

**Minutes of a meeting of Ashdon Parish Council, held on  
Monday 18 November 2024, 7.30pm at Ashdon Village Hall.**

*Present:* Cllrs: Goodwin, Gray, Horrigan, Moran & Pardue.  
*In the Chair:* Cllr Gray.  
*Clerk:* Angela Balcombe.  
*Also present:* 5 members of the public.

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**ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN.**

In the absence of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman a Chairman must be elected to chair this meeting.

Cllr Horrigan proposed Cllr Gray as Chairman, seconded by Cllr Goodwin and unanimously agreed.

Cllr Gray signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Chairman.

**24/74. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Olley and Cllr Lee. Cllr Moran will be late to the meeting.

**24/75. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING.**

The minutes of 21 October 2024 were approved as a correct record of events.

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

**24/76. 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).*

**24/77. 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).*

**Christmas Tree** - a brief update on the arrangements for the Christmas Tree was given.

**New Clerk** - the advert has not been placed in the local paper and is only on one notice board. It was explained that the advert had been placed where practising clerks would see it.

**24/78. COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORTS.**

**Essex County Council** (Cllr Foley). Apologies were received from Cllr Foley.

**Uttlesford District Council** (Cllr Moran). An emailed report was received and noted.

**24/79. PUBLIC FORUM**

- Rectory Lane Potholes - the list of potholes for all areas has been submitted to Cllr Foley via the Member Pothole Initiative.

- Comments regarding policies, resolutions and councillors attendance at the Budget Meeting.

#### **24/80. FINANCE.**

Payments:

103006 £925.08 M D Landscapes Ltd (Grass Cutting)  
 103007 £683.40 A Balcombe (Locum Clerk Costs)  
 103008 £54.00 A Olley (Daines-Lowe - stone for War Memorial)  
 103009 £30.00 Ashdon Village Hall (Hire)  
 103010 £5.73 D Green (Backpay for 8 days re LJC pay rise)  
 103011 £1,510.50 Uttlesford District Council (Garden Waste Collection)  
 103012 £140.00 Alsa Wood Farm (Christmas Tree)  
 D/D £67.03 npower Business Solutions (Streetlighting October)  
**HMRC Notice of Penalty Cancellation** - the late filing penalty has been cancelled.

*Councillor Moran arrived at the meeting.*

#### **24/81. BUDGET & PRECEPT 2025/26.**

To agree the budget and set the precept for 2025/26. The Council considered the draft budget and will agree the final expenditure and precept at the December meeting.

#### **24/82. AUDIT 2023/24.**

Copy of an email received from PKF Littlejohn regarding 'objections to the 2023/24 AGAR - eligibility decisions'. The Auditor has assessed all of the objections as ineligible since they were not received by the Auditor during the Council's public rights period. Regarding costs, additional work as a result of challenge correspondence is charged at £355.00 per hour (£2,485 per day). The Parish Council would have to pay these costs.

The Clerk explained the Notice of Audit dates had been changed due to instructions from PKF Littlejohn (External Auditor). She also explained that it was the Clerk who updated the website with the new details and that this was done immediately after receiving instruction from the Auditor.

#### **24/83. PLANNING.**

**Application No: UTT/24/2741/FUL.** Change of use of agricultural land to equestrian use with erection of stables, gazebo, wash-down shelter.

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

The Parish Council objects to this retrospective application; the biodiversity net loss is unacceptable and damage has been done to the Grade II listed monument.

**Application No: UTT/24/2846/PDE.** Proposed single storey rear extension - extending 6m from rear wall, maximum height 3.6m and height to eaves 3.6m.

**Location:** Fairview, Church Hill, Ashdon.

The Parish Council objects to this application mainly due to over development. Three previous applications have been granted. Trees that were protected by a TPO have been lost.

*It was agreed to delegate power to the Clerk to return comments on the following planning application as it was not received in time to be discussed at this meeting. Deadline for comments 11 December 2024.*

**Proposed: Cllr Pardue. Seconded: Cllr Moran. All agreed.**

**Application No: UTT/24/2836/FUL.** Erection of single storey, self-build dwelling and detached single storey office, access and associated landscaping.

**Location:** Land east of Fairfields, Water End Road, Ashdon.

**24/84. PLAY AREAS.**

To receive a brief update on work agreed. A date to be agreed for councillors to look at the play areas and the access steps at Ashdon Playing Field.

**24/85. FLOODING AT STEVENTON END.**

Cllr Goodwin is applying for a grant from UDC Climate Change fund to get flashing flood signs for Steventon End. At Overhall Lane the ditch has been dug out (ECC responsibility) and the hedges are to be cut at a cost to the affected residents.

Cllr Goodwin was thanked for the work she has put in to resolve the flooding issues.

**24/86. CORRESPONDENCE TO NOTE.**

**Essex Highways** - temporary road closure of Steventon End 19 November 2024 for three days while Affinity Water undertakes renew/replace frame and lid.

**Essex Highways** - temporary road closure of Dorvis Lane 28 November 2024 for two days while Gigaclear undertakes blockage clearance.

**Essex Highways** - temporary road closure of Over Hall Lane 3 December 2024 for one day while Openreach undertakes new connection.

**Cllr Foley** - copy of an email sent to Cllr Foley regarding overgrown hedges along Church Hill. Cllr Foley has followed this up with ECC, however it appears that it may be the responsibility of local landowners.

A number of emails plus telephone calls received from a member of the public regarding various issues including the 2023/24 Audit.

**24/87. VEXATIOUS COMPLAINTS.**

To consider determining a complainant as vexatious (please refer to the Councils Vexatious Complaints Policy).

Cllr Gray proposed we act on the Vexatious Complaints Policy, seconded by Cllr Moran and agreed with one abstention.

**24/88. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA.**

- Areas of Responsibility (Roles and Responsibilities)
- District Councillors Grant
- Allotments
- Internal Auditors Report
- Budget

**24/89. MEETING DATES 2024.**

Meetings are held on the third Monday of the month (except August).  
16 December

**Meeting Dates 2025**

20 January, 17 February, 17 March, 28 April, 19 May (Annual Meetings), 16 June, 21 July, 15 September, 20 October, 17 November (Budget Meeting),  
15 December.

**Close of meeting 21.38**

**Signed (Chairman):**

**Date:**