

DRAFT MINUTES

2023/001



ASHENDON PARISH COUNCIL

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

Monday 16th January 2023 at 7.30pm

PRESENT:

Councillors: Chris Rand (**CR**), Sian Miller (**SM**), Fiona Jacob (**FJ**), Mark Wakeling (**MW**), Venetia Davies (**Clerk and RFO**). Buckinghamshire Councillors, Ashley Waite (**AW**) was also present.

Parishioners: There was one Parishioner present.

Parishioners Question Time

There were no questions.

1. Apologies

Les Curtis was absent.

2. Approval of Minutes – Monday 28th November 2022

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

3. Matters Arising

- **Combined Village Website.** **ACTION: CLERK** to make final amends, **CLERK/SM** to arrange editors meeting and door-to-door drop leaflet.
- **Scots Pine on Boughton's Peace.** The planning application administer by Four Seasons Tree Care has been withdrawn to avoid a Tree Preservation Order on the Scots Pine. Four Seasons Tree Care has confirmed that Buckinghamshire Council generally do this if there are no compelling reasons to justify the tree's removal and if the tree is deemed to provide 'amenity value' in keeping with a conservation area. Four Season have not looked at the tree again since the beginning of 2022 but are not aware that it has any defects or issues that might relate to health and safety. There is therefore no compelling reason to justify its removal. The tree needs to remain unless the condition of the tree changes.
- **Grass Cutting:** The price per cut has increased from £360.00 to £390.00. This was unanimously approved.
- **Platinum Jubilee Commemorative Elm.** **ACTION: Councillors** approved cost (in region of £50.00/£75.00). **CR** to arrange purchase. **SM/FJ** to arrange planting ceremony for **Saturday 11th February at 2.30pm** and provide refreshments.

4. Declarations of Interest

There were no interests declared.

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5. Contributions from Buckinghamshire Councillors

Cllr Ashley Waite. Kit is available for the Great British Spring Clean. The deadline for nominations for the Proud of Bucks Awards is 12th February (there are three groups: outstanding adult, child and group). Parish Councillors are invited to be on the judging panel. Buckinghamshire Council has launched its Estates Strategy and is reviewing its office accommodation inherited from the pre-unitary councils. This year, the Haddenham and Waddesdon Community Board gave the highest level of contributory funding, a total of £138k against £215k contributory funding. The excessive cold snap, which was followed by rain, has exasperated road problems. Parishioners are asked to report issues on Fix My Street. Ashley is on the car parking consultation. Parish Council are invited to register suitable sites for EV charging. Issues are being sorted with UK Power Networks but works are still running a couple of weeks behind schedule. The large projects and roadworks concerning HS2 generally surround A41 (closing for 3 days on 30th June) and A418. Ashley thanked Ashendon for its support with Bernie and the Food Banks. 3,000 children were given a Christmas present this year. Bernie the bus has been joined by Bart and Bernadette (in Buckingham). There will be a fourth bus soon.

6. Reports from Councillors attending meetings and outside organisations.

There were none.

7. Correspondence

Emails regarding overgrown land/trees/hedges:

Lower End. **ACTION: CLERK** to arrange meeting with **CR** and landowner so that works can be advised. The landowner of The Hundred PH has also agreed to contribute towards the costs of repairing the fallen hedge on Parish Council land.

Three Sycamore Trees in Lower End, Councillors has **agreed** the PC's responsibility for the trees and will obtain a further quotation for the cutting back of all three trees (by approximately 30-40%). **ACTION: CR** to obtain further quotation. CR to also discuss latest correspondence regarding this with Paul Irwin (some evidence provided by the previous Clerk of Ashendon has suggested that the trees were the responsibility of Bucks Council) but Colin Woolford, Local Area Technician, has given evidence to show that the land the trees sit on does not form part of the highways extent and will no longer respond on this issue. The Claimant will instead need to go through the incident report form procedure to take this further.

8. Buckinghamshire Council Settlement Review

Buckinghamshire Council is conducting a Settlement Review of all Towns and Parishes within the Council area. This review will form part of the evidence base for the Local Plan for Buckinghamshire and has been split into two parts - Part one: review of the services and facilities, and Part two: general feedback. **ACTION: COUNCILLORS** to review the data sourced for the Ashendon Parish Council area. **ACTION: CLERK** to submit amendments to Buckinghamshire Council in time for the deadline of 28th February 2023.

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9. Speed Awareness Project

- **Wotton Road Footpath and HS2 Road Safety Fund (RSF |)**. The Footpath on Wotton Road is being considered in the Stage 2 assessments. This was expected to be completed by the end of January 2023. However, this has been delayed as the current Transport for Buckinghamshire arrangement comes to an end. Atkins have been awarded the new highways contract, commencing 1st April 2023. The new maintenance contractor, Balfour Beatty Living Places, were appointed in July, to support highways maintenance and infrastructure projects.
- **Speed Awareness**. Richard Phillips has spoken to Traffic Technology who has apologised for the excessive delay in the return of SID. The unit is expected to be ready for collection at the end of the month. As soon as the SID is back, it will be used to survey the village in all directions.

10. Ultrafast Broadband

SM has asked Paul Irwin/Ashley Waite if it is possible to put some time in with Greg Smith to discuss Broadband concerns and also to identify a BDUK contact in Bucks Council. BDUK has a list of companies that claim they are working in the Ashendon area. SM is working through the list:

- Rapid Rural Broadband - cover areas the other side of A41 – contact identified, awaiting discussion.
- Cerberus – requested a desk survey – in touch in next 28 days.
- ITS are business only.
- Voneus – emailed enquiry, awaiting response.
- Ecom – now offer services in Blackthorn - contacted.
- Swish Fibre – emailed enquiry, awaiting response.
- BT Openreach has paused its community fibre partnership programme due to high demand.

Starlink Residential Services could be an option for anyone needing faster broadband now – this is available now and any individual can open an account. High-speed, satellite broadband internet for remote and rural locations across the globe. £75/month with a one-time hardware cost of £460.

11. Boughton's Peace and Wilding project

FJ suggested forming a group for the Boughton's Peace wilding project. Seeds need to be ordered. **ACTION: FJ to organise a working group.** Concerns have been expressed by a nearby neighbour about the effects of the wilding garden in terms of hay fever and allergies.

12. Proud of Bucks Awards

Parish Councillors unanimously proposed to nominate the Bernwode Bus Group for the Community Group category. **ACTION: CLERK to complete.**

13. Defibrillator training

A local first responder has kindly agreed to run a defibrillator training session in lieu of a donation. **ACTION: CLERK to request date in February/March and book village hall. SM to**

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circulate date to village. Up to 20 people will be able to attend. London Hearts also provided a link to a professionally recorded full demonstration training session including FAQ's and suggested contacting a local first responder group for a face-to-face session. **ACTION: CLERK to download and share demonstration with others at a Village meeting and/or via the website.** A third defibrillator has been requested by residents of Watbridge. **ACTION: CLERK to investigate grant funding.**

14. Community Allotment

Due to personal circumstances, Cllr Mark Wakeling is unable to lead the project and is looking for someone else to take over the project. **ACTION: MW/SM to send a note out in early March asking for interested residents to meet for a planning session.**

15. Finance

- **Balance from Minutes of previous meeting (28th November 2022): £38,035.51**
- **Receipts: £19.98 (E-on)**
- **Debits: £45.88** (Npower: £34.63 November. £11.25 December)
- **Plus unrepresented cheques: £384.00** (£144.00 - Traffic Technology Ltd and £240.00 PKF Littlejohn)
- **Less standing orders: £499.20** (Clerk: November and December)
- **Balance of Bank Account: £37,894.41** (as at 23rd December 2022)
- **Available Funds: £37,510.41** (balance of bank account less unrepresented cheques)

a. Orders for Payment: £358.23

- **Venetia Davies - £20.00** (Backdated pay - due to no readjustment on Standing Order with Bank (November and December – as agreed in 2021/22)
- **Venetia Davies - £160.00** (backdated pay in line new pay agreement increase which took effect from 1 April 2022)
- **Venetia Davies - £9.45** (Clerk travel)
- **Ashendon Village Hall - £140.00** (hire of Hall and storage of filling cabinet)
- **Peter Johnson - £28.78** (purchase of Ashendon.org.uk domain name – 123 Reg)
- **BALANCE: £37,152.18** (Available Funds less Orders for Payment)

Also agreed:

RTM Landscapes - £864.00 (grass cutting for October (£432.00 - £360 + £72.00 VAT) and November 2022 (£432.00 - £360 + £72.00 VAT))

- **BALANCE: £36,288.18** (Available Funds less Orders for Payment)

b. Management Report, January 2023 circular.

- #### c. Precept 2023/24.
- The budget and projects were reviewed. Due to the increase in running costs/normal expenditure for the Parish Council and taking consideration of the cost-of-living crisis, Councillors unanimously agreed to make a modest increase to the Precept and request £17,000 (£16,000 in 2022/23). This will result in: Tax Base: £131.79 (2022/23) and (£131.79 2023/24) a difference of **0.00**. Band D Tax Estimate: £121.41 to £128.99 (a 6.24% increase). **ACTION: CLERK to return Precept request.**

- #### d. Audit.
- The appointed auditor for 2022-23 to 2026-2027 was noted as PKF Littlejohn LLP.

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16. Planning

The following discharge of conditions were informed through the Planning Tracker on the Hugo Fox website. Whilst Parish Councils or Ward Councillors are not consulted on discharge of conditions

- **21/A3165/DIS | Submission of details pursuant to Condition 2 (materials) 10 (soft landscape) 12 (details of screen, boundary, walls, fences and other means of enclosure) 17 (details of secured by design) relating to Planning Permission 21/03165/APP | Barns Off Main Road Upper Pollicott HP18 0HH Ashendon Buckinghamshire HP18 0HH**

ACTION: CLERK to comment that on the plan, the middle access of the development shows no planting or closure of the access.

17. Items for Information including Diary Dates:

- **Platinum Jubilee Commemorative Elm Planting Ceremony** - Saturday 11th February at 2.30pm. All welcome.
- **Haddenham and Waddesdon Community Board** - Thursday 16th February 2023 at 6.30pm on MS Teams.
- The [Great British Spring Clean | Buckinghamshire Council](#) – 25 March 2023 to 10 April 2023. **ACTION: CLERK** to agenda litter pick for March meeting.

18. Date and Time of Next Meeting:

Monday 20th March 2023 at 7.30pm in Ashendon Village Hall