

**Minutes of the Ashwell Parish Council meeting
held on Wednesday 3rd April 2019 in the Parish Room**

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

The Clerk (Jane Porter) was also in attendance.

Members of the public: Two parishioners and County Councillor Steve Jarvis.

125 Apologies for absence. None.

126. Declarations of Interest. None.

127. Minutes of previous meetings.

Proposal for approval and signature of the minutes of the Council meeting held on 6th March 2019.

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

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

128.1 Election of a new Parish Council for 2019-2023, Thursday 2nd May. It was noted that the deadline for nominations had now passed and the names of the candidates would be published shortly by NHDC.

128.2 Village Hall. Cllr Martin Hoffman (a holding/custodian trustee in his own right) reported that the transfer of the holding/custodian trusteeship to the Parish Council was proceeding. It was emphasised that the role of the management trustees, ie the current user's committee, would not change. Their responsibilities as trustees had been clearly defined to all parties.

128.3 Annual Parish Meeting, Wednesday 27th March, 8pm at the School. It was agreed to consider any matters raised at the next Council meeting.

128.4 Items raised by parish councillors. *To include any matters on other village groups and organisations.*

128.4.1 Museum. Cllr Martin Hoffman reported that fundraising for the building work was going well, applications for grants were being progressed and quotes were in hand.

128.5 Items from other organisations/bodies.

128.5.1 Parish Tree Warden scheme operated by South Cambridgeshire. Cllr David Sims reported that further information had been received. Also, a much-appreciated offer had been made by a parishioner to assist with firming up the protection of valued trees in the village; a meeting was to be scheduled in the next week.

Action: Clerk/DRS

128.5.2 Arbury Banks/Beacons of the Past -Hillforts project. Nothing further to report.

128.5.3 Highways matters. County Councillor Steve Jarvis gave updates on the following; (i) The yellow line parking restrictions had all been marked up. (ii) The Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) had been issued for the timed spaces outside retail outlets. (iii) The proposed 20mph zone would be installed but there was nothing further to report at present. (iv) Signage to address speeding issues in the rough section of Ashwell Street, the Ruddery, had been identified and would cost £700. His Highways Locality Budget (HLB) for 2019-20 was all allocated but he was hopeful the money could be found from somewhere. (v) Surveys for the West End safety proposals had been undertaken. (vi) There was nothing further to report on the Silver Street pinch point.

The Chairman reported that he had received an objection from a local resident to the proposed timed parking spaces outside the pharmacy in the High Street. It was understood that the resident had adequate off-street parking on his property but had a preference for parking in the High Street.

128.5.4 Speeding volunteer group. Cllr Martin Hoffman reported that the village group had not been active for at least two years. The locations at which they had been permitted to operate had been limited by various police rules; the two Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) in Station Road and Newnham Way now covered those areas. He had received a communication from the police DriveSafe organisers asking if the group wished to continue; he was minded to respond in the negative.

Action: Clerk

128.5.5 Ashwell School. Copies of letters written to Sir Oliver Heald, MP, from class 6 children following their recent visit to Parliament had been received. The letters had included, along with many other worthwhile suggestions, comments relevant to the Recreation Ground. Cllrs David Short and Madeleine Legg agreed to consider and form a response. In the interim acknowledgment had been sent to the class teacher and Sir Oliver.

Action: Clerk

128.6 Items from parishioners.

See 128.3 above.

129. Matters of general report from previous meetings

129.1 Village map. Cllr Graham Lee gave an update on the new village map. The proposed supplier had been briefed and a firm quote requested. It was intended that a new map would include both places of interest and local businesses/retail outlets.

129.2 Village entrance sign in Station Road (Ashwell 1100). It was reported that a delivery date was awaited from the supplier. Arrangements for installation would then be confirmed with Herts Highways.

130. Parish management reports from councillors (current responsibilities shown in brackets)

130.1 Cemetery (Cllr responsible: Madeleine Legg)

Cllr Madeleine Legg reported: (i) Chapel of Rest/update on the new tenancy agreement with Neville Funeral Services. A new lease had been signed. The papers for a formal complaint to the Parish Council's solicitor were in hand. No response, or acknowledgement, had been received to the request for the return of documents held. Action on both these matters was to be discussed further. (ii) Trees. A professional survey was commissioned every two years; this was the case with all trees that were the responsibility of the Parish Council.

130.2 Recreation Ground including the Pavilion and Public Toilets

(Cllrs responsible: Mark White and Madeleine Legg)

Cllr Madeleine Legg reported: (i) Further incidents of bagged dog waste left on the pitches had occurred. No further information as to who the perpetrator might be, or why they were doing it, had been received. CCTV coverage was being investigated. A suggestion had been made that the waste was not dog but human; professional investigation of this would be considered. The NHDC Enforcement Officer and the PCSO were to hold a 'Responsible Dog Ownership' drop-in event on Thursday 4th April at 3.30pm.

(ii) Proposals for new toilet facilities. Site visits with potential suppliers had taken place and options were being considered.

130.3 Playground (Cllr responsible: Madeleine Legg)

Cllr Madeleine Legg reported: (i) Minor works agreed were being progressed. (ii) Proposals re the skateboard area and proposals for new equipment would be considered further, and consultations undertaken, by the new Council.

130.4 The Springs (Cllr responsible: Martin Hoffman)

Cllr Martin Hoffman reported: (i) Minor works had been completed. (ii). The organisers of the Duck Race were to be thanked for leaving the site in a good state following their recent event. (iii) Volunteers who had participated in working parties over the autumn/winter period would be thanked. (iv) The regular site inspection would be scheduled shortly. (v) A report of a bullhead fish had been received and confirmed by a local expert. Methods of deterring the fishing of protected creatures was to be considered.

130.5 Small Gains (Allotments, Accies sports field and shared car parking area)

(Cllr responsible: David Sims)

Cllr David Sims reported: (i) All the allotment plots had been allocated for this season, (ii) Problems with youths using the Accies goals and damaging plots when retrieving balls continued. He would remind the Accies of the agreement to turn the goals around and also suggest that the alignment of the pitch might be changed. (iii) Complaints had been received about litter, probably left by visitors other than when the Accies were using the site.

130.6 The Lock Up (Cllr responsible: David Short) Nothing to report.

130.7 Merchant Taylors' Green and Carters' Pond (Cllr responsible: Martin Hoffman)

Cllr Martin Hoffman reported:

(i) There had been no further communications re the Walnut tree at Merchant Taylors Green. Complaints re the car parked on the pavement opposite the entrance to the doctors' surgery had been passed to the police.

(ii) Works to the hedge at the rear of Carters Pond had been completed.

130.8 Street furniture (Cllr responsible: Bridget Macey) Nothing to report.

130.9 St Mary's Churchyard grounds maintenance (Cllr responsible: Martin Hoffman) Nothing to report.

130.10 Parish Clock (Cllr responsible: Mark White) Nothing to report.

130.11 War Memorial (i) It was reported that watering of the new Yew hedging plants had commenced and would be continued as necessary. A line of bark chippings was to be laid and the bare areas grass-seeded.

131. Items re other authorities/organisations;

131.1 Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) See 128.5 above re Herts Highways.

131.2 North Herts District Council (NHDC) See below re Local Planning Authority matters.

132. Planning matters

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. 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) Full details of applications are available on the NHDC website.

132.1 New consultations on applications received from NHDC

(See also appendix with summary table below).

The application below was considered on site at a meeting of the Planning Committee, Wed 3rd April, 7.15pm, ie immediately before the Council meeting. See minutes of that meeting.

NHDC Case Ref. 19/00455/FP. Land at the junction of Ashwell Street and Station Road

Full Planning Permission: Erection of 9 (6 No. Three Bedroom, 3 No. Four bedroom) dwellings with associated parking, amenity space and associated ancillary works, following demolition of existing redundant structures. Creation of new access from Station Road.

132.2 NHDC Case Ref No: 16/01797/1. Land rear of Claybush Road.

Nothing further to report.

132.3 Trees in the Conservation Area (Section 211) and Tree Protection Orders (TPOs).

Nothing to report. See also item 128.5.1 above.

132.4 Development at the Cooke Engineering site.

132.4.1 It was noted that there had been no further correspondence following the Parish Council's letter to the developer expressing concerns, and requesting action, re the poor state of the site and in particular the adjacent Highways verge and the Right of Way. It was agreed that further representations be made to the relevant authorities re the new kerbing now partly installed at the west end of the site at the junction of the unmade and made-up sections of the right of way. **Action: Clerk**

132.4.2 Concerns received from local residents re the over-brightness of the new streetlighting. It was noted that these had been forwarded to HCC with a request for investigation. It was understood that they had now been dimmed and any further adjustments could be requested from Herts Highways once the road had been adopted.

132.4.3 Concerns received from local residents re the hazardous cavity on the south boundary between the new fencing and hedge. It was noted that these had been forwarded to HCC with a request that the developer urgently address the issue; this had been done.

132.5 Proposed development land at Station Road. NHDC Case Ref No: 17/01406/1

It was noted that a response to the letter sent on 15th January, and follow-up phone calls, to the agent acting for Beck Homes Ltd. had not been received.

132.6 Local Plan Examination.

The draft response to the NHDC consultation on the revised draft following the modifications requested by the Inspector was noted. It was agreed that minor modifications be included and a final version circulated in time for the deadline of 11th April. **Action: Clerk/GEL**

Details on www.north-herts.gov.uk/localplan

133. Reports re Finance matters

133.1 Annual Audit for the financial year 2018-19. It was reported that the Parish Council had been included in the randomly selected 5% of councils to be the subject of an intermediate rather than a basic audit. The arrangements and dates for the Internal and External Audit were noted. **Action: Clerk**

133.2 The latest accounts, bank reconciliation and budget tracking documents were noted.

133.3 Proposal for approval of the monthly summary of accounts (see appendix).

It was **resolved** to accept the proposal.

Action: Clerk

134. Reports re employment matters (Cllrs responsible, the Chairman and Madeleine Legg)

Nothing to report.

135. Reports from working groups

135.1 Neighbourhood Plan Group (leader Cllr David Short, Cllrs Graham Lee and Madeleine Legg)
Cllr David Short reported that a meeting was scheduled.

135.2 Website (leader Cllr Graham Lee) Nothing to report.

135.3 Yearbook Group (leader Cllr David Short) Cllr David Short reported that a different supplier had been used for design work this year and had resulted in some errors; as leader he took full responsibility for this.

135.4 Local business support (leader Cllr Graham Lee) (*See 128.5.3 and 129.1 above*)

135.5 Litter Pick Group (leader Cllr Madeleine Legg) Spring Clean held on Saturday 23rd March. Cllr Madeleine Legg reported that this had been a successful event with over 40 bags of rubbish cleared and subsequently collected by NHDC. She thanked all the volunteers including the group from the branch of McDonalds at the Radwell services. The Chairman thanked Cllr Legg for organising the event.

135.6 Village Sports Day (leader Guy Reed) The arrangements, including insurance cover and risk assessment, for Sunday 19th May, were noted.

Meeting closed at 9pm.

Forthcoming meeting dates:

May Council meeting, Wednesday 1st May 2019, 8pm in the Parish Room.

Appendix 1 – General material received

NHDC weekly ‘Members Information’; HAPTC briefings and bulletins; SLCC updates and newsletters; Police OWL/Rural News/Neighbourhood Watch bulletins.

Appendix 2 - Planning Applications summary

Consultations on planning and listed building applications received from NHDC - as at 8th April 2019				
Address	Application Number	Brief description	Ashwell PC Comments	North Herts Decision
Land Jct of Ashwell St & Station Rd	19/00455/FP	Erection of 9 (6 No. Three Bedroom, 3 No. Four bedroom) dwellings with associated parking, amenity space and associated ancillary works, following demolition of existing redundant structures. Creation of new access from Station Road.	Planning Committee Wed 3rd April. PC Decision sent to NHDC: recommendation that permission be REFUSED	Pending
1 Newnham Way	19/00424/FP	Erection of replacement 4 bed detached dwelling, attached double garage (variation to accepted application 17/01634/1).	Planning Committee Sunday 10th March. PC Decision sent to NHDC: recommendation that permission be REFUSED	Permission granted
43 Dixies Close	19/00399/FPH	Two storey side extension, single storey front porch extension with extended canopy.	PC Decision sent to NHDC: recommendation that permission be GRANTED	Pending
The Coach Barn, Hinxworth Road	19/00213/FPH	Single storey side extension following demolition of existing conservatory.	PC Decision sent to NHDC: recommendation that permission be GRANTED	Permission granted
11 Swan Street (Ashwell Museum)	19/00146/LBC	Listed Building Consent: Repair of oak frame, replacement of concrete infill panels with lime plaster and lath, re-tiling roof and other associated repairs.	PC Decision sent to NHDC: recommendation that permission be GRANTED	Permission granted
Westbury Farm House, West End	19/00079/FP	Single storey rear extension to existing garage and workshop outbuilding.	PC Decision sent to NHDC: recommendation that permission be GRANTED	Permission granted
Land rear of 4-14 Claybush Road	16/01797/1	30 proposed dwellings with associated access, parking, amenity & open space.	PC Decision sent to NHDC: recommendation that permission be REFUSED	Pending

Appendix 3 - Monthly accounts summary

	RECEIPTS		£
79	Neville Funeral Services	cemetery chapel rent (Mar 19)	68.75
80	EH Crouch	Ashes interment CW19.04	135.00
81	EH Crouch	Ashes interment CW 19.01	650.00
82	Bradleys Hairdressers	Payment for yearbook 2019 advert	125.00
83	EH Crouch	Memorial CW 19.05	135.00
84	EH Crouch	ashes interment CW 19.06	135.00
85	Jane Buxton	Payment for advert for Yearbook 2019	70.00
86	Kate Cumins (T/A Amazing Feet)	Payment for advert for Yearbook 2019	40.00
87	Groundwork UK	Grant for the Neighbourhood Plan	2,400.00
88	Crumps Butchers	Payment for advert for Yearbook 2019	125.00
89	Que Sera	Payment for advert for Yearbook 2020	70.00
90	Football Club	Rec/pavilion rent for 2018-19	500.00
91	Kip McGrath	Payment for advert for Yearbook 2019	125.00
92	Mantles	Payment for Yearbook 2019 advert	300.00
93	Collings Electrical	Payment for Yearbook 2019 advert	40.00
		TOTAL	4,918.75
	PAYMENTS		
261	EON	Electricity public toilets (1/3/19)	7.83
262	EON	Electricity to the Pavilion (1/3/19)	48.11
263	Affinity Water	Small Gains (1/3/19)	21.01
264	Affinity Water	Cemetery(1/3/19)	16.68
265	Wave	Sewerage 17/08/2018 - 16/02/2019	81.81
266	Clerk	Clerk's salary	1,266.23
267	Clerk	Clerk's reimbursements	34.35
268	Deputy Clerk	Deputy Clerk's Salary	687.02
269	Deputy Clerk	Deputy Clerk's Reimbursements	65.60
270	HCC Pensions-LGPS Account,	Clerk & Deputy Clerk Pension	639.88
271	Grounds Officer	Grounds Officer salary	159.00
272	ECO	Environmental Cleansing Officer salary	249.60
273	HMRC accounts ref 321PF00003624	tax&NI to Inland Revenue	391.64
274	Duo Design	Website monthly fee (March)	30.00
275	Philip Kirk Landscaping	Works at Ashwell Springs	905.00
276	Arena Stationers	Stationery for office and trimmer	173.46
277	The Blue Tree Company	Work at Carters Pond	270.00
278	Parkes Printers	Yearbook printing	4,172.97
279	D J Granger Grounds Maint. Ltd	Grounds maintenance worksheet 44	414.00
		TOTAL	9,634.19
MONEY AT BANK			
		Current Account (31/3/19)	10,012.22
		Reserve Account (31/3/19)	20,600.38