

ASHFORD HILL with HEADLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 14th JANUARY 2021

HELD VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Present

Mr J Woodford (Chairman), Mrs K Cochrane, Mrs K Saunders, Mr G Stewart, Mr P Wyatt and the Clerk, Mr S Marshall.

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

The meeting started at the earlier time of 7.00pm which will be the new start time of all Parish Council meetings conducted virtually.

1. Apologies

There had been no apologies. Cllr Rhatigan explained that Cllr Kinnear would be absent from meetings for a period of time.

2. Declaration of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of previous meeting for approval

The minutes of the last meeting held on Monday 14th December 2020 were approved.

4. Matters arising

Cllr Grist had previously confirmed that a collapsable bollard would be recommended for the car park entrance in order to allow pedestrian access at all times and the cost of this would be in the region of £80-100. Cllr Grist would try to source an installer for such an item. There had been no further information provided but the Clerk suggested that such an installation form part of the overall car park resurfacing project. The Chairman confirmed that a volunteer would still be needed to manage the bollard but it would allow the community to close the car park if it were thought to be appropriate.

Cllr Rhatigan confirmed that the Oakfield developer would consider installing a footpath to serve the new car park, when it reviewed the main structures of the development.

The Clerk had emailed Mrs Philippa Kent who had expressed an interest in the co-opted position of Parish Councillor and had sent a reminder email in the last few days. Cllr Saunders agreed to enquire as to whether there was still interest in the co-opted position.

5. Highways

Cllr Stewart reported on the development of pothole equipment by the company JCB which he hoped would assist with the ongoing problem of potholes in the area. Cllr Mellor confirmed that such development had been superseded by equipment known as 'Dragon Patchers' which had been purchased by HCC and were proving to be effective. The Chairman agreed that the area had been well served by such technology and there was little work outstanding in the area as far as pothole repairs.

Cllr Cochrane reported on work being undertaken by Southern Water but there still appeared to be a problem with flowing water across the highway which would prove problematic if the cold weather persisted. Cllr Cochrane was asked to report the matter to the Southern Water via their website in order to log the problem.*

The Chairman reported on a further matter involving Southern Water which had involved a mains leak in Chapel Lane which had washed silt and gravel onto the highway which had in turn caused the drains to block near to 'Pam's Bridge'. The Chairman would further report an issue with bridleway no. 6 which was excessively muddy and very arduous to traverse for horse and walker alike.

6. Planning Applications

No planning applications had been received.

7. Neighbourhood Plan

There were no matters to report.

8. Reports

County Councillor

Cllr Mellor's verbatim report;

“ COVID

No point in referring to the current data as it would be out of date by the time of the meeting. The data trend is not good although with 2.6M vaccinations to date, there is real hope for April onwards. Suffice to say, the testing centres have been ultra busy....with fast testing on those not showing symptoms now featuring heavily; at the same time Chineham (Hampshire Court Hotel) has been dealing with the vaccination of the over 85's for my ward.

Info over the weekend in respect of the Vaccine Distribution suggests that the frontliners have been vaccinated and new Vaccine Centres at Basingstoke Fire Station as well as the Hospital will be in action this week. Transport for the elderly remains a problem. Pharmacies (Boots) also joining the campaign although specific locations not known (as at 10 Jan). Surgeries are now gradually being brought into the exercise now that the NHS is looking after the Over 80's. Looks like the lockdown will be at least up to Mar 31; priority must be to get the schools back and today's advice re isolated case at our local primary schools is not what we wanted.

NB School Attendance was around 40% last week throughout the County.

Highways

Storm Bella did bring some flooding but again with two exceptions in my ward- as far as I could see - surface water cleared very quickly. Noted with interest that JCB announced to the UK at the weekend that they have developed some machinery that will allow local authorities the capability of handling "51 road repairs in 20 days;" HCC has had such equipment for 2-3 years and that is why we have performed well in the past year on pothole repair vis a vis many other authorities. The Dragon Patchers we employ do a lot more than that ! We also had all 7 gritters either working or on standby every night last week. Of local interest, subject to weather, the Thornford Road 'flooding' saga- see last months notes - hopefully will be completed this or next week as the equipment /manpower is 'booked'. Locally too, there is a road surfacing project on the A340 in Tadley (Dix Hill Cottage /Main Road) booked in for late March with a tentative 35 mile diversion. Diversions are for all vehicles that could normally use the affected highwaypublic transport, utility, HGV. Of course locals all know the shortest diversion be it through rural lanes and with this in mind, our Streetworks Manager is reviewing diversion routes before the notice is dispatched. As you know the A340 has some unique ONR requirements.

Consultations

Through the columns of your newsletter may I seek some promotion of two current consultations that are just being introduced. AHH generally does not submit on such but I do urge that you do make a comment or encourage your residents to make such.

a/ Chief Constable has launched a survey re her request to increase the police precept by up to £15 per annum (for Band D) so that HC can 'build on what has been achieved in past year'.....more Police Officers.....more focus on drugs and weapons off our streets.....an investment in forensic capability to enable officers to get evidence to bring more offenders to justice.....improve productivity. Of course, in this county we would like more focus on traveller issues, rural crime and there is no mention of this so the survey gives an opportunity to comment on this , traffic issues as well as other priorities. I have to say our MP is very supportive of Policing (naturally) but issue of SP30's do not feature as a priority although cars with markers and other ANPR related activity does. The link is hampshire-pcc.gov.uk

b/ Local Transport Plan; I have reported before on the reviews such as the Basingstoke Transport Strategy; the future activity for the A339 post Manydown under the South West Basingstoke Strategy where we had some meetings before Christmas but in view of all the infrastructure issues the need for a revised Local Transport Plan is now upon us. Local infrastructure often decides on other issues such as housing...,even hospitals, industrial estates, schools etc so we need input from the community. Please go to <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/localtransportplan4> Finance; although previous reports had reflected serious concern as to the lack of government funding to cover the loss of Revenue Support Grant and the additional expenditure on Adult Social Care and Children Services (which now total some 80% of our budget,) the picture is marginally rosier. As advised, the Auditors were not prepared to approve our Accounts for 2020 on the basis of future cash flow over the next 3 years. Pleased to advise that we expect the books to be approved in next few days, that a viable budget for 21/22 and beyond will be presented to Cabinet for approval on Feb 1st...e.g the Highways Budgets will be very similar to 2020/1 and the Capital programme on roads, school building will be full.”

Borough Councillor

Cllr Rhatigan acknowledged that the Borough was experiencing good levels of compliance with the national lockdown restrictions. Despite the obvious strain on NHS resources, the improved medical knowledge as to how to treat COVID patients was proving beneficial.

Cllr Rhatigan did not support the call for additional funding for the police service given the unacceptable findings of an investigation into the behaviour and attitudes of certain Officers within the constabulary. The opportunity to fund additional Officers should be met from the additional finding from central government in the Councillor’s opinion.

The ‘green bin’ collection had received complaints from residents and was being reviewed by an operational supervisor in the forthcoming week and Cllr Rhatigan would be personally reviewing the standard of operation of the crew.

Chairman

The Chairman’s verbatim report;

“I would like to thank Lorna Grist for her involvement with the Parish Council over the past couple of years, sadly her tenure has not been long enough as I felt she had many profound and useful ideas to support the Parish in. She leaves due to personal matters and we do hope these lead to a very happy outcome!

Two new Cllrs are needed to make our Parish Council viable!

If you feel your Parish Council is important to the local area we are now in very *URGENT* need of two Cllrs to make sure we can viably exist. Please do consider applying to join this small but important team, we aim to improve the area and work on projects to better everyone lives in the villages!! If so do think to apply either through the web site or direct to Steven Marshall our Parish Clerk
ashfordhillheadley@hotmail.co.uk

Projects for 2021 Ashford Hill and Headley

We have planned for 3 major projects to be carried out during 2021, these have been funded by our small increases in Precept over the past couple of years and prudent accounts keeping. These include phased repairs to the dragons teeth around Headley Reactional ground, the White Gates project and car park resurfacing in Ashford Hill. Funds for the resurfacing were raised through the Precept especially for this purpose.

“Walkers Only” signs in Holt and Butlers Copse and Great Haughurst Copse

I have been in contact with both landowners about bikes being used on the footpaths with our local woodland areas. They have given me permission to install HCC approved “Footpath - Walker Only” signs on current way marker locations.

Headley Football Pitches

I have been approached by Cold Ash Junior Girls and Boys FC who are in need of additional football fields to use. They would be interested to rent our pitches every Sunday for 2 hours and will pay a small fee of £30 per use. I have mentioned that parking in the area is fairly restricted and they will need to take care not to frustrate local residents. That said the layby opposite the shop really is for use by patrons of the shop and visitors to the reactional ground and not an alternative parking location for residents. They have suggested most parents will drop and collect or they drop the players off and then park in the Village Hall car park. I believe these arrangements are fine and we would welcome the area to be used for football once again as it was intended for and the passion of Mr Barry Hiscock, our former Chairman, and family in the past.

Refuse collection mess and broken glass left behind

May I start by saying we are highly supportive of the refuse collection services that BDBC provides. However recently on more than 3 occasions the collections have resulted in bin mess/litter on the street, broken glass outside drive ways and even unemptied bins within Ashford Hill. I would like to raise a real concern about the services we are receiving and I would welcome comments from any other AH or Headley residents who have had similar experiences to contact the Parish Council so we can understand if these are just isolated problems.

Village tidy ups in 2021

As you know we ask Cllrs and the residents to join us on our annual village tidy ups. These take place in Headley from Common Road up to the Ashford Hill Church and in Ashford Hill from the Ship Inn to the Pineapple (La Capanna). Date for this very worthwhile activity is Sunday 7th March, for a 9:30am start, to help avoid the traffic. If you are keen to make our villages look nice please join us on this very rewarding activity!!

Feb 2021 meeting

The next meeting to be held on Feb 8th through Teams at 7:00pm.”

Parish Councillors

Cllr Stewart had previously presented Councillors with design plans of a building that could be used as a ‘social venue’ for the Headley recreation ground to replace the existing and abandoned facility. The 400 square feet structure comprises of a kitchen area, a seating area as well as changing facilities with toilet provision. The cost is ca. £40k exclusive of demolition of existing, ground works, utilities connection, a limited number of fixtures and fittings as well as soft furnishings. Whilst Cllr Rhatigan confirmed the potential source of funding for such a facility from the Borough, it was important to confirm that the company that had provided the quotation was not a company that had connections with a member of the Borough Council and Cllr Rhatigan confirmed he would investigate the matter further.*

Cllr Wyatt raised his concerns regarding the inappropriate use of the sewage system by some residents using it to dispose of certain sanitary products, which had resulted in a recent overflow of the system onto the public highway together with a high volume of litter that had been discarded on the A339. The Councillor further reported that there was an ongoing dispute by residents who use footpath 745 near to Headley Stud as to the right of way over land.

9. Recess

Mr George March, a resident of Ashford Hill Road, raised the issue of an overflowing storm drain opposite the Oakfield development, which the Chairman asked Mr March to report to the online facility on HCC’s website. Mr March also reported his concern over the condition of the footpath that leads off the 7124 onto the 710 and connects to Oxford Bridge on Hockford Lane and Woodhouse Lane. The Chairman advised Mr March to report the condition of the footpath and the stile to HCC’s website.

10. Financial Statement

The Lloyds TSB current account of the Parish Council stood at £26,343.93.

The Lloyds TSB deposit account of the Parish Council stood at £10,842.66.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.11pm.