

**Minutes of the Ashwell Parish Council meeting
held on Wednesday 6th March 2019 in the Parish Room**

Present: Cllrs Mark White (Chairman), Graham Lee, Bridget Macey, David Short, Madeleine Legg, David Sims.

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

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

114. Apologies for absence. Cllr Martin Hoffman (other commitment).

115. Declarations of Interest. Cllrs David Sims and David Short: item 122.6/accounts (reimbursement for purchases).

116. Minutes of previous meetings.

Proposal for approval and signature of the minutes of the Council meeting held on 9th February 2019.

It was *resolved* that these be signed.

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

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

117.1 Public exhibition by Extra-Care Retirement Housing re their proposed retirement housing development on land to the rear of Donkey Meadow. Correspondence received from parishioners was noted. It had been reiterated that no planning application had yet been made to the local planning authority, NHDC. The Parish Council would not be making any formal comment at this pre-application stage but would do so as and when the required NHDC public consultation took place.

117.2 Election of a new Parish Council for 2019-2023, Thursday 2nd May. The information supplied by NHDC as the electoral authority including their deadline of April 3rd for nominations was noted. Information had been posted on the website (www.ashwell.gov.uk) and publicity around the village was ongoing. People signed up on the website would be emailed. **Action: Clerk/Deputy Clerk**

117.3 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*). The Chairman reported that communication with the local ACRE representative was ongoing. **Action: Clerk**

117.4 Annual Parish Meeting, Wednesday 27th March, 8pm at the School. The Chairman reported that publicity was ongoing. As usual the agenda was in the Yearbook due for delivery to all households and businesses from Friday. A flyer would also be included. **Action: Clerk**

117.5 Items raised by parish councillors.

117.5.1 Henry Colbron Trust. Cllr David Short reported that the deadline for the next round of applications for funding was 30th April. The trustees had been contacted with an offer to help with local publicity but no response had been received.

117.5.2 Moss Cottage Homes. Cllr Madeleine Legg reported that the renovation of one of the cottages was nearing completion.

117.5.3 East-west rail link/public consultation. Cllr David Short reported that there had been publicity on the proposed routes put forward by the promoters and by local groups; one of them came within a few miles of the parish boundary. It was agreed that individuals could respond if they wished.

117.6 Items from other organisations/bodies.

117.6.1 Cllr David Sims reported that further information re the Parish Tree Warden scheme operated by South Cambridgeshire had been received; contact with a local volunteer to take on this project was in hand.

117.6.2 Arbury Banks. Further information from the organisers of the Beacons of the Past -Hillforts project on their activities had been received.

117.6.3 Highways matters.

County Councillor Steve Jarvis gave updates on the following, (i) Street lighting conversion to LED. The County Council had decided not to complete the conversion of all the streetlights in Ashwell as it was not

cost-effective. Those that had been converted would remain including the units where a modern lamp had been installed at the top of heritage design swan-neck column. (*see also 121.4 below re lighting in the Cooke Engineering development*). (ii) Resurfacing of Loves Lane, road to Bluegates etc. Following patching, surface dressing would take place in the summer. Cllr Graham Lee raised concerns re the poor quality of some of the patches; this was noted. (iii) 20mph proposal public consultation. Concerns re West End and Cow Lane had been noted. All were encouraged to send in their comments. (iv) A505 safety. A recent meeting with county engineers had reviewed a list of potential changes. This included a new roundabout at the Odsey junction but progress with this was unlikely due to the lack of funding; developer contributions associated with major housing sites might address this in the future. He would discuss what options to improve safety might be achievable in the interim.

Cllr David Sims requested information on the Silver Street pinch point and the safety proposals for Station Road; Cllr Jarvis responded that there was no further information available on these. Cllr Madeleine Legg requested an update on the request for speed restrictions along the Ruddy; Cllr Jarvis responded that this was on the list for investigation.

Cllr David Short commended the works opposite the garage to cut back the overhanging vegetation but requested that the drop at the edge of the carriageway be investigated.

117.7 Items from parishioners.

117.7.1 Off-road bikers. The concerns raised by a parishioner were noted. Also the OWL message from the Police requesting information from the public.

Standing orders reinstated from here.

118. Matters of general report from previous meetings

118.1 Village map. The proposals for a new village map were discussed. It was agreed to progress discussions with the potential supplier.

Action: Deputy Clerk/GEL

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

119.1 Cemetery (Cllr Madeleine Legg) Cllr Madeleine Legg reported:

(i) Chapel of Rest/update on the new tenancy agreement with Neville Funeral Services. A letter of apology at the poor level of service they had provided had been received from the Parish Council's solicitor. The new lease was now being progressed.

119.2 Recreation Ground including the Pavilion and Public Toilets

(Cllrs Mark White and Madeleine Legg) Cllr Madeleine Legg reported: (i) Further incidents of bagged dog waste left on the pitches had occurred and one similar incident in Dixies Close. (ii) Proposals for new toilet facilities were being investigated and site visits with potential suppliers held.

119.3 Playground (Cllr Madeleine Legg) Cllr Madeleine Legg reported: (i) Minor works would be progressed now the weather would be better. (ii) Proposals re the skateboard area and for new equipment were being investigated. Consultation with users/interested parties would continue.

119.4 The Springs (Cllr Martin Hoffman) Cllr Martin Hoffman had reported:

(i) Minor works to fencing and steps were in progress. (ii) Volunteer working parties had done good work. (iii) Concerns had been received about the stepping stones. It was noted that the rules of the SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) prevented them being fixed and visitors did sometimes move them. They had now been moved back to their previous position. (iv) The annual Duck Race organised by the Playgroup would take place on Saturday 23rd March.

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

Cllr David Sims reported:

(i) The pitch and fencing had been damaged by vehicles. He had liaised with the Accies and new concrete posts had been installed. He had reported vehicles seen in the vicinity to the police. (ii) He had also liaised with the Accies re the goals; these were to be fixed with new locks and moved away from the allotments to prevent damage.

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

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

Cllr Martin Hoffman had reported:

(i) Walnut tree at Merchant Taylors Green. There had been further communications with a neighbour who had previously complained about the proximity of branches to his property. The regular professional survey

of the tree commissioned by the Parish Council had concluded that no action was necessary. The neighbour had now declared his intention to cut back the branches overhanging the roadway. He had been given advice that as the roadway was owned by the residents of Merchant Taylors Close the branches were trespassing on their property. The Parish Council had taken advice from its preferred tree supplier and would undertake works to balance the tree should the resident remove branches on one side. The required submission for works to a tree in the conservation area had been applied for.

(ii) Works to the hedge at the rear of Carters Pond were scheduled.

119.8 Street furniture (Cllr Bridget Macey)

(i) Notice board and seat renovations were to commence over the spring/summer months.

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

Cllr Martin Hoffman had reported:

(i) Works to the gate from Church Path had been completed in part funded by parishioners' donations.

(ii) A report on the Mill Street boundary wall had been received from the PCC.

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

119.11 War Memorial (i) Works to replace the hedge were nearing completion. Arrangements had been put in place for regular watering of the new Yew hedging over the summer.

119.12 Grounds maintenance The contractual arrangements with the two suppliers would continue for this season. These covered, (i) the miscellaneous village areas including the Cemetery, the Springs, the Churchyard, and (ii) the pitches at the Recreation Ground.

120. Items re other authorities/organisations;

120.1 Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) *See 117 above re Herts Highways.*

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

121. 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.

121.1 New consultation on applications received from NHDC

(See also appendix with summary table below).

121.1.1 NHDC Case Ref No:19/00399/FPH 43 Dixies Close

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

Action: Clerk/Deputy Clerk

See also 121.6 below

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

No further information received. *(See also below re Local Plan 121.7)*

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

Submissions made by residents to NHDC and the Planning Officers' responses to them were noted.

See also item 117.6.1 above.

121.4 Development at the Cooke Engineering site.

121.4.1 It was reported 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.

121.4.2 Street lighting. Several parishioners had raised concerns that the new units installed by the developer were excessively bright, much so compared to the rest of the village and out of keeping with a village environment. County Councillor Steve Jarvis reported that this was the developer's responsibility as they would not at this stage have been adopted by the county council. It was agreed that this would be investigated.

Action: Clerk/Deputy Clerk

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

It was reported that there had been no response to the letter sent on 15th January to the agent acting for Beck Homes Ltd. requesting further information on their proposed actions and indicating that the Parish Council would be happy to meet with representatives.

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

The correspondence from the applicant was noted. It was agreed that the response to the NHDC consultation would be considered at a meeting of the Planning Committee (Sunday 10th March, 9am).

121.7 Local Plan Examination.

It was noted that the deadline for the public consultation by NHDC on the revised draft following the modifications requested by the Inspector had been extended again to 11th April.

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

Action: Clerk

121.8 Enforcement of planning conditions. (see December Council 2018, 88.4)

The email from Sir Oliver Heald, MP, and the response from the Minister was noted.

122. Reports re Finance matters

122.1 Financial Regulations. A proposal was made to adopt a new version based on the latest NALC model. It was *resolved* to accept the proposal. **Action: Clerk**

122.2 Review of the Risk Assessment Policy. Proposal to approve. It was *resolved* to accept the proposal. **Action: Clerk**

122.3 Review of the Effectiveness of Internal Audit. Proposal to approve. It was *resolved* to accept the proposal. **Action: Clerk**

122.4 Annual Audit for the financial year 2018-19. The arrangements and dates for the Internal and External Audit were noted. **Action: Clerk**

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

122.6 Proposal for approval of the monthly summary of accounts (see appendix). It was *resolved* to accept the proposal. **Action: Clerk**

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

Nothing to report.

124. Reports from working groups

124.1 Neighbourhood Plan Group (leader Cllr David Short, Cllrs Graham Lee and Madeleine Legg) Cllr David Short reported that the review by the consultant was ongoing. Another grant bid would be made in April.

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

124.3 Yearbook Group (leader Cllr David Short) Cllr David Short reported that the new edition would be received from the printer on Friday and then delivered by volunteers.

124.4 Local business support (leader Cllr Graham Lee) (*See 117.6.3 above re proposals for restricted time parking spaces outside retail premises*)

124.5 Litter Pick Group (leader Cllr Madeleine Legg) Cllr Madeleine Legg reported that the village Spring Clean would take place on Saturday 23rd March (meet 2pm at the Pavilion).

Forthcoming meeting dates:

Meeting closed 9.10pm

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

April Council meeting, Wednesday 3rd April 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

Consulations on planning and listed building applications received from NHDC - as at 6th March 2019				
Address	Application Number	Brief description	Ashwell PC Comments	North Herts Decision
1 Newnham Way	19/00424/FP	Erection of replacment 4 bed detached dwelling, attached double garage(variation to accepted application 17/01634/1).	Item for the Planning Committee meeting Sunday 10th March	Pending
43 Dixies Close	19/00399/FPH	Two storey side extension, single storey front porchextension 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	Pending
40 High Street	19/00077/LBC	Listed Building Consent: Various works including installation of wood fibre insulation to west gable, internal timber panelling and lead drip flashing above plinth to south elevation together with various repairs.	PC Decision sent to NHDC: recommendation that permission be GRANTED	Pending
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	Pending
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	Pending
26 Silver Street	18/03329/FPH	Part single storey, part two storey extension with roof alterations.	PC Decision sent to NHDC: recommendation that permission be GRANTED	Permission granted
32 West End	18/03343/FPH	Installation of 4 front rooflights, 3 rear pitched roof dormers to covert loft into habitable space.	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

ACCOUNTS & BILLS FOR PAYMENT - summary for March Council 2019			
	RECEIPTS		£
75	monthly interest (01 Feb)		9.09
76	cemetery plaque (CW19.03)		135.00
77	contribution for new Churchyard gate		830.00
78	Santander adjustment to account		50.00
		Total receipts	1,024.09
	PAYMENTS		
245	EON	Electricity public toilets	8.36
246	EON	Electricity Pavilion	71.86
247	Clerk	Salary	1,266.23
248	Deputy Clerk	Salary	687.02
249	HCC Pensions-LGPS Account,	Pensions	639.88
250	Grounds Officer	Salary	142.80
251	C E Metcalfe	Public toilets cleaning and consumables	225.00
252	ECO	Salary	225.60
253	HMRC accounts ref 321PF00003624	Tax&NI to Inland Revenue	381.84
254	David Short	Reimbursement (refreshments volunteer event , postage Neighbourhood Plan)	77.29
255	Royston & District Community Transport	Donation	200.00
256	Stuart Chapman	Cemetery fencing -labour cost	195.00
257	David Sims	Reimbursement (concrete bollards at Small Gains)	35.00
258	Jarrett Fencing	Gate at Churchyard	1,723.73
259	Ashwell Primary School	Annual Parish Meeting school hire charge 27/3/19	45.00
260	Duo Design	Website Monthly Fee	30.00
		Total payments	5,954.61
	MONEY AT BANK		
		Current Account (28/02/19)	6,281.67
		Reserve Account (28/02/19)	30,592.17