

**Minutes of the Ashwell Parish Council meeting
held on Wednesday 1st May 2019 in the Parish Room**

Present: Cllrs Mark White (Chairman), Martin Hoffman (Vice-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: Four parishioners and County Councillor Steve Jarvis.

136 Apologies for absence. None.

137. Declarations of Interest.

138. Minutes of previous meetings.

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 3rd April 2019 were accepted and signed.

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

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

139.1 Election of the new Parish Council for 2019-2023. The Chairman expressed thanks to the two new parishioners who had stood for election; he welcomed them to the Parish Council and looked forward to working with them. Both the Chairman and the Vice-chairman, Martin Hoffman, expressed regret that there had been only six nominations; to be elected by a poll of the electorate was a more democratic process and much preferred. It was noted that; (i) all the members of the new Parish Council would take office on Tuesday 7th May, (ii) the first meeting, the AGM, of the new Council would be held on Tuesday 14th May, (iii) the agenda would include items to elect a chairman, agree responsibilities and make various appointments, (iv) the regular monthly meetings were scheduled to commence from Wednesday 5th June.

139.2 Village Hall. Cllr Martin Hoffman (a trustee of the Village Hall in his own right) gave an update on the transfer of the custodian trusteeship to the Parish Council. Clarification was given of the roles of the two sets of trustees. These were the custodian (or holding) trustees, who held the title of the land and property, and the management trustees (the users' committee) who managed the premises and were responsible for the financial aspects of this. Cllr Hoffman reported that the transfer of the custodian trusteeship was to be handled by the solicitor recommended by ACRE and the existing custodian trustees had made financial provision for this. The users' committee had been kept informed throughout and were supportive of the transfer; a further meeting was to be scheduled to update them, to ensure they were fully informed and aware of their responsibilities. The Chairman reported that he was not aware of any confusion that might exist with the users' as to the separate roles of the two sets of trustees. He would attend their next meeting and would clarify anything if required.

Action: MNW

It was agreed that the accounts published by the users' committee would be circulated.

Action: Clerk/Deputy Clerk

139.3 Annual Parish Meeting. It was noted that concerns re parking, the high volume of traffic in the High Street and litter at Small Gains had been raised.

See item 139.4.3 re Small Gains and 139.5.3 below re parking.

139.4 Items raised by parish councillors and parishioners.

To include any matters on other village groups and organisations.

139.4.1 Car parking at the Ashwell & Morden Station in Odsey. Cllr David Short reported that he had been approached by the Odsey landowner, Mr Jeremy Fordham, who sought the Parish Council's support for a planning application he was intending to make to South Cambridgeshire District Council. It was understood that Mr Fordham's application would include housing and maybe include land for a car park that would alleviate the current problems with parking on the verges. It was agreed that the Parish Council would, in principle, be supportive of measures that would address the lack of parking for the station but before any firm statement could be made further details would have to be forthcoming. It was agreed to write to Mr Fordham stating this.

Action: Clerk

139.4.2 Rabbits at Small Gains. Cllr David Sims reported increasing problems throughout the area including the allotments, the sports field and the adjacent cycle and tennis club sites. It was agreed that he would speak to landowners and club representatives and pursue options to address the issue.

139.4.3 Litter at Small Gains. Cllr David Sims reported that the litter problem reported to the Annual Parish Meeting was associated with the perpetrators of the minor vandalism that was increasingly a problem. He would discuss the issue again with the PCSO and the Accies representative.

139.4.4 Luton Airport. The Chairman reported on an email informing of possible changes to noise regulations. It was noted that the working group re airport noise was no longer active. Anyone willing to take on a role re this, such as reading through documents and alerting the Parish Council to any issues relevant to the village, would be welcomed.

139.4.5 Litter on verges. The Chairman reported on an email from a resident of the Mordens who had collected litter from the road leading out of Ashwell in that direction. She was concerned that the Highways verge cutting had spread, and worsened, the problem. Cllr Madeleine Legg reported that the annual village litter pick had, as usual, taken place in March. She would to pass the information on to others who she hoped would continue to be involved. County Councillor Steve Jarvis reported that this had been an issue in other areas; for some reason verge cutting had been carried out earlier than usual this year and had not been well-timed re village litter picks. He would endeavour to ensure that the timing was better co-ordinated in future. It was agreed the lady be thanked for her litter picking efforts. **Action: Clerk/Deputy Clerk**

139.4.6 Henry Colbron Trust. Cllr David Short reported that there had been no further communications from the trustees, the Merchant Taylors' Company, since they had published their notice inviting bids to the trust. The Parish Council had publicised the notice but had been told that the trustees were not intending to visit the village this year.

139.4.7 School. Cllr David Short reported that the head was concerned that the re-painting of the yellow line parking restrictions in Silver Street had not taken place during the school holidays as had been hoped. County Councillor Steve Jarvis reported that for reasons of cost efficiency all the yellow, and white, line painting was scheduled to be done at the same time; he did not know why this was still pending.

See also 140.3 below.

139.4.8 Museum. Cllr Martin Hoffman (a trustee of the Museum charity in his own right) reported that grants had been received from NHDC and others and the fundraising was 'looking good'.

139.4.9 Moss Cottage Homes. Cllr Madeleine Legg (a trustee of the charity nominated by the Parish Council) reported that the recently refurbished cottage was now occupied. Double glazing would be installed this year in two of the units with the others the following year.

139.4.10 Neighbourhood Watch signage. The Chairman reported a request from a parishioner for additional signs around the village. It was agreed that the PCSO be requested to supply a few more signs as it was felt that these did have some deterrent effect and residents found them reassuring. **Action: Clerk/Deputy Clerk**

139.4.11 Hunts Close, field off Ashwell Street. The Chairman reported on an email received from parishioner Mrs Sarah Talks. She was aware that the field could be subject to development and raised concerns re the access, valued trees and significant archaeology. The site was also the location of an air crash when two bombers collided during WW2 and had resulted in 12 deaths. She was of the view that the site should be marked with a suitable memorial and would continue to investigate the incident. Parish councillors requested that she keep them updated. **Action: Clerk**

139.4.12 Community Assets. Cllr David Short reported that he had identified a volunteer who might be willing to progress this.

139.5 Items from other organisations/bodies.

139.5.1 Cllr David Sims reported that further information had been received about the Parish Tree Warden scheme operated by South Cambridgeshire.

See also 146.6 re working group/protection of valued trees.

139.5.2 Arbury Banks. Cllr Martin Hoffman reported that another newsletter had been received from the organisers of the Beacons of the Past -Hillforts project.

139.5.3 Highways matters. County Councillor Steve Jarvis gave updates on the following;

(i) Restricted time parking spaces outside retail outlets. There had been no objections re the shop or Crumps. The residents of London House in the High Street had raised objections to the two spaces to serve the pharmacy and the estate agent as these would fall across part of their frontage. Rhubarb & Mustard had voiced their concerns that there had been no proposal made for spaces outside their premises. A possible amendment had been suggested which would put one space outside the estate agent and one the other side of the drive to the flats, outside Vine Cottage. This would address the objections from London House residents, take up less space and therefore leave more for other parking, and move the timed spaces closer to Rhubarb

& Mustard. Parish councillors reiterated their view that residents who had off-street parking, as was the case for London House, should use it rather than use on-street spaces. It was agreed that the views of the Vine Cottage resident be sought before the Parish Council confirmed its thinking.

(ii) West End safety proposals. Design work on this had commenced.

(iii) 20mph zone. Additional speed measurements for the proposed extension at West End were to be undertaken.

Concerns from a parishioner re the poor state of Northfields Road were noted. She had questioned why works had been undertaken on other, but less busy, local roads. County Councillor Steve Jarvis reported that any surface works required, as well as re-cutting of the grips to improve drainage, would be investigated.

Concerns from a parishioner re the increasing number of heavy vehicles in the centre of the village were noted. County Councillor Steve Jarvis reported that enforcement of restrictions was difficult as there would be exemptions for access. In some places restrictions on short sections of road had been tried but had not been entirely successful.

Cllr Bridget Macey reported ongoing concerns re the overhanging vegetation at the junction of Claybush Road and Ashwell Street. It was noted that a letter had been sent some weeks ago to the resident requesting that their hedge be cut back.

See also items 139.4.5 and 139.4.7 above.

Standing orders reinstated from here.

140. Matters of general report from previous meetings

140.1 Village map. Cllr Graham Lee reported that the proposals for a new village map had been circulated. It was resolved that the proposals be progressed. **Action: GEL/Deputy Clerk**

140.2 Village entrance sign (Ashwell 1100). It was reported that the new sign to be installed in Station Road was scheduled for delivery tomorrow.

140.3 (April Council, 128.5.5) Ashwell School/copies of letters written to Sir Oliver Heald, MP, from class 6 children. Cllr David Short reported that he would review these and compile a report so that responses could be made to the school and Sir Oliver. **Action: CDS**

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

141.1 Cemetery (Cllr Madeleine Legg)

(i) Chapel of Rest/ new tenancy agreement with Neville Funeral Services. Cllr Madeleine Legg reported that there had been further exchanges with the Parish Council's solicitor. She was hopeful that the matter was now soon to be completed.

141.2 Recreation Ground including the Pavilion and Public Toilets

(Cllrs Mark White and Madeleine Legg) Cllr Madeleine Legg reported;

(i) There had been several further incidents of bagged dog waste left on the pitches. (ii) Minor roof works had been completed to the pavilion. (iii) Discussions with potential suppliers for new toilet facilities were ongoing.

141.3 Playground (Cllr Madeleine Legg) Cllr Madeleine Legg reported;

(i) Minor works to the equipment were being progressed. (ii) She was hopeful that the proposals for the skateboard area and for new equipment would be progressed by the new Parish Council.

141.4 The Springs (Cllr Martin Hoffman) Cllr Martin Hoffman reported;

(i) His regular site inspection would take place over the next few weeks. (ii) Concerns about the removal of vegetation from part of the banks area would be discussed with the volunteer group.

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

See 139.4.2 and 139.4.3 above.

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

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

Cllr Martin Hoffman reported;

(i) Minor works to the tree seat on Carters Pond would be undertaken as soon as a suitable supplier had been identified.

141.8 Street furniture (Cllr Bridget Macey) Nothing to report.

141.9 St Mary's Churchyard grounds maintenance (Cllr Martin Hoffman) Nothing to report.

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

141.11 War Memorial The Chairman reported that keeping the new hedge adequately watered had been challenging due to the dry weather.

142. Items re other authorities/organisations;

To note any reports or correspondence received.

142.1 Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) See 139.5 above re Herts Highways.

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

143. 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.

143.1 New consultations on applications received from NHDC

(See also appendix with summary table below).

NHDC Case Ref No: 19/00638/LBC 1 Foresters Cottages, High Street.

Listed Building Consent: Replace ground floor white painted single glazed softwood windows and doors at rear and side of house with white painted double glazed windows.

It was **resolved** that, as there were no objections, a recommendation be sent to the NHDC Planning Officer that permission be granted.

Action: Deputy Clerk

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

It was noted that no further information had been received.

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

The following submission made by the resident to NHDC was noted:

NHDC Case Ref No: 19/00817/TCA 103 High Street.

Apple-Crown reduce by up to 2m and thin by approx. 25%.

See also item 139.5.1 above and 146.6 below re working group/protection of valued trees.

143.4 Development at the Cooke Engineering site.

143.4.1 Further concerns from a parishioner and parish councillors were noted. The Chairman reported that he was aware of some progress with the hard landscaping. It was agreed that the developer be written to again re the poor state of the site and adjacent areas, including the following requests, (i) assurance that the rubbish was to be cleared and the damage to be rectified on the verges adjacent to the site and the grass banks to the frontage of houses in Ashwell Street, (ii) was the surface material laid on the right of way consistent with the rules for disabled access, (iii) were the bollards in accordance with rules re access for the right of way, (iv) what were their plans to reinstate vegetation that had been removed.

Action: Clerk

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

It was noted again that a response to the letter sent on 15th January, and follow-up phone calls, to the agent acting for Beck Homes Ltd. had not been received.

143.6 Local Plan Examination.

It was noted that the Parish Council's response to the NHDC consultation on the revised draft following the modifications requested by the Inspector had been submitted.

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

144. Reports re Finance matters

144.1 Annual Audit for the financial year 2018-19. The following were noted; (i) Documents supplied to the Internal Auditor. (ii) The arrangements and dates for the exercise of public rights. (iii) The arrangements and dates for the submission to the External Auditor including the additional material following the Parish Council's inclusion in the randomly selected 5% of councils to be the subject of an intermediate rather than a basic audit. (iv) The Annual Return sections to be completed by the Parish Council to be an agenda item for the June Council meeting.

144.2 Financial Regulations. The procedures to be put in place for the new financial year to comply with the new model adopted were noted.

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

144.4 Proposal for approval of the monthly summary of accounts.
 Proposal for approval of the monthly summary of accounts (see appendix).

It was *resolved* to accept the proposal.

Action: Clerk

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

The Chairman reported that amended contracts had been discussed and agreed re the Clerk and Deputy Clerk to incorporate the latest version of the NALC model. It was noted that for both these employees there was an agreement that the NALC model and any national pay rises awarded be followed.

146. Reports from working groups

146.1 Neighbourhood Plan Group (leader Cllr David Short, Cllrs Graham Lee, Madeleine Legg and parishioners) Cllr David Short reported that a meeting was scheduled to review the amended version from the consultant.

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

146.3 Yearbook Group (leader Cllr David Short) Cllr David Short reported that a meeting was scheduled to review the last edition and discuss plans for the future. He did not intend to put himself forward for the position of group leader. The Chairman thanked Cllr Short for all his hard work.

146.4 Local business support (leader Cllr Graham Lee)

See 139.5.3 above re proposals for restricted time parking spaces outside retail premises and 140.1 re the new map to include retail premises.

146.5 Village Sports Day (leader Guy Reed) The arrangements, including insurance cover and risk assessment, for Sunday 19th May were noted.

146.6 Protection of valued trees. (leader David Sims) Cllr David Sims gave an update on the work ongoing to identify trees considered to be at risk and to submit applications for Tree Protection Orders to NHDC. Submissions re trees in the area earmarked for development at the junction of Station Road and Ashwell Street would be made shortly. The input of the parishioner volunteer involved was greatly appreciated.

147. The Chairman noted that this was the last meeting of this Parish Council. Both the Chairman and the Vice-chairman thanked those councillors who had not re-stood for all their hard work and looked forward to working with the two new members.

Meeting closed 9.35pm.

Forthcoming meeting dates:

First meeting, and AGM, of the new Parish Council TUESDAY 14th May 2019, 8pm in the Parish Room.
 June Council meeting, Wednesday 5th June 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

Consultations on recent planning and listed building applications received from NHDC - as at 1st May 2019				
Address	Application Number	Brief description	Ashwell PC Comments	North Herts Decision
1 Forresters Cottages, 14 High Street	19/00638/LBC	Replace ground floor white painted single glazed softwood windows and doors at rear and side of house with white painted double glazed windows.	PC Decision sent to NHDC: recommendation that permission be GRANTED	Pending
Land Jct of Ashwell St & Station Rd	19/00455/FP	Erection of 9 (6 No. Three Bedroom, 3 No. Four bedroom) dwellings with associated parking, amenity space and associated ancillary works, following demolition of existing redundant structures. Creation of new access from Station Road.	Planning Committee Wed 3rd April. PC Decision sent to NHDC: recommendation that permission be REFUSED	Pending
43 Dixies Close	19/00399/FPH	Two storey side extension, single storey front porch extension with extended canopy.	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 - Summary for May Council 2019			
	RECEIPTS		£
1	Bickerdikes Garden centre	Advert fee payment for 2019 yearbook advert	125.00
2	Nevilles Funeral Services	Rent for Chapel of Rest (April)	68.75
3	Paul Norman	Advert fee payment for 2019 yearbook advert	40.00
4	Angela Whitehead	Advert fee payment for 2019 yearbook advert	40.00
5	Edward Metcalfe	Advert fee payment for 2019 yearbook advert	70.00
6	Broad Oak Manor	Advert fee payment for 2019 yearbook advert	200.00
7	Christina Winters	Advert fee payment for 2019 yearbook advert	70.00
8	The Walkers Partnership	Advert fee payment for 2019 yearbook advert	70.00
9	Olivers Opticians	Advert fee payment for 2019 yearbook advert	350.00
10	Alex Holmes Ashwell Stage School	Advert fee payment for 2019 yearbook advert	70.00
11	Redman Stewart Ltd (Country Properties)	Advert fee payment for 2019 yearbook advert	200.00
12	NHDC	Half of the yearly precept	39,500.00
13	Allotment tenant	Allotment payment for plot 7a	10.00
14	Neville Funeral Services	Advert fee payment for 2019 yearbook advert	200.00
15	Ashwell Garage Ltd	Advert fee payment for 2019 yearbook advert	70.00
16	Allotment tenant	Allotment payment for plot 11	20.00
17	Liric Accountants	Advert fee payment for 2019 yearbook advert	125.00
18	Amber Osteopathy	Advert fee payment for 2019 yearbook advert	200.00
19	Allotment tenant	Allotment payment for plot 4b	10.00
20	Allotment tenant	Allotment payment for plot 13b	10.00
21	Allotment tenant	Allotment payment for plot 1	20.00
22	Allotment tenant	Allotment payment for plot 2 and 13a	20.00
23	Allotment tenant	Allotment payment for plot 8b	20.00
24	T Wright	Advert fee payment for 2019 yearbook advert	40.00
		TOTAL	41,548.75
	PAYMENTS		
1	EON	Electricity public toilets - invoice dated 06/04/19	8.88
2	NHDC	(invoice requested from NHDC)	35.00
3	NHDC	Waste collection for the springs - invoice dated 01/04/19	110.50
4	NHDC	Waste collection for the rec	99.45
5	Affinity for Business	Pavilion water (21/01/19)	230.15
6	Clerk	Clerk's salary	1,280.09
7	Clerk	Clerk's reimbursements	45.85
8	Deputy Clerk	Deputy Clerk's Salary	699.25
9	HCC Pensions-LGPS Account,	Clerk & Deputy Clerk Pension	677.98
10	Grounds Officer	Grounds Officer salary	149.20
11	ECO	Environmental Cleansing Officer salary	225.60
12	HMRC accounts ref 321PF00003624	tax&NI to Inland Revenue	368.48
13	Edwards Cleaning & Maintenance	Public Toilet Cleaning - March	180.00
14	Edwards Cleaning & Maintenance	Public Toilet Cleaning - April	188.00
15	SLCC	Annual membership	175.00
16	Duo Design	Website monthly fee - April	30.00
17	Hertford Picture Framing	Cemetery memorial plaque	37.20
18	Brilliant Lawns	Rec Grass Cutting - March	110.00
19	Brilliant Lawns	Rec Grass Cutting - fertilizer treatment	309.00
20	Brilliant Lawns	Rec Grass Cutting - April	220.00
21	Horne Builders	Pavilion roof maintenance	270.00
22	D J Granger Grounds Maintenance Ltd	Grounds Maintenance Worksheet 45	444.00
23	D J Granger Grounds Maintenance Ltd	Grounds Maintenance Worksheet 45a	216.00
24	Alison Eardley	Neighbourhood Plan Consultant	2,880.00
25	Community Heartbeat	Defib new adult pads	50.40
26	HAPTC	Annual subscription	785.67
		TOTAL	9,825.70
MONEY AT BANK			
		Current Account 30/4/2019	£41,735.27
		Reserve Account 29/4/2019	£20,609.19