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ASHENDON ANNUAL VILLAGE MEETING

DRAFT Minutes of Annual Village Meeting held in The Village Hall

Monday 15th April 2024 at 7.00pm

Chair: Chris Rand, Chair
Clerk: Venetia Davies, Clerk
Attendance: 14 Parishioners including Cllrs Paul Irwin (PI) and Ashley Waite (AW).

1. Apologies

Sian Miller, Les Curtis, Peter Johnson, and Pietro Ranieri.

2. Minutes of previous Annual Village Meeting held on Monday 17th April 2023.

Minutes were accepted by the meeting as a true record and signed by Chair, Chris Rand

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Community Pub – Luke Jamieson

It was less than a year ago since the village started talking about buying the pub. There were a lot of enthusiastic voices (at the Coronation in May), and as a result, a Steering Group (SG) was formed with ten or so people. The SG had to understand how it might be possible to justify that Ashendon wanted to buy the pub and how they could raise money to buy it! Sian Miller led a team of residents to do a survey – the first to gauge interest, the second survey asking all sorts of questions about what the pub would be like and what people want. Other local villages, including Westcott, Dorton, Chilton, Wotton under Wood, Nether Winchendon and Upper Winchendon, were surveyed. The results showed that everyone was enthusiastic. The SG obtained seed funding from the Parish Council and Red Lion Social Club which got the ‘wheels turning.’ The SG learned about the large Community Ownership Fund from the Government Department of Levelling Up - £250k capital funding plus £50k towards running costs. Residents of Ashendon and surrounding villages were also asked to pledge to buy shares, and the SG has been thrilled to receive pledges for £170k. A Business Plan and Grant Application, led by Roger Copleston, Simon Blackburn, Sue Moldenado, and Paul de Lusignan, which consisted of a team of over twenty residents, was made and submitted in January. The SG is delighted to report that Ashendon has been successfully offered the full grant of £300k. The whole process has received guidance from the Plunkett Foundation, which said the application was possibly the best they have seen. They have been very impressed by how Ashendon has handled the whole process. As Ashendon was not a connected community, that in part meant a successful application. There is a shortfall of £80,000. Teresa Payne is leading a team that is looking into other grants. There has been some good news from Bucks Business First, but unfortunately, applications to the National Lottery and Rothschild Foundation were unsuccessful. The Heart of Bucks offers an interest free loan. The SG is now working on the Share offer. Luke thanked Chris Rand for calling the first meeting and more than 25 people involved in the survey, business plan and grant



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applications. He thanked everyone in Ashendon who has made this happen and said everyone should 'pat themselves on the back'. Luke also thanked Michael and Sue Rand for being completely supportive of the project and the PC and RLSC for 'chipping' in the initial cash. Most people in SG are very positive – talking about when the pub opens and when Ashendon are going to get the first pint in! Luke said the success was an amazing reflection of Ashendon.

5. Ashendon Community Speed Watch – Richard Phillips

The Speedwatch team seeks to increase the quality of life for Ashendon residents and is proud to help achieve this in its own small way. For a simple illustration, the group took a week almost exactly a year ago when SiD was monitoring traffic without appearing to be live - and compared it with the latest weeks data from the same East farm site, just after the road was recently re-opened. Results have showed that for the vast majority of traffic, over 80% is 'very well behaved' and travelling at less than 30mph when passing by the Speed indication Device. Roughly 10-15% travel at 30 to 40mph but some 5-10% are travelling at over 40mph – 'grossly over-speeding.' When SiD appears not to be operating, some 275 vehicles were recorded transgressing at these speeds. However, when SiD is live and messaging drivers in the recent comparable period, the figure drops by about 100 vehicles to 178. This is a 30% reduction in over-speeding. The Speedwatch team has increased to include Paul Horwood & Richard Phillips on maintenance plus Peter Johnson and Chris Pullin on data analysis. The team strive to continuously update SiD's messaging and monitor recorded data. SiD sitting- i.e. traffic greeting, has already started again and the team look forward to more volunteers, who are able to give up an hour during peak times (06:00 to 09:00 & 15:00 to 18:30) to join them in cheerily greeting careful drivers! Please contact Richard Phillips, email: therichardphillips@hotmail.com. The Parish Council is extremely grateful to the Speedwatch team.

6. Ashendon Voices - Fiona Jacob

[Report filed and available to view here](#). The group meet on Tuesday afternoons at 2pm.

In March, the group took part in the Beaconsfield Festival of Choirs singing newly composed work on stage and gaining confidence. The group also hosted its own concert in Ashendon Church and has sung for the Memory café and at the Christingle service. The group has welcome three ladies from outside the village. A fundraising concert is planned for July. Emphasis is on health, enthusiasm and being open to try different kind of music – singing anything from religious music to pop. If you would like to join the group or help with 'front of house' at the upcoming concert, please contact Fiona.m.jacob@gmail.com.

Diary Date: Concert in Ashendon Church – Saturday 6th July

7. Ashendon Parish Council – Chris Rand

Chris Rand reported on a reasonably good year for the Parish Council. Chris was asked to carry on with the Chairmanship. The Parish Council was sad to lose Mark Wakeling who moved out of the village but was very pleased to co-opt and welcome Luke Jamieson. The laurels and scrub have been removed from Lower End, trees have been reduced opposite the



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pub, and the streetlight has just recently been repaired at Lower End. The Parish Council hosted a bouncy castle fun day with over 50 children attending. The Parish Council resolved to change the grass cutter for its devolved grass cutting and Boughton's Peace. The Parish Council continue to support APFA with a donation towards grass cutting and helped with the Community Pub initiative, as best it could. The PC continue to push for road repairs but were very disappointed not to receive the HS2 grant for the Wotton Road footpath – the feasibility study was four times the quote the PC received from Council contractors. The Parish Council continues to look at other grants. The Precept has been raised from £17,000 to £18,000 to reflect the predicted 17% increase in essential annual expenditure incurred by the Parish Council and enable smaller projects including dog bins. Fiona Jacob is working on a speed awareness campaign with youngsters in the village. There was a very good turnout for the recent litter pick – 25 people – and a large amount of rubbish was collected. **ACTION: CLERK to chase removal of rubbish.** Chris thanked Venetia, Clerk, and all fellow councillors and hoped the Parish Council was going in right direction for everyone in village. He said it would be really good to see people at the monthly meetings especially to obtain the different opinions of people living in Ashendon. A [Financial Report](#) was circulated which detailed expenditure in 2023-24, grants and projects received, and planned expenditure for 2024-25.

8. Ashendon Playing Fields Association (APFA) - Andy Theobald.

[Report filed and available to view here.](#) The Association has gained a very active Trustee, Greg Woodford (Secretary). Andy thanked the Parish Council for its contribution towards grass cutting. The Association had a bad start to the year with Ludgershall Football club letting the Association down but Andy was pleased to report that a newly formed Club, Aylesbury Heart FC, has signed to use the field this year. The MUGA and play equipment continues to be appreciated by villagers and those from surrounding areas but the Association is disappointed to report that anti-social behaviour has resulted in some items having to be locked away. Four allotments are let and it is hoped the Community allotment will soon be resurrected with support from Community Impact Bucks. Lottery income provides £442.00 per annum from 10 supporters (17 tickets). Please visit www.valelottery.co.uk and nominate APFA as your chosen cause.

9. Ashendon Village Hall - Richard Bates

[Report filed and available to view here.](#) The Village Hall continues to flourish. It is hired out on a regular basis by the PC, The Church, the WI and Ashendon Voices. With the temporary closure of the pub, the hall's relevance has been greater than ever with a number of events also held by the RLSC. As a result, a small annual profit of £406 was reported. Rental charges remain low. There are plans to redecorate the hall and purchase some new small tables.

10. Dominoes - Kevin Nash

Ashendon dominoes team is based at the pub – or at least they were until the pub closed. Since then, the team has been based at Westcott Cricket Club and the group thank the Club for accommodating them. The season lasts from October to April and the traditional pub game of fives and threes is played. Kevin noted that it's an easy game to learn but more



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difficult to be good at! There are five members who live in Ashendon and one in Westcott and a reserve who lives in Waddesdon. The team play in the Aylesbury league and also play in various cup competitions. There are just five teams now in the league and Ashendon are not the best. For the past few years, they have won the wooden spoon but this year came fourth (out of five!). The team can't wait to return to the pub and hope to be back there in October. If anyone is interested in learning more about the game or would like to join the team, please contact Kevin Nash - kevinpnash@yahoo.co.uk.

11. Red Lion Social Club - Luke Jamieson.

The Red Lion Social Club (RLSC) has had a well-supported and fun year. The group continue to meet every month. The committee are looking for one or two other people to join. The Club has run a number of events throughout the year. In May, they hosted the Coronation Event in association with other village groups. A big team ran this and was very well organised and attended. Luke helped to organise a teenager's bowling afternoon in June. Progressive Supper was a huge success, and thanks go to Luisa Rossi for making it all happen. RLSC organised a Conkers competition in October. The Church decided not to hold a 'pop up' in November, so this was organised in the Village Hall. With the Christmas auction and monies raised from the bar and food, the RLSC could donate nearly £1,000 to the Church. Luke thanked Julian Chester, Sian Miller, and Peter Johnson for their help in organising the auction. Thanks were also paid to Amy Kirstien who organised the Children's Christmas party. In February, sloe Nueveau was held in the Village Hall and was well attended. Thanks to Freddie, Matt, Peter Felicity and other for running the competition.

12. Parochial Church Council - Peter Johnson, read by Richard Bates

[Report filed and available to view here](#). There are three services each month, Lego Church, Holy Communion, and an informal service of morning worship. A Home Group has been re-established. The Church continues its livestream broadcasts of the monthly Communion service and major Festivals on Facebook, in addition to weekly Zoom service of Compline held every Sunday, technically managed by Peter Johnson and Imogen Holbrook. The weekly Zoom service spans the whole benefice, with good representation from Ashendon. The number of members of the village who support the church in one way or another continues to be very encouraging, covering everything from keeping the church clean, tidy, and beautifully decorated with flowers through mowing the churchyard, organising, and helping run events such as the Harvest Supper and the Christmas Bazaar to the clerical work involved in administering a church. The attached report has 27 headings (which is certainly not all the activities) and contains 51 individual names, plus the WI (behind which stand yet more names). That is around 20% of the village. The Church are very grateful for this support and held a service of thanksgiving for to celebrate this support which was very well attended.

13. Women's Institute - Sue Rand

[Report filed and available to view here](#). The group meet on the second Tuesday of the month. It is a time when ladies get together not only to socialise but to offer support when it's needed. The group currently welcomes 19 members and is proud of its WI continuity within



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Ashendon since 1939, 85 years. The group are frequently enlightened on topical issues and meetings incorporate fun and interaction. The group host an annual fundraising event to cover the running cost of the WI which is not met purely from subscription fees. New Members are welcome to join. Please view the link for a full report.

14. Book Group - Sian Miller, read by Fiona Jacob

The Book Group has enjoyed another great year of reading, with returning members and meetings kindly hosted in one another's homes every other month. Typically, around 10 members come along to join the chat. The group continue to meet on this basis and welcome anyone who would like to join. Sadly, the group has lost a couple of regular members as they felt less comfortable meeting in homes – it is hoped that the reopening of the pub will help.

15. Buckinghamshire Council – Cllr Paul Irwin and Cllr Ashely Waite

[Report filed and available to view here.](#) The budget has been one of the toughest on record with escalating costs. They are four key areas: Children's social care, Adult social care, Home-to-school transport, and temporary accommodation. These account for 71% of a total budget of around £920 million. These are all regulatory items which means regardless of the cost or volume of users, Buckinghamshire Council has to provide the service. The budget is now balanced through to 2027. An extra £5 million has been released for road repairs. February was the wettest in 248 years. There is now 29 Gangs fixing the road. The cancellation of part of HS2 will release £8 billion back into road, but Buckinghamshire Council is unsure of what share it will get. The street works permit team has double fines for overstaying. Please continue to report issues on Fix my Street. An update was given on Community Boards (Haddenham and Waddesdon Community Board has the highest level of contributory funding which is a measure of quality and sustainability of the projects delivered in the area), Environment, Helping Hands, Bernie, and initiatives, *I'd like to borrow* and *I'd like a Bike*.

ACTION: AW to forward supporting literature for the Bernwode News. Please click on the report for a summary of each. Surfacing works (and Road Closure) - 4th July (Pollicott to Crossroad). The results of the recent freight strategy consultation will soon be published. It is hoped Ashendon will have its HGV ban soon. Paul Irwin thanked Ashendon for its continuous support of Bernie and the foodbank. Chris thanked Paul and Ashely. He said whenever there is a problem or help is needed, they do a marvellous job.

16. Gatehangers Association

There is a dinner on 17th May at the Boobytrap Brewery.

Closing Comments

Chris Rand thanked everyone in the room for all they do in the village. He said that at times, it is a lot of work but if it wasn't for everyone, the village would not be what it is.

Parish Council AGM – Monday 20th MAY 2024 at 7.30pm

Ashendon Village Hall