

## **A Meeting of Ashen Parish Council was held on Saturday 18 April 2015 at 10.00 am in the Ashen Memorial Hall.**

### **Minutes**

Present: Cllr R. Purchas (Chairman) (RP)  
Cllr L. Dockerill (LD)  
Cllr P Mitchell (PM)  
Cllr Nigel McCrea (NM)  
Cllr C Hainsworth (CH)

Public: 3 members of the public attended.

In attendance: Karen Melville-Ross - Clerk to the Council (KMR)

#### **14.50 Apologies for Absence**

Everyone was present.

#### **14.51 Declarations of Interest**

All confirmed that their interests were unchanged from those previously declared.

#### **14.52 Approval of previous minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 10<sup>th</sup> January 2015 were approved and signed.

#### **14.53 Financial Matters**

- a) The accounts are completed and were approved.
- b) There will be no election costs and the Council has received a £74 surplus payment from BDC. The audit fee was so high last year due to the council's expenditure exceeding £50,000.
- c) Payments were made to Alan Rigg, KMR and EALC. KMR is to contact the Co Operative Bank to obtain the forms for change of signatories.

#### **14.54 Playing Field**

- a) Alan Rigg has sprayed the play area surface to remove algae and Playquest have repaired the broken climbing frame. CH has put up the signs as advised. Thanks were expressed to Stephen Norris for cutting the playing field hedge. PM asked what is happening to the old goal posts. RP is to check there is no grant stipulations and if not PM is to organise upcycling.
- b) NM asked if the football field could be rolled and RP is to approach BDC, who are now cutting the playing fields as they were considerably cheaper than Advantage Environmental.
- c) The Orchard has been sown with wild flower seeds. It was decided to wait until the next meeting to review if poison or a digger was necessary to remove the remaining suckers. PM is to check with Spencer about dealing the fallen apple tree.

#### **14.55 Village Hall**

- a) LD expressed her gratitude for all the help with the hall from the PC. A new committee is needed for the hall and RP is to check the position re. trustees. The hall has had a £500 legacy from a parishioner and there will be a quiz night in May. Some weeds are coming through the tarmac which CH is to treat with weed killer.
- b) It was agreed that a sign post for the village hall would be beneficial from a safety, access and community point of view and that the PC was happy to finance a sign for these reasons. ECC only need to provide permission. CH is to look into a wooden post so that a decision can be taken as to the preferred design.

#### **14.56 Highways**

- a) Lower Stoke Road was dealt with in the APM.
- b) The ownership of the waver and the green lane to Ridgewell were also dealt with in the APM. It was agreed that RP should raise changing the derating from a byway to a bridle path to exclude quad bikes and other vehicles with Cllr Finch.

A single entrance was approved for the new property at Upper Lea and concerns were raised about a second entrance. However it would seem that this is just during construction work and a single entrance should be reinstated.

c) The footpaths are all in good order.

d) RP has responded to the public transport strategy survey.

e) It was agreed to continue with the Street Cleaning Agreement and the forms were signed. Recycling bags are to be discussed at the next meeting. RP thanked Alan Rigg for all his work and he agreed to continue. Alan Rigg is to look into a trolley to make collecting the litter bags easier.

PM has put up duck warning signs.

#### **14.57 Neighbourhood watch and Police**

a) RP is to enquire into the nature of the meeting with the Police Commissioner on 25/26 June.

b) Alan Rigg has taken over from LD as Neighbourhood Watch coordinator and has started a new email list for communications but cannot use LD's list due to data protection issues. It was agreed Alan should send a flyer to parishioners with any printing costs to be paid by the PC.

#### **14.58 Village Amenity**

a) Ashen Close pond currently is in a good state. The tree still needs to come out of the waver but the PC are waiting to see if ECC take responsibility.

#### **14.59 Administration**

a) BT asked if the council would like to adopt the kiosk for £1 but it was felt that as a listed building BT had a duty to maintain it themselves.

b) Only 1 name has been given for the email database.

c) The website is up to date and the welcome pack is work in progress.

d) LD suggested that Lower Ashen are missing out on communications due to their distance from the village centre. Another notice board was suggested for the area. CH is to look at possible suitable positions. This is being considered as part of the Parish Plan but should be considered at the next meeting.

#### **14.60 Planning Matters**

a) RP reported that permission for the gliding club extension of area has been approved.

b) None

c) RP reported that consultation had closed on the issues and options for the local plan and the scoping report for the sustainability report. The presubmission plan was due to be published for consultation towards the end of the year.

d) None

e) RP has replied to the Open Spaces Survey.

#### **14.61 Parish Plan**

CH expressed thanks to Jim Butler and LD for their work. The draft questionnaire for consultation will be circulated to the committee and should be approved in May. NM asked to see the questionnaire before publication, which the planning committee will discuss. RP thanked all for their efforts.

#### **14.62 Village Agent**

Nothing

#### **14.63 Forward Plan**

The plan is in order and was signed off.

#### **14.64 Other Urgent Business**

Both LD and PM are standing down. RP thanked LD who has been a councillor since 2005 for her tremendous contribution to achieving the major improvements that have been carried out over the past nine years and also towards life in the village in so many ways. PM, who has been a councillor since 2011, was also thanked for his considerable input to all parts of the Council's work. Both will be missed. RP is to contact Samantha Nicholls who will join the council in May 2015 to provide her with the relevant background documents.

CH reported he'd received a letter suggesting discretionary rate relief for the hall for 2016/17 could be scrapped. He is to keep an eye on the situation.

**14.65 Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2015 at the earlier time of 9.00am.