

ASHFORD HILL with HEADLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 11th FEBRUARY 2019

AT ASHFORD HILL VILLAGE HALL

Present

Mr J Woodford (Chairman), Mr S Hiscock (Vice Chairman), Mr S Liddeatt, Mrs K Saunders
Mr G Stewart, Mr R Tucker, Mrs R Wilson and the Clerk, Mr S Marshall.

Cllrs Mellor and Rhatigan and members of the public were also present.

The Chairman opened the meeting by requesting that Parish Councillors address all Councillors with the appropriate level of civility and direct their comments to fellow Councillors through the Chairman.

1. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Cllr Sherlock.

2. Declaration of interest

Cllr Hiscock declared an interest in the maintenance of the recreation grounds as the Council's nominated contractor.

3. Minutes of previous meeting for approval

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 14th January 2019 were approved and signed as a true record by the Chairman with one alteration as to a location.

4. Matters arising

Matters relating to the recreation grounds as far as work quotations and woodland inspection were referred to future meetings.

Cllr Stewart had distributed indicative plans for a new changing room facility on Headley recreation ground. The Councillor later reported that a site meeting had been organised for the 18 March 2019 with the Borough Council to discuss the plan and potential partial funding for the project.

5. Highways

The Chairman reported that the grit bin at the top of Ashford Hill was low on grit and a photo had been taken and shared with the Clerk. After the snow fall the weight had moved some branches at the top of Ashford Hill to dangerously overhang into the carriageway which should be attended to by the Highways department as soon as possible.

The Chairman reported on the large volume of litter up from The Ship Inn to the previous Pineapple public house which had reminded him that a date needed to be set for the annual village litter collections. The Chairman also commented on the fact that the abandoned traffic sign was still located on the verge opposite Old Lane.

Cllr Hiscock reported that work on the drain at the previous Harrow public house would begin in March 2019 and that due to intervention from local contractors the perimeter hedge at Hollybush had been cut.

Cllr Stewart reported that work by the Lengthman's scheme would start during the week to clean road signs and to complete the several jobs still outstanding.

Cllr Tucker reported on the large potholes in need of repair on the Ashford Hill Road towards Ashford Hill and near to the dwelling Pleasant Place.

Cllr Liddeatt reported on the water puddling at the end of Old Lane near to Pam's Bridge. The Councillor also reported that the pothole at the top of the hill in Ashford Hill which had been reported twice had still not been repaired.

The Chairman agreed the date for the next annual litter pick within the villages to be Sunday 10 March 2019 at 9.30am.

6. Planning Applications

The planning applications received by the Parish Council during the period were not objected to by the Council.

7. Reports

County Councillor's verbatim report

"1. The budget for 2019/20 will be voted on at next Thursday's (14/02) full Council meeting. Council Tax increase at 2.99%; Police precept increase. Biggest issue has been the enormous increase in Adult and Social Care - one example being the additional £47M on salaries due law changes/wage increases and more care workers and enacting the policy of providing more care at home rather than fast tracking into care homes. Additionally, 1000 more people will reach 85 thus adding pressure. Ensuring HCC has the right infrastructure means that over the next 3 years, some £480M- (£194.7M in 2019/20) will be spent on roads in the county. However, there will be a marginal decrease in Highways Maintenance but this should not affect the substantial performance improvement as the Capital Expenditure in 2018/19 on such as Dragon Blasters will realise big efficiency/ productivity improvements. Hampshire has the second lowest County Council Tax in the country - currently just £5 more than financially troubled Somerset.

2. Past two weeks have been challenging with the heavy snowfall. It was expected and some 5000 tons of gritting was undertaken using on a 24/7 basis some 43 trucks. However, best laid plans were hit by the two major lorry jack-knifing incidents on the M3 which lead to virtual gridlock in Basingstoke as traffic was diverted on to the A30/A33 at both junction 6/7 and 8/9.

Additionally, there was an incident at Headley on the A339 which temporarily paralysed the traffic as rescue vehicles were initially unable to reach the incident due the resultant jam and the narrow characteristic of the A339.

Fortunately, the fast thaw that followed the snow did not realise much flooding at all and this was due to good gully clearance by local councils and HCC. The water dissipated quickly. (added comment....no visible increase 'yet' in the potholes as last year's 'Beast from the East'.) Cllr Mellor advised too of the provision of small snow plough attachments that HCC had provided to some farmers some time ago in rural areas with some 100 throughout the county assisting in clearing their own accesses. There were 5 locations in his area with such e.g. Stacey's etc.

To the future, Cllr Mellor was very pleased that Ashford Hill with Headley PC had participated in the discussions at Kingsclere reference the future of the A339 in the light of the planned massive expansion plans for Sandleford, Greenham Common and even Thatcham adding to the growth of traffic generated by the Manydown project. Whilst the meeting gave those attending an opportunity to air their issues, many were 'aged' such as the AWE commuters on the B3051, the caravans in the summer on Swan Street in Kingsclere etc.... All valid but hopefully the next report from HCC Transport Strategy estimated in 6 months' time will realise some ideas for tackling the problems of estimated volumes of traffic, inability to right turn on the A339, West Berks plans to route traffic NOT through Newbury etc."

Borough Councillor's report

Cllr Rhatigan reported that Sascron had confirmed that there were fewer vehicular movements being directed through Ashford Hill. Cllr Rhatigan encouraged residents to use the new restaurant opening at the previous Pineapple PH location. Cllr Rhatigan confirmed that a meeting would be held that week to discuss the implications of the proposed amalgamation of local health centres. One potential implication being the need to provide transport for some residents who did not have their own transport to attend appointments. Cllr Rhatigan confirmed a meeting with Sovereign Housing to discuss the affordable housing element of the new Ashford Hill housing development was to be re-arranged. The Councillor also confirmed that the Environment Agency would need to confirm that the appropriate level of cleanliness was being achieved by the housing development insofar as its effluent discharge into the local water stream.

Chairman's report

Public Access Defibrillator - The British Heart Foundation supports local schemes under their Public Access Defibrillator (PAD) community package but the Parish Council was not awarded any funding this time. The Clerk had looked for alternative options we can purchase, supplied by Primary Healthcare at a cost of £1500.00 (Inc. VAT). The Chairman asked the meeting for approval to purchase the defibrillator unit once we had approval from the Community Shop to locate such a unit on an exterior wall.

Local Table Tennis league - Cllr Wilson had asked the Chairman to mention that the Ashford Hill league was mentioned in the recent publication of the NWN newspaper as being at the top of its league. The Chairman wanted to congratulate the league on this achievement on behalf of the Parish Council.

The Chairman and Cllr Wilson had attended a meeting and site visit with Mr Alfred Nortey from HCC's Highways' department on the 26th January 2019. The following are notes from Mr Nortey following the meeting;

"Thornford Road; the summary of which point towards good compliance levels.

1. Cllr Woodford confirmed that the SIDs that have been deployed in the area were acquired with help from AWE and that their Speed Watch programme is not currently active.
2. It was further confirmed that the data captured from the SID on the B3051 indicated non-compliance, especially on Sunday mornings.
3. Also established was that the ongoing development on Ashford Hill Road is likely to be completed by the end of 2019.
4. The situation relating to a proposed car park which could be utilised by the school is currently unknown.
5. With regard to new traffic surveys (to be funded by the Parish Council at a cost of £245 per site with a likely discount for multiple sites), the following locations were put forward:
 - a. Near the Village Hall on the B3051.
 - b. At an agreed location on the C111 Ashford Hill Road (choice between a point either within the 30mph or the 40mph section).
6. It was agreed that a total of 6 new gateway features be installed at 3 or 4 different locations, mainly across Ashford Hill territory.
 - a. Gates to be manufactured from rigid wood effect material in white.
 - b. Whilst an indicative cost of £500 per gate (excluding design fees and associated works such as signs, removal of old furniture/signs etc.) was presented to the Parish, the true cost of manufacture and delivery of 2.3m high (1.8m above ground) by 1.2m wide gate, complete with three horizontal slats is circa **£605**.
 - c. As explained to Cllrs Woodford and Wilson, cost of gateway feature depends on the design i.e. number of horizontal and/or vertical slats as specified below:
 1. 1.7m high (1.2m above ground) by 2m wide, complete with two horizontal slats and five vertical slats is circa **£935**.
 2. 1.7m high (1.2m above ground) by 2m wide, complete with four horizontal slats is circa **£635**.

With respect to Cllr Woodford's query relating to virtual pinch points on the B3051, this can be realised at the design stage of the CFI process once the overall carriageway width is known. Given the character of the B3051, in that it is of significance to all traffic (including through traffic), we are constrained by the width of carriageway that should be maintained (at least 5.5m to allow 2 lorries to pass each other). As a general rule, the typical dimension of a bus or lorry between wing mirrors is 3.0m but more importantly, the factors to take into account include the volume of vehicular traffic and pedestrian activity, traffic composition, road curvature (bends require greater width to accommodate larger vehicles) and traffic speeds."

Parish Councillors

Cllr Wilson reiterated her concern regarding the effectiveness of the screening planned for the new housing development at Ashford Hill.

Cllr Liddeatt reported on the ongoing problem of dog fouling on the Ashford Hill recreation ground which Cllr Rhatigan suggested may be ameliorated by the production and distribution of an information leaflet to dog owners. Cllr Liddeatt confirmed that cyclists and motor cyclists are not permitted to use local footpaths and if seen using the footpaths they should be confronted and informed by walkers.

Discussion ensued and was continued after the meeting with regard to the true situation regarding public rights of way within the area.

Cllr Tucker expressed his concern regarding the transport of large amounts of soil by tractor vehicles using the public highway which was a matter being investigated by the local PCSO.

Cllr Saunders expressed her concern regarding the ongoing issue of speed reduction on the highway from St Paul's church to the primary school following concerns from parents using the pavement. The Chairman confirmed that the Parish Council had done all that it could within its sphere of influence to address this ongoing problem and confirmed that it would be useful if parents were informed to write to other local authorities to express their concern regarding this safety issue.

Cllr Stewart reported that he had arranged a meeting in March with BDBC officials to discuss the potential use of the Local Infrastructure Fund to partially finance the new changing room facility on Headley recreation ground. Cllr Stewart reiterated his concern regarding potentially dangerous trees on the recreation ground that were in need of urgent attention. Discussion ensued with regard to when it was convenient for all interested parties to meet and review the scope of work that was required to be undertaken in the management of the tree stock on the recreation ground in Headley.

Cllr Hiscock requested that Sovereign Housing be reminded of their legal responsibility to keep drainage ditches cleared adjacent to Paynes Close in Headley which act as a rainwater conveyance and hence avoid localised flooding. Cllr Hiscock had been contacted by a resident for permission to plant out a disused cattle trough with plants to be located where the BT telephone box had previously been located in Headley. The idea was well received by Councillors and Cllr Hiscock agreed to facilitate the initiative.

Clerk to the Council

The Clerk had nothing further to report that had not already been covered by Councillors.

8. Recess

The Chairman was asked to update the public with regard to the progress being made to devise the Neighbourhood Plan but the Chairman was not aware of any significant progress other than attempts to establish a committee of interested residents who were willing to undertake the work required to devise the plan.

9. Financial Statement

The Lloyds TSB current account of the Parish Council stood at £21,123.32.

The Lloyds TSB deposit account of the Parish Council stood at £25,097.18.

10. Accounts for approval and payment

Mr S Fernandez – Ashford Hill playground back boarding - £488.30

Fawns Recreational Services – Headley playground improvement project - £26,074.90

11. Correspondence received

No other correspondence had been received which warranted Councillors' attention.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.29 pm.