

## Minutes

### Ashwell Parish Council Meeting to be held in the Parish Room on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2026, at 7.00pm

The AGM of Allotment for Exercise & Recreation will be held immediately prior to  
the Parish Council Meeting – **Draft Minutes**

**Present: Councillors:** Graham Lee (Chair), Norton Mahy (Vice-Chair), Cllrs Chris Button, Joan Yates, Max Patterson and Ian Duffy.

**Also in attendance:** Clerk, Sally Roberts, Deputy Clerk, Nicky Forrester, Head of HCC, Steve Jarvis, District Councillor, Tom Tyson and 5 members of the public.

Please click on links for papers issued with agenda and referred to in the minutes. [Meetings Minutes and Agendas.](#)

- 21 **Apologies for absence** To receive and accept apologies for absence. To agree any long-term absence from meetings to comply with the 'six month rule' (Local Government Act 1972). Cllr Sims remains unwell and may not be back to Council for some months. A Dispensation to attend meetings has been granted. Apologies were received from Cllr Hoffman who was unable to attend the meeting and Cllr Sims who is unwell.
- 22 **Interests** a) To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda, b) To receive written requests for dispensations for declarable interests, and c) To grant any requests for dispensation as appropriate. Where any declaration of interest involves the chair, the meeting to agree an alternative individual to take the chair for that item(s). Cllr Lee has an on-going Dispensation to report on Zero Carbon Ashwell. No new interests were declared.
- 23 **Minutes Proposal** to approve draft minutes of the Parish Council meeting on **6<sup>th</sup> May 2026**. It was proposed that the Minutes were passed as a true account of proceedings and resolved that the proposal be accepted. Proposed by Cllr Yates, seconded by Cllr Button, with all councillors in favour.

**Action: Clerk/Chair**

- 24 **Parish Issues and Public Participation** [Protocols for Public Participation in Council Meetings](#)

#### ***Standing Orders to be suspended***

To hear any new matters raised (members of the public and councillors can raise any Parish related matters).

- 24.1 To hear any new matters raised (members of the public and councillors can raise any Parish related matters).

- 24.1.1 To receive any update relating to Village Stores. No new updates

**24.1.2** Update to village [dog poo waste bins](#). The notice in the link has been adhered to nearly all dog poo bins advising residents that bins are emptied weekly, requesting not to put garden waste into bins and to display a map of further dog poo waste bins in the village. Cllrs to continue regular inspections. Deputy Clerk to ensure all bins carry the new notice.

**Action: Deputy Clerk**

**24.1.3** **To note request for Parish Council feedback on [Bakery Shed](#).** The Parish Council are unable to allow use of any Parish Council owned land for the Bakery Shed and therefore have no responsibility to approve or object to alternative sites where it might be positioned. Cllrs would like to wish the parishioner all the very best in their endeavours.

**24.1.4** **To discuss pot-hole repairs in Ashwell.** Highway Engineers will repair some roads that the public might question, this is because these roads will deteriorate quicker than others if not immediately repaired. Station Road was highlighted as in need of repair due to mass of pot hole area affected. Deputy Clerk to report to Highways. Major roads such as the A505 are surveyed regularly whilst other roads are inspected annually. Use of camera and AI detection, is often used. The public are invited to advise the priority of pothole repair in and around the village to Highways. Clerk to promote to the village with the reporting procedure.

**Action: Clerk and Deputy Clerk**

**24.1.5** NHDC Local Plan Consultation [Settlement Hierarchies form](#) to be completed by parish councillors by 31<sup>st</sup> July. The survey comprises a series of questions issued by NHC as consultation linked to the Local Plan, Clerk to submit.

**Action: Clerk**

Cllrs Lee and Mahy have liaised with the Neighbourhood Plan Consultant previously employed and the Consultant has made some suggestions. Cllrs wish to discuss with NHC to align the NP with the Local Plan. Cllrs Mahy and Lee would welcome any other councillors who wish to be involved.

**Action: Cllrs**

The Chairman from Bygrave Parish Council spoke on item 26.2. The application is to increase the number of articulated HGV lorries using the Bygrave lanes to access the solar plant site whilst it is under construction. Added to this, other construction traffic is expected to be in the region of 2500 various vehicles using the lanes during the period of development. Highways have previously objected on safety grounds and that the roads are unsafe for more than two HGV vehicles making a return journey each day. Cllrs agreed to object to the application on the grounds of safety which is paramount and should not be overlooked in order to accommodate the developer. Proposed by Cllr Duffy, seconded by Cllr Mahy, all in favour.

**Action: Deputy Clerk**

A parishioner spoke to acknowledge the excellent services of Cllr Vinny Jones to the parish council; to thank Cllrs Button & Mahy for the S106 correspondence to NHC and to give views and opinions on agenda item 34.5.

**24.2** To receive reports from representatives from outside bodies, local authorities and agencies.

**24.2.1** To receive a report from HCC Leader, Cllr Steve Jarvis.

Several bollards in the village have been painted; Lucas Lane Speed Indicator Device has been ordered; the 3 areas in the village identified for double yellow lines is moving to the next phase; maintenance road work is planned in the future to Lucas Lane, High Street (West End) and the footway in Silver Street. The A505 is to be surface dressed from the Wallington junction to the tunnel, this is scheduled for July. A505 safety measures are due to be presented to Cllr Jarvis in June with proposals stretching from the Radio Station to the Cambridgeshire border on the other side of Royston.

24.2.2 To receive a report from District Councillor, Tom Tyson.

There is a meeting on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> June at 7.30pm at the Baldock and Villages Community Forum, (community HUB opposite the library), where the public are invited to attend a Q&A session on Growing Baldock and a presentation on the Local Plan first steps. Clerk to readvertise via the HUB and Website.

**Action: Clerk**

There is a pledge from Settle to repair the thatched wall next to Wolverley house.

### **Standing Orders to be reinstated**

25 **Reports from Working Groups.** To receive oral updates from relevant leaders/members and agree any actions that require Parish Council input/approval.

25.1 **Planning Advisory Working Group.** To note any updates. The Planning application at Station Road was rejected by the Planning Committee after the S106 sum was agreed of £138,000 to be paid to APC should the planning be approved. Cllrs query that should the application be approved at Appeal by the Inspector that APC's S106 claim still stands. Cllr Button to contact planning officer regarding the potential appeal of that decision along with the precedents the S106 request made sets in relation to the Unilateral Undertaking the developer may complete prior to an appeal.

**Action: Cllr Button**

The planning advisory working group to look into whether the Ashwell Springs SSSI entitles the Parish to request S106 contributions from developments outside the parish due to the likelihood of an increase in visitors to the SSSI, mirroring the approach Therfield Heath adopted to the Station Road development.

**Action: Cllr Button & Mahy**

25.2 **Access to Ashwell station** includes the cycle/footway route and car parking. To note any updates. No further updates.

25.3 **Zero Carbon Ashwell (ZCA) Group.** (Cllrs Lee & Duffy). To note any updates. The Consultants final report to be circulated to Cllrs confidentially to seek their comments, after it has been agreed by the ZCA Working Group who are working with the Consultants. This will be ahead of agreeing a date for a community meeting for the key points of the consultation to be presented and discussed.

26 **Planning matters: to include new and existing applications.** To see full details of applications on the [NHC website](#) enter the reference number into the planning search box.

To note correspondence from [Hill Residential](#) undertaking technical assessments and early design work to inform a future planning application for land off Claybush Road. APC to invite the developer to a Parish Council meeting after they have held their pre-planning meeting with NHC. This is to better understand what development is proposed and the density and style of housing proposed. Clerk to invite Hill Residential to present to APC following the pre-planning stage.

**Action: Clerk**

### **New Planning Applications:**

26.2 **26/01224/S73:** Land Adjacent Sewage Pumping Station, Ashwell Road, Bygrave, Hertfordshire : Section 73 Application : Variation of Condition numbers 21 (External appearances): vary approved colour scheme. 26 (CTMP): vary amount of articulated lorry visits for no more than 4 weeks, and 29 (Enabling works): replace the wording "HGV movements" with "articulated lorry movements" of planning permission reference 22/00741/FP granted on 17.06.2024 for Ground mounted solar photovoltaic (PV)

farm including battery energy storage; continued agricultural use, ancillary infrastructure, security fencing, landscaping provision, ecological enhancements and associated works (as amended by information received 29 January 2024. See above item 24.1.4 paragraph 3.

- 26.3 **26/01207/FP** Slip End Farm, Royston Road, Slip End. Erection of 9 dwellings with associated hard and soft landscaping, parking, garaging, cycle storage and EV points and private gardens, following demolition of agricultural buildings. Cllrs object to the application as follows. Not sustainable and incorrect housing mix, ie not in line with the Neighbourhood Plan and affordable housing. Cllrs to check on the relevance of an unilateral undertaking (legal agreement made by a landowner/developer). Proposed by Cllr Lee and seconded by Cllr Mahy. Response to the Planning Office by 18<sup>th</sup> June. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

- 26.4 **26/00815/FPH** Field House, 18A Newnham Way : Single storey rear extension, first floor rear extension and replace existing rear rooflight with rear dormer window. Installation of rooflight to existing west elevation roof slope. Replace existing garage doors with glazed gable and windows to facilitate conversion of garage into habitable accommodation. Alteration to existing fenestration. Detached carport/store to the front driveway (amended scheme submitted 26.6.26). The detached carport/store was missing from the initial application. Cllr Lee proposed no objection, all councillors in favour. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

27 **Existing Applications**, any updates:

- 27.1 **25/02571/OP**: Growing Baldock. To note planning amendments have been submitted. No further updates.
- 27.2 **24/01444/FP**: Land Between Huntsridge and Ashwell House 5 High Street Erection of 14 dwellings (including affordable housing), (Hunts Close). No further updates.

28 **Planning Summary** – To note

29 **Tree consultations** (Conservation Area and TPO) received from NHC. To agree responses to any received

- 29.1 **26/01299/TCA**: Spring House, 7 High Street, T1: Silver Birch - Fell to ground level. T2: Medlar – Fell to ground level. T3: Cork Screw Hazel - Fell to ground level. Cllrs did not object as the trees were dead, but request native trees be planted to replace those felled. **Action- Deputy Clerk**

30 **Tree Planning Summary** – To note

31 **Footpath at Townsend Meadow** - To note any updates. Cllr Lee has contacted the NHC Officer responsible, but has received no response.

32 **Reports from Committees**

HR Committee. The [draft Minutes](#) of HR Committee meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2026 were noted.

33 **Reports from parish councillors on premises and other responsibilities. To receive oral reports and agree any actions needed.**

- 33.1 The Springs. Report from Cllr Hoffman. To note update of planting project.

Cllrs to discuss and approve if whips or mature trees (3-5 years old) be planted at the Springs to replace felled Sycamores. [See quote for mature trees](#), vs [email advice re Whips](#).

Cllrs agreed to approve a mixture of mature trees and whips be planted as part of the biodiversity project at the Springs. It was noted that Muntjacs are likely to damage the trees if not properly protected, and that this protection can be necessary for up to 10 years. It was agreed that 50% of the mature trees be planted along with 50% of the Whips suggested, with proposed planning time late October/November. Deputy Clerk to obtain new quote. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

33.2 St Mary's Churchyard Grounds Maintenance. Report from Cllr Hoffman. No update.

33.3 Recreation Ground including the playground, pavilion and public toilets. To receive any updates from [Pavilion Working Group](#). Action is underway through the school and parent contact, the Scouts and Knights Templar students on choice of playground equipment at the rec. A member of the Working Group has sent a preliminary brief to the Head Teacher at Ashwell Primary School to gain his feedback on a project for children & parents to provide input on the Pavilion facilities.

33.4 Small Gains and Track – To note any updates. See item 34.3.

33.5 Cemetery – To note any updates from Cllr Mahy. To discuss and agree action plan for [Holm Oaks management at the cemetery](#). Cllrs noted the long term commitment to cost of the project to fell or pollard the Holm Oak trees at the cemetery. It was agreed that a phased tree management programme over the next approx. 10 years be implemented. With £3700 allocated in the budget for the work, it was agreed that one tree per year should be felled and replaced by a native species. Deputy Clerk to obtain further quotations. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

33.6 Street furniture - To note any updates Cllr Mahy. No updates.

## 34 Finance and Governance

34.1 **Budget tracking and the monthly summary of accounts and bank reconciliation.** To note the information up to month end to be circulated to parish councillors after the end of the month. Proposal that the summary of receipts and payments be issued with the draft minutes and the two nominated parish councillors sign off the accounts in accordance with internal control procedures. To note any variances of actual expenditure compared to budget.

34.2 **Transfer of Funds to Savings A/C.** To note and approve transfer of precept funds £60,000 to interest bearing account. Cllrs approved the transfer of £60,000 precept funds into the higher interest account. As agreed in the revised Financial Regulations, the transfer was noted and approved, proposed by Cllr Mahy and seconded by Cllr Button, all in favour.

34.3 **Budget 2025/26 Update** – To note any updates.

34.3.1 To receive a verbal update on proposed licence agreement for ACCIES. Request received from the ACCIES to extend the notice period in the draft licence agreement to six months to allow for completion of the football season in the event of a notice period being served. Cllr Button to liaise with Cllr Lee. **Action: Cllrs Lee/Button**

34.4 **Annual Audit 2023/24 & 2024/25** – To note any updates.

34.4.1 Annual Audit for the 2023/24 financial year. External Auditor has notified the Parish Council and the Complainant that the case is currently under review and should be finalised within the next month. The cost is £355 per hour and is currently standing at approx. £1,500. A conclusion is hoped to have been reached by the end of June, with final cost currently unknown.

34.4.2 Annual Audit for the 2024/25 financial year.

34.5 Annual Audit 2025/26 – External Audit Submission. Internal Audit completed and signed by Internal Auditor; AGAR 2025/26 and Allotments for Exercise & Recreation Charity. Cllrs to approve the following:

34.5.1 To note and approve [Section 1, Annual Governance Statement](#). Following correspondence received from a parishioner Cllr Button questioned whether the complaint made by the parishioner earlier in the year should be discussed/debated. It was noted that documentation on AGAR preparation is voluminous and is a complex process. The Clerk read a statement after taking advice from the Practitioners Guide. That the Monitoring Officer had dealt with the complaint informally by requesting an apology; that there had been no formal finding requiring investigation, hearing, sanction, legal action or financial consequence; but that the position would be different if there had been a formal finding of a breach of the Code of Conduct or that the Council had failed to follow the Monitoring Officer's advice, and that was not the case.

A proposal was made to approve Section 1, Annual Governance Statement to be submitted to the External Auditor. It was resolved that proposal be accepted. Proposed by Cllr Yates and seconded by Cllr Mahy, all in favour. **Action: Clerk**

34.5.2 To note and approve [Section 2, Accounting Statements](#). A proposal was made to approve Section 2, Accounting Statements to be submitted to the External Auditor. It was resolved that proposal be accepted. Proposed by Cllr Yates and seconded by Cllr Mahy, all in favour. **Action: Clerk**

34.5.3 To note [notice of the period of public rights](#). The date of the Exercise of Public Rights was noted. All documents to be submitted to the External Auditor. **Action: Clerk**

34.5.4 To note [Effectiveness of Audit](#). Noted by Cllrs and signed by the Internal Auditor. This was reviewed at the Finance Meeting in October 2025 and signed by the Internal Auditor.

Date of next Parish Council meeting: 1<sup>st</sup> July 2026 at 7pm in the Parish Room.

The meeting ended at 9.10pm.