

**Minutes of the Ashwell Parish Council meeting
held on Wednesday 9th January 2019 in the Parish Room**

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

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

Members of the public: Three. One parishioner, Mr Sam Wallace as Chairman of the Village Hall Trustees, and County Councillor Steve Jarvis.

92. Apologies for absence Cllr Bridget Macey (unwell).

93. Declarations of Interest

Item 95.3.1 Cllr Martin Hoffman: Trustee of the Village Hall (non-pecuniary).

Items 99.3 and 99.6.2 Cllr Graham Lee: Resident of Ashwell Street (non-pecuniary).

Item 99.4 Cllr Martin Hoffman: Next door neighbour to site.

94. Minutes of previous meetings

Proposal for approval and signature of the minutes of the Council meeting held on 5th December 2018.

It was resolved that these be approved and signed.

Action: MNW

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

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

95.1 Annual Parish Meeting. The date, Wednesday 27th March, 8pm at the School, was noted

95.2 Election of a new Parish Council for 2019-2023, Thursday 2nd May. It was noted that the formal timetable had been published by NHDC as the Electoral Authority. It was noted that the Deputy Clerk had attended a relevant training course with material from HAPTC and SLCC that could be used. It was agreed that publicity be progressed and that individual parish councillors should encourage residents to get involved and to emphasize the importance of the Parish Council to the village.

Action: Clerk/Deputy Clerk

95.3 Items raised by parish councillors

95.3.1 Village Hall/letter from the Chairman of the trustees requesting that the Parish Council take over the role of trustee (see February Council 2018, minute 98.1 for details). Mr Sam Wallace, Chairman of the Village Hall Trustees, reported that good information applicable to the Ashwell situation was available from ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England) and he suggested that their advice be followed. It was noted that templates for Terms of Reference were also available and the Clerk to the Management Committee was progressing these. It was noted that the Parish Council had agreed in principal to taking on the trusteeship but wanted to move forward cautiously to ensure that all parties were kept in the loop and all matters covered satisfactorily, particularly those with financial implications. It was agreed that a solicitor should be employed to finalise the matter. Mr Wallace reported that the Trustees would be happy to be approached re the costs of this. It was agreed that the matter continue to be progressed and that a full report be made to the Annual Parish Meeting in March.

Action: Clerk/Deputy Clerk

95.3.2 Volunteers social event. Cllr Madeleine Legg reported on arrangements.

95.4 Items from other organisations/bodies

95.4.1 Parish Tree Warden scheme operated by South Cambridgeshire. Cllr David Sims reported that he had requested further information. It was noted that the January Village News item from the Parish Council had included a request for a volunteer(s) to progress similar in Ashwell. A potential volunteer had been identified and would be contacted.

Action: Clerk/Deputy Clerk

95.4.2 At Home 2019/Creative Ashwell theme and their plans for a community quilt. It was noted that the Parish Council's section of material and further information had been received. It was agreed that Cllr Madeleine Legg and the Deputy Clerk discuss and progress the matter.

Action: MFL/Deputy Clerk

95.4.3 Arbury Banks. The latest newsletter received from the organisers of the Beacons of the Past -Hillforts project was noted and commended. Cllr David Short reported that he had applied to attend some of the training courses.

95.4.4 Taxibus service to the station (see previous minute November Council 74.2.3).

County Councillor Steve Jarvis reported that tenders had been received by the County Council for a new agreement when the current, temporary license ended in March.

95.4.5 County Councillor Steve Jarvis/Highways matters. Cllr Jarvis reported that speed and volume data for the proposed 20mph zone was being analysed, data from the Station Road SID had been requested. A request to reverse the SID in Newnham Way to monitor traffic in the other direction was agreed. Safety proposals for the narrow section of West End would be progressed in the 2019-20 Highways Locality Budget. Further information on the junction protection (yellow lines) and waiting restrictions (timed spaces outside retail outlets) was due shortly.

It was agreed that a date be agreed for the next liaison meeting to receive updates on other items including the Silver Street pinch point, West End safety and Station Road safety proposals. Cllr David Sims reported that the fault with the street lighting to the chicane in Station Road had been repaired. Herts Highways works to remove overhanging vegetation opposite the garage in Station Road was commended.

95.5 Items from parishioners None to report.

Standing Orders reinstated.

96. Matters of general report from previous meetings. None not covered by other agenda items.

97. Parish management reports (current responsibilities shown in brackets)

97.1 Cemetery (Cllr Madeleine Legg)

Cllr Madeleine Legg reported the following:

(i) Chapel of Rest/new tenancy agreement with Neville Funeral Services. There had been further correspondence with the Parish Council's solicitor, Curwens. A meeting with the tenant was scheduled for 23rd January. (ii) Cemetery boundary fencing. Following a request from a neighbour a site meeting had been scheduled for Sunday 13th January.

97.2 Recreation Ground including the Pavilion and Public Toilets

(Cllrs Mark White and Madeleine Legg) Cllr Madeleine Legg reported the following:

(i) There had been several further incidents of bagged dog waste left on the cricket square. She had drafted an item for the Village News appealing for information. (ii) Arrangements to dispose of the rubbish at the rear of the pavilion were in hand. (iii) New arrangements for maintenance tasks at the pavilion were being discussed. (iv) A site meeting was to be scheduled with a potential supplier to discuss possible plans for new toilet facilities.

Action: Clerk/Deputy Clerk

97.3 Playground (Cllr Madeleine Legg) Cllr Madeleine Legg reported the following:

(i) Minor works agreed following the RoSPA report would be progressed when the weather was better. (ii) A preliminary sketch for new equipment and changes to the skateboard area had been received following the site meeting with a potential supplier. Full design proposals and quotes were to follow.

97.4 The Springs (Cllr Martin Hoffman) Cllr Martin Hoffman reported the following:

(i) Minor works agreed following the RoSPA report would be progressed pending quotes from the supplier. (ii) Volunteer working parties in December had done good work. (iii) Lower flow rates had been reported by the Environment Agency in December and they had been requested to give the reasons for this. A comprehensive response had been received including confirmation that they had ensured Affinity Water complied with its obligations under the extraction license. The terms of this ensured that flow rates were maintained at a sufficient level for the survival of the ice-age worms, the main reason for the SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) designation.

97.5 Small Gains (Allotments, Accies sports field and shared car parking area) (Cllr David Sims)

Cllr David Sims thanked the Accies for their co-operation in reversing the goals when not in use to prevent damage to the allotments. However, there was a group of teenagers who persisted in moving the goals and there had been a few incidents of damage to plots.

97.6 The Lock Up (Cllr David Short) Nothing to report.

97.7 Merchant Taylors' Green and Carters' Pond (Cllr Martin Hoffman)

See 100.1 below re the claim from Planning Contribution funds held by NHDC.

97.8 Street furniture (Cllr Bridget Macey) The following was reported:

(i) Damage to a litter bin in the High Street was scheduled for repair. (ii) A further incident of bagged trade waste put into a litter bin had occurred. (iii) Works to remove soil from around the base of the bin, to prevent rot, on the corner of Ashwell Street and Station Road was scheduled. (iv) The new footpath map had been installed on the wall in the High Street.

97.9 St Mary's Churchyard grounds maintenance (Cllr Martin Hoffman)

Cllr Martin Hoffman reported that the boundary wall in Mill Street was to be discussed again with the PC representatives.

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

97.11 War Memorial It was noted that the replacement of the hedge was pending receipt of quotes from the supplier; this had again been chased.

98. Items re other authorities/organisations;

98.1 Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) See 95.4.4 and 95.4.5 above.

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

99. 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.

99.1 New consultations on applications received from NHDC

(See also appendix with summary table below).

99.1.1 NHDC Case Ref No. 18/03208/FPH. 11 Fordham Close.

Full Permission Householder: Single storey rear infill extension and single storey side extension.

It was **resolved** that a recommendation for permission to be granted be sent to the Planning Officer.

Action: Clerk/Deputy Clerk

99.1.2 NHDC Case Ref No. 18/03132/FPH. 35 Ashwell Street.

Full Permission Householder: Two storey side and rear extension. Changes to fenestration including removal of existing front dormer windows and replaced with roof-light windows, removal of front bay window and replaced with flat glazed screen. External wall finish to be changed from brickwork to render.

It was **resolved** that a recommendation for permission to be granted be sent to the Planning Officer.

Action: Clerk/Deputy Clerk

99.2 NHDC Case Ref No: 16/01797/1. Land rear of Claybush Road/ Flood risk on the proposed site.

It was noted that, following the meeting on Tuesday 4th December with various parties at NHDC, further reports would be made to the February Council meeting. John Rumble, Head of Environmental Resource Planning, HCC, and Parishioner Duncan Wardrop were to attend.

(See also 99.6 below)

99.3 Development at the Cooke Engineering site.

The correspondence following the Parish Council's letter to the developer expressing concerns, and requesting action, re the poor state of the site in particular the adjacent Highways verge and the Right of Way was noted. The NHDC Planning Officer, the HCC Development Officer and the HCC Countryside Access Officer had all been supportive of the Parish Council's concerns and had directly contacted the developer to request action.

99.4 NHDC Case Ref No: 17/01634/1. 1 Newnham Way.

The further correspondence was noted, (i) with the NHDC Planning Officer and Herts Building Control re the planning requirements for the height of the new house now that the build process had commenced, and (ii) with the HCC Countryside Access Officer re the line of the boundary with the adjacent right of way (Partridge Hill) and the concerns that vegetation had been removed from the Highways verge. It was understood that the Planning Officer had contacted the applicant to underline the requirement to meet the conditions of the planning permission re the height of the house. It was agreed that the situation re the

Highways verge would be reviewed once the build process had progressed and any re-planting scheduled for the autumn/winter planting season.

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

TCA submissions made by residents to NHDC for tree works at The Stables, Mill Street and 89 Back Street were noted.

(See also item 95.4.1 above)

99.6 Local Plan Examination.

99.6.1 The amendments to the draft plan requested by the Inspector following the Public Examination were noted. The required public consultation on these would run from 3rd January to 14th February.

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

It was agreed that Cllr David Short and the Clerk draft a response.

Action: Clerk/CDS

99.6.2 The response from the Inspector following the Parish Council's further challenge to the data used by NHDC as evidence for the sustainability of development proposals re site AS1/Claybush Hill was noted. He was unable to accept any further representations in relation to the previous consultation.

(See also 99.2 above)

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

It was noted that a letter had been received from the agent acting for Beck Homes Ltd. This had informed; (i) Their intention to contest, through the High Court, the dismissal of the appeal by the Planning Inspector against the NHDC decision to refuse planning permission. (ii) Their proposal to send a questionnaire to local residents and representatives of sports clubs to ascertain their views on the plans and possible amendments. The agent requested whether the Parish Council wished to participate in this exercise. The possibility of a revised plan with a reduced number of houses was also raised.

It was noted that the parishioner surveys conducted as part of the Neighbourhood Plan had shown clear support for improved sports facilities and the working group had progressed discussions with landowners re potential sites.

Following discussion a proposal was made; (i) The Parish Council did not wish to participate in the developer's proposed questionnaire as this might form part of a pre-application process. (ii) The Parish Council would be pleased to engage with the developer and to hear their proposals for possible revisions to the plans. The Chairman would act as the representative for this.

It was *resolved* that the proposal be accepted.

Action: Clerk/MNW

100. Reports re Finance matters

100.1 Planning Contributions/Section 106 claims to NHDC.

It was noted that a response was still pending to the claim made in August for release of funds for a litter bin for Carters Pond.

100.2 Proposal for approval of monthly summary of accounts and bills for payment.

It was *resolved* that the proposal be accepted.

Action: Clerk/Deputy Clerk

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

Nothing to report.

102. Reports from working groups

102.1 Neighbourhood Plan Group (leader Cllr David Short, Cllrs Graham Lee and Madeleine Legg)

Cllr David Short reported on the latest meeting of the group; notes had been distributed. The meeting had been attended by Alison Eardley, a planning consultant, who had analysed the survey responses for the Parish Council. He proposed that she be employed to take the plan forward on the grounds that expert input was required; this was beyond the abilities of the volunteers involved. The costs of employing her could be met by an application for grant funding; she would be able to progress a bid and would thus be cost neutral to the Parish Council. It was agreed that full details be circulated for consideration.

102.2 Website (leader Cllr Graham Lee) Cllr Graham Lee reported that more sign-ups had been received. Additional material would be added to the site as resources were available.

102.3 Yearbook Group (leader Cllr David Short) Cllr David Short reported that the final copy deadline was this week. The advert sales by the Deputy Clerk had been good and this edition was expected to break

even. Distribution was again scheduled for early March and he would be seeking volunteers for village deliveries.

102.4 Local business support (leader Cllr Graham Lee) (*See 95.4.5 above re proposals for restricted time parking spaces outside retail premises*)

Meeting closed 9.30pm

Forthcoming meeting dates:

February Council meeting, Wednesday 6th 8.00pm in the Parish Room.

Annual Parish Meeting, Wednesday 27th March 8pm at the School

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 Applications received from NHDC (as of 9th January 2019)				
Address	Application Number	Brief description	Ashwell PC Comments	North Herts Decision
35 Ashwell Street	18/03132/FPH	Two storey side and rear extension. Changes to fenestration including removal of existing front dormer windows and replaced with rooflight windows, removal of front bay window and replaced with flat glazed screen. External wall finish to be changed from brickwork to render.	PC Decision sent to NHDC: recommendation that permission be GRANTED	Pending
11 Fordham Close		Single storey rear infill extension and single storey side extension	PC Decision sent to NHDC: recommendation that permission be GRANTED	Pending
Ashwell End Farm, Loves Lane	18/02549/FP	Construction of an all weather menage within existing small fenced paddock with associated landscaping.	PC Decision sent to NHDC: recommendation to ACCEPT on assumption that archaeological investigations undertaken	Permission granted
10 Newnham Way	18/02378/FPH	Two storey side extensions, 1&2 storey rear extension, demolition of lean-to side extension & single garage. Amended plans received 05/12/2018	PC Decision sent to NHDC: recommendation to ACCEPT amended plans	Permission granted
90 High Street	18/02250/FPH	Single storey rear extension.	PC Decision sent to NHDC: recommendation to REFUSE	Permission granted
Land at the junction of Ashwell Street and Station Rd	18/01874/FP	Erection of 9 new dwellings with associated parking, amenity space & associated ancillary works, following demolition of redundant structures. Creation of new access from Station Rd.	PC Decision sent to NHDC: recommendation to REFUSE	WITHDRAWN by applicant
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 to REFUSE	Pending

Appendix 3 - Monthly accounts summary

ACCOUNTS & BILLS FOR PAYMENT - summary for January Council 2019			
RECEIPTS			£
69	Neville of Luton	Cemetery chapel rent (Dec)	68.75
70	Neville of Luton	Cemetery chapel rent Jan)	68.75
71	Santander	Monthly interest account (01 Dec)	8.79
72	Santander	Monthly interest account (01 Jan)	9.09
73	Rhubarb & Mustard	Yearbook sales 2018 edition	22.00
Total receipts			177.38
PAYMENTS			
Items paid by Direct Debit and by bank transfer to employees and regular suppliers/agreed quotes			
208	EON	electricity public toilets	8.36
209	Mrs J Porter	Clerk's salary	1,266.43
210	Mrs L Brooks-Payne	Deputy Clerk's Salary	746.64
211	HCC Pensions-LGPS Account,	Clerk & Deputy Clerk Pension	660.76
212	Mr M Chandler	Grounds Officer salary	142.80
213	Mr A Beddall	Environmental Cleansing Officer salary	225.60
214	HMRC accounts ref 321PF00003624	tax&NI to Inland Revenue	400.21
215	Gearing Locksmith	emergency access to office	78.00
216	NHDC	dog waste bin emptying 01/04/18 to 31/03/19	1,126.44
217	Herts Computer Services	IT support	60.00
218	Alison Eardley	Neighbourhood Plan regulation 4 analysis	480.00
219	Duo Design	Neighbourhood Plan website for statutory consultees	864.00
220	Duo Design	Website monthly fee	30.00
221	C E Metcalfe	Public toilets cleaning and consumables	190.00
Items to be paid by bank transfer following Parish Council's approval			
Total payments			6,279.24
MONEY AT BANK			
			Current Account (07/01/19)
			Reserve Account (03/01/19)
			17,032.32
			30,583.08