

ASHFORD HILL with HEADLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 9th JANUARY 2017 AT HEADLEY VILLAGE HALL

Present

Mr J Woodford (Chairman), Mrs C Hellings (acting Clerk), Mrs H Taylor, Mrs R Wilson, Mr G Stewart, and Mr R Tucker.

Councillor Sherlock and members of the public were also present.

Apologies had been received from Councillors Austin, Rhatigan, Chapman and the Clerk, Mr S Marshall.

Declaration of interest
None were declared.

Minutes of previous meeting for approval

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 12th December 2016 contained one typographical error and one error of fact. Subject to correction of those, the minutes were approved and will be signed as a true record by the Chairman at the next meeting.

Matters arising

The Clerk had previously written to the Bursar of Cheam School to discuss the traffic congestion caused by parents turning right into the school on the A339 at morning drop off. The Bursar had replied asking the Parish Council to support the idea of the installation of a filter lane on the A339 long enough to accommodate six cars as they wait to turn right into the school. Councillors unanimously agreed to offer support on this proposal.

At the previous meeting the Vice Chairman had agreed to ask a local tree surgeon to provide a condition report on trees that may be posing a safety risk to users of Headley Recreation Ground. She is awaiting a response.

Councillors agreed at the previous meeting to invite Sue Adams from Kingsclere to a Parish Council meeting to share her experience of that village's Neighbourhood Plan. This has yet to be done.

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The Chairman stated that three parishioners had signed up to be part of the Steering group for the Neighbourhood Plan and two further individuals had offered ad hoc support.

Councillor Stewart has reflected on the need for signage in the new layby on Thornford Road and concluded that there does not appear to be a current need for signage.

Neighbourhood Plan

The Chairman stated that over the next couple of months he would be contacting the individuals who had offered support and would also be contacting Kingsclere (see note above) to gain the benefit of their experience. He reminded Councillors that he needed two Parish Councillors to join the steering committee.

The Chairman reminded all present that a critical step was determining whether the villages wanted to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan. A poll of all residents would be required and we could not proceed without the support of 50% of those who voted.

The Chairman reported that the pavement has been cleared of grass and other vegetation between Chapel Lane and Old Lane in Ashford Hill.

The Chairman asked for volunteers from Headley to take over the care of the SID in Headley.

The battery needs charging from time to time and the traffic data collected. He noted that the device could be moved to The Cedars if that was preferred. Headley Councillors agreed that this would be a good idea.

Councillor Stewart informed the meeting that he had been round the villages with the Lengthsman and identified the following list of activities:

- Some signs need attention
- Culverts will be cleared
- Leaves lying around will be cleared
- Bus shelters will be cleaned; and
- Pavement foliage will be cut back.
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The point raised by Councillor Tucker at the last meeting regarding the dropped kerb on the Ashford Hill Road in Headley is to be referred to Highways.

The Chairman reported that the flooding problem near Sascron has been referred to Highways. He also noted that further down the road, towards Kingsclere, there is a problem with brambles and flooding. The landowner will be contacted.

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Councillor Tucker reported that a sunken manhole cover in the Ashford Hill Road in Headley is causing traffic problems. Councillor Tucker will identify which utility this belongs to.

Councillor Hellings reported that the one street light on the Ashford Hill Road in Headley has stopped working in the last few days. She will report it to B&D.

Planning Applications

There were no Planning Applications for Ashford Hill. Councillor Tucker has two for Headley but wishes to discuss them with the Clerk before forming a view.

Katie Cochrane and Maria Josey from the Ashford Hill Playground Regeneration Project made a presentation to Councillors on the planned work and the funding achieved to date. Councillors voted unanimously to support the use of LIF money for this project.

Borough Councillors

Cllr Sherlock reported that he was glad that most of the permits for local residents to use the West Berkshire recycling centre had been made available. He noted that the devolution debate continues. He reported that the monitoring of discharges into the Baughurst Brook has now been made official.

Chairman

The Chairman reported that he was delighted that the Playground Regeneration Project was moving ahead. He is sure that all children in the parish will enjoy the facilities once completed.

A large amount of litter has been exposed between White House Farm and the top of Ashford Hill following a landowner cutting back the hedge and verge. The Chairman has spoken to John, the litter picker, who is happy to spend a few hours clearing this area. There is budget for this.

The padlock to the overhead barrier for Ashford Hill recreation ground has been the source of some concern over recent months. It is our belief that our lock has been removed and replaced as previous key holders have found that their keys no longer work. The Parish Council takes a dim view of this and will replace the lock and give keys to those who have official business and permitted access to the ground. The Chairman asked Simon Hiscock to acquire a new lock with 4 keys and charge it to the Parish Council. (There was some discussion as to whether the lock had actually been removed and Simon Hiscock undertook to check this.)

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On a related issue, Councillors observed that the notice of contact details for key holdersto the barriers on Headley Recreation Ground has still not been prepared.

Parish Councillors

Cllr Stewart reported that one tree on Headley Recreation Ground, in excess of 5 metres tall, was leaning and being supported by surrounding trees. This should be assessed by the tree surgeon.

Cllr Taylor asked about progress on the Persimmon Homes development and, in particular, how we are kept informed on what is being done. The Chairman responded that Cllr Rhatigan keeps us informed when something happens.

Cllr Hellings reported that she had been contacted by residents in Ashford Hill Road regarding a resident who leaves refuse bins at the side of the road 24/7. This is unsightly and obstructs the view of drivers. She has contacted B&D who say they will write a letter to the resident.

An offer was made to assist in any necessary felling of trees on the Headley Recreation Ground.

Budget 2017/2018

The Clerk had provided a draft budget to Councillors prior to the meeting. The Chairman and Vice Chairman had prepared an additional version, showing progression of the surplus, which was handed to Councillors at the meeting. The Chairman explained that the draft budget showed a proposed increase of 8% in the precept because the General grant previously received from B&D was not expected to be available in 2017/18. Councillors unanimously agreed the increase in the precept.

Financial Statement

There were no financial statement details due to the Clerk's absence on sick leave.

Accounts for approval and payment

No accounts were presented for approval and payment.

Correspondence received

Councillors were not aware of any correspondence received that warranted their attention. The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.28pm.