



Ashwell Parish Council

Chairman: Graham Lee (☎ 743126)
Office at Bear Farm, 6A Back Street (☎ 743706)
Clerk: Jane Porter, Deputy Clerk: Laura Brooks-Payne
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**Minutes of the monthly Parish Council meeting
held on Wednesday 7th July 2021 at 6.30pm.**

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

Also in attendance: Clerk (Jane Porter), Deputy Clerk (Laura Brooks-Payne). District Councillor Tom Tyson, County Councillor Steve Jarvis. Two members of the public also joined the meeting.

Members of the public who were signed up to the website (www.ashwell.gov.uk) were invited to join the meeting using Zoom. A link with log in details was emailed to them and any others who requested.

18. Apologies for absence. None.

19. Declarations of Interest. None.

20. Proposal to approve and sign the minutes of the Council meeting held on 2nd June 2021.

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

Action: Graham/Clerk

21. OPEN FORUM - VILLAGE AFFAIRS, REPORTS FROM OTHER BODIES, ETC

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

21.1 Items raised by members of the public.

Including reports received earlier and any matters raised at the meeting.

21.1.1 Ashwell Surgery. A parishioner reported that they had been unable to book a face-to-face appointment at the Ashwell premises. She was also aware of others who were having to travel to Bassingbourn, some who had no access to their own transport. The Chairman, Graham Lee, reported that the Parish Council was continuing to engage with the Surgery, alongside the Ashwell Patients Group, over this and other issues. He was aware that post-Covid arrangements were to be put in place but not when this was likely to happen. A new practice manager had been appointed and a meeting with her had been scheduled for early September once she was in position. The Chairman stressed that this matter was 'high on the agenda' but it was outside of the Parish Council's control.

21.1.2 30mph limit in Claybush Road. A parishioner reported their concerns re the position of the signage. County Councillor Steve Jarvis responded that Highways had now decided that there was to be no requirement to move the 30mph restriction further up the hill in the light of the new housing development; it was to stay in the previous location. He was aware of some issues with signage and was scheduled to take this up with the Highways officer.

21.1.3 30mph limit signage in Station Road. A parishioner reported their concerns that the fallen signage had still not been replaced; if prompt action had been taken, rather than it laying in the field, part of the unit could probably have been reused and costs reduced. County Councillor Steve Jarvis responded that he was sympathetic to this view and was pursuing the matter.

21.1.4 Greening Ashwell group. It was noted that a number of parishioners had expressed their concerns in relation to various actions by the lead member of the group including a letter that had been sent to some local residents. Further concerns were also expressed to the meeting. It was agreed that the Parish Council would discuss the matter at an *in camera* session as there was sensitive information involved (*see agenda item 26 below*). All were of the view that it was important to find a solution to the current problems and that the Parish Council remained fully supportive of the objectives of the group.

Chairman's Signature.....Date.....

21.2 North Herts District Council (NHDC). Reports/updates from our District Councillor Tom Tyson.

See also item 24 re Planning below.

(i) New footway adjacent to the x9 new houses at Townsend Meadow, Station Road. He had again been in contact with the Planning Officer who had confirmed the requirement for the developer to adhere to the planning condition. Following a question from parish councillor David Sims he confirmed that the width, 1.5 metres, had been defined to ensure protection of the existing boundary hedge that was required to be retained.

(ii) Claybush Hill development/Condition 24 pedestrian access. He had chased this up with the Planning Officer who had passed on his questions to the developer. There was a requirement for the works to the surface to make it both safe and durable; also queries re signage and lighting.

(iii) Neighbourhood Plan/appointment of Inspector. He was waiting for response from the NHDC officer re this.

(iv) Baldock & District Committee grants to community groups. Two grants had been awarded to village organisations - Greening Ashwell and the Playgroup.

(v) On demand bus service proposals. Following the receipt of a number of questions from the Chairman, Graham Lee, he had taken these up with the NHDC Transport Officer. County Councillor Steve Jarvis reported that he was to attend a meeting on this next week. It was likely that existing bus stops would be used for pick-up/drop-off points but he welcomed suggestions for any other locations, eg Loves Lane junction with the Hinxworth Road.

(vi) New playground equipment proposals. Parish councillor Gemma Allan reported on her communications with the Henry Colbron Trust for funding; evidence of any other funding sources would enhance an application to the trust. He agreed to look into this. County Councillor Steve Jarvis reported that he would look favourably on a request to his county councillors' fund.

21.3 Hertfordshire County Council (HCC). Reports/updates from our County Councillor Steve Jarvis.

(i) Station Road pedestrian safety improvements. No further information had been received from Highways and he would chase this up.

(ii) Additional yellow lines. All the regulatory orders for these were being progressed. The lines for Silver Street had been slightly reduced to address the concerns of a resident. Previous experience was that parked cars would be an issue for getting them painted.

(iii) West End chicane. Works were scheduled for the 26th July but an issue with a driveway had been raised by the safety team that might cause this to be changed.

See also 21.2 (v) and (vi) above.

21.4 Any items from parish councillors.

21.4.1 Henry Colbron Trust/New playground equipment proposals. *(See also 21.2 (vi) above)*

Parish councillor Gemma Allan requested that some funding from the Parish Council's budget be considered as well as the bid to the trust. It was noted that the school was the primary beneficiary of the trust and particularly in current circumstances was much in need of access to the trust's funding. It was agreed that this be taken into consideration during discussions. The Clerk was requested to provide figures to enable this.

Action: Clerk

End of Open Forum/Standing Orders to be reinstated from here.

22. Working Groups reports.

22.1 Neighbourhood Plan Group, (leader Cllr Graham Lee, deputy Cllr Norton Mahy).

The Chairman reported that a response from NHDC re the Inspector appointment was awaited.

Yearbook Group (leader Cllr Norton Mahy). Norton Mahy reported that the group was to meet in

September to begin work on the next edition. An item was to appear in the Village News requesting

information for any obituaries or anniversaries. The Deputy Clerk reported that all income from adverts in the 2021 edition had now been received. It was agreed that the payment made to recognise the design work be repeated for the 2022 edition.

23. Monthly reports from parish councillors.

*See appendices below for summary of actions completed, actions ongoing and premises matters.
Also reports received from other organisations.*

23.1 Pedestrian safety on the Ruddy and prioritization of non-vehicular users. The Chairman reported on his meeting with the HCC rights of way officer and County Councillor Steve Jarvis (the Clerk was also present). The rights of way officer had expressed their support for the objective and agreed to work towards the submission of a regulation order to achieve this. Local information and documents to support this had been provided. All access rights would be maintained and a public consultation with local landowners would be included.

23.2 The Springs. Parish councillor Martin Hoffman reported that a tenant of a neighbouring house had raised their concern re a tree branch that had fallen into their garden. A site visit had taken place and the resident spoken to. It was believed that the tree was not within the ownership boundary of the Springs and maps/plans were being consulted to support this view. It was agreed that the property landowner be written to with copies of relevant documents. Proposals put forward last year to improve the boundary fencing at this point would then be progressed. **Action: Clerk**

24. Planning matters.

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

24.1 New consultations from NHDC.

24.1.1 40 High Street.

NHDC Ref no. 21/01835/FPH. Full Permission Householder: Re-render gable and chimney.

NHDC Ref no. 21/01836/LBC. Listed Building Consent: Remove cement render to chimney stack and gable end; remove paint finishes to brick; replace defective bricks; remove masonry parapet; repoint as required; remove flaunching and brick to chimney top and repair creasing tiles; install lead drip and reinstate brick and flaunching to chimney top; re-render gable and chimney; redecorate brickwork and exterior joinery. It was noted that no concerns had been received and, as of today, no objections had been posted on the NHDC website.

It was **resolved** that the response to NHDC should be 'no objections'.

Action: Deputy Clerk

24.1.2 Land East Of 35, Ashwell Street. NHDC Ref no. 21/01825/FP

Full Planning Permission: Erection of one detached 4-bed dwelling (revision of previously approved planning application 20/01712/FP granted 28.09.2020).

It was noted that a Planning Committee site meeting was held re this item -see separate minutes in addition to below.

A proposal was made to object on the following grounds:

The effort made to achieve a design that would minimise the impact on the surrounding properties was recognised. However, the existing permission for a 2-bed dwelling fitted the housing needs of the village as demonstrated by the Neighbourhood Plan and housing need surveys whilst a 4-bed dwelling did not.

It was **resolved** to object to the application on the grounds stated.

Action: Clerk

24.1.3 Meadow View, Loves Lane. NHDC Ref no. 21/01745/FP

Full Planning Permission: Erection of one detached 2-bed dwelling including creation of new vehicular access off Loves Lane, landscaping and ancillary works.

A proposal was made to object on the following grounds:

The site was outside of the settlement boundary and did not meet a community need. The contribution of one dwelling to address the overall housing supply needs of the District was, on balance, of much less significance. It was thought likely that this would also be the view of the NHDC Planning Officer.

It was **resolved** to object to the application on the grounds stated.

Action: Deputy Clerk

24.2 Trees in the Conservation Area (TCA)/Tree Preservation Orders (TPO).

24.2.1 Westbury House. 21/01915/TCA. Corsican Pine – fell.

The previously expressed objections would be repeated and a request made that NHDC commission an independent tree report.

24.2.2 Silver Street Ash tree. It was noted that HCC had responded to concerns raised by a local resident. Investigations had revealed structural weaknesses and other issues that had led to the tree being felled.

24.3 Updates on previous planning applications/developments ongoing.

24.3.1 Land at the junction of Station Road and Ashwell Street to be called Townsend Meadow. (permission now granted for x9 houses of 4 and 5 bedrooms, see NHDC ref. no. 19/00455/FP and 20/02599/S73).

See 21.2 (i) above re the required additional footway.

24.3.2 Land rear of Claybush Road development to be called Claybush Hill Meadow.

NHDC ref. no. 16/0797/1.

See 21.1.2 above re the 30mph limit.

See 21.2 (ii) above re the Condition 24 pedestrian access.

24.3.4 Dixies Meadow advertisement by Savills Cambridge/‘For Sale -Development opportunity’.

The Chairman reported that the Parish Council gathering of information was ongoing. It was reiterated that a full consultation with the village would be undertaken before any decisions were made.

25. Finance and governance matters.

25.1 Monthly summary of accounts.

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

Action: Deputy Clerk/Graham/Martin

25.2 Annual Audit for the financial year 2020-21.

The following were noted, (i) the report from the Internal Auditor, (ii) the despatch of required documents to the External Auditor, (iii) publicity/exercise of public rights on the notice board and website as required.

26. Greening Ashwell group. (*see also 21.1.4 above*)

It was agreed that a meeting be scheduled to discuss the matter further. This would take place *in camera*, ie with the public excluded, on the grounds that it would include discussion of sensitive matters.

[Standing order 10.i. ‘to exclude the press and public from a meeting in respect of confidential or other information which is prejudicial to the public interest’]

Meeting closed: 7.45pm.

Forthcoming meeting dates:

Next monthly Council meeting - Wednesday 4th August 2021, 8pm.

Appendix A: Parish Council actions ongoing.

(i) Parking issues. The Police and NHDC Enforcement Officers continue to make checks on the yellow lines and restricted parking spaces and will issue penalty notices. The police have also been requested to address any issues re obstruction of private driveways.

(ii) Village hall. The solicitor has provided a draft constitution for consideration by the Village Hall Management trustees to change their status to an Incorporated Charitable Organisation. The transfer of the property title to the Parish Council, who will become the holding/custodian trustee, is to follow this.

(iii) Improved cycleway and carparking at the station/proposals by Cambridgeshire landowner as part of development plans in Odsey. No further communications with the landowner.

Appendix B: Reports/updates on Parish Council premises management.

(i) Small Gains Allotments (Cllr David Sims). There have been several changes of tenancy for this season. All plots are currently let and there is no-one on the waiting list.

(ii) Small Gains sports area (Cllr David Sims). The Accies have initiated a project to improve their facilities; the Parish Council is supportive of this.

(iii) Tree works have been completed at the Springs and the Cemetery. There were some snagging issues at the Recreation Ground and the contractor is to return. The annual professional tree survey for all trees that come within the Parish Council's responsibility is pending.

(iv) Street furniture. Minor repairs to some of the parish-owned litter bins have been carried out. The Parish Council's notice board and the open access 'community' board by the old telephone box in the High Street are scheduled for refurbishment later in the year.

(v) Grounds' maintenance. Extra strimming is being done in St Mary's Churchyard to support the 'Living Churchyards' project in the area next to Hodwell.

(vi) Parish Clock. The annual maintenance service has been carried out and no issues found.

Appendix C: Reports/updates from other organisations.

(i) Greening Ashwell. The Parish Council has asked to be kept updated on the group's activities. Also to be given advance warning of the locations where the group is planning planting/other activities to avoid overlap with other organisations (including the Parish Council's planting plans) and to provide support if needed. See also 26 above.

(ii) Regular local policing update 'Rural News' from our PCSO Chris Braybrook (see under News and Events on www.ashwell.gov.uk).

Appendix D: Summary of recent NHDC Planning Application consultations and their status -as of 7th July 2021

Details of applications are sent from North Herts District Council (NHDC) to the Parish Council as a consultee. Full details of applications are available on the NHDC website www.north-herts.gov.uk

Summary of consultations on recent planning and listed building applications received from NHDC up to 7th July 2021				
Address	Application Number	Brief description	Ashwell PC Comments	North Herts Decision
40 High Street	21/01835/FPH	Repairs to chimney stack and gable end (see also Listed Building Consent 21/01836/LBC)	PC to NHDC: No objection	Pending
35 Ashwell Street		Erection of one 4 bed dwelling (revision of previously approved planning application, 20/01712/FP granted on 28/9/2020)	PC to NHDC: Objection (see July Council minute 24.1.2)	Pending
Meadow View, Loves Lane	21/01745/FP	Erection of one detached 2-bed dwelling including creation of new vehicular access off Loves Lane, landscaping and ancillary works.	PC to NHDC: Objection(see July Council minute 24.1.3)	Pending
59 High Street	21/01063/FPH	Installation of air source heat pump in disused dog kennel	PC to NHDC: No objection	Pending
10 Lucas Lane	21/01434/FPH	Single storey rear extension and insertion of two front dormer windows and three rear roof lights in existing roof slopes to facilitate addition of first floor to existing bungalow following demolition of existing single storey rear extension	PC to NHDC: No objection	NHDC Granted Permission on 5/5/2021
Land OPPOSITE 67 Station Road	21/01025/FP	Erection of 2 semi-detached (1 x 4-bed and 1 x 2 bed) dwell	PC to NHDC: No Objection but comments re; (i) tree retention, (ii) impact on The Ruddery, (iii) Highways comments. See minute 10.1.1 May Council Meeting.	Withdrawn by applicant
Westbury Farm House	20/00734/FPH and 20/00735/LBC	(APPEAL against the refused application) Extension, alterations and internal alterations to garden room between Westbury Moat House and Westbury Farm House.	PC nothing to add (no objections to original application)	NHDC refusal of application. Appeal to the Inspector pending
43 High Street	21/00163/FPH	First floor side extension, canopy over existing door, repoint existing chimney, replace existing side elevation garage roof & replace/widen rear elevation doors, re-render garage. Replace existing rear elevation window on ground & first floor, & first floor side elevation window, re-render rear & side elevation. Replace existing front elevation beech hedge with black metal railings & gates. Widen existing front elevation drive & repave. Widen existing dropped kerb onto High Street.	PC to NHDC: No Objection	Pending

Appendix E: Accounts summary for 01/06/2021 to 30/06/2021

ACCOUNTS - Summary for 1st to 30th June 2021					
RECEIPTS					£
40	Nevilles Funeral Services	Rent for Chapel of Rest (June)			68.75
41	Nevilles Funeral Services	Payment for CW 21.11			140.00
42	Allotment Tenant	Allotment rent for 2021 plot 4a			10.00
43	Santander	Account interest			0.18
				Total	218.93
PAYMENTS			£ less VAT	VAT	£ inc VAT
53	Brilliant Lawns	Grass Cutting on Rec, Inv no 8840	120.00		120.00
54	Edward's Cleaning and Maintenance Services	Toilet Cleaning & Consumables May 2021	201.00		201.00
55	D J Granger Grounds Maintenance Ltd	Grounds Maintenance Worksheet number 7, inv no 21490	479.00	95.80	574.80
56	D J Granger Grounds Maintenance Ltd	Grounds Maintenance Worksheet number 8, inv no 21495	643.00	128.60	771.60
57	D J Granger Grounds Maintenance Ltd	Grounds Maintenance Worksheet number 9, inv no 21540	649.00	129.80	778.80
58	Castle Water	Water Bill for Cemetery Inv No 5653486	35.02		35.02
59	Castle Water	Water Bill for Small Gains Inv No 5644607	46.84		46.84
60	EON	Electricity for Public Toilets for 5/5 -5/6/2021, Inv no	13.03	0.65	13.68
61	Brilliant Lawns	Grass Cutting on Rec, Inv no 8890	120.00		120.00
62	Clerk	Reimbursement, Wickes, Post Office	28.51	1.50	30.01
63	Clerk	Clerk salary	1,395.70		1,395.70
64	Deputy Clerk	Deputy Clerk Salary	850.71		850.71
65	Grounds Officer	Grounds Officer salary	153.60		153.60
66	ECO	Environmental Cleansing Officer salary	236.80		236.80
67	HMRC accounts ref 321PF00003624	tax&NI to Inland Revenue	501.39		501.39
68	HCC Pensions-LGPS Account	Clerk & Deputy Clerk Pension to LGPS	740.66		740.66
69	Edward's Cleaning and Maintenance Services	Toilet Cleaning & Consumables June 2021	180.00		180.00
70	Brilliant Lawns	Grass Cutting on Rec, Inv no 8842	120.00		120.00
71	Wayne Francis	Parish Clock Annual Service	300.00		300.00
		TOTAL	6,814.26	356.35	7,170.61
MONEY AT BANK					
		Current Account 30/06/2021	40,668.31		
		Reserve Account 30/06/2021	20,702.87		