

ASHDON PARISH COUNCIL
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**Minutes of a meeting of Ashdon Parish Council, held on
Monday 16 September 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: 1 member of the public.

24/35. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

There were no apologies.

24/36. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING.

The minutes of 15 July 2024 were approved as a correct record of events.

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

24/37. 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.

Cllr Moran is a District Councillor for Uttlesford District Council (UDC).

Cllr Olley declared a Pecuniary Interest in item 24/47 Application No: UTT/24/2047/TPO as the applicant.

Cllr Horrigan declared a Pecuniary Interest in item 24/47 Application No: UTT/24/2012/TCA as the applicant.

24/38. MATTERS ARISING.

A brief update on any actions from the previous meeting.

(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).

Website - the new .gov.uk website/email addresses are now up and running.

Thanks were noted to John Thorn for all his work on the old website and Facebook which he carried out with no remuneration. It was agreed to arrange a suitable gift as a thank you from the Parish Council.

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

Thanks were also noted to VCS Websites Ltd. who have given some of their time free of charge to help set up the new email addresses for Councillors.

24/39. COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORTS.

Essex County Council - apologies were received from Cllr Foley.

Uttlesford District Council - Cllr Moran updated the Council on the Local Plan. he also informed the Council that a considerable amount of money has been received by UDC from Central Government towards 'decarbonisation' of social housing, such as new windows, insulation, heat pumps etc. Work should start in Ashdon in a few weeks time.

24/40. PUBLIC FORUM

No matters were raised.

24/41. FINANCE.

Payments:

August

102983 £146.40 D Green (Clerks Salary x 8 days 118.80/Packing Boxes 27.60)
102984 £29.70 HMRC (PAYE)
102985 £750.78 M D Landscapes Ltd (Grass Cutting)
102986 £507.40 A Balcombe (Locum Clerk Costs)
102987 £2,405.07 Ashdon Village Hall Charitable Trust (Reclaimed VAT)

September

102988 £304.00 V S Waples (Internal Audit Fee/Expenses)
102989 £688.00 VCS Websites Ltd (Website/email set up/1 years hosting)
102990 113.51 npower Business Solutions (Streetlighting July/August)
102991 £750.78 M D Landscapes Ltd (Grass Cutting)
102992 £420.00 J Gray (Canon Architectural Design)
102993 £627.00 A Balcombe (Locum Clerk Costs)
102994 £28.00 Grasshopper Lawncare (War Memorial)
102995 £96.00 EALC (War Memorial Training)

24/42. FINANCIAL REPORT.

The Clerk gave a report on income, expenditure against budget, and bank balances to date. It was unanimously agreed to add Chairman's Allowance to the budget and move £500.00 to this heading.

Proposed: Cllr Horrigan. Seconded: Cllr Lee.

24/43. ADOPTION OF NEW POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.

1. Freedom of Information (Legal Requirement).
2. Data Protection (Legal Requirement).
3. Complaints Procedure.
4. Complaints Procedure (Abusive, persistent and vexatious complaints policy).
5. Volunteer Policy.
6. Equality & Diversity Policy.
7. Health & Safety Policy.
8. Planning Policy.
9. Safeguarding Policy.

It was unanimously agreed to adopt the above policies

Proposed: Cllr Horrigan. Seconded: Cllr Lee. Unanimously agreed.

It was agreed to register with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO), cost £35.00.

Proposed: Cllr Gray. Seconded: Cllr Moran. Unanimously agreed.

24/44. UPDATE ON FILING POLICY & PROCEDURES.

Cllrs Gray & Horrigan were thanked for all the hours spent on doing the filing which is now in two locked filing cabinets in the Village Hall. It was agreed to donate old maps to the Ashdon Village Museum, plus the old playing field fund raising documents. Councillors wishing to access any documents will be required to sign them in and out, this will be co-ordinated by Cllr Gray.

24/45. WAR MEMORIAL.

To consider the quotes received for cleaning the Memorial. Following various discussions with conservation officers and other parish councils, cleaning the Memorial with soap and water seems to be very safe and effective therefore

Councillors will meet on 16 October at 9am to give it a clean in time for Remembrance Day. The Memorial was originally owned by the Village by public subscription but was taken over by the Parish Council when it fell into disrepair. A valuation for insurance purposes to be obtained and the Memorial should be added to the Heritage site. Cllr Lee to arrange for a Stone Mason for advice and a valuation.

The Clerk will order a Poppy Wreath for November. A Wreath Policy was suggested to cover how long a wreath should remain in place, advice to be sought from the Royal British Legion.

24/46. ALLOTMENTS.

A brief discussion regarding the report received from Cllr Moran regarding the lease of the allotments. The onsite trees were a cause for concern, a tree survey would be needed prior to any decision being made, along with a business plan with a clear vision of how it would be managed. The meadow is designated community open space in the Local Plan so therefore protected.

The Neighbourhood Plan consultation shows residents would like to have additional community space (access to the meadow) so it was agreed that the Council should consult with residents. Cllr Moran to speak to other Councils who have a community orchard and provide a report/recommendation for next meeting.

24/47. PLANNING.

Cllr Horrigan left the meeting for this item.

Application No: UTT/24/2012/TCA. Proposed work to 1 no. Lime consisting of a crown lift to approx. 4 metres and crown reduction of approx. 2.5 metres.

Site Address: Little House, Radwinter Road, Ashdon. **No objections.**

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

Site Address: Guildhall Church End, Church Lane, Ashdon. **No objections.**

Application No: UTT/24/2309/DOC. Application to discharge condition 4 (materials) attached to UTT/24/1546/HHF.

Site Address: Guildhall Church End, Church Lane, Ashdon. **No objections.**

Cllr Olley left the meeting for this item.

Application No: UTT/24/2047/TPO. Proposed felling of 1 no. Yew due to damage caused to drainage running in close proximity to base of tree.

Site Address: Chapel Farm, Radwinter Road, Ashdon. **No objections.**

- **Local Plan Consultation** - the consultation has been extended to Monday 14 October.

24/48. PLAY AREAS.

To consider the main safety issues and to agree any actions needed. It was suggested that the cheapest quote be accepted and to carry out the minor repairs using a local person. Agreed to make sure the MUGA is safe but not do any additional work at the moment. It was also agreed to check equipment guarantees before any work is ordered. Cllr Lee to work with Cllr Pardue, an update to be provided at the next meeting.

24/49. SPEED REDUCTION.

- Traffic/speed reports.
- Steventon End.
- Follow up to the 40mph request from Goldstones to Midsummer Hill in Radwinter Road. An email from Cllr Foley was referred to stating that this was unlikely to be approved. It was noted that this has never been formally requested by the Parish Council.

It was agreed that speed reduction and signage at the three entrances to the Village was needed, Steventon End being more of a priority. Cllr Moran will speak to Cllr Foley, he also suggested that he would like to see a 20mph limit through much of the village. Highways to be chased regarding suitable sites for speed reduction signage. Speed check strips have gone down at Steventon End.

24/50. CHRISTMAS TREE.

To finalise the arrangements for the Christmas Tree. Cllr Moran to order the tree, the Christmas lights need PAT testing.

24/51. ADVERT FOR A NEW PARISH CLERK.

To agree the details for a new permanent parish clerk. The Clerk to organise.

24/52. REPORTS.

- Emergency Plan Update (Cllr Gray). The Plan is progressing with work ongoing.
- Cemetery Update (Cllr Gray). Burials (basic) currently cost £110.00, elsewhere they cost around £500.00. The current records are being digitalised. The graves are not in an orderly line which makes it difficult for grass cutting and visitors to the Cemetery. Quotes to be obtained for strimming the area. There are some large trees with their roots spreading out towards the graves which are restricting the burial area. They need 25% uplift plus 25% crown reduction. It was agreed that a carefully worded letter should be sent to the families concerned. To sum up there needs to be more forward planning which needs to be discussed in more detail.

24/53. CORRESPONDENCE TO NOTE.

- A number of emails regarding a Freedom of Information Request.
- Email regarding running the Facebook page. Cllr Lee offered to take this on.
- Water End Road - complaint about the state of the road regarding lorries, overgrown hedges and speeding issues. These complaints are mainly Highways issues, the hedges are privately owned. Cllr Moran has spoken to the resident who submitted the complaint.

24/54. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA.

- Neighbourhood Plan website, it was suggested adding the Plan to the Council website. Agreed to add this to the next agenda and to also decide what other information should be included.

24/55. MEETING DATES 2024.

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

*Members of the public and the press were excluded from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted (Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. **Unanimously agreed.***

24/56. PERSONEL MATTERS.

A response to the letter from Thomas Mansfield Solicitors was discussed and agreed. Cllr Pardue proposed that the Parish Council pay for the unapproved costs requested, this was not seconded however a vote was taken with 1 in favour, 4 against and 2 abstentions. Therefore the proposal was not carried.

24/57. CLOSE OF MEETING.

The meeting closed at 22.06

Signed (Chairman):

Date: