

**Minutes of a meeting of Ashdon Parish Council, held on
Monday 28 April 2025, 7.30pm at Ashdon Village Hall.**

Present: Cllrs: Goodwin, Gray, Horrigan, Lewis, Moran & Pardue.
In the Chair: Cllr Moran.
Clerk: Angela Balcombe.
Also present: 7 members of the public & County Cllr Foley.

***Prior to the start of the meeting, Cllr Paul Lewis signed the Declaration of
Acceptance of Office agreeing to abide by the Code of Conduct.***

The Chairman welcomed Cllr Lewis to the Council.

25/63. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies were received from Cllr Olley.

25/64. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING.

The minutes of 17 March 2025 were approved as a correct record of events.

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

25/65. 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). No other interests were declared.

25/66. MATTERS ARISING.

25/49. Cemetery Progress - an offer from a resident to paint/oil the Cemetery gates has been received, the Parish Council were happy to accept the offer.

25/67. LICENSING OF ASHDON'S NEW PRIEST.

The official announcement of Ashdon's new Priest, the Revd Romey Poston, was read by Mr Mat Lester. Councillors were invited to attend her official Licensing Service at 7.30pm on 2 September 2025.

25/68. COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORTS.

Essex County Council (Cllr Foley). Local Government Reform is causing problems at ECC, one issue is the Local Highways Panel (LHP), which has been suspended. Extra funding for repair of potholes has been received, an up to date list of outstanding potholes to be sent to Cllr Foley who has been given a team for one week to carry out the work.

Potholes in Rectory Lane were still awaiting repair, someone (not Highways) has tried to fill them in. Cllr Moran to send the reference numbers to Cllr Foley.

White railings - the railings need repair and painting, it was explained that the Parish Council would like to do some of this work themselves even though it is Highways responsibility, permission is needed from Highways before any work is done. The Clerk to contact Highways and copy in Cllr Foley.

Uttlesford District Council (Cllr Moran). There was no further news on the Local Government Reform, hope to hear more in May/September. Cllr Moran had attended the Planning Committee regarding the objection to Lang Meadow however, it was passed and received no other objections.

25/69. PUBLIC FORUM

- Potholes in Rectory Lane - it was explained that it is Highways responsibility to repair them, the Parish Council can only put pressure on Highways to do the work. Reference numbers to be sent to Cllr Foley.
- Speeding - the Parish Council has budgeted for three Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) but cannot proceed without permission from Highways. Although it was thought a location map had been submitted, the Clerk suggested doing it again to be able to chase up the permission.

25/70. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

To agree the updated roles and responsibilities following the recent change of councillors. Unanimously agreed.

25/71. PROPOSED REMOVAL OF THE PHONE BOX AT CHURCH HILL.

To receive an update. The deadline for responses to UDC is 30 April 2025 (the official BT deadline for responses is 15 June 2025). BT are aware the phone box is listed, if they decide to remove the phone they will leave the box sealed up.

25/72. FINANCE.

Payments made:

103040 £30.00 Grasshopper Lawncare (War Memorial)
103041 £30.00 Ashdon Village Hall (Hall Hire)
103042 £801.36 M D Landscapes Ltd (Grass Cutting)
103043 £126.60 RCCE (Dual Membership)
103044 £368.21 EALC (Affiliation Fees 2025/26)
103045 £4,765.64 UDC (Election Costs)
103046 £1,624.50 UDC (Garden Waste Service)
103047 £744.40 A Balcombe (Locum Clerk Costs - Salary/Mileage/Postage/
outstanding PAYE 2023/24)
103048 £1,138.13 J Gray (Stationery £16.00, 6 Padlocks plus metal bin £130.13,
Bags for Cemetery £36.00, 4 Compost Bins £956.00). (contractors)
103049 £2,333.48 Clear Council Management (Insurance)

Cllr Horrigan checked the authenticity of invoices against cheques.

Income

UDC £22,655 1st Instalment Precept

Bank Balances to date:

Current Account £40,942.90 (includes 1st Instalment Precept)
Business Saving Account £55,355.66
Business Saving Account £1,102.77

25/73. PLANNING.

Application No: UTT/25/0712/CLP. Proposed single storey rear extension

Location: South Field, Church End, Church Lane, Ashdon.

The Council objects to this planning application for the following reasons:

The proposal goes against Policies ASH 1, 4, 6, 7, 8 and 14 of the Ashdon Neighbourhood Plan.

Ref: INV/25/0057/C. Land to the west of Butlers Lane, Saffron Walden.

Acknowledgement of receipt of recent correspondence regarding the alleged breach of Planning Control - importation and dumping of large amounts of soil.

The Planning Department at UDC are aware that the Parish Council has concerns.

Application No: UTT/23/3239/FUL. Proposed demolition of existing dwelling and construction of new dwelling with associated garaging, swimming pool, and extensive soft landscaping and retention of existing stable block.

Location: Lang Meadows, Bartlow Road, Ashdon CB10 2HY. **Approved with conditions.**

Application No: UTT/25/0765/DOC. Application to discharge condition 3 (biodiversity enhancement) 4 (biodiversity gain plan) attached to UTT/24/2741/FUL.

Location: Guildhall, Church End, Church Lane, Ashdon CB10 2HG.

Discharge conditions in part.

25/74. REPAIR & PAINTING OF THE WHITE RAILINGS IN THE VILLAGE.

It was agreed that although a Highway responsibility, the Parish Council would like to do some of the work themselves using volunteers and that it could be done in stages. Due to the safety aspect permission would be needed from Highways, some of the work requires tree work which can't be done until the autumn due to nesting birds. It has been advised that a tree surgeon should be consulted. A piece to be put on the Facebook page asking for volunteers to help with the painting but agreed the repair work was outside of the scope of volunteers. The Clerk will contact Highways asking permission to do the painting and to report the repair work for them to complete.

25/75. VICTORY IN EUROPE DAY - THURSDAY 8 MAY 2025.

Agreement on plans for VE Day celebrations (Cllr Moran). A lot of celebrations are taking place on 5 May, the Ashdon School Run, a Hog Roast at the pub and an event at the Museum. A brief ceremony to be held at the War Memorial, a wreath has been ordered. Bunting to be collected from the Windmill and put up at 9am on Saturday.

25/76. MULTI-GYM FACILITY TRAINING DAY.

To consider the possibility of a training day at the multi-gym facility (Cllr Goodwin). Cllr Goodwin apologised for not progressing this yet, details of sessions and cost to be obtained. Weed spraying of the area to be organised.

25/77. LITTER PICK.

To agree a decision on the Litter Pick (Cllr Moran). It was agreed to leave this for the moment but to keep it under review and to concentrate on getting volunteers to help with the white railings first.

25/78. ALLOTMENTS.

After much discussion it was agreed that the allotments are a key asset for the Village and the Parish Council should look at how they can facilitate the retention of them. Should the Parish Council decide to take them on a lot of work must be done to bring the area up to scratch first, as going forward it would mean taking on responsibility for the trees and the river bank. The whole site is designated as amenity greenspace/protected open space in the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan. The meadow area would need a properly costed business plan before it could be considered taking this on.

It was generally agreed that taking a five-year lease would not be long enough. In the meantime, it was agreed that we would explore a more viable proposition with the Chair of the Ashdon Allotments Group and the owner. Cllr Gray will contact the Chair of the Allotment Group

25/79. TREE WORK AROUND THE VILLAGE.

An update on tree work needed around the Village. There are a number of trees that are the responsibility of the Parish Council and it was agreed to have a walk round in the summer to make a list.

With regard to the recent hedges that were cut down, talks are being held about removing the brash, the residents responsible were concerned about birds nesting. There was some disagreement over ownership of the area but it was explained that it was not the responsibility of the Parish Council but that the Council was listening and trying to find a solution. Cllr Moran hopes to come back with an agreement in a couple of weeks about getting rid of the brash.

25/80. CORRESPONDENCE TO NOTE.

Highways - temporary closure of Church Hill, due to commence on 18th May 2025 for 1 day (09:30 - 15:30 only). Openreach new service.

Highways - temporary closure of Radwinter Road, due to commence on 12th May 2025 for 1 day (09:30-15:30 only). Openreach pole testing.

UDC Community Safety Officer - Councillor drop-in sessions starting Wednesday 11 June 2025 (appointments must be booked).

EALC - Routine Playground Inspection Course & Exam - Thursday 8th May 2025

RCCE - Village of the Year & Rural Community Awards - deadline for entry Monday 2 June 2025.

PKF Littlejohn - list of questions relating to the external audit for 2023/24.

Freedom of Information Request - further correspondence.

25/81. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA.

25/82. MEETING DATES 2025.

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

19 May (Annual Council Meeting 7.pm, Annual Parish Meeting 7.45pm), 16 June, 21 July, 15 September, 20 October, 17 November (Budget Meeting), 15 December.

Close of meeting 21:13

Signed (Chairman):

Date: