

**Minutes of a meeting of Ashdon Parish Council, held on  
Monday 15 July 2024, 7.30pm at Ashdon Village Hall.**

*Present:* Cllrs: Goodwin, Gray, Horrigan, Lee, Moran, Olley & Pardue.  
*In the Chair:* Cllr Moran.  
*Clerk:* Angela Balcombe.  
*Also present:* 11 members of the public.

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*Prior to the start of the meeting, Mr Chris Pardue signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Parish Councillor for Ashdon Parish Council.*

**24/16. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

There were no apologies.

**24/17. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING.**

The minutes of 17 June 2024 were approved as a correct record of events.

**Proposed: Cllr Olley. Seconded: Cllr Gray. All agreed.**

**24/18. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS.**

To receive any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, Other Registerable Interests or Non-Registerable Interests relating to items on the agenda.

***Please note:*** all Councillors are Sole Trustees of the Village Hall and Cllr Moran is District Councillor at Uttlesford District Council.

**24/19. MATTERS ARISING.**

*(For information only, Councillors are reminded that no decisions can be made under this agenda item; Longfield Parish Council v Wright (1918) 88 LJ Ch 119).*

No matters raised.

**24/20. COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORTS.**

**Essex County Council** - apologies were received from Cllr Foley, he will forward on his report.

**Uttlesford District Council** - the Regulation 19 Draft Local Plan was recommended by the members of the Local Plan Panel at a meeting held on 15 July and will go to Cabinet on 18 July. If approved by the Council the consultation will commence 8th August and run for a period of 8 weeks, ending on 3rd October. Parish Councils are urged to respond to the consultation. There is no requirement for further housing for this area and housing proposals for Thaxted are no longer in the Plan. **Agenda item for September.**

**24/21. PUBLIC FORUM**

- A member of the public raised a number of issues regarding missing items from a Freedom of Information request, incorrect minutes, Monitoring Officer advice, no reply to previous correspondence and a police incident. The Chairman noted these comments.
- The Council was asked when the accounts would be published on the website, the Clerk advised that they would be sent over in the morning along with the Internal Auditors report.

#### **24/22. ACCOUNTS YEAR ENDING 2023/24.**

The year-end accounts for 2023/24 to be approved and signed by the Chairman and Clerk/RFO.

**Proposed: Cllr Olley. Seconded: Cllr Horrigan. All agreed.**

The Chairman and Responsible Financial Officer signed:

22.1. Annual Governance Statement.

22.2. Accounting Statements.

**Internal Auditors Report - next agenda.**

#### **24/23. FINANCE.**

Payments made:

102977 £844.20 M D Landscapes Ltd (Grass Cutting)

102978 £540.00 Haward Horological Ltd (Service of Ashdon School Clock)

102979 £160.00 EALC (Councillor Training)

102980 £513.90 A Balcombe (Locum Clerk Costs)

102981 £54.81 npower Business Solutions (Electricity Streetlights)

102982 £86.88 J Thorn (Clerks Email Address)

#### **24/24. PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE / COUNCILLOR EMAIL ADDRESSES.**

To consider the setting up of a new Parish Council website and Councillor email addresses (information circulated). Cllr Goodwin went through the quotes received and recommended that VCS Websites would be her chosen supplier.

**Proposed: Cllr Goodwin. Seconded: Cllr Pardue. Unanimously agreed.**

It was suggested that the Council look into £100.00 funding for .gov.uk sites.

#### **24/25. WAR MEMORIAL.**

To discuss arrangements for looking after the War Memorial and to consider a request for funding for some plants. Cllrs Moran and Lee had met with a company who offered to clean the Memorial at no cost. As the Memorial is a Grade 2 listed monument and care must be taken when cleaning, references of their work have been requested. The Parish Council continues to support the group of volunteers who help with the gardening, there is £100.00 in the budget for plants. As Autumn is the best time for planting it was agreed to make the money available for plants in September. With regard to Health and Safety a volunteer form will need to be completed for all volunteers.

#### **24/26. PLANNING.**

**Application No: UTT/24/1546/HHF.** Proposed erection of single garage.

**Location:** Guildhall, Church End, Church Lane, Ashdon.

A Conservation Officer at UDC has been asked to look at this application, in the meantime it has been called in by District Cllr Moran, therefore he will step back from it. Agreed to support the comments made by UDC officers, there is already a garage on site so there is no reason to oppose it.

#### **24/27. PLAY AREA.**

To consider the main safety issues and to agree any actions needed.

Cllr Lee has asked for more quotes, to include the two signs and one post (kite flying). As there were no urgent issues raised in the RoSPA reports it was suggested that a handyman could be used to do some of the most important maintenance work although this was questioned due to the safety aspect. There is £1,000.00 in the budget to cover this.

Cllrs Lee and Moran to have another look in next couple of weeks. Suggested that a climbing wall would be a great addition to the area, however this was also questioned as 34% of the Councils budget is spent on the play areas.

Cllr Moran/Cllr Lee proposed that a report be put together for the Council to consider at future meeting.

Ownership of bins - Cllr Moran to check with UDC and also whether or not they would take on the emptying of any new bins.

#### **24/28. CHRISTMAS TREE.**

To agree the purchase of a tree for December 2024. There is £400.00 in the budget for a tree. Cllr Moran proposed that the Council move forward in purchasing a tree, seconded by Cllr Lee and unanimously agreed.

It was suggested that in the future the Council could plant a tree, this will need looking at regarding the necessary permissions etc.

#### **24/29. COMMENDATION OF FORMER PARISH CLERK.**

Cllr Moran has asked what the former Clerk would like but has had no reply as yet. Suggestions included a plaque to also include the services of the previous Clerks father, or a bench although it was noted that a bench is usually for a memorial. Cllr Moran will write to Mr Green.

#### **24/30. COUNCILLOR SURGERIES.**

This has been discussed previously, it was agreed that the Coffee Morning may not be appropriate and it was suggested that the small hall would be better at set times. Agreed to advertise the surgeries in the Village Magazine and trial it for three months. It was also agreed that prior notice of any queries might be helpful if it was something specific, however not to be too restrictive.

#### **24/31. REPORTS.**

10.1. Cemetery - a brief report from Cllr Gray was noted.

The main points raised were maintenance and the need for more land. 18 cuts a season are currently done and the Council is also responsible for the lime trees. A compost bin is needed, this has been voted on previously. Cllr Gray will meet with the Town Council to find out how they manage their cemetery and records.

10.2. Emergency Plan - a brief report from Cllr Gray was noted.

A pro-forma template had been circulated, and it was suggested that it would be sensible to nominate one person for the various areas to liaise with Cllr Gray regarding any vulnerable residents. A survey was suggested to find out this information, however, there was some concern around asking for and holding sensitive information. The Plan will need to be reviewed annually. Cllr Gray to continue working on the Plan.

#### **24/32. CORRESPONDENCE TO NOTE.**

- Residents email regarding the War Memorial.
- Letter from the previous Clerk regarding hours worked and money owed.
- A number of emails from a member of the public referring to the items raised in the Public Forum.

#### **24/33. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA.**

- Local Plan Consultation
- School Clock

- Council Surgeries
- Allotments - report needed before any decision taken.
- Traffic/Speed Reports
- Speed Reduction - Steventon End

**24/34. MEETING DATES 2024.**

Meetings are held on the third Monday of the month (except August).  
16 September, 21 October, 18 November (Budget Meeting), 16 December

**The meeting closed at 21.22**

**Signed (Chairman):**

**Date:**