

DRAFT MINUTES

2021/05



ASHENDON PARISH COUNCIL
Draft Minutes of Parish Council Meeting
held by VIDEO CONFERENCE
Monday 15th March 2021 at 8.00pm

PRESENT:

Councillors: Kevin Nash (**KN**), Sian Miller (**SM**), Chris Rand (**CR**), Peter Smettem (**PS**), Venetia Davies (**Clerk and RFO**). Councillor Paul Ridout (**PR**) and Ashley Waite (**AW**) were also present.

Parishioners: There were five Parishioners present.

Parishioners Question Time

- A degree of misunderstanding regarding road safety had been expressed in an email circulation. Kevin Nash addressed the meeting and clarified that road safety is the responsibility of Buckinghamshire Council and not the Parish Council. He pointed out that Councillors are 5 volunteers who have no training regarding this matter whereas Buckinghamshire Council have trained staff and a budget which they allocate according to risk. If they cannot assist in any particular instance, they may suggest that the parish council may be able to help but that does not pass the responsibility for road safety to them. He went on to inform the meeting that the National Association of Local Councils recommends Parish Councils retain 50% of their precept as reserves and that Ashendon has agreed to retain less than that amount. In the 2020/21 budget, there were no allocations for road safety other than for the footway on the Causeway and that any money agreed for road safety in the budget for the year starting on 1st April 2021 would reduce the funds allocated towards the cost of kerbing and a footway in Wotton Road
- A Parishioner asked under Item 13, for the Parish Council to consider other contractors for grass cutting, suggesting the PC might like to look at other villages and the contractors used. More detail of the grant requested by Ashendon Playing Field Association was asked for but deferred to Item 12.
- A paper produced by David Crwys-Williams, lead of the Traffic Working Party, was circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. It noted that the group comprises two Councillors and two village volunteers but gave a personal recommendation for the purchase of a transferable Speed Indicator Device (SID) that displays speed and collects data. David gave a background to the traffic calming measures explored to date which have included speed humps, 20mphs speed limits, white lines, and road signs. It was felt none of these able to reduce speed limits to what is regarded as a safe limit (30mph or below). The HS2 Safety Fund is now open, and it is understood that the fund is attracting many bids for large sums. The Community Led Plan, noted and endorsed by the PC, lists road maintenance and speed reduction as its highest priorities; it was stressed that a SID would directly address these.

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1. Apologies

Les Curtis (LC).

2. Approval of Minutes – Monday 18th January 2021

The Draft Minutes of the January meeting were accepted as a true record (and will be signed) by Chairman KN.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Declarations of Interest

There were no interests declared.

5. Contributions from Buckinghamshire Councillors

- **Cllr Paul Irwin.** PI confirmed that road sweeping should include any kerbed road. He indicated that Ashendon would have a good case for the support of a SID if an application to the HS2 fund were submitted. He suggested the application should focus on staff vehicles driving through Ashendon rather than HGV traffic. He also indicated that the Community Boards has a large fund for infrastructure. A large-scale plane and patch programme is schedule for the A41. An extension to the cycleways has been agreed which will take the *Greenway* into Westcott, with plans to extend this to Aylesbury, Fairford Leys and eventually Thame. Bernie's meal vouchers have been a success and SM and her team were thanked for their support with the scheme in Ashendon. To date, the whole scheme has delivered over 600 meals. Increased funding will ensure meals are delivered for those who have suffered financial hardship or who have been hospitalised over a long period during the pandemic. Elections are set to go ahead on 6th May 2021. There will be 3 Councillors (currently 7) who serve the Stone and Waddesdon Ward. It is anticipated that this will reduce to 2 Councillors in 4 years times. **ACTION: PI to request white lines are refreshed with Colin Woolford, Local Area Technician.**
- **Cllr Ashley Waite.** Covid cases have dropped by 19%. Vaccinations up to 7th March 2021 are just shy of 185,000. Vaccinations for the 60's and 50's year old groups should be completed by 15th April 2021 and Phase 2 (49 years down to 18 years) by the end of July 2021. AW provided a link to the Covid dashboard which contains the latest vaccine information. Buckinghamshire Council has issued close to £14m in Covid-19 business grants. The Bernie Book boxes initiative now includes a cabinet in Ashendon with 10 cabinets across the villages.

6. Reports from Councillors attending meetings and outside organisations.

- **Greatmoor CLG Meeting (21.01.21), PS.** Waste by trains will stop at the end of March. An approved route will be shared for haulage.
- **Haddenham and Waddesdon Freight Strategy Group (16.02.21), CR.** Apologies. Minutes circulated indicated some alarming proposals for county roads. **ACTION: CR to attend next meeting.**

7. Correspondence

There was none outside the Agenda items.

2021/07

8. Traffic Calming Measures

SM updated the meeting. Two traffic calming priorities have been identified by the Traffic Working Group. These are for one (possibly two) Speed Indicator Device/s (SID), positioned in three locations in Ashendon. The other is for white lines with robust Slow signs on the road surface. The top specification SID is approximately £5,000. It retains data but also keeps the driver's attention through messaging. An added advantage is that it can also be used purely for the collection of data, which was considered a benefit for future works. PS referred to an article by Transport Research Laboratory which has proved that SIDs reduced speed. The article also gave an indication as to where SIDs should be located; a detection range of approximately 100 metres so that drivers are aware and can lower their speed. PS considered that there were two locations in Ashendon that could easily accommodate a SID – the Causeway and East Farm but was concerned about the distances being achievable on Wotton Road. It was confirmed that the poles on which the SID would sit, would be installed free of charge by TfB. The cost of a spare battery has been costed into the price and there is no recommendation for a regular service. The meeting discussed funding. Whilst Ashendon PC has agreed in principle to match fund a SID (a maximum of £2,500 if required), it was agreed Cllr Paul Irwin will seek £5,000 from the Community Boards but if unsuccessful, the PC will make a bid to the Community Board for £2,500 with a backup bid to HS2 for £2,500. It was however noted that the decision date for the HS2 Safety Fund was not until September 2021, some 6 months away, and that there may be other funds that could be applied to so that the equipment could be purchased sooner or the earmarked funding from the PC released.

9. Wotton Road Footpath

In online discussions, Councillors agreed to progress the Wotton Road Footpath. **ACTION: PI/AW to contact John Dearn and also to forward alternative contractors details (SLM) to KN for quotations.**

10. Village Signage for Village Approaches

The Parish Council has received a quotation from Bucks Council for £4,662.00 to replace the village signs at the three village approaches. This consists mainly of overheads (a feasibility stage, obtaining quotations and a traffic management plan) the actual cost of the signs being only £410.00. An alternative quote has been sourced for two different type of signs at a cost of £3,071.21 (for a rectangular sign with the words 'Welcome to Ashendon') and £2,089.92 (for a doomed sign with the same words and including at the top the ash leaf from the PC logo). This excludes new posts and carriage. PI informed the meeting that signs must be those provided by Bucks Council. It was agreed that the TfB costs were disproportionate. PI agreed to challenge this with TfB. **ACTION: KN to send full details to PI.**

11. Defibrillator for Pollicott

The decision to proceed with a second defibrillator serving Upper and Lower Pollicott was deferred until a location and power source (from the streetlight in Upper Pollicott or the broadband box owned by BT Openreach) was better understood. **ACTION: SM to present a proposal at the April meeting.**

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12. Village Grass Cutting

As a devolved council and in line with the Executed Agreement Variation (2020-2022), the devolved payment due to be paid to Ashendon Parish Council is £566.78 (due April 2021). Whilst the quality of service has been disappointing on occasion, Councillors agreed to continue with the existing contractor (6 cuts per year at £340 + VAT per cut) but agreed to consider a new contractor in Autumn next year. Proposed KN, Seconded SM. Councillors also agreed to using the existing contractor for grass cutting in Boughton's Peace. **ACTION: CLERK to inform both contractors.**

13. Ashendon Playing Fields Association

A request for a grant of £500 from Ashendon Playing Field Association was agreed. Proposed PS, seconded CR. **ACTION: KN to notify APFA.** The current contractor for the playing fields is unable to continue with cuts. **ACTION: CLERK to circulate quotation from new contractor.**

14. Footpath and Bridleways

The poor condition of stiles, gates and pedestrian/equestrian bridges in Ashendon and their connection to other parishes were discussed. It was noted that stiles are the responsibility of landowners whilst bridges, due to costs, are often the joint responsibility of the landowner and Council. It was noted that anyone can report an issue concerning broken stiles, dangerous path surfaces, missing signposts and waysides to Bucks Council at <https://www.buckscc.gov.uk/services/environment/public-rights-of-way/report-a-rights-of-way-issue/> but it was hoped that any works in the first instance be reported to landowners. The appointment of a Footpath Warden/s to help monitor and report conditions to the landowners were considered and it was agreed to appeal for volunteers. **ACTION: KN to appeal for volunteers to become Footpath Wardens.**

15. Village Website

The Ashendon Village website (ashendon.org.uk), set up by the Red Lion Social Club some years ago, is out of date. This is partly due to the difficulty in using the current outdated platform which has become difficult to navigate particularly with the uploading of photographs. Given the valuable information on this site, it was agreed that the Parish Council take over the website and explore setting up a new website (with links to the PC website) or amalgamating it with the Parish Council website which functions through the website provider, Hugo Fox. **ACTION: KN/CLERK to explore both options and give recommendations at the April meeting.**

16. Finance

- a. **Balance from Minutes of previous meeting (18th January 2021): £9,101.52**
- **Receipts:** £11,000 (Haddenham and Waddesdon Community Board grant)
 - **Debits:** £73.74 (E-on)
 - **Plus unpresented cheques:** £0.00
 - **Less standing orders:** £737.54 (Clerk salary – 3 months)
 - **Balance of Bank Account: £19,290.24** (as at 8th March 2021)
- Available Funds: £19,290.24** (balance of bank account less unpresented cheques).

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b. Orders for Payment: £477.70.

Proposed PS, seconded KN.

- **Venetia Davies** - £9.45 – Clerk travel (£9.45)
- **Venetia Davies** - £180.00 (use of home) 2019/20
- **Len Holder** - £280.00 (mowing of Boughton's Peace for 2020)
- **2D Print World** - £8.25 (printing of A5 Elections leaflets)
- **BALANCE: £18,812.54** (Available Funds less Orders for Payment)

c. Management Report. The March report was circulated.

d. VAT Return. A VAT return for £5,243.02 has been submitted.

17. Planning

- **21/00488/APP - Walnut Tree House, Main Street, Ashendon, HP18 0HB**

Single storey rear extension, rear dormer window, front porch, changes to the windows/ fenestration and external landscaping. Comment date: 16th March 2021

ACTION: CLERK to return NO OBJECTIONS to Bucks Council

- **Valley Farm, Upper Pollicott, Ashendon, HP18 0HH.**

Submission of details re change of use of an agricultural building to two dwellings. Case Officer: David Wood. Comment date by: 23rd March 2021

ACTION: CLERK to return No OBJECTIONS to Bucks Council

18. Items for Information including Diary Dates:

- **Haddenham & Waddesdon Community Boards** – Thursday 18.03.21 at 7pm
- **HS2 Meeting** (with Bucks Council and Contractors to raise any issues). Provisional dates: 23.03.21 and 30.03.21.
- **Parish Charter Survey.** Consultation extended to 31st March 2021.
- **Town and Parish Council Elections** – Thursday 6th May 2021. Publication of Notice of Election 22.03.2021. Deadline for receipt of nomination paper – 4pm on Thursday 08.04.2021.
- **Play Around the Parishes** - Wednesday 18 August 2021, 10.00-12.00pm
- **Litter Pick.** **ACTION: KN** to make bags and litter pickers available for Villagers wishing to litter pick whilst walking. A list of areas to be included.

19. Date and Time of Next Meeting:

Monday 19th April 2021 at 8pm in Ashendon Village Hall or by Video Conference (tbc)
Parishioners are invited to the meeting but are required to email the Clerk at ashendonpc@gmail.com for a Zoom meeting ID number and password if the meeting is by Video Conference.