

ASHMANSWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting And Annual Parish Assembly of the Council

Date: 19^h May 2021 **Time:** 7.30 pm

Place: Ashmansworth Village Hall

Present: Cllr Alan Cox (Chairman) Cllr Kieron Black
Cllr Andrew Bays Cllr Angela Harris
Cllr Sally Burch Cllr Graham Falconer (BDBC)
Cllr Samuel Carr (BDBC) Cllr Tom Thacker (HCC)

In Attendance: Sadie Owen (Clerk)

Apologies: Cllr John Izett

1. Welcome & Apologies

Cllr Cox welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Cllr John Izett.

2. Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman

Cllr Cox formally stood down as Chairman. Cllr Black presided as Chair and thanked Cllr Cox for the past year of service, particularly given the difficulties presented by the COVID pandemic. Cllr Black proposed and Cllr Bays seconded that Cllr Cox be re-elected. Cllr Cox resumed chairing the meeting.

Cllr Cox proposed and Cllr Bay seconded that Cllr Black be re-elected. Unanimously agreed.

The Clerk requested that any material changes to register of interests be notified as a matter of priority.

Cllr Cox welcomed Cllr Burch back after a period of ill health and thanked Cllr Bays for all of his assistance in relation to Zoom in the previous year.

3. Presentation of Achievements and Financial Report for 2020/21

See Appendix A for the Chairman's report. It was agreed that the Clerk would circulate the presentation to Ashy PC following the meeting and request any questions.

4. Reports from Borough and County Councillors

Borough Councillors – further to the presentation, Cllr Falconer reported that following local elections the borough council had transformed from a council with no overall control to a Conservative majority of 12 seats. Ashmansworth was now a member of Evingar ward, which was composed of 7 parishes. Cllr Falconer commented that he would continue to be the main point of contact for Ashmansworth, East Woodhay and Highclere with Cllr Izett responsible for

Burghclere, Newtown and Ecchinswell and Cllr Carr responsible for St Mary Bourne and Hurstbourne Priors.

It was reported that there had been reduced usage in council offices during the pandemic and that current refurbishments meant that there would be no access until December.

It was acknowledged that there had been issues and delays with planning applications throughout the past year.

Cllr Falconer reported that finances of the borough were better than expected with a shortfall of £1 million, which could be met by reserves.

It was reported that there had been a number of successful fly tipping precautions which had potentially led to a reduced number of instances.

It was noted that there were ongoing financial issues with the Anvil theatre and borough funding. Cllr Falconer reported that the theatre was suffering from a large shortfall in annual income, and was also impacted by capital issues. There were ongoing negotiations with the council but to date no resolution.

Cllr Carr introduced himself as a new member representative for Evingar ward. He reported that he lived in St Mary Bourne and so would act as a principal contact for its parish issues. Cllr Carr anticipated that the three members for the ward would work well together and encouraged residents to contact all three members with any local issues.

County Councillor – further to the presentation Cllr Thacker reported that HCC had set up a helpline for frail or vulnerable residents requiring urgent assistance and agreed to forward details to the Clerk.

It was reported that HCC's forthcoming focus would be investment in roads and infrastructure, economic recovery, climate change mitigation and support for social care. Increasing the council tax would assist with financing these priorities.

It was reported that HCC had reduced carbon emissions by 43% since 2017 and was aiming for carbon neutrality by 2050.

It was noted that there had been issues with verge cutting throughout the county. Cllr Cox agreed to forward correspondence relating to the recent parish issue whereby daffodils were prematurely cut down by HCC verge cutters.

**Cllr
Cox**

It was noted that the Drove had been re-classified from a highway track to an unclassified road and it was hoped that it would be repaired imminently.

5. Police report

Cllr Cox reported that the local PCSO was Bethany Ireland. It was agreed that the Clerk would invite her to the next meeting.

Clerk

Cllr Cox reported that there had been a recent incident whereby 3 catalytic convertors had been stolen from local vehicles. Cllr Cox had written to Karen McManus, Chief Inspector of Basingstoke district, the in relation to the incident.

6. Climate Change report and update

Cllr Cox reported that he was involved in a climate change forum with a number of other local parishes. It was noted that Overton, in particular, was doing a lot of good work in relation to tackling climate change and had recently declared itself a plastic free parish.

Cllr Cox suggested that the main areas of focus for local residents should be in relation to electric cars and the investigation of alternative forms of heating, for example heat pumps, insulation and heat batteries.

Cllr Cox reported that Ashmansworth parish council had agreed to purchase of two infra-red cameras (I-phone and android compatible) for loan to parishioners to test and view the radiation emitted from their houses.

7. Public discussion and question

There were no members of the public present.

8. Planning applications

21/01121/LDEU – land at Ashmansworth House, certificate of lawfulness bestowing residential status to the land. No objections.

Clerk

9. Financial payments and insurance renewal

- a) Payments Approval –the Clerk presented the financial statements (Appendix B). The payments were unanimously agreed. Clerk to process.
Councillors also agreed renewal of GLEAM membership for £15.

Clerk

- b) Insurance renewal - the Council approved policy renewal of £330 with Came & Company/Ecclesiastical.

10. Date of next meeting

The meeting closed at 9.25 pm. Next meeting APM on 16th June at 7.30 pm.

Appendix A

Ashmansworth
Parish Council




ASHMANSWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2021

19th MAY

1

Ashmansworth
Parish Council




Annual Parish Meeting Agenda

- Welcome and Apologies
- Elections
- Presentation on Achievements and Financial Report
- Report from Borough / County Councillors
- Police Report
- Update on Climate Emergency
- Public discussion and questions

2

Ashmansworth
Parish Council




Parish Council Elections for 2021/22

- Election of Chairman
- Election of Vice-chairman
- Parish council due for election in May 2022

3

Ashmansworth
Parish Council




Who were we in the past year?

• Alan Cox	Chairman
• Kieron Black	Vice-chairman
• Andrew Bays	
• Sally Burch	
• Angela Harris	
• Sadie Owen	Clerk

4

Ashmansworth
Parish Council



Our Role

- Cover villages of Ashmansworth and Crux Easton.
- Lowest level of democracy.
- Provide guidance on Planning Applications.
- A link to Borough and County Councils on what is planned and what we want.
- Focus of local interest.
- Non-political.
- One of the smallest in the county, limited budget.
- Thanks to all members for their hard work!

5

What do we do?

- We meet every ~8 weeks, by zoom this year due to Covid - reverting to physical meetings from now on.
- We had 11 new Planning Applications in last year. All of these were approved or are still pending, except for 1 we objected to which was withdrawn. Also 5 tree applications OK.
- Slow signs repainted by HCC at last!
- Concern at reduction in plastic Recycling facilities.
- We have updated our joint emergency plan (with Highclere and East Woodhay).

6

What do we do +?

- Village details on new improved Website.
- We have new email addresses for council business.
- Ashy-PC very popular, allowing any member to email everyone – no spam!
- Lengthsman repaired stiles, cleared footpaths and cut hedges.
- Added plaque to war memorial commemorating Norman Scull's crossing Atlantic in Airship R34.
- Greatly appreciate Neighbourcare Covid support.
- Budget to spend our Precept to benefit Parish.

7

Concerns

- Access to Newbury Newtown Road Recycling.
- Resolution of planning applications taking too long.
- Taxi-share suspended due to low use and Covid. Hope it will be restored shortly.
- Verges cut during Spring, damaging daffodils – requesting cut for autumn only.
- Roadside litter, though residents have been collecting it – council cannot, due to insurance!
- Would like residents of Crux Easton to use more of our services, Taxi-share, village hall, table tennis...

8

Covid-19

- Not so badly impacted as some areas
- Looking forward to easing of restrictions
- Greatly appreciate support from Neighbourcare and neighbours assisting each other!

9

Clerk's Report 1

- The parish council has once again kept its precept at the same level this year, despite continued cut backs and increases from both county and borough.
- Communication with the wider community is important to the PC and all our agendas, minutes and other documents are available on our revised website www.ashmansworth-pc.org.uk. There is also a link to all planning applications within our new website so if you haven't already, then please do take a look at it.

10

Clerk's Report 2

- The lengthsman has undertaken some good work in helping the PCC clear the churchyard vegetation, and has also been busy again around the parish mending stiles and clearing footpaths.
- Our mowing contractors remain the same and we hope that they continue with the great work that they have carried out to date.

11

Financial Report

- Income was as expected but less than last year due to ongoing cuts.
- Income of £285 in BDBC Grants & £4,123 Precept.
- Expenditure roughly as expected.
- Reserves have decreased by a small amount. Opening balance £5,396, closing £4,782.
- Annual return figures are not yet available – audit booked for tomorrow, May 20th.

12

The Year Ahead

- The Precept for 2021/22 has remained at last year's amount of £4,123.
- This is in line with budget spend predictions and will also allow the council to make some small donations.
- The Lengthsman scheme will continue for 2021/22 and we again have a budget of £1,000 to allocate to local works. Please do let us know about any suggested tasks.

13

New Borough Council

- A Conservative majority of 12 plus Whitchurch independent
- 54 councillors in 18 Wards – reduced from 60
- Reorganisation - **Evingar** – with 7 parishes
- East Woodhay, Hurstbourne Priors new to us
- Graham Falconer, John Izett and Sam Carr

Borough Issues

- Local Plan - ongoing rolling 5 year review. SHELA , 5 year land supply
- Planning – staffing issues
- HWRC – AS-is for this year
- Fly tipping – successful prosecutions
- Finance – £28m in pandemic grants to business
- Pandemic shortfall about £1m, rest covered by government grants

15

County Council Issues

- Councillor Tom Thacker re-elected
- County Council Report
- Roads – potholes and white lines
- Recycling – still no access to Newbury HRC
- Lengthsman – doing a good job

16

Climate Emergency

- Basingstoke & Hampshire declared a climate emergency
- We are in discussions with Basingstoke + "Sustainable Overton", so far with zoom meetings and by email
- Impact of carbon emissions on climate change – for us, mainly house heating and vehicle use
- Impact of plastic use, need less packaging, better recycling
- Reduction of food waste, reuse of clothing etc
- Avoid exporting emissions – China making products with coal-fired electricity, oil based shipping and flights...

17

House Heating

- Today, most use oil and/or log burners. No mains gas.
- Will be discouraged/banned due to emissions + pollution
- Propose use of heat pumps
 - Air pumps less efficient but cheaper and easier to install
 - Ground pumps more efficient but more expensive to install, needing large trenches or holes to bury pipes
 - Neither provides water as hot as required so ideally needs underfloor heating or some other boost
- New ideas like "heat batteries" look very promising
- Need good insulation – plan to buy IR cameras to loan

18

Caldera Heat Battery



19

Electricity

- May have solar panels on some houses but difficult on thatch or listed buildings
- Large batteries (electrical or thermal) for storage of off peak or solar. Hope costs fall.
- Possibility of village-wide energy projects - solar panels, wind turbines or anaerobic digestors
- Probably uneconomic for now so await developments!

20

Alpha 311 Wind Turbine



21

Travel

- Encouraging use of electric vehicles as diesel and petrol phased out
- Concern at range for long distance travel
- Chargers being installed across the country
- We are fortunate that nearly all our houses have off-street parking – major problem in other areas
- Fly less unless new developments, eg hydrogen or "bio-fuels" made from hydrogen

22

Farming Emissions

- There may be restrictions on methane emissions, especially from cattle
- There may also be restrictions on nitrates, especially on muck-spreading
- We await developments on tractors and HGVs, possibly using hydrogen rather than batteries?

23

Plastic & Recycling

- Concern at excessive use of plastic causing pollution
- Much plastic is not recycled by BDBC, even when marked as recyclable
- Hope new developments will allow local recycling of all types of plastic
- Consumers should minimise plastic use and pressure shops and suppliers to use less packaging

24

Who does what?

- Individuals can choose to be more efficient and less polluting – and persuade others!
- Government likely to enforce this with persuasion, legislation and taxation – tax oil and gas like petrol?
- Research should create new opportunities and market forces should cut prices
- Hopefully home heating and electric vehicles will become more affordable!

25

Risks and Opportunities

- Very expensive to green every existing house
- Subsidies impractical if impact nearly everyone!
- Avoid buying everything from China
- Research needed for new technologies + cheaper:
 - batteries and solar panels using less precious/scarcce metals
 - less obtrusive wind turbines
 - hydrogen generation and conversion into bio-fuels
 - ...

26

Conclusions

- Thanks to all for their hard work and especially to Andrew Bays for providing Zoom!
- We are enjoying meeting up in the hall again!
- We welcome suggestions and assistance from everyone, especially for Community Enhancement
- What more would you like us to do?

27

Appendix B

Financial Statement: Ashmansworth Parish Council

Meeting date: 19/05/2021

Balances:

Statement No: 19/05/21 Balance	Balance after reconciliation – 19/05/21
£4,638.46	£6,610.28

Payments since last meeting date:

Cheque No	Payee	Details	TOTAL COST
TOTAL			

New items for payment

Date	Payee	Details	TOTAL COST
19.05.21	Mrs S Owen	Clerk salary May	£144.48
19.05.21	Lengthsman	Invoice 956	£43.20
19.05.21	A D Clark & Son	Invoice 489	£190.00
TOTAL			£377.68

Receipts since last meeting date:

Receipt Date	Payer	Details	TOTAL AMOUNT
26.04.21	BDBC BACS payment	Half the precept	£2,061.50
26.04.21	BDBC BACS payment	Grass cutting grant	£288.00
TOTAL			£2,349.50

Payments not yet presented

Cheque No	Payee	Details	TOTAL COST
TOTAL			0.00