

ASHFORD HILL with HEADLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 13th NOVEMBER 2017

AT HEADLEY VILLAGE HALL

Present

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

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

1. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Liddeatt and Stewart and the Clerk, Mr S Marshall.

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 9 October 2017 were approved and signed as a true record by the Chairman.

4. Matters arising

In the Clerk's absence, the Chairman was not clear whether the Clerk had written to Kingsclere Parish Council about the advertising of their firework event.

It appeared that there was a typographical slip in the last paragraph on page 1356; the properties identified are both in Common Road rather than Thornford Road. The Chairman made a manuscript amendment to the minutes. Cllr Hiscock agreed to try and identify the owner of the field in Thornford Road whose hedges are overgrowing the pavement.

The Clerk had written to Sentinel Housing to remind them of their responsibility to maintain the hedge at the boundary of the Hollybush development.

The Chairman reported that Cllr Stewart is planning for the Lengthsman to cut hedges, clean signposts and adjust any that have been moved during mechanical hedge-cutting.

The Chairman noted that he still had concerns about whose responsibility the maintenance of the common areas in the new development in Ashford Hill would be. The Chairman plans to speak to our Borough Councillors about this*.

5. Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Hellings reported on the progress regarding the compilation of the Neighbourhood Scheme. No response had yet been received from BDBD to our formal application but no problems are anticipated. The draft questionnaire for residents was almost finalised. The Chairman noted that the simple programme, Survey Monkey, is free for the first 100 users but thereafter payment was required. Clearly we shall need more than 100 and so we must budget for the costs.

6. Highways

The Chairman noted that new concrete-panelled fencing has been erected along the road side at the top of Ashford Hill along the perimeter of “The Retreat”. A number of Ashford Hill residents have commented on how ugly and out of keeping they are. We are hoping the landowner will extend the wood panelling used at the entrance of the site to soften the effect. Cllr Liddeatt is looking into the matter*.

Cllr Tucker reported that a tree was down across the road near the Headley ford. He will ask the Clerk to report this to Highways*.

Cllr Hiscock reported that water was coming up through the surface of the road outside the shop in Thornford Road. He believes that we have reported this on previous occasions but the Clerk will be asked to report it to Southern Water again*.

7. Planning Applications

The Parish Council would not be objecting to the recent planning applications received. However, in relation to application 17/03461/FUL at Woodlands Park Farm, Cllr Wilson suggested that the Parish Council’s response to B&D makes a request that any granting of permission is made subject to the condition that the access road is reinstated by the developer. The access road is an unmade, un-adopted road and will be seriously compromised by contractors’ vehicles using the site during the development.

8. Reports

County Councillor

Cllr Mellor reported that, as has been well publicised in the media. HCC has to save £140 million over the next three years. The main areas under consideration are adult social care (given the ageing population), highways and waste. Council tax will increase to fund the investments.

In care, the Council is investing in social workers and Amazon Echo to enable people to live at home and not go into care. The cost of care workers sleeping in will increase.

Education will be ring-fenced. The performance of our local schools as assessed by Ofsted is largely good or outstanding. HCC is fighting to get a proper share of money for our county; London schools get around twice the amount per pupil as Hampshire.

It is the Council's intention to renew the waste permits for Newbury. Cllr Mellor reported that there was to be a meeting to discuss this on 14 November. Apparently West Berks Council was planning to count the usage of the permits but the necessary system was not installed. The Wade Road site is outdated and needs improvement. The Council are considering charging £1 per visit to fund improvements but is consulting Central Government as the law is unclear as to whether this is permitted. *Post meeting note: Permits for Newbury waste disposal centre are to be renewed for another year.*

In Highways, the cost of street lighting will be cut by reducing the power.

HCC is generating income by increasing parking charges and by selling services to other county councils.

Cllr Mellor further reported on some issues on which he had been consulted recently namely, reduction of the speed limit on the B3051 in Brimpton and Ashford Hill, overloading of the roads around the Persimmon development in Ashford Hill, parking outside the school in Ashford Hill and speeding. A group of people had met with our local MP to discuss the issues but not much can be done. Cllr Mellor repeated what he had told our meeting some time ago, that Hampshire will only act on speed limits where there is a clear need as a result of accidents and injuries.

Borough Councillor

Cllr Rhatigan reported that the Kingsclere ward has recently been awarded £174,000 of LIF money for the Fieldgate Centre and for Busy Bees. He encouraged us to identify projects and apply for similar funding.

Cllr Rhatigan also reported that the Borough had won the appeal in respect of Chapel Cottage in Plastow Green. This was a clear demonstration of the robustness of the Borough's planning procedures.

Cllr Rhatigan further reported that work at the Ashford Hill site has been stopped because the developer has not complied with the planning conditions. In view of the legal process involved it is unlikely that work will restart before the New Year. He noted that the school has applied for an additional classroom to accommodate the increase in pupils expected.

Chairman's verbatim report:

Development by B3051 and C111

"Works have stopped at the site until planning conditions have been satisfied. The B3051 has been marked up with spray paint and I speculate this is in preparation for drainage for the site to be installed. I have no confirmation of this.

Field above the development

A number of residents are observing the situation and keeping the Parish Council informed.

AH Play park – Phase 2

Completed ahead of schedule!

Once the hedges have been cut around the recreational ground I will ask for local support to cut back the area at the back of the play park as the brambles have encroached into the park play areas.

General comments

I have supplied Jeremy Loxton with the keys to the Speed Limit Reminder by the school so he can keep this device running. I would like to ask the Council permission to purchase a second battery for £83. This so we can charge one and have the other running the unit. Cllrs Wilson and Tucker approved this.

Mountain bike usage in Butler Copse, Ashford Hill Meadows and the woods. I'm very much in favour of local residents and visitors enjoying the woods, this time of year the footpaths are becoming muddy and can become damaged. Please can cyclists check that the routes they use are legal to be ridden on. Here are some guidelines...

"If it is a public right of way, then it will either be a public footpath, a public bridleway, or a public byway. If it's a public footpath, you can't ride on it (you leave yourself open to accusations of trespass), it's a grey area as to whether you can push a bike on it (although you can push a pushchair, pram or wheelchair on it), but you can carry your bike on it.

The width of a road/path/track has no bearing on its status. It could be wide enough to land a jumbo jet on but if it is only a public footpath - no cycling.

If it is a public bridleway or byway, there's nothing to stop you from using it.

Trespass is a civil offence, not a criminal offence - any case against you has to be brought by the landowner and they have to prove a) that you have damaged their property, and b) that you have done so deliberately. "

So cyclists please take care that you have the land owner's permission to use these routes. Here you can find out the footpaths in the area:-

<http://localviewmaps.hants.gov.uk/LocalViewMaps/Sites/ROWOnline/>

Remembrance Services in the Parish

The Parish Council laid wreaths at both memorials this Sunday. It was great to see regular supporters of the church at this service; next year it would be even better if this event was supported by many more in the community.

December meeting

At the next PC meeting, 11 Dec in AH, we will be providing drinks and snacks at the end of the meeting in celebration of the festive season. You are welcome to come along, meet the councillors and your fellow parishioners. We look forward to seeing you there.

We shall have a short presentation from a local group hoping to provide Fibre Optic Broadband solutions to Wheathold and the surrounding settlements.”

Parish Councillors

Cllr Tucker reported that the undergrowth on Headley Common needs cutting back. He will investigate the costs*.

Cllr Wilson asked Cllr Mellor to support us on the issues with the new houses. Planning consent was granted subject to certain conditions on drainage being met before work started. Residents are concerned that, as top soil has been removed without any apparent work being done on drainage, there will be flooding in the event of heavy rain. Cllr Mellor advised that the drainage conditions have been met but that other conditions have not, hence work has been stopped.

Cllr Wilson also reported that a Headley resident had asked for a pedestrian crossing on the A339. Cllr Mellor replied that a request for a crossing was unlikely to be granted.

Clerk to the Council

The Clerk had no issues to report.

9. Recess

Various items were raised by members of the public.

There was some discussion about the ford and the new gates. A nearby resident, Mr Peter Hemmings told the meeting that there had been a notable reduction in the traffic approaching and using the ford since the introduction of the new signage and gates. Some concern was expressed that horse riders were not finding the gates as easy to use as the Highways Dept had expected. A suggestion was made to purchase a suitable handle, known as a hunting latch.

10. Financial Statement

The Lloyds TSB current account of the Parish Council stood at £1245.23 credit.

The Lloyds TSB current account of the Parish Council stood at £21,826.17.

The Lloyds TSB deposit account for the Ashford Hill Playground Project stands at £15,711.24.

The Chairman had given each Councillor a copy of the draft budget for 2018/19 prepared by the Clerk. He asked all Councillors to digest the information therein and consider their responses for the December meeting.

11. Accounts for approval and payment

Fawns Recreational Services Ltd – Phase 2 Ashford Hill Playground - £11,711.88

Fencing Unlimited – Payable to Cllr R Tucker – Wooden bollards for Headley recreation ground - £275.00

Dale Valley Training – Tree Warden training for Cllr Hiscock - £186.00

12. Correspondence received

The Chairman had received correspondence from the Newbury Weekly News regarding the issue of the speed limit on the B3051 through Brimpton and Ashford Hill. He had replied stating that we were supportive of the request and referring the journalist to the minutes of our meeting on our website.

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

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.29pm.

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