

ASHFORD HILL with HEADLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 12th JUNE 2017

AT ASHFORD HILL VILLAGE HALL

Present

Mr J Woodford (Chairman), Mrs C Hellings (Vice Chairman), Mr S Hiscock, Mr R Tucker, Mrs R Wilson and the Clerk, Mr S Marshall.

Councillor Mellor and members of the public were also present.

1. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Sherlock, Rhatigan and Stewart.

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 8 May 2017 were approved and signed as a true record by the Chairman.

4. Matters arising

The Clerk reported that Cllr Rhatigan had not responded to the reminder regarding information leaflets for dog walkers. The Chairman requested the Clerk*to send another reminder regarding the matter.

Cllr Tucker*is pursuing the issue of replacing the broken 'dragons teeth' fencing at Headley recreation ground.

Cllr Wilson*in conjunction with Cllr Mellor is pursuing the issue regarding the school bus company using the C111 outside of school hours.

Cllr Hiscock*confirmed that an article was being drafted for inclusion in the Parish Magazine to outline the countryside code of conduct.

The Chairman*confirmed he was dealing with the additional topsoil issue for the new Ashford Hill playground in order to aid the grass cutting process.

5. Co-option of Parish Councillor

The Chairman expressed his appreciation to the volunteering candidates that had put themselves forward to the vacant post of Parish Councillor. The interview panel had had a difficult task in selecting a candidate as all candidates had outstanding skills suitable for the post of Parish Councillor. However, the interview panel had selected Mr Sam Liddeatt for the post. The Chairman proposed Mr Liddeatt as the co-opted Parish Councillor. Cllr Wilson seconded the proposal and all Councillors present were in favour of the nomination.

6. Neighbourhood Plan

There was nothing to report regarding the progression of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Chairman would like to take the opportunity of the 'closed' Parish Council meeting in July to further discuss the progression of the Neighbourhood Plan.

7. Highways

The meeting discussed the need to address the overgrown state of many roadside verges and other unattended areas. The Chairman would speak to Cllr Stewart with regard to the drawing up of a list of works for the Length man's Scheme to undertake.

The Chairman reported on correspondence with residents living on the B3051 near to the former Public House known as 'the Pineapple'. Residents were concerned about the speed of traffic along this road and the associated danger. The road from the garden centre to beyond Ashford Hill House is currently classified with a 40 mph classification. The residents are requesting this stretch of the B3051 be reclassified to 30mph. West Berkshire Traffic Management department has informed them that this stretch of the road has the correct speed classification. The residents are making a case to oppose this decision based on a number of safety issues as well as the history of serious road accidents.

8. Planning Applications

The Parish Council would be objecting to the Planning permission applications received for The Chalet at Broadacres on the Newbury Road in Headley and for land off the Newbury Road in Headley.

Cllr Wilson raised her concern regarding planning permission being granted by the Borough Council to convert a garage to living accommodation at 11 Hollycroft in Ashford Hill. In order to achieve the correct pitch of the roof to provide living accommodation, the height of the roof had been changed. The permission granted also contravenes the covenant imposed on the homeowners which forbids the conversion of garages to living accommodation.

9. Annual Financial Return 2016/2017

The Clerk had sent Councillors a copy of the Annual Governance Statement 2016/17 which had to be acknowledged by Councillors and minuted as such. The Statement acknowledging that to the best of Councillors' knowledge and belief that there was a sound system of internal control including the preparation of the accounting statements.

The Clerk further confirmed that the Councillors had been sent a Consolidated Account for the year ended 31 March 2017, which the Chairman and the Vice Chairman had commented on with the appropriate amendments having been made.

The Chairman requested a proposer to acknowledge the Annual Governance Statement and to adopt the 2016/2017 Accounts. Cllr Tucker proposed the acknowledgement and adoption and Cllr Hiscock seconded the acknowledgement and adoption. All Councillors present were in favour of the proposal.

10. Reports

County Councillor

Cllr Mellor described the political makeup of the County Council since the election. Cllr Mellor had been appointed to the Executive Committee of Economy, Transport & Environment and Audit Committees of the County Council. Cllr Mellor explained that the recommendations from a highways' report regarding speed limit issues were to be implemented during the current financial year. Cllr Mellor further explained that whilst the Police Authority supported the volunteer based Speed Watch initiative, resources did not allow them to take action against many speeding motorists. Further significant cost cutting exercises were required of the County Council by 2020, which hopefully would not involve staff redundancies but reliant upon the Council not filling vacant posts. Whilst many schools in the County had received favourable results from Ofsted inspections, there was a need to improve standards in certain schools. Cllr Mellor had explained that he was in discussion with the local Community Shop to provide additional signage to promote the facility. A facility which he fully supported and found to be a valuable local amenity. Cllr Mellor was impressed with the amount of money raised at this year's Church Fete. Cllr Mellor congratulated the Parish Council on the improvements provided at the Ashford Hill playground.

Chairman

The Chairman thanked Cllr Mellor for his report and would be asking the Parish Council how it can interact and contribute to County Council matters.

Chairman's verbatim report:

"Village Fete held at Headley – those who attended seemed to really enjoy the day. In particular, the Dog Show was well supported from owners in the local community and the number of the arena displays during the day delighted everyone. I think the falconry display was both exciting and informative".

“I did however feel that attendance was lighter than previous years and this was confirmed when I spoke with the team running the BBQ at the end of the event. However, I am keen to know how much we raised during the event.

Cricket club screens at Ashford Hill – this month has seen some very high winds and I noticed while walking the dog that one of the screen had blown over in the outfield. Could I recommend to the cricket club if there are high winds forecast that they relocate the screen, it would be most unfortunate if someone were to be injured especially as very young children use the areas regularly.

Additional plans to AH play park from the VAT recovered money, I would like to show these to the Cllrs to see the extra activity areas. We need the shark’s teeth replaced in the car park also ASAP.

There will be no Parish Council meeting in July, and I would ask that all Cllrs are available for the 10th July date where we can have strategy meeting about projects and the Neighbourhood plan.”

Parish Councillors

Cllr Tucker wished to express appreciation on behalf of the Parish Council for the outstanding contribution from Mr & Mrs Stewart in organising such a successful Church Fete.

Cllr Wilson requested Cllr Mellor to investigate the conditions of the school bus company operating on the C111 outside of school hours.

Cllr Hiscock reported the finding of human excrement adjacent to the changing rooms on Thornford Road. Cllr Hiscock thanked the Parish Council for the permission to use the Headley recreation ground to host the football match in memory of his father and former Chairman of the Parish Council, Mr Barrie Hiscock. The event had raised £900 which would be donated to St Michael’s hospice.

Clerk to the Council

The Clerk reported on the communication with Kingsclere Parish Clerk which had confirmed that Sandford Springs Golf Club had submitted a planning application for their advertising hoarding.

The Clerk reported on correspondence with the Safety Engineering Team from the County Council regarding phase 2 of the works relating to the closure of the ford in Headley. Work will start at the end of June and last approximately 7 weeks. The scheme will comprise a new turning point in advance of the ford, new kerbing, carriageway construction and vegetation clearance.

The Clerk reported on correspondence with the Senior Countryside Access Ranger from the County Council regarding the work planned for the bridge over the river near to Kingsbrook House which will start in mid-June. The delay to the bridge replacement has been as a result of access issues.

The Clerk reported that the Grounds Contractor had completed 10 cuts to date on both recreation grounds. The rail road at Ashford Hill which runs from the playground to Old Lane has been cut.

The Clerk reported on correspondence with the Structural Engineer from the County Council's Engineering Consultancy with regard to the condition of the road bridge near to the Shio Inn in Ashford Hill. The engineer had inspected the structure and whilst some of the brickwork is pitted and spalled, there is no immediate concerns regarding the foundations of the bridge. The bridge is inspected annually and any work identified at the inspection will be carried out as necessary.

The Clerk requested Councillors to provide him with as much notice as possible if they are unable to attend Parish Council meetings. The Parish Council can only meet as a quorum which needs to consist of a minimum of 4 Councillors based on its full membership.

The Clerk reported the receipt of letters of appreciation from the local Parochial Church Council and St Michael's Hospice following the contributions made by the Parish Council in memory of the Parish Council's former Chairman, Mr Barrie Hiscock.

11. Recess

Overgrown footpaths were discussed with particular reference to the path at Mill Green.
Post meeting note; discussions ensued whilst reference was made to the footpath map and with reference to landowners being informed of their legal obligation to keep such paths clear of overgrowth in order to ensure paths were accessible to pedestrians.

12. Financial Statement

The Lloyds TSB current account of the Parish Council stood at £2,294.22 in credit.

The Lloyds TSB current account of the Parish Council stood at £22,740.26.

13. Accounts for approval and payment

Mr J Kirby – Litter Warden’s salary – Jul-Sep 2017 - £427.23
Mr C Butler – Litter Warden’s salary – Jul-Sep 2017 - £501.36
Mr S Marshall – Clerk’s salary & Expenses – Jul-Sep 2017 - £2729.91
Miles Contractors Ltd – Thornbury Road layby repairs - £282.00
M R Davis Sign Systems – Ashford Hill playground signage - £90.00
HMRC – PAYE & Tax contributions – Jul/Aug/Sep 2017 - £1579.49
Bramley Business Services Ltd – PAYE/Annual Audit - £237.50
James George Tree Surgery – Treework surgery - £945.00
Mr S Hiscock – Recreational Grounds maintenance – 2 of 3 annual payments - £1973.00
Came & Company – Insurance - £991.10

12. Correspondence received

There had been no correspondence that warranted Councillors’ attention.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.32pm.

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Actions: See * in text of minutes for individual action points required