

DRAFT MINUTES

2024/001



ASHENDON PARISH COUNCIL

Draft Minutes of the Parish Council held in the Village Hall.

Monday 15th January 2024 at 7.30pm

PRESENT:

Councillors: Fiona Jacobs (FJ), Luke Jamieson (LJ), Sian Miller (SM, Vice Chair), Chris Rand (CR, Chair), Venetia Davies (Clerk and RFO).

Parishioners: There was one Parishioner present.

Parishioners Question Time. There were no questions.

1. Apologies

Les Curtis (LC).

2. Approval of Minutes – Monday 20th November 2023

The Draft Minutes of the November meeting were accepted as a true record and signed by Chair, Chris Rand.

3. Matters Arising

- **Platinum Jubilee Commemorative Elm.** Position agreed with APFA. **ACTION: CR to clear a patch of briars and plant in February.**
- **Watbridge Defibrillator.** The application submitted to the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) for match funding has been successful. After the funding has been applied, the cost to Ashendon Parish Council for a Mindray C1A Fully Automatic Defibrillator and External Heated Cabinet with Keypad lock is £750 ex VAT per unit. Further funding is available from the H&W Community Board or from the Parish Council reserves. The defibrillator is for installation on an external wall and cabinet that requires a power supply. **ACTION: Prior to accepting the DHSC funding, SM to liaise with residents for a suitable location (with electricity).** The Parish Council also discussed the possibility of further defibrillators at Lower End (as part of the pub reopening) and White City. It was noted that the provision of electricity to both may be prohibited so the PC could look at defibrillators not requiring electricity but would not benefit from the DHSC funding. It has been suggested a sign also be purchased to highlight location of defibrillators. Thank you to Kevin Nash for organising the replacement battery for the defibrillator located outside the Village Hall.
- **Ultrafast Broadband.** Ongoing.
- **Ashendon Parish Council and Village Website.** The cost of the Hugo Fox website is now £239.88 per annum (£19.99 per month). Hugo Fox has assured the PC that its servers are backed up every week and whilst it does not restore the site for accidental deletion or Human error, it looks into case of malicious deletion of content and restores where possible. Each User and Editor has their own login email and password.

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The Agenda and Minutes of the Parish Council meetings can be viewed at:

www.ashendonparish.org.uk

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- **Community Pub Initiative.** The Clerk has received further guidance from BALC on the giving of a larger grant to the Ashendon Community Pub initiative. If a grants policy permits and there is a power in place, the PC can make a more substantial donation.
ACTION: CLERK to agenda Grants Policy for the March meeting. ACTION: Guidance from Ashely Waite regarding use of S106 monies as sports and leisure contribution.

4. Declarations of Interest

There were no interests declared.

5. Ashendon Village Community Pub Initiative

Pledges totalling £165k have been received. The target is £250k. Negotiations are now being finalised with the current owners and it is hoped to make a public notice about this soon. The biggest amount of work has been the preparation of a bid for the Community Ownership Fund to secure a £250k grant plus £50k revenue grant. This is due to be submitted by the end of January. The Plunkett Foundation regard the application, which has been supported by dozens of people in the village, to be of a very high standard.

6. Contributions from Buckinghamshire Councillor

There were none.

7. Reports from Councillors attending meetings and outside organisations.

There were none.

8. Correspondence

There was none outside the agenda items.

9. Speed Safety Projects

- **Wotton Road footpath and HS2 Road Safety Fund.** Judith Wainwright, HS2 Community Engagement Officer, Communities Directorate Buckinghamshire Council has written to say that the Project Board has decided not to progress the scheme for the reasons here: *Based on site surveys and outline designs which formed part of that feasibility, estimated costs of delivery for your proposed scheme have increased by over 78% based on our original cost estimate when this was initially assessed, to £194k. Unfortunately, the steep verge along Wotton Road has limited the width available for a new footway, and the costs for its removal and adjusting the levels to facilitate the new path have been inflated. Additionally, the retaining required to hold the remaining verge has added to the cost and these physical constraints have undermined the value of providing this scheme.* The Wotton Path has been an aspiration of the PC for several years and it was agreed to 'keep pushing' with the project and obtain updated costs and feasibility from alternative suppliers. **ACTION: CR to arrange site visit.**
- **Speed Awareness Update.** The SiD post on Wotton Road has been re-erected and concreted. The additional SiD bracket has been received and will be used in setting up 'pop up SiD' around the village. The basic batteries have shown signs of deterioration. Replacement batteries are in trial. A resident has taken an active interest in maintaining the SiD and is at present training up. Some SiD campaigns are planned for the better

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weather including more traffic greeting sessions, pop up sessions and a poster competition (see below). As present, data is proving Ashendon has much higher speed reductions than the generally accepted very modest reductions of 3-4 Km p H shown in published papers. The group like to think this reflects the use of enhanced variation of signage. Speed reductions are three times better than that stated in research papers, verified using own covert data as a base line. A reply has been received from Greg Smith, MP - there is nothing on the proposal for a police presence. Richard Phillips will be attending the freight strategy meetings with some basic information about Ashendon's traffic flows and has some questions about the proposals.

- **Ashendon '20 is Plenty' campaign.** Fiona Jacob outlined her proposals for a '20 is plenty' campaign which includes inviting young people to design a poster to encourage drivers to slow down and drive safely. The posters (designed by 8-12 and 13-18 year olds) will be entered into a competition and could be selected on best slogan and most eye-catching poster. The winning posters in each category would be professionally reproduced at A2 and displayed around the village (and on the available SiD posts not being used). Parish Councillors agreed. **ACTION: FJ to progress '20 is plenty' campaign.**
- **Proposed Freight Strategy Zone Consultation.** Buckinghamshire Council is proposing to reduce the volume of Heavy Goods Vehicles in the areas of **Ashendon, Brill, Chearsley and Cuddington** through the implementation of a 'freight zone' This major public runs until Saturday 17 February. There are two drop-in events taking place at Ashendon Village Hall on: Wednesday 17 January, 1pm until 8pm and Saturday 27 January, 10am to 5pm. **ACTION: SM/CLERK to continue to promote the consultation. LJ to organise door drop of leaflet.**
[PLEASE HAVE YOUR SAY here.](#)

10. Grass Cutting 2024/2025 Season

A quotation has been received for the 2024/25 season from a new contractor. Kevin Nash and Fiona Jacob are meeting a further two contractors. As well as the devolved grass cutting, this will include cutting of Boughton's Peace. **ACTION: FJ to meet contractors with Kevin Nash, Wednesday 18th January.**

11. Trees on Parish Land

The Parish Council is responsible for trees on parish land and the Parish Council has allocated £3,000 from its budget for tree work. **ACTION: CR to produce a tree register and inform any associated works.** Works to the three Sycamore Trees in Lower End will commence in February. **ACTION: CR to inform residents and liaise with landowner for agreed contribution towards the costs of the fallen hedge on Parish Council land (now completed).**

12. Budget/Precept 2024/25

The meeting reviewed the proposed budget for 2024/25 and noted the increase in 'normal' expenditure of the Parish Council (approximately 17%). With regard to planned village projects for 2024/25 (Wotton Road footpath, a potential contribution to Community Pub, tree works, footpath improvements and dog bins, and the absence now of HS2 funding for the Wotton Road footpath), the Parish Council agreed to a small Precept increase of £1,000 (from £17,000 to £18,000). This will result in: Tax Base: £131.79 (2023/24) and

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£131.79 (2024/25) a difference of 0.00. Band D Tax Estimate: £128.99 to £136.58 (a 5.88% increase). **ACTION: CLERK to return Precept request of £18,000 to Buckinghamshire Council.**

13. Finance

- a. **Balance from Minutes of previous meeting (20th November 2023): £46,424.16**
 - **Receipts: £0.00**
 - **Debits: £274.96** (Npower - £51.49 November and £59.49 December) (Hugo Fox £23.98) (Venetia Davies Back Pay £140.00)
 - **Plus unrepresented BACS: £40.00*** (ICO – Data Protection fee, payment by Sian Miller)
 - **Less standing orders: £558.00** (Clerk Salary)
 - **Balance of Bank Account: £45,631.20** (as at 22nd December)
Available Funds: £45,591.20 (balance of bank account less unrepresented BACS)
- b. **Orders for Payment: £1,629.90**
 - **Venetia Davies - £18.90** (Clerk travel)
 - **Ashendon Village Hall - £165.00** (Hall hire for 2023 plus storage of filing cabinet)
 - **Ashendon Playing Field Association - £1,200.00** (grant for 2023 grass cutting)
 - **Kevin Nash - £246.00** (£205.00 + £41.00 VAT) (iPAD SP1 replacement battery)
 - **BALANCE: £43,961.30** (Available Funds less Orders for Payment)
 - **Also agreed:**
 - **Richard Phillips - £22.50** (Postcrete for SiD post on Wotton Road)
 - **BALANCE: £43,938.80**
- c. **Management Report.** The Management Report for January was circulated.

14. Planning

There have been no planning applications received since the November meeting. Councillors agreed to adopting the 'Planning Considerations' document. **ACTION: CLERK to prepare and upload on village website.**

15. Items for Information including Diary Dates:

- **CLG Meeting – Monday 12th February at 6pm** in person or via Teams.
- **Litter Pick – Sunday 7th April at 9.30pm.** High vis jackets and litter pickers to be sourced. **ACTION: CLERK to arrange collection of litter from Street Scene, Buckinghamshire Council.**
- **Apologies** - Sian Miller (March meeting)
- **Annual Village Meeting - Monday 15th April 2024 at 7.00pm**

16. Date and Time of Next Meeting:

Monday 18th March 2024 at 7.30pm in Ashendon Village Hall