

Meeting of Ashbury Parish Council
Via Zoom
Monday 8th March 2021 at 6.00pm
Minutes

Present: Cllr C Davies (Chairman), P Cowx, C Prentice, A Reynolds, J Greenham, J Ruggiero, N Morgan, County Councillor Y Constance, District Cllr E Ware, L Evans (Clerk), E Derrington and two members of the public

At the start of the meeting, CD stated for the benefit of the public that; meetings are run to a strict time-schedule, and being via Zoom, would be recorded for ease of minuting.

ITEM

1 To receive apologies for absence

District Cllr S Howell

2 To receive any declarations of personal and/or prejudicial interest in respect of items on the agenda for this meeting- None

3 To approve the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting on Monday 11th January 2021

Approved

4 To address matters arising from the previous meeting–

- Excessive number of vehicles on Ridgeway -District Cllr E Ware confirmed that the Covid Marshalls and the Police had been made aware of the concerns raised at the last meeting, but advised it was a police matter and that they had increased patrols. Cllr A Reynolds confirmed that a Police car had been seen recently on Idstone Hill.

All other matters arising are covered elsewhere within the agenda.

5 County & District Councillors- To receive reports from County and District Councillors (5 minute time slot)

Welcome Pack - Cllr C Davies explained that Ashbury PCC was producing a 'Welcome Pack' for new residents to the village and asked whether the County and District Councillors wished to contribute information. Cllr C Davies to pass contact details. CD

District Councillor report attached to minutes in appendix 1

Planning Office – There is currently a back log of applications at the planning office, recruitment for more staff is due to start shortly.

Proposal for a Joint South and Vale Local Plan- District Cllr E Ware strongly urged the Parish Council to look at this proposal, as this is a concern. This is due to be debated at the Cabinets meeting on 17th March then will be presented to full Council on 24th March.

District Cllr E Ware raised concerns over the new developments at Wrag Barn Golf Club as there are concerns that Shrivenham will be used as a rat run to the A420.

County Cllr Y Constance presented updates regarding transport schemes and Covid-19 update.

County Cllr Y Constance explained that the OCC are trying to build a Councillor relationship with Swindon Borough Council as they seem to see treat the A420 as a version of a dual carriageway.

Speed Reduction through Ashbury- Cllr Prentice still awaiting estimated costs of a speed survey, County Cllr Y Constance explained that the costs can be rather high. County Cllr Y Constance explained that there is a proposal being put forward for the County Council Elections, where a 20 MPH speed limit would be offered to all Parish Councils while helping to reduce the cost of the implementation, if elected. County Cllr Y Constance is working to revive the Speed Watch programme along with the Police.

Idstone Road Railings – Cllr Greenham explained the progress is slow, several departments from OCC are aware and are looking at the embankment that supports the railing plus the railings themselves. County Cllr Y Constance explained that as it is a safety issue the railings should come out of the Safety Budget at OCC but as this budget has been spent for this financial year 2022/21 that Cllr Greenham keep the contacts at OCC as the new year financial year starts in April 2021 and to copy County Cllr Y Constance on any correspondence sent. JG

6 Chairs Verbal Update (3 minute time slot)

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Report attached to minutes in appendix 2

Thanks to Cllr C Prentice for agreeing to become Chair in May and Cllr J Greenham Vice chair. Thanks also to Neil Morgan for offering to fill the council vacancy that would exist after Cllr C Davies resigns in May.

Cllr C Davies suggested that with the easing of Covid-19 restrictions, the Parish Council should consider organising a form of celebration on the Village Green to thank those who have contributed during the pandemic, or contributed by carrying out parish maintenance, etc. Cllr A Reynolds enquired as to whether there was going to be a Village Fete this year but no confirmation has been received. Cllr C Prentice suggested that as people are not in the habit of making plans at the moment due to restrictions being constantly reviewed and that perhaps this could be discussed nearer the time.

Cllr A Reynolds enquired whether it was worth escalating the potential breach of planning in Kingstone Winslow as this has been going on for some time – see 11 below.

7 Clerks Verbal Update (3 minute time slot)

- Ashbury Events and Information change of email address – A vote of thanks was given to Margaret Smith for the Round Robin emails, as it is a very useful source of information.

8 Councillors Forum- To receive reports from responsible officers (12 minute time slot)

- Confirm proposed co-option of new Councillor- - The meeting thanked Neil Morgan for offering his service as a councillor, and all Cllrs agreed that he be co-opted. The formal co-option to the council shall take place at the May AGM.
- Cllr P Cowx enquired whether OCC's email offering funding for local transports [ie the Shopperbus] meant we should consider applying for funding on an individual basis rather than with Uffington. Cllr C Davies considered that we should, but suggested Cllr P Cowx liaise with Uffington.
- Cllr J Greenham is aware that this is the normal time of year that a Litter Pick would take place, but with Covid restrictions easing this may not be the first thing volunteers would wish to do, but will keep a litter pick on the radar.

PC

JG

9 Sub Committee Reports- To receive reports from Sub-committees (6 minute time slot)

E Derrington presented the report (attached to the minutes in appendix 3)

Have received good news that the Lottery funding applied for has been accepted so will be able to purchase the picnic tables including the bases. Cllr C Davies congratulated Liz and the team on achieving the funding, all Cllrs agreed.

Received the price from BGG regarding the weedkilling, trying to obtain other quotes but have not received any back. Maintenance visits from BGG to start the second week of April and then regular fortnightly intervals.

Neil Morgan as the Communications Officer, from May to liaise regularly with our contractor BGG regarding the Village Green- this is a Council function rather than a sub- committee function. Cllr C Davies to forward all details to Neil.

CD

- Proposal to set guidelines to NPG on the treatment of planning objections- see item 11

10 Financial Matters

- Bank Reconciliation to be approved.
- OALC 2021/22 annual subscription renewal – The meeting agreed to renew the subscription with OALC as the resources available are very useful.
- The meeting agreed that the sum of £225 (excluding VAT) for weedkilling on the Village Green be funded by S106 monies.
- S106 monies- potential for clawback at 10-year anniversary; do we take steps to mitigate- The meeting agreed as there is no contractual obligation to spend within 10 years, there is no need to accelerate spending.
- Review of asset register- The Asset Register was reviewed and approved.
- See item 11 'other' below.

CD

Clerk

AR

11 Planning Matters Applications;

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- P20/V3249/D- Odstone Farmhouse Ashbury Swindon Oxfordshire- Application to determine if prior approval is required for demolition of agricultural steel frame buildings – ongoing.
- P21/V0007/FUL - Kingstone Farm Kingstone Winslow Ashbury - Demolition of redundant farm buildings, change of use and conversion of remaining redundant farm buildings to provide eight dwellings. together with associated ancillary works – the application has been amended which has led to an extended period of consultation.
The meeting agreed that the amendments failed to address the significant concerns raised by the application – Cllr C Davies suggested that NPG review the amendments and determine whether any further action was needed. As a member of NPG, Cllr C Prentice to refer back to the group.

CP

Decisions:

- P20/V2855/HH-Berrycroft Cottage 3 The Lane Ashbury- Increasing height of existing chimney stack. Approved.

Other:

- Enforcement Investigation VE19/469 – Cllr C Davies confirmed that he had written to the enforcement officer requesting an update on progress with the retrospective application & clarification of the usage of the annex, to date no response has been forthcoming. District Cllr E Ware stated that VWHDC enforcement officers had a backlog of cases but offered to determine the situation on this case. Cllr C Davies to raise this issue with the head of the department, and District Cllr E Ware requested to be copied in on the email.
- Proposal to better define the terms of reference of the Neighbourhood Plan Group- Cllr C Davies suggested that any objection sent by NPG be accompanied by a letter outlining the areas of a proposed planning application that do not fit within the Neighbourhood Plan, rather than just using the proforma sent as a tick box exercise – approved by meeting, Cllr C Davies to confirm to group.
- Potential need for an earmarked fund should consent be given for P21/V0007/FUL above- as District Cllr E Ware confirmed that APC had no right of appeal should the application be approved, no fund would be needed.

CD

CD

12 Public Forum- To take comments, representation or queries on agenda items (15 minute time slot)
None received

13 Individual Topics (12 minutes allocated)

- Ashbury Shop – Confirm proposed renewal process, and agree process start date & Councillor dealing- Cllr C Davies asked if all the Cllrs were happy with the renewal process, majority vote agreed. The date to begin the process was undecided and it was suggested that this matter appear on each agenda while bearing in mind that 1-year's notice of the lease end date would be preferable.
- To confirm future meeting dates for 2021-22- Clerk to email out for reference & agreement post meeting.
- Confirm intended post-AGM new member & revised office holders- Clerk sent out the new APC roles and emails post May, to which all Cllrs agreed.
- Obligations arising from the Allotments Act- Deferred until the next meeting

LE

14 Agenda Diary

- To re-approve Standing Orders – The meeting approved the Standing Orders
- To re-approve the Financial Regulations – The meeting approved the Financial Regulations
- To re-approve the bank mandate – Approved but Cllr C Davies to be removed when resigning in May and Cllr Greenham to be added as a signatory

AR

15 Correspondence

- 29/01/2021 – Town & Parish Update
- 29/01/2021- OALC January update
- 31/01/2021- Budget Report for Parish Councils
- 01/02/2021 – District Councillor Report February 2021
- 05/02/2021 – Vale Town and Parish Council Update

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- 12/02/2021 – Town and Parish Council Update
- 15/02/2021 – OCC News consultation on Oxfordshire’s draft transport blueprint
- 26/02/2021- Community Transport Newsletter

16 Future Agenda Items

The meeting closed at 7:32pm

Signed.....Dated.....

APC Draft

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Appendix 1

District Councillors Report to Parish Councils

Watchfield and Shrivenham Ward

March 2021

Vale of White Horse District Council

The Vale Communications Team continued to provide Town and Parish Councils with regular updates regarding Covid. The good news is that we now have a four- step roadmap that will see current restrictions being lifted over the coming months.

As previously reported Vale staff continue to work from home. Although this is not ideal they would appreciate it if any communications are by Email rather than telephone.

The Vale has set up a Covid-19 symptom free testing programme at The Beacon in Wantage. This facility will provide rapid testing for public facing workers and volunteers who are not displaying symptoms. For further information please go to the Vale website-www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk

Climate Emergency Advisory Committee – the next meeting is now scheduled for 19 April. Agenda details will be published on the Vale website one week before the meeting.

Environment - The Vale along with South Oxfordshire District Council have helped to raise more than £240,000 for great crested newt habitats. Over the past three years funds have been raised through an ongoing and innovative conservation scheme to protect the newts which are a European protected species.

A new partnership has been set up between Oxfordshire Greentech and the Vale and South Oxfordshire District Councils. The aim is to assist in helping the districts to become carbon neutral.

The County Council is asking for people to comment on the draft Local Transport and Connectivity Plan. The consultation ends on 29 March details may be found on OCC's website current consultations. The plan sets out a vision and will contribute to developing a zero economy and improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire residents.

Garden Waste – The suspension of the garden waste service caused significant concern throughout the Vale. The service resumed on 15 February and the Vale contractor Biffa is confident that it will meet its contractual agreement of 20 collections per annum.

Civil Parking Enforcement – Following the agreement of all Councils involved the County Council is awaiting confirmation from Government of the delegation powers that will enable the new arrangements to commence later this year.

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Planning – Since Christmas there has been a number of applications submitted to the Vale from within the Watchfield & Shrivenham Ward. Decisions are still awaited on two applications that will be called into Committee for consideration should they be recommended for approval.

The application to build four dwellings at the rear of April Cottage in Stallpits Road was considered by the Planning Committee on 11 February. It was very disappointing that the application was approved but there were additional conditions attached to the approval which will need to be discharged before any works can commence.

Both Cabinet and the Scrutiny Committee publicise their work programmes on the Vale website. To access the programmes go to www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk and enter work programmes in the search box.

The next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee is scheduled for 9 March when it will discuss a proposal to consider the preparation and production of a joint local plan with South Oxfordshire District Council. Any recommendations from the Scrutiny Committee will be considered by the Cabinet which is due to meet on 17 March and will be presented to full Council on 24 March.

Full Council meeting – Full Council met virtually on Wednesday 10 February. This meeting considered the budget and set the Council Tax for 2021/22. The motion regarding the 20 is plenty was debated and approved unanimously. It is hoped that over the coming years more and more roads in both urban and rural areas will benefit from a reduction in speed limits. The minutes of the meeting will be published on the Vale website in due course.

Census – the 2021 Census 21 March – This Census is the first to be primarily online. Households will receive a letter from the Office of National Statistics with an access code for online completion of a questionnaire. Paper copies will be available on request for those that need them.

Community Engagement – Community groups and sporting organisations in Wantage, Grove and Faringdon are to be asked to help identify how millions of s106 funding raised from housing developers can be spent in their local areas. By speaking with the community the Vale hopes to get an up to date picture of current leisure provision and identify alternative local need. The Council has appointed an independent consultant Strategic Leisure Ltd to engage with a variety of stakeholders over the coming weeks.

Shrivenham Sports Pavilion – Following a lengthy process the Vale approved the release of s106 funds to help build a brand new sports pavilion in the Recreation Ground. The money comes from the agreements made with the various developers of the new homes in the village. All being well construction will start after Easter.

Swindon Borough Council – New Eastern Villages – Work continues on the Southern Connector Road and all other road improvements that form part of the infrastructure to support the NEV. The distribution centres at Symmetry Park are well on the way to being completed. OCC Officers are due to meet with Swindon BC Officers in March to discuss the impact that the road works will have on the A420 as well as the long-term disruption which will be created as the NEV construction begins.

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Although we don't hold surgeries we are always available to deal with any issues.

Simon Howell – 01793 784491 – simon.howell@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

Elaine Ware – 01793 783026 – elaine.ware@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

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Appendix 2

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING ON 8TH MARCH 2021

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

ACTIONS carried forward from previous meetings by reference:

November -13] Revise Email addresses: agreed & held pending publication post AGM – action complete.

November-11] Potential breach of planning in Kingstone Winslow: The Enforcement Officer has been contacted to seek clarification on the decision on usage of the annex, and the required timing for the retrospective planning application on the new extension. - Action complete, response pending

January -9] Agree preferred bench design for VG and advise VG-group: APC opted to delegate decision to VG-group - action complete.

January -10] Sign-off ratified contract with BGG for 2021: contract counter-signed & returned to BGG on 15th January 2021– action complete.

January -13] Draft programme for establishing shop under-tenants post July 2022: proposal distributed 15th January 2021 – action complete.

OTHER MATTERS

Council make-up:

My thanks to Christopher for agreeing to become Chair following my scheduled departure in May, and for James G. for supporting him by becoming Vice-Chair. My thanks also to Neil Morgan for offering to fill the council vacancy that would otherwise have existed after the May AGM. I have then asked Laura to issue the full reshuffle for ratification at the meeting.

Kingstone Farm - P21/0007/FUL:

I consider that NPG's intended response to the above [see attached] fell far short of what is required when dealing with an application that could, were consent given, undermine both the ANP and Local Plan. In consequence I consider that APC should set out guidelines on the response expected for each category of application – e.g. a pro-forma such as that attached is fine for minor applications, but a detailed submission measured against the ANP & Local Plan would be required for applications such as that referenced above.

Similarly, we should refresh our request that APC has sight of all responses prior to being returned to the planning department to ensure the agreed process is adhered to.

Ashbury Shop:

Having set out a proposed format/timing for a process aimed at establishing the replacement under-tenancy, there appears to be little appetite amongst other members for the process to begin immediately. As I will not be in post after the May AGM, I would ask members to either; confirm the intended start date & nominate the lead officer, OR; formally defer the process – the object being that the decision is then a matter of record.

Village Green Maintenance:

The VG-group have asked for the BGG schedule to be tweaked to better match the volunteer input – i.e. cutting to commence no earlier than 2nd week of April, and fortnightly thereafter.

As my parting shot I will instruct BGG accordingly, but at the March meeting members will need to decide the officer dealing thereafter.

Ashbury Allotments:

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My recent experience when securing an allotment-plot has highlighted several shortcomings in the process, not least because the organisation falls to one individual that has little or no support. In the short time that I have had the plot there is evidently some disquiet amongst plot-holders and I consider that we need to lend more weight to Christopher's initiative in seeking to establish a role for APC to ensure a more equitable management structure.

Thinking 'out of the box' perhaps APC should consider purchasing or leasing the site.

Post Covid:

With the easing of Covid restrictions should we consider organizing some form of 'celebration' on the green to thank not only those that have contributed during the pandemic, but also those that have 'done their bit' in other ways such as volunteering with maintenance.

Cliff Davies
2nd March 2021

APC Draft

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Appendix 3

Ashbury Parish Council - Village Green Sub-committee Progress Report March 2021

Tree trail

All trees have now been sponsored and we have just over £4800 in the maintenance fund. We have no plans for further large-scale planting but will respond to demand as it arises. Later this month volunteers will clear the weeds around each tree and spread wood chippings to reduce future weed growth and facilitate mowing.

Further development

We have applied for funding from the National Lottery to buy 2 picnic tables and concrete bases. We expect a response in early May and are keeping our fingers crossed.

Weedkilling

We have tried, but failed, to get more than one quote for a second attempt at weedkilling. We therefore propose to ask BGG (whose quote is £255 excluding VAT) to do the work in late March/early April. We are grateful to APC for its offer to assist with the cost of this. If we then follow up with regular mowing, only area we expect to need further treatment is the path. APC's maintenance contract with BGG already provides for this.

Playing field

With luck the playing field will come into its own this year as Covid restrictions are relaxed. As the government currently plans to permit outdoor meetings between two families and also organised outdoor games from 29 March, we intend to mark out and mow the playing field (with the help of volunteers) before that date and let people know that it will be available for use.

Maintenance

To make most effective use of APC's maintenance contract – and to enable the Subcommittee to work out a timetable for additional work by volunteers – we have suggested that maintenance visits by BGG should start in mid April and that 13 of the 14 visits should take place at regular fortnightly intervals, running through to October. The date of the final visit could be left open and timed to ensure that the Green is left as tidy as possible at the end of the season. Julia Blake will act as mainte

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Appendix 4

ASHBURY PARISH COUNCIL

FINANCE REPORT TO 28 FEBRUARY 2021

1. The Parish precept for 2020/2021 is £9,984.
2. To 28 February 2021, precept-related expenditure was expected to be £7,734.
3. To 28 February 2021, precept-related expenditure was actually £7,440. The details can be found in the attached report.
4. At 28 February 2021, total reserves stood at £46,079 (compared to £46,554 at 31 March 2020) of which £32,372 related to earmarked reserves. Again, the details can be found in the attached report.
5. The General Reserves increased as both precept instalments have been received (£9,984).

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nance monitor reporting back to APC following each visit by the contractors.

APC Draft