

## **ASHFORD HILL with HEADLEY PARISH COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 12<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2023**

#### **Present**

Mr J Woodford (Chair), Mrs K Saunders (Vice Chair), Mr P Clark, Mr S Dunn, Mrs K Parker, Mr J Sunley and the Clerk, Mr S Marshall.

Councillor Mike Bound and Christine Allwright were also present.

#### **1. Apologies**

Apologies had been received from Cllr Hoskins, Cllr Morrow, Cllr Mellor and Cllr Rhatigan.

#### **2. Declaration of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **3. Minutes of previous meeting for approval**

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2023 were approved.

#### **4. Matters arising**

Matters arising were dealt with under the individual Parish Councillors' reports.

#### **5. Highways**

A general discussion ensued regarding the ever-increasing number of significant potholes on the roads and lanes throughout Ashford Hill and Headley, which were considered as dangerous to users of the highways. The Chair encouraged Councillors to report the potholes on the HCC website as the works that received more individual loggings of the road problems appeared to receive faster attention. The Chair reiterated that he had been in communication with Sheila Pinney - Universal Services DMT and Executive Support of Hampshire County Council - about the flooding issue along the B3051. The Chair also reported the green waste fly tipping in the layby nearest to Ashford Hill House.

#### **6. Planning Applications**

23/01184/HSE – Woodside, Ashford Hill Road, Headley

- Proposed side and front extensions with associated alterations

*No objection*

23/01174/FUL – Land adjacent to Knightsbridge Lodge, Newbury Road, Headley

- Erection of 6 no. dwellings

*No objection*

T/00208/23/TPO – Poplars, Chapel Lane, Ashford Hill

- 3 no. lime trees to prune to varying heights

*The Parish Council would recommend that all trees should only be pollarded to a height of 9 metres.*

23/01286/FUL – Paddock land at Woodland Park Farm, Ram Alley, Ashford Hill

- Erection of 1 no. dwelling with associated parking

*The Parish Council objected to the planning application on the grounds that the application falls outside of the Settlement Boundary, it is on a greenfield site and is incongruous with the Neighbourhood Plan.*

## 7. **Reports**

### **County Councillor**

Cllr Mellor had sent the following report to the meeting;

#### **“Cost of living support**

Hampshire County Council has announced plans for how £14.2million of additional funding will be used to help local households struggling with the cost of food and energy prices. The funding is an extension of Government’s Household Support Fund (HSF) until the end of March 2024. They will continue to work closely with other local organisations including district and borough councils, education settings, charities, and neighbourhood groups to ensure that eligible households receive support with food, energy and water bills and assistance with essential household items. This includes up to £200,000 of funding to provide locally based food and energy advice services, alongside practical help with costs.

The funding allocation includes:

- £800,000 to support the community pantry network and £361,000 for organisations supporting unpaid carers
- £800,000 in community grants for locally based organisations to support local residents
- £4,442,870 to district and borough councils to provide food vouchers and support with exceptional housing costs

- £2,845,622 to schools and other educational establishments to offer support at their own discretion to families most in need
- £460,000 in direct fuel support to vulnerable adults
- £715,000 in food vouchers to foster carers and connected carers

Details of how to seek support can be found at the connect4communities website <https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/childrenandfamilies/connectforcommunities>

## **Greening campaigns**

More communities across Hampshire can be empowered to take positive action on climate change over the next three years, thanks to almost £0.5million of National Lottery funding awarded to the Greening Campaign, with support from Hampshire County Council. This could include improving the energy efficiency of people's homes, reducing CO2, reducing waste, reusing and repairing, being more sustainable through locally grown produce, and providing green spaces for wildlife to thrive.

The Greening Campaign is a structured process, guiding communities to act on climate change and biodiversity locally. Guidance, based on experience gained from working with over 200 other groups across the UK, provides a blueprint for success for each step of the way, starting with motivating people in the community to get involved, through to making it fun and rewarding.

Two events are being held for those wanting to know more - on 12th and 15th June. Information or booking at <https://greening-campaign.org/events/>

## **Fostering campaign**

A new campaign has been launched by Hampshire County Council to encourage residents to consider fostering an unaccompanied asylum-seeking child, whose numbers are increasing locally and nationally. Fostering one of these children can be extremely rewarding – by being a positive and enabling presence to support them to access education, stability in everyday life and to become settled into a new culture and country. More information can be found at <https://www.hants.gov.uk/uasc>.

As an alternative to fostering, residents can join the Council's Innovation Volunteers service, which supports local children, young people and families overcome challenges – <https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/childrenandfamilies/innovationvolunteers>

## **New support for buses**

Operators of nine bus routes have secured funding totalling £3.5m from Hampshire County Council, protecting their services for the next four years. Buses locally are under pressure with bus passenger numbers locally and nationally still below pre-pandemic levels. This is making it more challenging for the operators to deliver viable services, especially when coupled with increased operating costs and driver shortages. However, the Government has extended the £2 bus fare cap to the end of October 2023, rising to just £2.50 until November 2024, so this is very much an affordable way to travel when services are available.

## **Rural verge cutting**

Hampshire Highways have now begun their seasonal grass cutting programme. This can be an emotive subject to many, especially in the nesting season. The department work closely with the conservation charity, Plantlife UK, to ensure that their work promotes biodiversity; in particular, they try to avoid cutting grass at ecologically important times, and particularly at sensitive sites.

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For safety reasons however, there are some locations where roadside grass still needs to be mown to maintain adequate visibility and sight lines, for example on the approaches to roundabouts or at junctions. More information can be found at <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/grasscutting>

## **Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan consultation**

The consultation on the update to the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan closed at the end of January this year. The summary report on the responses can be seen at <https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/strategic-planning/hampshire-minerals-waste-plan/minerals-waste-plan-partial-update-consultation>. These responses are being considered and the next stage is for the Minerals and Waste Authority to publish a response.”

## **Borough Councillor’s report**

Cllr Mike Bound as a newly elected Borough Councillor, introduced himself to the meeting, having sent a brief resume to Parish Councillors regarding his areas of responsibility within the Borough Council.

## **Chair of the Parish Council**

The Chair’s verbatim report: -

### **“Stolen goal post socket metal cover**

Within weeks of installing the new goal post holes in Ashford Hill, one of the metal goal post holes’ covers has been stolen and the area around the post hole kicked and damaged. Please can the person who has taken this cover return it. They are no value to you and are required to keep dogs, children, and other animals from hurting themselves. I see this as a very callous act of theft and vandalism and the cost for such damage just comes from us having to increase our precept charges.

### **Bike tracks still leading into the wood behind Butler’s Garage and Ashford Hill Meadows**

This is my annual reminder that bikes are **only** permitted on bridleways or dedicated cycle tracks. Footpaths are not to be used by cyclists and there no such permission within the woods within Ashford Hill, other than the bridleway from Haughurst Hill to Wheathold.

If you are unclear where you can go look up the route on the Internet, it's all there on **footpathmap.co.uk** and shows the bridleway routes as well!"

Following the Chair's report, the meeting discussed the recent acts of vandalism which includes graffiti on signs as well as the new goal post metal cover. It was agreed that an article in the Parish Magazine may bring parents attention to such vandalism.

### **Parish Councillors**

Cllr Clark reported that he would look at the graffiti on signage in the water meadows which Cllr Hoskins had previously agreed to investigate the removal of. \*

Cllr Clark further reported that he was still investigating the prospect of having allotments for residents of Ashford Hill. Cllr Clark had welcomed the new Vicar to the parish on behalf of the Parish Council.

Cllr Sunley reported the removal of the dead tree on the Ashford Hill recreation ground. Cllr Sunley agreed to add a new cap to the exposed goal socket on the recreation ground and to add topsoil to the area of the goal socket that had been disturbed. \*

Cllr Sunley had sent to Councillors an outline of the discussion with the management of Jiminy Cricket pre-school regarding their outdoor expansion plans. After discussion regarding the proposal, the Parish Council accepted the pre-school's proposal which had been firmly endorsed by Cllr Sunley. Cllr Sunley would report back to the pre-school with the Parish Council's decision together with the Chair's request to keep the surrounding areas tidier with particular reference to the tyres that had been left out.

Cllr Sunley further reported that he would be attending the Ashford Hill Village Hall meeting of trustees as the Parish Council's representative and would report back at the September meeting of the Parish Council. \*

Cllr Dunn reported that the Westcotec equipment demonstration date had been postponed and an alternate date would be sought. \*

Cllr Saunders had received some adverse comment about the appropriateness of the new school gates which Cllr Clark would look into to enquire if planning permission had been sought or if planning permission was in fact required. \*

### **Clerk to the Council**

Following a question from Cllr Clark, the Clerk explained that there was not a set amount of proposed expenditure that invoked the requirement to obtain alternative quotes being obtained. A general financial judgement was taken by the RFO (Responsible Finance Officer) together with Councillors, as to whether the expenditure is within the remit of the Parish Council as well as the cost offering value for money and comparable to the market cost. Significant sums of expenditure such as contracts and projects always required the process of competitive tendering to be undertaken. Cllr Clark thanked the Clerk & RFO for the clarification.

8. **Recess**

Discussion ensued as to the best location on the Headley recreation ground for a new picnic bench to best serve the needs of the users of the Community Shop.

9. **Financial statement**

The Lloyds TSB current account of the Parish Council stood at £28,268.77.

The Lloyds TSB deposit account of the Parish Council stood at £24,284.94.

10. **Accounts for approval & payment**

Mr S Marshall - Clerk's salary & expenses July - September 2023 - £5417.79

Mr J Kirkby – Litter Warden's salary July – September 2023 - £504.10

Mr P Kemp – Litter Warden's salary July – September 2023 & PPE - £786.29

Scofell Commercial Landscapes – Monthly grounds maintenance – May-August - £5436.28

Bramley Business Services – PAYE admin. & Annual audit - £475.00

HMRC – Tax & NICs - July – September 2023 - £462.31

Mr N Haynes – Headley coronation event expenses - £116.27

Mrs K Parker – Headley coronation event expenses - £216.30

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.34pm which had started at 7.29pm.