householder: Single storey rear extension following demolition of existing conservatory and outbuildings.

It was noted that the proposed extension would replace an existing conservatory and outbuildings in the rear garden not visible from the road. It was believed that the neighbours had made no objections.

A proposal was made that a recommendation be made to the Planning Officer that permission be granted.

It was *resolved* that the proposal be accepted.

**Action: Clerk/Deputy Clerk**

**84.1.3 Land rear of 1-11 Back Street.** NHDC Case Ref. 19/01515/FP.

Full Permission: Erection of two 3-bed detached bungalows with associated gardens and parking as variation of permission approved under ref 15/00962/1 (amended by drawings received 14th October 2019).

A proposal was made that a recommendation be made to the Planning Officer that permission be granted.

It was *resolved* that the proposal be accepted.

**Action: Clerk/Deputy Clerk**

**84.2 Land rear of 4-14 Claybush Road.** NHDC Case Ref. 16/01797/1.

*(See 81.4 above)*

**84.3 Former Cooke Engineering site.** NHDC Case Ref. 16/02154/1.

The correspondence with the HCC officer re the Parish Council's proposal for planting and remedial works on the Highways verge adjacent to the site damaged during the build process was noted. Communication with the Land Management team were ongoing with the objective of their undertaking agreed planting.

**84.4 No.1 Newnham Way.** NHDC Case Ref. 19/00424/FPH.

Communications with the HCC rights of way officer. Nothing further to report.

**84.5 Land between Lucas Lane and Ashwell Street (Hunts Close).** Pre-application.

*(see September Council 2019, minute 55.1 for details).*

The following were noted. (i) The public exhibition held by the developer. (ii) The further research undertaken by Cllr David Sims on the WW2 air crash.

**84.6 Trees in the Conservation Area and Tree Preservation Orders.**

*(See also 81.4 and 84.2 above and the appendix with summary below)*

**84.6.1 Land adjacent to Townsend House, 24 Lucas Lane.** NHDC Case Ref. 19/02185/TCA.

Fell Chestnut tree. *See 81.4 above.*

## 85. FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE MATTERS

**85.1 Monthly summary of accounts.** Proposal for approval. (*see appendix below*).

It was *resolved* that this be approved.

### 85.2 Budget for 2020-21.

(i) The draft minutes of the committee meeting held on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> October were noted.

(ii) The first draft of the budget was noted. The Chairman reported his request that the sum allocated for the new pavilion be increased (*see 79.1 above*); this was agreed. (iii) It was noted that NHDC had informed that the preliminary tax base would be made available in the third week of November. (iv) It was noted that the final draft was to be proposed to the December Council meeting for approval.

### 85.3 Requests for charitable and other donations.

The request for financial support from the Friends of Therfield Heath was noted. It was agreed that as this was outside the parish no donation would be given. The general policy for charitable requests was discussed. It was agreed that requests from charities operating outside the parish should be declined but that any that were of particular benefit to Ashwellians would be considered on a case by case basis.

**Meeting closed 9.30pm**

### Forthcoming meeting dates:

December Council meeting, Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2019, 8pm in the Parish Room.

January Council meeting, Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2020, 8pm in the Parish Room.

### Appendix: Summary of recent planning consultations as of 6<sup>th</sup> November 2019.

*Details of applications are sent from North Herts District Council (NHDC) to the Parish Council as a consultee. These are available on [www.north-herts.gov.uk](http://www.north-herts.gov.uk). If any concerns are raised either by a parishioner or a parish councillor on an application, an on-site meeting of the Parish Council's Planning Committee may be convened to consider those items. See the notice board, website or contact the office for the agenda. A summary is available on the website ([www.ashwell.gov.uk](http://www.ashwell.gov.uk)) Full details of applications are available on the NHDC website.*

Consultations on recent planning and listed building applications received from NHDC -as of 7th November				
Address	Application Number	Brief description	Ashwell PC Comments	North Herts Decision
51b High Street	19/02306/FPH	Air Source Heat Pump within 1 m of boundary	PC to agree response following consultation with neighbour.	Pending
48 Station Road	19/02427/FP	single storey rear extension after demolition of conservatory/outbuildings	PC Decision sent to NHDC: recommendation that permission be GRANTED	Pending
103 High Street	19/02126/FPH	insertion of 3 x front dormer windows, chimney to side, single storey extension to boiler room	PC Decision sent to NHDC: recommendation that permission be GRANTED	Permission Granted 03/9/19
Land adjacent 2 Ashwell Street	19/01809/FP	Erection of a detached 3 bedroom dwelling, detached single garage, new vehicular access onto Ashwell Street, and ancillary works.	Planning Committee Wed 4th Sept PC Decision sent to NHDC: recommendation that permission be GRANTED with a condition that the hedges to the front are kept to maintain privacy	Permission Granted 24/9/19
80 Ashwell Street	19/01379/FPH	Two storey side extension, single storey rear extension, demolition of existing garage and front porch extension, with ancillary works.	Planning Committee Wed 3rd July PC Decision sent to NHDC: recommendation that permission be REFUSED	Permission Granted 17/09/19
Land rear 1-11 Back Street	19/01515/FP	Erection of two 3-bed detached bungalows with associated gardens and parking as variation of permission approved under ref 15/00962/1 (amended by drawings recived 14th October 2019).	PC Decision sent to NHDC: recommendation that permission be GRANTED	Pending
		Erection of two 3-bed detached bungalows with associated gardens and parking (as variation of permission approved under ref 15/00962/1)	Planning Committee Wed 3rd July PC Decision sent to NHDC: recommendation that variations be approved	

## Appendix: Trees in the Conservation Area and Tree Preservation Orders.

Summary of recent submissions to NHDC for works to trees in the Conservation Area and those with Tree Preservation Orders.				
Address	Application Number	Brief description	Ashwell PC	NHDC
17 Mill Street	19/02230/TCA	T1 Conifer - Fell. T2 Holly - Reduce by approx 1/3. T3 Yew - Fell	No objections	Approved 19/10/19
Land adj to Townsend House, 24 Lucas lane	19/02185/TCA	T001 - Horse Chestnut - Fell	Objections	Temporary TPO imposed pending NHDC commissioned
United Reformed Church High Street	19/02449/TCA	T1 - Holly - Fell to ground level T2 - Lawson cypress - Fell to ground level	No objections following information from applicant	Pending

## Appendix: Monthly accounts summary

ACCOUNTS - Summary for 01/10/2019 - 31/10/2019			
RECEIPTS			£
61	Nevilles Funeral Services	Rent for Chapel of Rest (October)	68.75
62	Chenery Funeral Services	Payment for CW19.17	135.00
63	Santander Reserve account	Interest 01/10/2019	5.94
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>209.69</b>
PAYMENTS			
136	EON	Electricity for Pavilion (13/10/19)	28.89
137	EON	Electricity for Toilets (5/10/2019)	8.36
138	NHDC	Springs trade waste bin 05/08/2019	110.50
139	NHDC	Recreation Ground trade waste bin (charity rate)	99.45
140	Clerk	Clerk's salary	1,301.02
141	Clerk	Clerk reimbursements	42.68
142	Deputy Clerk	Deputy Clerk's Salary	793.93
143	HCC Pensions-LGPS Account,	Clerk & Deputy Clerk Pension to LGPS	723.78
144	Grounds Officer	Grounds Officer salary	149.20
145	ECO	Environmental Cleansing Officer salary	225.60
146	HMRC accounts ref 321PF00003624	tax&NI to Inland Revenue	421.73
147	Edwards Cleaning & Maintenance	Public Toilet Cleaning August	188.00
148	D J Granger grounds Maintenance Ltd	Grounds Maintenance sheet 62	450.00
149	PKF Little John LLP	External Audit fee	480.00
150	Home Builders	Replace broken window at pavilion	45.00
151	Home Builders	Replace damaged roof slates on pavilion	60.00
152	Duo Design	Website hosting 01/10/2019 inv 8856	30.00
153	Bugs 'n' Things	Removal of wasp nest in pavilion roof	60.00
154	MCL Powerscribe	Website domain renewal for 2 yrs	81.60
155	Ashwell PC	To Rec charity 'Allotment for Exercise...' grant to maintain a/c open	10.00
156	Arena Stationers	Office stationery supplies	78.49
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>5,388.23</b>
MONEY AT BANK			
			Current Account 31/10/2019
			<b>£44,241.60</b>
			Reserve Account 31/10/2019
			<b>£20,645.38</b>