

**Minutes of the Ashwell Parish Council meeting  
held on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December 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) was in attendance. Others present: Four members of the public, County Councillor Steve Jarvis and District Councillor Tom Tyson.

**86.** Apologies for absence. None.

**87.** Declarations of Interest. Cllr Graham Lee item 94.2 (resident of Ashwell Street).

**88.** Proposal to approve and sign the minutes of the previous meeting, 6<sup>th</sup> November 2019.

It was *resolved* that these be approved and signed.

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

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

**89.1 New pavilion project/replacement** of the existing pavilion at the Recreation Ground with enhanced facilities for sports and community use. The Chairman and Cllr Gemma Allan reported that an initial meeting had been positive and the chairman-elect of the Cricket Club, Richard Young, had agreed to lead the group to progress the project. Useful advice had been received from a parishioner with expertise in the design/project management of sports facilities and this would guide the next stages. A further meeting involving representatives from all the main user groups was to be scheduled after the Xmas/New Year.

**89.2 Ashwell and Morden Station/update** on the 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 the proposed new section of path was intended to link up with the existing and complete the route from the village to the station. He cautioned that no details of the proposals had yet been published by South Cambridgeshire District Council, the relevant planning authority.

**89.3 Village hall/update** on the transfer to the Parish Council of the holding (or custodian) trusteeship. (*see previous minutes including February Council 2018, minute 98.1 for details*). The Chairman reported that no further communication had been received from the solicitor despite regular requests. It was agreed that the Parish Council's disappointment with the service be conveyed to them.

**89.4 Henry Colbron Trust/land** between Gardiners Lane and Rollys Lane. Nothing further to report. *See also 93.2 (Recreation ground) below.*

**89.5 Luton Airport consultation on proposals for expansion.** The Chairman thanked the parishioner who had attended the consultation exhibition in Letchworth and supplied further information. It was agreed to encourage parishioners to respond by the deadline (16<sup>th</sup> December) and to remain alert for any further consultations or announcements, particularly from NATS.

**89.6 Items raised by parish councillors.**

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

(i) Museum. Cllr Martin Hoffman (Chairman of the trustees in his own right) reported that a special opening session was to take place this coming Sunday to celebrate the completion of the building works. He reiterated the successful achievement, and timescale, of the project.

*See also 91.4 (valued trees) below.*

**89.7 Matters re other authorities and organisations.**

**89.7.1 North Herts District Council (NHDC)**

District Councillor Tom Tyson reported the following:

(i) Parking restrictions outside the school. Additional visits by the Enforcement Officer had taken place; he was not aware whether any penalty notices had been issued. It was agreed that the presence of a uniformed

officer was a good deterrent and the view was expressed that fewer drivers were parking on the yellow lines.

*See also item 94 below re Planning matters.*

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

County Councillor Steve Jarvis reported the following:

- (i) Drainage. The problems at the junction of the High Street and Wilsons Lane continued to be investigated.
- (ii) Taxibus/202 service to the station. Following receipt of information that passenger numbers had fallen he had consulted the representative of the users. She had confirmed the declining use and possible reasons for this, ie trains not running to time, bus times not suitable, legacy of the chaos surrounding the last timetable changes. Concerns remained as to whether HCC would continue to support the service. The possibility of linking with Cambridgeshire services was being investigated.

Cllr Graham Lee requested information on the following:

- (i) Resurfacing of Hinxworth High Street. This was scheduled for this financial year.
- (ii) Installation of the restricted parking spaces outside retailers. This would be chased again.

*See also 90.1 (A505 safety) and 94.1.12 (footway in Station Road) below.*

### **90. Items raised by parishioners.**

**90.1** A505 safety concerns. A parishioner reported that two further accidents had taken place at junctions this week. County Councillor Steve Jarvis responded that he was aware (*see also November Council, minute. 79.7.2*).

**90.2** The Big Climate Fightback/request from a parishioner for support. The Chairman reported that to date no further information had been received.

*See also 91.4 (tree working group), 94.2 (Claybush development) below.*

### **91. Working Groups reports.**

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

**91.1 Neighbourhood Plan Group** (leader Cllr Graham Lee, deputy Cllr Norton Mahy) Cllr Graham Lee reported that following input from the consultant, he and Cllr Mahy were scheduled to meet to incorporate amendments from her and from group members. The next draft would come back to parish councillors before despatch to NHDC. The plan was on track to go to NHDC by the end of March. A further grant application to fund the next stage would be progressed. Registration of Community Assets was being investigated by the group.

**91.2 Yearbook Group** (leader Cllr Norton Mahy) Cllr Norton Mahy reported that the editor, Cliff Jenkinson, was quite pleased with the current status.

**91.3 Local business support** (leader Cllr Graham Lee) *See 89.7.2 (parking spaces) above and 92.1 (village map) below.*

**91.4 Protection of valued trees** (leader Cllr David Sims) Cllr David Sims proposed membership of the Woodland Trust; this was agreed.

*See also 93.5 (Small Gains) and 94.2 (Claybush development) below.*

*See 93.4 below re the Springs volunteer working group and 89.1 above re the New Pavilion Project.*

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*Standing orders reinstated from here.*

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

**92.1** New village map. Cllr Graham Lee reported that a quote had been received from the new supplier identified.

It was *resolved* that the quote be accepted.

**Action: Deputy Clerk**

### **93. PREMISES MANAGEMENT REPORTS**

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

**93.1 Cemetery.** Nothing to report.

**93.2 Recreation Ground including the pavilion and public toilets.** (Responsible: Cllrs Mark White and Gemma Allan) Cllr Gemma Allan reported that consultation with teenagers re new equipment was ongoing. Plans would then be finalised with a view to making a bid to the Henry Colbron Trust in the spring or autumn of next year.

*See also item 89.1 (new pavilion) above.*

**93.3 Playground.** (Responsible: Cllr Gemma Allan) *See 93.2 above.*

**93.4 The Springs.** (Responsible: Cllr Martin Hoffman) Cllr Martin Hoffman reported:

(i) A small number of volunteers had attended the working group; good work had been achieved.

(ii) The latest update of the Drought Management Plan from Affinity Water had been published as was required by law. Again, Ashwell Springs had been specifically mentioned and, unlike other chalk streams in Hertfordshire, had been specifically excluded from plans for additional extraction by water companies in times of drought. This was due to the SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) designation to protect the ice-age worms and was in addition to the statutory requirement to maintain the water flows that were regularly monitored by the Environment Agency.

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

(Responsible: Cllr David Sims)

(i) Cllr David Sims reported that he had identified a suitable location to plant a few trees and maybe some hedging. It was agreed that he progress this. *See also 90.2 and 91.4 below.*

(ii) Allotments. It was **resolved** that the meeting be closed to the public for an in camera session on the grounds that this item included sensitive matters. This item was taken at the end of the meeting.

*Standing Order item 62. That in view of the special nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw.*

**93.6 The Lock Up.** (Responsible: Cllr Norton Mahy) It was reported that the new sign had been delivered and would be installed once the fixing had been organised.

**93.7 Merchant Taylors' Green.** (Responsible: Cllr Martin Hoffman) It was reported that the refurbished seat plaque had been delivered and was pending installation.

**93.8 Carters' Pond.** (Responsible: Cllr Martin Hoffman) Nothing to report.

**93.9 Street furniture.** The Chairman proposed that the litter bins be reviewed as per the agreement to replace the round, open bins with the square, lidded design. This was agreed.

**Action: Clerk/Deputy Clerk**

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

Nothing to report.

**93.11 Parish Clock.** (Responsible: Cllr Mark White) Nothing to report.

**93.12 War Memorial.** Nothing to report.

## **94. PLANNING MATTERS**

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

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

**94.1.1 The Old Rectory, Hodwell.** NHDC Case Ref. 19/02374/FPH and 19/02375/LBC.

Full Permission Householder (and Listed Building Consent): First floor and single storey side extensions. Conversion of existing garage to store/playroom following the removal of garage door and the insertion of two front and one side windows. Erection of detached double opened bay garage with storage area.

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**

**94.1.2 Land at the junction of Ashwell Street and Station Road.** NHDC Case Ref.19/02691/S73.

Section 73 Application: 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 (Section 73 application, variation of condition 8 - footway).

It was noted that objections to the removal of the hedge and tree had been received from parishioners.

It was noted that information had been sought from Highways, via County Councillor Steve Jarvis, as to whether it would be possible to retain the hedge and the tree as well as installing the new length of

footway. Following discussion it was agreed that retention of the hedge and the Ash tree was essential. An alternative option to install the new footway inside the existing hedge and tree was proposed.

It was **resolved**, (i) that a response be made to the Planning Officer that retention of the hedge and tree was essential and ways to achieve this and install the new footway be sought, (ii) to request District Councillor Tom Tyson to discuss options with the Planning Officer and to call in the application if this was necessary.

**Action: Clerk**

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

*(See also planning summary below and October Council, 74.2)*

**94.2.1** The letter sent to NHDC by local residents expressing their concerns re pedestrian safety at the junction of Claybush Road and the new vehicular access road to the site and re the access to the public open space was noted.

Concerns re the lack of clarity re the public open space, particularly the access to it, were discussed.

It was **resolved** that information be sought from the Planning Officer.

**Action: Clerk**

Cllr Graham Lee reported on the concerns raised with the NHDC Planning Officer by local residents re drainage and the SUDS system required to be installed as part of the planning permission. The response that they had received from the HCC Head of Environmental Resource Planning was noted. Residents to the north of the site remained concerned re the flooding risk to their properties.

It was **resolved** to write to the NHDC Planning Officer requesting clarification as to the standards required to meet the statutory requirements for the risk of flooding events, ie whether this was for one in 30 year or one in 100 year events, and whether these were met by the specifications for this development.

**Action: Clerk**

**94.2.2** Proposed TPO (Tree Preservation Order) application to cover all trees on the site. Requests to various organisations for information and support was ongoing prior to drafting of the submission to NHDC.

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

Verge between the site roadway and Ashwell Street. The further 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. The HCC Land Management Services Officer was to prepare a works specification. An action plan and funding were still to be determined.

#### **94.4 Trees in the Conservation Area and Tree Preservation Orders.**

*(See 91.4, 94.1.2 and 94.2)*

### **95. FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE MATTERS**

#### **95.1 Monthly summary of accounts.** *(See appendix below).*

Proposal for approval.

It was **resolved** that this be approved.

#### **95.2 Budget for 2020-21.**

**95.2.1** The proposals following discussion at the committee meeting held on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> October and the information provided by NHDC on the figures to be used for the calculation of Council Tax in 2020-21 were noted.

**95.2.2** Proposal to accept the draft of the budget for 2020-21.

It was **resolved** that the proposal be accepted.

**Action: Clerk/Deputy Clerk**

**95.2.3** Proposal that the Parish Precept for 2020-21 be set at £81,000 and, assuming there were no further changes to the figures supplied by NHDC, the required information to be supplied to them by the January deadline.

It was **resolved** that the proposal be accepted.

**Action: Clerk/Deputy Clerk**

**95.3 Local Government Pension Scheme/proposal from HCC for ill-health retirement liability insurance.** It was noted that fuller information was pending from HAPTC and SLCC. It was agreed that the Chairman and Cllr Graham Lee progress anything further required at this stage.

**Meeting closed 9.20pm**

#### **Forthcoming meeting dates:**

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

## Appendix: Summary of recent planning consultations as of 4<sup>th</sup> December 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).

Address	Application Number	Brief description	Ashwell PC Comments	North Herts Decision
The Old Rectory, Hodwell	19/02374/FPH and 19/02375/LBC	First floor and single storey side extensions. Conversion of existing garage to store/playroom following the removal of garage door and the insertion of two front and one side windows. Erection of detached double opened bay garage with storage area.	PC Decision sent to NHDC (December Council): recommendation that permission be granted	Pending
Land at the junction of Ashwell Street and Station Road.	19/02691/S73	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 (Section 73 application, variation of condition 8 - footway).	PC Decision sent to NHDC (December Council -see minute 94.1.2): recommendation that permission be refused and further communication with the Planning Officer.	Pending
51b High Street	19/02306/FPH	Air Source Heat Pump within 1 m of boundary	See minutes PC November Council meeting.	Permission Granted
48 Station Road	19/02427/FP	Single storey rear extension after demolition of conservatory/outbuildings	PC Decision sent to NHDC (November Council): recommendation that variations be approved	Permission Granted
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 (November Council): recommendation that variations be approved	Pending
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)	Planning Committee Wed 3rd July PC Decision sent to NHDC: recommendation that variations be approved	Pending

## Appendix: Monthly accounts summary

ACCOUNTS - Summary for 01/11/2019 - 30/11/2019			
<b>RECEIPTS</b>			£
64	Nevilles Funeral Services	Rent for Chapel of Rest (November)	68.75
65	Nevilles Funeral Services	Payment for part of CW 19.19	265.00
66	Santander Interest Reserve Account	Interest Reserve Account 1/11/19	6.14
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>339.89</b>
<b>PAYMENTS</b>			
157	EON	Electricity for Pavilion (10/11/19)	65.12
158	EON	Electricity for Toilets (5/11/19)	8.62
159	BT	Phone and broadband (inc line and a/c changes)	195.60
160	NHDC	Waste collection - streets support (1/10/19)	110.50
161	Clerk	Clerk's salary	1,300.82
162	Deputy Clerk	Deputy Clerk's Salary	793.73
163	HCC Pensions-LGPS Account,	Clerk & Deputy Clerk Pension to LGPS	723.78
164	Grounds Officer	Grounds Officer salary	165.00
165	ECO	Environmental Cleansing Officer salary	225.60
166	HMRC accounts	tax&NI to Inland Revenue	426.33
167	Ashwell Housing Association	PC office rent Nov-Apr	450.00
168	Duo Design	Website Hosting 01/11/2019 inv	30.00
169	Arena Stationers	Office Stationery Supplies	102.00
170	Brilliant Lawns	Rec pitches/fertiliser and cut - 3/10/19 & 24/10/19 inv 6931	474.00
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>5,071.10</b>
<b>MONEY AT BANK</b>			
			Current Account 30/11/2019
			<b>£39,504.25</b>
			Reserve Account 30/11/2019
			<b>£20,651.52</b>