

Ashton Keynes Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 11th March 2020

Present: Cllrs D Wingrove; S Crawford; M Carter; N Inzani; B Low; R Blackaller; B Ellison (late arrival).

In attendance: Yvonne Jordan (minutes); 2 members of public (names recorded).

The meeting commenced at 7:15pm

The Chairman welcomed the members of the public and invited them to speak.

One member of public raised the matter of trees recently felled in Kent End. His concern was that there had been no opportunity for any objections as permission was granted and the trees felled the same day. Ownership of this land is not clear; previous indications were that it could be WC land but in this instance they had denied ownership. As the trees could only be felled "with the owner's permission" this threw into doubt the legality of householder's actions.

The member of public also raised the matter of the ditch adjacent to the site of the felled trees and brought to the council's notice that this ditch was now filled in.

The member of public asked for the Council's views and what action (if any) the council was minded to take.

The Chairman thanked the member of public for bringing this matter to the council's attention and for their interest. He informed those present that this matter was covered in the Clerk's report where there would be a full account of all the known facts.

19-20/126 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Smith & Cooper & Wilts Cllr Berry.

19-20/127 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

19-20/128 To confirm the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 12th February 2020

The minutes of the Council Meeting 12th February 2020 had been circulated previously and were agreed and signed as a true record.

19-20/129 Parish Council Vacancy

The Chairman informed the council that unfortunately due to personal circumstances Cllr A Levens had resigned. The Chairman thanked Cllr Levens for his service. This now leaves 2 vacancies on the Parish Council.

Diana Wain had shown an interest and the Chairman moved that she be co-opted to one of these vacancies. The vote to accept was unanimous apart from Cllr Crawford who had temporarily left the room at this point. Mrs Wain signed the 'Declaration of Acceptance of Office' form and duly took her place on the Council. (Cllr Carter agreed to set up Cllr Wain with an AKPC email address.)

Action: Cllr Carter

19-20/130 Actions from Previous Meeting

- AutoSpeedWatch update: Cllr Crawford informed the meeting that an application to participate in the AutoSpeedWatch trial was still being put together. It was noted that two other local parishes have already applied to participate in the trial. Cllr Crawford will continue to progress this and will work with Wiltshire Council to determine the best position for a camera. He will give a further update next month.

Action: Cllr Crawford

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- Gravel extraction: Cllr Wingrove had submitted the Council's response to this application as agreed previously with the council and after consultation with Cllr B Low and Mr M Low (CWP trustee and Parishioner).
- The Clerk had circulated the hydrology report as agreed on 13th February 2020.
- Faded road signage: Cllr C Berry, who was investigating this matter, was not in attendance, so no update was given. This matter will be raised at the next Council meeting.

Action: Cllr Berry

- Thames Path Crossing: Cllr Crawford updated the Council on his discussions with Martin Rose. Cllr Crawford said that he hoped that he could get the matter on the agenda of the CATG Meeting to be held the following week.

Action: Cllr Crawford

- At the previous meeting, concern had been expressed that, on the stretch of the River between the White Hart Inn and The Derry, two bridge arches had been closed off, seemingly stopping 50% of the flow. Cllr Wingrove reported that the arches in this stretch were partially blocked with silt. Some riparian owners had blocked arches in this manner to force the water to flow through the other arch to wash away the silt that had built up

Cllr Wingrove also reported that this action was consistent with current Environment Agency policy. Whereas previously the Agency had directly managed the waterway themselves, they are now happy for this work to be done by riparian owners and the community at large.

The Council understood this but felt that they should be advised of the work that is being undertaken. It was felt that Cllr Ellison is best placed to do this.

Action: Cllr Ellison

19-20/131 Chairman's Report

The Annual Parish Meeting will take place at 7pm on Wednesday 29th April in the Ashton Keynes Village Hall. The purpose of the meeting is to inform the public of the Parish council's work and recipients of financial aid from the council are invited to attend to give an update on their current activities and future plans. All members of the public are welcome to attend. Cllr Wingrove said that he hoped as many Councillors as possible would attend.

The Best Kept Village competition entries need to be in by 20th April. Although Ashton Keynes won a sub-category last year, some of the problems identified by the judges still remain. After some discussion it was agreed that the village would enter the competition again this year. Cllr Wingrove agreed to complete the entry form. Cllr Wain suggested getting local groups more involved. Cllr Inzani volunteered to co-ordinate this, assisted by Cllr Wain.

Action: Cllrs Wingrove, Inzani and Wain

At the recent Malmesbury Area Board Gigaclear were invited to give a presentation about their work to lay cable to villages in the area which would extend the reach of fibre broadband. Ashton Keynes is not included in the work and the criteria for inclusion is unclear. It was felt by members of the council that this was a probably commercial decision because the village already has the option of partial fibre broadband so take-up would be potentially much less than villages without any other option. Cllr Wingrove said that Gigaclear had offered to make a presentation to the Parish Council at some point in the future.

Cllr Wingrove reminded councillors that 2021 would be the end of the 4 year term of office for existing Councillors. At this point Cllr Wingrove stated his intention to stand down. As a first step towards this he gave notice that he would not be seeking re-election as Chairman in May 2020 although he would remain a councillor to the end of his term.

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19-20/132 Clerks Report

Although absent from the meeting, the Clerk had prepared and circulated a report which Cllr Wingrove presented.

The Asset Register has been circulated.

The Wiltshire Council Open Space and Green Infrastructure survey is due for completion by the end of March. Both Councils and individual parishioners can complete the survey and, to that end, Cllr Carter had put the survey onto the website. Cllrs felt this was already addressed in the Neighbourhood Plan. However, some of the survey simply requires factual details to be confirmed and Cllr Wingrove and the Clerk will complete the return.

Action: Cllrs Wingrove, The Clerk

The Village Shop AGM is on 18th March 2020 and Cllr Wingrove will attend on behalf of the Parish Council.

Action: Cllr Wingrove

The matter of the removal of trees on Kent End adjacent to Ashfield, as raised by a Parishioner at the beginning of the meeting, was then discussed at length.

Cllr Wingrove had been in contact with Wiltshire Council who had confirmed that a '5 day Dead and Dangerous' tree order had been granted following a report from a householder that the trees were in a dangerous state. Although Wiltshire Council had not inspected the site, Wiltshire Highways had previously undertaken some work on these trees, and this was considered by Wiltshire Council as evidence of the need to act.

It was noted that the '5 Day Order' had specified that the trees needed to be replaced and the householder who had asked for the '5 Day Order' had agreed that they would replant trees later in the year when appropriate to do so.

Any breach in the process regarding these trees is a civil matter and ensuring that new trees are planted is the only action the Parish Council or Wiltshire Council can take. It was agreed that the Parish Council would hold Wiltshire Council to account for ensuring tree planting on this site rather than the Parish Council taking responsibility for following this up.

There was further discussion about a previous planning request for this land made by Wiltshire Council, but this did not prove ownership. Cllr Wain raised a concern that unowned/unclaimed land in the village could cause problems in the future.

It was noted that an attending member of public had said that the ditch adjacent to the site of the felled trees has been filled in. No-one on the council knew if this ditch was still used for drainage following the Ashfield development and the building of adjacent properties. Cllr Wingrove is to investigate further.

Action: Cllr Wingrove

19-20/133 Financial Report

The financial report was circulated prior to the meeting and was agreed by all councillors present.

19-20/134 Thames Clearance

There have been problems with blocked ditches causing flooding. Cotswold Water Park rangers have inspected the site and are willing to undertake some remedial work and have

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provided a quote. The flooding in the Derry is causing particular concern and the wider concern is that this will then cause problems upstream.

No remedial work can be undertaken until September for ecological reasons.

Cllr Carter questioned if the purpose of the work was to prevent flooding or to improve flow. Cllr Low expressed the view that it was both and that recent problems stemmed from the difficulties in persuading riparian owners to take action. Cllr Wingrove agreed with Cllr Carter that this is not strictly a Parish Council responsibility and could be considered as setting a precedent. However, as Cllr Wain pointed out the Parish Council had a wider responsibility to all Parishioners to help with problems like this that arose in the Parish.

Cllr Crawford asked if more quotes were to be obtained before any agreement to undertake any work. He also asked if this was considered a long term solution with tangible benefits.

Cllr Low was concerned that asking for further clarification and getting quotes would delay the September deadline for doing the work this year. Cllr Wingrove said that the actions could be taken concurrently not sequentially which would shorten the timeframe needed.

Cllr Low to contact the Environment Agency to get an explicit statement as to what the benefits would be of having this work carried out, and to arrange for a more detailed specification of the work to be done (including a map).

Action: Cllr Low

When the specification had been produced, more quotes could be sought.

Action: Cllr Wingrove

19-20/135 Committees, Working Groups and Representatives' Report

- a) **Planning Committee:** the chairman was absent so no update but minutes circulated previously
- b) **Environmental Committee:** this committee needs a new chairman
- c) **Internal Affairs Committee:** Cllr Cooper was absent so no update
- d) **Minerals Liaison Committee:** Cllr Ellison had nothing to report
- e) **Village Hall Committee:** Cllr Cooper was absent; Cllr Wingrove reported that the Village Hall Committee had been successful in obtaining a grant from Malmesbury Area Board for new external lighting
- f) **Playing Fields Committee:** It was noted that the Playing Fields AGM is on Wednesday 15 April at Bradstone. It was also noted that Cllr Crawford, liaising with the Chairman of the Playing Fields Committee, is looking into the possibility of getting a grant for new play equipment
- g) **Cotswold Water Park:** Cllr Carter reported that the Cleveland Lake restoration is nearing completion. The intention to make all the Lakes SSI has been deferred until the end of April.
- h) **School Governors:** Cllr Crawford reported an offer has now been made to fill the Deputy Head post
- i) **Police:** Cllr Wingrove reported yet another new police liaison officer. Cllr Wingrove is also going to liaise with the local Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator to see whether the police can provide more detailed information about local crimes.

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- j) **Highways:** Cllr Crawford is going to liaise with the Clerk to present an update on the SID findings in the Parish newsletter in the near future

Action: Cllr Crawford

19-20/136 Matters for the next meeting

Councillors were reminded to contact the clerk prior to the next meeting with any items for consideration for the next agenda.

19-20/137 Date for the next meeting

The next council meeting is due to be held on Wednesday 8th April 2020 at 7.15pm in Ashton Keynes Village Hall.

The meeting concluded at 9.27pm