

ASHFORD HILL with HEADLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 13th MAY 2019

AT HEADLEY VILLAGE HALL

Present

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

Cllr Mellor and a significant number of members of the public were also present.

1. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Rhatigan and Kinnear.

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 8th April 2019 were approved and signed as a true record by the Chairman.

4. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

5. Parish Councillors Co-option

The Chairman explained the current constitutional situation of the Parish Council as it was without its constituent number of Councillors per ward. However, the Council had a quorum of Councillors which allowed it to undertake the business of the Council. The Council wished to co-opt Councillors in order to increase its membership. Therefore, the Chairman asked for proposals to co-opt Councillors. Cllr Stewart nominated Mr Simon Hiscock which was seconded by Cllr Saunders. All Councillors were in favour of the proposal and Mr Simon Hiscock joined the meeting as a co-opted Councillor, signing his Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

6. Highways

Cllr Hiscock queried the logic of the County Council's Highways' department's 'split' labour force to manage the cutting of verges on public highways.

The Chairman had concluded that he would have to personally clean the chevron signs at the end of the Ashford Hill village towards Kingsclere.

The Chairman commented on the many times the state of the road surface and pot-holes had been discussed and he had reported such issues using the Hampshire County Council's online tool. A couple of pot holes in Ashford Hill are now 12"x12" square a good 6" deep. The Chairman had reported at least 3 in the past 2 months with pictures and no actions have been taken [25/3/19]. Two of the pot holes are considered to be extremely dangerous.

In addition, the road surface just past the Ashford Hill village hall is in a very poor state and requires a complete repair not just patch up job.

7. Planning Applications

There were no objections from the Parish Council regarding any planning applications it had received.

8. Neighbourhood Plan

The Chairman reported that a small but hugely dedicated team of local volunteers had formed to create the 'Steering Committee' to develop Ashford Hill with Headley's Neighbourhood Plan. The objective of the Steering Committee is to create a succinct document which identifies key amenities for the two villages such as recreational amenities, village halls, green open spaces, woodlands and water courses. Development in the two villages would happen in the future and this document will through carefully created policies make every effort to ensure that the style of any further development is in keeping with the local area. The Neighbourhood Plan will not set out to identify any development areas as both villages have already seen a number of development sites built on recently. Although a Neighbourhood Plan is not there to prevent development it can protect the villages from speculative developments being built and not having a Neighbourhood Plan would leave all the planning decisions to the Local Authority. It is the opinion of the Parish Council this is too great a risk for our future and a Neighbourhood Plan has merit. The Chairman hoped that both villages would support this activity and further information will be made available in future drop-in sessions being arranged by the Steering Committee.

The following report had been received from Mrs Caroline Hellings, Chairman of the Steering Committee;

"Status as at 8 May 2019

We have established a group of 12 people who form the Steering Committee. The Committee agreed Terms of Reference which were approved by the Parish Council at their meeting in April 2019.

Our contact in Planning at B&D continues to be helpful, providing information and answering questions promptly.

The Committee has agreed that we need a Communication Strategy and a draft is out for comment with the group at present.

In brief this comprises:

- Raising awareness that we are proposing to prepare a NP. This will be done through a notice which will be in the June issue of the Parish magazine and displayed in the Community Shop in Headley, The Ship Inn in Ashford Hill, on the NP website. We also propose to send a copy to the Newbury Weekly News
- We will have a desk at the fete in Headley later this month
- Some of the younger members of the group are going to create and maintain a Facebook page for the Plan
- We will be publishing monthly updates of progress in the Parish magazine, on the website, on the Facebook page and through notices around the Parish
- The Committee is currently reviewing the latest draft of the questionnaire to be sent to residents asking for their views on the future of the Parish. The deadline for comments is 17 May as we wish it to be ready for issue in June/July
- The questionnaire will be issued as an insert in the July/August copy of the Parish magazine. Spare copies will be available in the Community Shop, The Ship, both churches and on-line on the website. We will be asking for the questionnaire to be completed by residents by the end of July in order to gather views before the main holiday period. We will, however, accept late entries up to a point!
- Completed questionnaires can be posted into special boxes in the Shop and in Butlers or posted to me
- We are also offering to help anyone who needs assistance in completing their questionnaire
- We are planning to hold drop in sessions in both villages on 15 and 22 July to cover both daytime and evening. The purpose of these sessions is to gather views which may not have been included in the questionnaire and to inform residents of the process. We will provide transport to anyone who needs it to get to these sessions. “

9. Recess

Mr David Henning addressed the meeting regarding the delivery of Broadband to the local communities. Mr Henning's note explains the current situation;

“Current situation

- There are two methods of delivering Broadband to customers. Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) or Fibre to the Cabinet (FTTC). It is an Openreach decision whether to install FTTC or FTTP
- FTTC :- is the minimum for broadband, was planned for us by Jun but plan has stalled
- If installed will be unsatisfactory in 2/3 years as the facilities available on the internet increase
- FTTP :-Future proof but requires planning effort

Developments

- Openreach bruised by press/TV coverage. Want to show willing, appreciate they have not done well
- BBC have spoken with Openreach who want to put things right, with a preference for FTTP
- Would like a breathing space to come up with revised plan

Proposal

- Give Openreach time to come up with a revised plan

County Councillor Mellor was asked to provide an update as far as this issue was concerned and subsequently provided the following briefing note to be minuted;

“a. The plan is to commence work by end of June; from the information I have the “job pack” including installation, sub-contractors etc. is in place for that
b. The additional power requirement on the plans necessitated a 14m connection to a HV pole, 4m of which would be requiring a duct through private land. The resultant wayleave problem for that 4m is the issue that Openreach’s Project Director is attempting to resolve
c. There is a fall back solution as explained at the meeting and hopefully if with regret that has to be used we too would like some assurance that any disruption to the installation schedule would be minimal “

10. Reports

County Councillor

In the temporary absence of Cllr Mellor, the Clerk reported that Cllr Mellor had reported on the continuing problems with reference to unfair sharing of funding for obligatory services but locally there was no detrimental effect on services. Cllr Mellor had further reported on the road maintenance programme which had covered 1 million square metres of road surface in 2018 which was a 20% increase on the previous year.

Borough Councillors

Borough Councillors had tendered their apologies for not being able to attend the meeting as committee membership was being allocated at the Borough Council during the same evening. Councillors Rhatigan and Kinnear had expressed their assurance that they would be continuing “to fight to stave off the travellers site in Headley...” Whilst working with the Planning Department team and the Senior Planning Officer on the planning proposal, a date for a decision had been delayed until the end of June. The Councillors encouraged concerned residents to contact them if there was anything that they could assist residents with as they form the newly elected team for the area.

Chairman's verbatim report

“Accidents along the C111 and B3051

Since the last meeting we have had two accidents on the C111 and junction of the C111/B3051. According to those affected both were as a result of speeding and poor driver judgement.

The first occurred by the Plastow Green junction, where a car and van collided. The van was forced off the road, destroying a resident's hedge and left a fair bit of debris on the carriageway. The second was at the junction of the C111/B3051, parked cars using the Old Forge loading bay were blocking the road and this was a contributing factor as well as oncoming vehicle speeds. This incident affected a resident of Ashford Hill who has enquired about why parking outside the Old Forge is permitted. The Parish Council has no authority over parking or speeding and I have spoken to the Head Teacher in the past about at location. Neither of us can restrict parking there as the loading bay is part of the Old Forge and its potential commercial usage.

Assault and attempted theft along Woodhouse Farm Lane

I received this email from David Pusinelli:-I thought I should make you aware of an incident yesterday when three youths in hoodies on a quadbike came down Woodhouse Lane. Spotting our groundsman working to the side of the road, they attacked him in an effort to steal our quadbike and/or leaf blower. Ross was hit with a rake and had to have treatment for minor abrasions in hospital. The hoodies drove off without stealing anything after Ross started shouting, but it was a deeply unpleasant experience. The police believe the youths are likely to have come from Paices Hill. I would suggest that anybody in the area seeing hoodies on quadbikes should ring the police immediately. Any theft is likely to be opportunistic but the police commented that a physical attack was hitherto extremely rare.

Bin at the top of Ashford Hill

This bin has been replaced, it had been removed by the local authority. They stated in other rural locations bins like these had attracted 'fly-tipping', in our case this has not proved to be the case, quite the opposite. Having just carried out the village tidy some weeks before I had photographic evidence of McDonalds, drinks cans and other associated rubbish left near where this bin had been. The authority agreed to re-instate the bin!

Ashford Hill Broadband situation

Those who were watching last Wednesday's evening television news might have seen an article on BBC South Today about the concerns of residents of Ashford Hill with no access to fast Broadband. I believe these concerns are noted and Hampshire County Council Broadband is looking into the matter regarding the roll-out of the next part of the network upgrades. Those with a keen eye might have spotted a new green road side cabinet next to Holt End Cottages. Speaking with the installation team last Tuesday they informed me it was an upgrade to the services out towards Kingsclere and Wheathold bring BT's FTTC services out there. Residents with an 01189 number in this area might be able to enquire about better Broadband now.

Small extension to the cricket club pavilion

I would ask that the Cricket Club sort out their drainage problems before they start any further building improvements.”

Parish Councillors

Cllr Stewart confirmed with the Chairman that permission had been granted from the Council for the use of the recreation ground to hold the Headley Village Fete on the 25 May 2019. Cllr Saunders sought agreement from the Council for the funding (ca.£50) batteries for the school’s defibrillator. The suggestion was proposed by Cllr Saunders and seconded by Cllr Hiscock with all Councillors in favour of the proposal. Cllr Hiscock reported that as a result of work being carried out on the Headley recreation ground that a trip hazard had been created by exposed tree roots. It was agreed that Cllr Hiscock would source a costing for this work together with repair or replacement of the recreation ground barrier.* It was agreed that due to the condition of the football nets on Headley recreation ground that Cllr Hiscock would remove them.* Councillors discussed the various options available for outdoors recreational equipment and facilities that could be funded from funding when available from the Local Infrastructure Fund.

Clerk to the Council

The Clerk updated the meeting on the initiative to raise funds for the purchase of a defibrillator for the local community which was being arranged by Mrs Christine Allwright. The Clerk also reported on the affectionately referred to ‘Headley Bed’ which was to be planted out by local volunteers. The school’s PTA had sought permission for the use of the Ashford Hill recreation ground to hold the Summer Fayre on 29 June 2019. Permission was granted by the Parish Council with the caveat that any accidental damage done to vehicles parked on the grounds by the Cricket Club activities or the terrain and access of the grounds would not be a liability of the Parish Council.

11. Financial Statement

The Lloyds TSB current account of the Parish Council stood at £26,235.51.

The Lloyds TSB deposit account of the Parish Council stood at £12,812.03.

12. Accounts for approval and payment

Mr S Marshall – Clerk’s expenses April 2019 - £371.24

Mr S Hiscock – Grounds maintenance 1 of 3 annual payments - £2533.33

Hampshire Association Local Councils – 2019 / 2020 Membership - £416.40

Headley Village Hall – Room hire - £30.00

Foxes Tree Services – Tree surgery Headley recreation ground - £360.00

Monger & Rixon – Grounds maintenance Ashford Hill recreation ground - £390.00

Mr J Woodford – Councillor’s retirement present (£33.25) / Website domain name renewal (£57.16) - £90.41

Bramley Business Services Ltd – Internal audit of annual accounts - £300.00

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.36 pm.