

## Minutes

of the Parish Council meeting held on

Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2022, at 7pm, in the Parish Room.

**Present:** Councillors Cath Connolly, Ian Duffy, Vinny Hall, Martin Hoffman, Graham Lee (Chairman), Norton Mahy (Vice-chairman) and David Sims. Two councillors joined the meeting on Zoom; Cllr Gemma Allan (child-care commitment) and Mark White (other commitment).

Also in attendance: Clerk (Jane Porter), Al Jacoutot (IT support). County Councillor Steve Jarvis and District Councillor Tom Tyson. Seven members of the public were present and two also joined on Zoom.

*Following a request from a parishioner it was agreed that the meeting could be recorded.*

*The new start time of 7pm was noted.*

**34 Apologies for absence from parish councillors.** None.

**35 Declarations of interest.** None.

**36 Proposal to approve and sign the minutes of the meeting 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2022.**

It was resolved that the proposal be accepted.

**Action: Clerk/Graham**

**37 OPEN FORUM - VILLAGE MATTERS, REPORTS FROM OTHER BODIES, ETC**

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

**37.1** Items from members of the public.

**33.1.1** Ashwell Show. Two representatives of the organisers wished it to be publicly noted that it had been 'a record year with record attendance' and to voice appreciation to all who helped and all who attended. Over 5,000 people had visited the show and the Sunday evening pre-event aimed at local residents had also been popular with a great atmosphere. The figures were yet to be finalized but the funds raised had been another record. The funds distribution sub-committee was due to meet shortly and details of how local organisations could apply were to be publicized. The Parish Council agreed to assist with this. Any feedback on any aspect of the Show was always welcomed. Parish councillor Martin Hoffman who had personally been involved with the running of the Show in the past over many years said he had 'nothing but praise'.

**37.1.1** Voneus Broadband proposals for high-speed fibre internet. Nothing further to report.

37.2 Items from our district councillor Tom Tyson.

- 37.2.1 New footway in Station Road as a condition of planning permission for Townsend Close. Slow progress was being made on this.
- 37.2.2 Bygrave Solar Farm. Land West of Ashwell Road, Bygrave NHC ref. 22/00741/FP. No date was yet set for the NHC Planning Committee to consider this.
- 37.2.3 Bygrave Woods music events. Two of the events planned for this year had been cancelled by the organisers. The main event that had taken place had generated some complaints but overall the feeling seemed to be that the level of disturbance was significantly less than previously. Parishioners reported seeing noise monitoring equipment at several locations and one reported concern with traffic management.
- 37.2.4 EV charging points. Information had been forwarded.
- 37.2.5 NHC consultation on waste and recycling services. The Clerk had attended a Zoom meeting and a review of the litter bins in the village (owned by the Parish council and emptied by NHC) had been agreed. **Action: All**

*See 37.3.1 below re Safer routes to the station and 39 re planning*

37.3 Items from our county councillor Steve Jarvis.

- 37.3.1 Safer routes to the station. Information was contributed by both county cllr Steve Jarvis and district cllr Tom Tyson. It was noted that land for a new section of footway in the preferred location had been offered by the landowner. Also that the route was listed on the Hertfordshire Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) albeit with a lower priority than hoped for as greater emphasis was given to the towns. The issue of significant costs remained with the additional problem that the location was in Cambridgeshire but with minimal benefit for Cambridgeshire residents. A parishioner suggested that it could be constructed by volunteers but as the landowner had stated they were not prepared to take on any liability or maintenance responsibility, it would have to be constructed to Highways standards. Parish councillor Martin Hoffman again expressed his frustration at the lack of progress. It was agreed that a list of stakeholders be compiled and contact made to try and push the matter forward.
- 37.3.2 Public transport to the station. Contacts with the Rail Users Group (RUG) were being sought to determine their views.
- 37.3.3 The Ruddery/request to HCC rights of way for a change of status to improve safety. A new local officer had now been appointed. The agreed amendments were now being progressed by a senior officer.

37.3.4

Highways works. The works completed so far in Station Road and Lucas Lane were commended. Information had been sought as to when the area by the War Memorial was to be completed. Signage and street lighting works at West End were still pending. A parishioner requested information on recent trackway repairs and raised concerns that the material used was not in keeping with a rural area and

would lead to 'urbanisation'. Drawings for the new pedestrian entrance to the Rec from Lucas Lane closer to the War Memorial had been sent to the British Legion (who had requested the new entrance) and the sports clubs (in case there were any issues with the location of the safety barrier). The British Legion were fully supportive; a response from the sports clubs would be chased up.

**Action: Clerk**

**37.4** Items on general village matters from parish councillors.

**37.4.1** Community Land Trust/Community Benefit Society. The submission to the FCA was pending the third signature. *See August council minute 30.4.3*

**37.4.2** NHC consultation on their review of the Ashwell Conservation Area. A draft of the Parish Council's response had been circulated to all parish councillors prior to the NHC submission deadline next week. It was agreed that this be sent. A request had been made to NHC for sight of the responses made by the public to inform the Parish Council's own response but this had been rejected on privacy grounds. Responses to NHC by some parishioners had been seen following the Parish Council's request to be copied. Chairman Graham Lee thanked parishioner David Short for his input particularly on correcting factual errors in the NHC document. District cllr Tom Tyson was asked to emphasize this with NHC officers to avoid a repetition of the inaccuracies published in the NHC Character Statement for Ashwell. A parishioner asked how the public would know what the Parish Council had said and why had they not consulted with parishioners before compiling their response. Chairman Graham Lee responded that the Parish Council's response to NHC would be posted on the website and that the views of parishioners had been sought previously.

**37.4.3** Village Hall trustees/re their proposal to change to an Incorporated Charitable Organisation and the future involvement of the Parish Council. Nothing further to report.

**37.5** Items from working groups.

**37.5.1** Trees and Hedges Group (leader Cllr David Sims). Cllr David Sims reported that plans for further hedge planting on the Lucas Lane boundary of the Rec were being progressed.

*End of Open Forum/Standing Orders reinstated.*

**38** **MONTHLY REPORTS ON PREMISES/OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES FROM PARISH COUNCILLORS.** *See also Appendix A below.*

**38.1** Recreation Ground/new equipment for older children. Cllr Gemma Allan reported that she hoped to progress this further over the next few months.

**38.2** Pavilion upgrade project. Chairman Graham Lee reported that there had been no further feedback from user groups and build quotes would now be sought based on the latest design proposal. A funding appeal was being drafted for publication shortly under the banner of the Queen's Jubilee. A request was made to district and county cllrs for any input on possible grant funding particularly with an environmental or disability focus.

- 38.3 Parish clock/fault repairs and annual service. A date from the supplier was pending.
- 38.4 Grounds maintenance. The grass cutting contract had been suspended due to the lack of growth during the hot, dry weather; the situation was under review.
- 38.5 Small Gains/rabbit problems. Cllr David Sims reported that input had been sought on possible control measures and contacts made with local landowners. A pest controller using ferrets was to be booked for October (the recommended time) and quotes for fencing had been requested.
- 38.6 Accies request for additional pitches. Chairman Graham Lee noted that the cost and availability of suitable land was obviously the main issue. This was a possible role for the CLT (see 37.4.1).

**39 PLANNING MATTERS** See also Appendix B summary below.

Full documents are available on the NHC website. Put the NHC ref. no. into the planning search box <https://pa2.north-herts.gov.uk/online-applications/>

**39.1** New consultations received from North Herts Council.

**39.1.1** Land Adjacent To 4, Ashwell Street. NHC ref. 22/01844/S73.

Variation of condition 2 of planning permission 22/00880/FP granted on 29/06/2022 - Erection of a detached 3-bedroom dwelling, and detached car-port; ancillary works and new vehicular access onto Ashwell Street.

No objections were raised and it was resolved that this be communicated to the NHC Planning Officer. **Action: Clerk**

**39.1.2** Spring House, 7 High Street. NHC ref. 22/02161/FPH and 22/02062/LBC. Replace three existing front elevation gates.

No objections were raised and it was resolved that this be communicated to the NHC Planning Officer. **Action: Clerk**

**39.1.3** 32 West End. NHC ref. 22/02163/FPH. Two storey side extension to include integrated garage following demolition of existing side extension and existing detached garage.

No objections were raised and it was resolved that this be communicated to the NHC Planning Officer. **Action: Clerk**

**39.1.4** 9 Philosophers Gate. NHC ref. 22/02070/FPH. Retention of detached garden outbuilding.

No objections were raised and it was resolved that this be communicated to the NHC Planning Officer. **Action: Clerk**

**39.2** Tree consultations (Conservation Area and TPO) received from NHC

**39.2.1** Townsend House, 24 Lucas Lane. 22/02176/TCA. Horse Chestnut -Fell to ground level. No objections were raised but a request to be made that a replacement be planted. It was resolved that this be communicated to the NHC Planning Officer.

**Action: Clerk**

Signed

Date

39.2.2 77 High Street. 22/02374/TCA. T1 Bay - Reduce to the height of the adjacent building. T2 Maple - Reduce low limbs back from building. T3 Mulberry -Reduce low limbs back from building and remove snapped limb. T4 Holm Oak-reduce back from building. No objections were raised and it was resolved that this be communicated to the NHC Planning Officer. **Action: Clerk**

39.2.3 89 Back Street. 22/02368/TCA, Chestnut- Fell. No objections were raised and it was resolved that this be communicated to the NHC Planning Officer.

**Action: Clerk**

39.3 Updates on previous planning applications, developments ongoing.

39.3.1 Land east of 35 Ashwell Street. NHC ref. 22/01847/S73. *See minute August Council 32.1.1.* The further correspondence with the planning officer and information from district cllr Tom Tyson were noted. It was understood that the concerns of the neighbour had now been dealt with. No objections were raised and it was resolved that this be communicated to the NHC Planning Officer.  
**Action: Clerk**

#### 40 FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE MATTERS.

40.1 The latest budget tracking and the monthly summary of accounts were noted. *See also Appendix C below.*

It was proposed that these be accepted.

**Action: Clerk**

40.1 External Auditor/5-year appointing period from 2022-23 until 2026-27.

It was proposed that the default option be accepted.

**Action: Clerk**

40.2 Insurance renewal date from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2022. It was proposed that the full documents be circulated to all parish cllrs and the representative of the Ashwell Village Trust, a review be undertaken by the Chair and Vice-Chair and if no issues were raised the recommendation of the broker be followed.

It was resolved that the proposal be accepted.

**Action: Clerk**

40.3 The timetable for setting the budget and precept for 2023-24 was noted and a date to be agreed for a discussion meeting in October before submission to the November or December council meeting.

**Action: Clerk**

40.4 Proposal for an additional signatory (Cllr Norton Mahy) for the current and reserve bank accounts. It was resolved that the proposal be accepted.

**Action: Clerk**

40.5 Yearbook. Cllr Norton Mahy reported that three potential suppliers had been identified and had been requested to quote for the design and print work as separate items. Two suppliers had to date supplied quotes. Cost increases were significant compared to last year due to rises in print costs and that the design had been done in house last year. Further options were being sought before a formal proposal was put to the Parish Council.

**Meeting closed at 20.40**

**Appendix A: Additional premises matters ongoing (see also item 38 above)**

New seat at the Recreation Ground/ongoing dialogue with supplier re faults.

New litter bins at the Springs/supplier to replace faulty units.

New dog waste bin for Ashwell Street/pending installation.

Pavilion security upgrade/ongoing.

Pavilion electricity/replacement of faulty meter completed and invoice resolution pending.

Small Gains water supply upgrade/pending quotes.

Springs additional fencing/pending quotes.

Springs tree works/pending quotes and conservation area permission.

Playground and Springs RoSPA inspection/booked for September.

Regular tree surveys/pending quotes.

## Appendix B: Planning Summary

Summary of consultations on recent planning and listed building applications received from NHC up to 8th September 2022				
To view all the documents relating to an application put the NHC reference number into the planning searchbox <a href="https://pa2.north-herts.gov.uk/online-applications/">https://pa2.north-herts.gov.uk/online-applications/</a>				
Address	Application ref. Number	Brief description	Ashwell PC response to NHC consultation	North Herts Decision
Land Adjacent To 4, Ashwell Street	22/01844/S73	Section 73 Application : Variation of condition 2 of planning permission 22/00880/FP granted on 29/06/2022 - Erection of a detached 3 bedroom dwelling, and detached car port; ancillary works and new vehicular access onto Ashwell Street as shown on plans 21-005 Rev I and 20/005/101/D.	PC to NHDC: No Objection September council, 39.1.1	Pending
Spring House 7 High Street	22/02161/FPH and 22/02062/LBC	Replace three existing front elevation gates.	PC to NHDC: No Objection September council, 39.1.2	Pending
9 Philosophers Gate	22/02070/FPH	Retention of detached garden outbuilding.	PC to NHDC: No Objection September council, 39.1.3	Pending
32 West End	22/02163/FPH	Two storey side extension to include integrated garage following demolition of existing side extension and existing detached garage.	PC to NHDC: No Objection September council, 39.1.4	Pending
Land to the east of 35 Ashwell Street	22/01847/S73	Variation of condition 2 of planning permission 20/02309/FP granted on 08.12.2020 - Erection of 1 x 3 bed detached single storey dwelling including basement and light-well as shown on plans.	PC to NHDC: Objection August council, 32.1.1	Pending
Land to the west of 35 Ashwell Street	21/02650/FP (amendments to original -see below)	Erection of two detached dwellings (1 x 2-bed and 1 x 4-bed) including alterations to existing vehicular access (amended plans received 16.06.2022).	PC to NHDC: Objection July council, 25.1.1	Pending
Slip End Farm, Royston Road	22/01541/FP	Replace existing entrance gates with acoustic gates, decommission existing vehicular access and install protective landscape bund to boundary.	PC to NHDC: No Objection July council, 25.1.2	Pending
91 High Street	22/01326/FPH and 22/01327/LBC.	Single storey rear extension, erection of detached store and erection of rear garden boundary wall following demolition of existing detached outhouses.	PC to NHDC: No Objection June council, 18.1.1	Pending
Land east of 35 Ashwell Street	22/01191/S73	Variation of Condition 2 (layout and external alterations) of planning permission 20/02309/FP granted 08.12.2020	PC to NHDC: No Objection June council, 18.1.2	Pending
Land West of Ashwell Road, Bygrave SG7 5EB	22/00741/FP	Full Planning Permission: Ground mounted solar photovoltaic (PV) farm including battery energy storage; continued agricultural use, ancillary infrastructure, security fencing, landscaping provision, ecological enhancements and associated works.	PC to NHDC: Objection June Council, 18.1.4	Pending
87 Back Street	22/01126/FP &22/001127/L BC	Replace existing garage doors with a window to facilitate conversion of garage into habitable accommodation and refurbish existing front elevation door.	PC to NHDC: Objection May council, 11.5	Permission Granted 07/09/2022
Land to the West of 35 Ashwell Street	21/02650/FP	Erection of 2 detached dwellings (1 x 2 bed & 1 x 4 bed) including alterations to existing vehicular access	PC to NHDC: Objection October council 2021, 50.1.1	Pending

## Appendix C: Monthly accounts summary

ACCOUNTS - Summary for 1st to 31st August 2022					
RECEIPTS					£
36	Nevilles Funeral Services	Rent for Chapel of Rest (August)			68.75
37	Thames (Castle Water)	refund for overpayment taken by DD			1580.13
38	Geere & Pepper Memorial Masons	CW 22.16			245.00
39	Santander	Reserve Account Interest			2.64
				<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,896.52</b>
PAYMENTS			£ less VAT	VAT	£ inc VAT
100	Duo Creative Services Ltd	Website monthly fee (July)	25.00	5.00	30.00
101	Brilliant Lawns	Herbicide application Inv 10215	299.00		299.00
102	Brilliant Lawns	Grass Cutting on Rec 27/07/2022 Inv No 10214	127.50		127.50
103	D J Granger Grounds Maintenance Ltd	Grounds Maintenance Worksheet no 16, inv no 22824	65.00	13.00	78.00
104	D J Granger Grounds Maintenance Ltd	Grounds Maintenance Worksheet no 15, inv no 22821	70.00	14.00	84.00
105	Edwards Cleaning & Maintenance	Toilets cleaning and consumables July Inv No 2412	190.00		190.00
106	CDA Herts	Annual membership	36.00		36.00
107	Gearing Locksmiths	New lock at pavilion	133.00	26.60	159.60
108	Abacus Cleaning Supplies	Stationery Supplies inv 24114114	46.86	9.37	56.23
109	D J Granger Grounds Maintenance Ltd	Grounds Maintenance Springs hedge inv no 22827	265.00	53.00	318.00
110	D J Granger Grounds Maintenance Ltd	Grounds Maintenance Worksheet no 17, inv no 22858	188.00	37.60	225.60
111	BT	Office phone and broadband quarterly	128.85	25.77	154.62
112	EonNext	Electricity toilets at pavilion dated 08Aug22	12.93	0.65	13.58
113	RLP Surveyors Ltd	Pavilion upgrade architectural services	1,700.00	340.00	2,040.00
114	ECO	Environmental Cleansing Officer salary	282.40		282.40
115	Deputy Clerk	Deputy Clerk Salary	920.53		920.53
116	Grounds Officer	Grounds Officer salary	156.60		156.60
117	Clerk	Clerk salary	1,458.18		1,458.18
118	HMRC accounts ref 321PF00003624	tax&NI to Inland Revenue	533.68		533.68
119	HCC Pensions-LGPS Account	Clerk & Deputy Clerk Pension to LGPS	775.47		775.47
		Sub-totals	7,414.00	524.99	
				<b>Total</b>	<b>£7,938.99</b>
	<b>MONEY AT BANK</b>	Current Account 31/08/2022	<b>£11,366.67</b>		
		Reserve Account 31/08/2022	<b>£52,807.59</b>		
		Total cash	<b>£64,174.26</b>		

Signed

Date