

GREAT ASHFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of a meeting held on Thursday, 17th September 2020 at 7.30pm
The Lord Thurlow Village Hall**

Mr. R. Barker – Chairman*

Mr. I. Sadler

Mrs. N. Calderbank*

Mrs D. Stick*

Mr. B. Fitch*

Present: All marked*

Mrs C. White took the minutes.

District Councillor Rick Meyer and two members of the public were in attendance.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and briefly thanked all those who had volunteered and helped out during the recent Covid-19 lockdown. Despite continuing challenges community spirit in the village remained high.

1. Record Councillors' apologies for absence

Apologies received and accepted from Cllr Sadler.

2. Declarations of interest

Cllr Barker in respect of items 13 & 14.

3. Suffolk County Councillor

Cllr Storey sent her apologies. A report had been received and circulated to Councillors which included: Highways works and where to access information regarding works in your area; preparations finalised for SCC funded school travel and working together to ensure safe start to the new school year; a new project website for SCC's A140 improvement scheme; Suffolk celebrating 1,000 miles of newly surfaced roads; free cycling sessions for people of Suffolk; an extra boost for apprentices for Suffolk & Norfolk businesses; new resources to help young people understand the link between movement and mental health.

District Councillor

Cllr Meyer was in attendance. However, a written report had been received and circulated and included: Suffolk Resilience Partners urging people to queue responsibly outside pubs and bars with easing of lockdown; Babergh & Mid Suffolk to receive government funding to install solar carports; with easing of lockdown people urged to shop local; council homes for Eye get the go ahead; a new look for the Regal Theatre Stowmarket; planning permission given for 80 new homes in Stowupland; detailed plans approved for 300 new homes in Woolpit, plus allocation of land for a new primary school; £2.20m upgrade to Mid Suffolk Leisure Centre, Stowmarket; a new awards event for business innovation; plans approved to transform the former Stowmarket middle school into 'Affordable Homes'.

However, Cllr Meyer addressed the meeting to specifically highlight the current Planning Consultation that is taking place. This is happening primarily on two levels:

- i) Detailed proposed changes to current planning rules and,
- ii) A White Paper Consultation with a view to revamping the whole planning system which would require a change in legislation.

The Consultation is primarily aimed at speeding up the planning process to meet housebuilding targets. All information is available on line and Parish Councils are encouraged to make any response to the proposals direct to the government, with a copy to Cllr Meyer.

Cllr Meyer also advised that he still had money in his Locality Budget for distribution and invited an application from the Parish Council to help support local initiatives. See items 6(ii) and 6(iii) below.

Public Forum

Two members of the public were in attendance, but did not speak.

4. To Sign the Minutes of the Previous Meeting as a True Record

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 18th June 2020 were signed as a correct record.

5. To consider co-option of Councillor

Mr Arthur Peake attended the meeting and confirmed his willingness to stand for office. Declaration of Acceptance of Office and Register of Member's Interests Forms to be emailed to him by the Clerk.

6. Reports

- i. General Highways & Portable Space: Suffolk Highways have advised surface dressing works are to be carried out necessitating the temporary closure of Main Road, Elmswell Road and Ashfield Road between 21st and 25th September between the hours of 9am and 3.30pm. Diversions will be in place.
There has been no progress relating to Portable Space due to the current Covid-19 restrictions.
- ii. Community Speed Watch: Cllr Stick advised that CSW was currently inactive due to Covid-19 restrictions and the requirement for specialist equipment and cleaning facilities. Speeding by HGV's particularly remained an issue in the area. Cllr Stick agreed to apply to Cllr Meyer's locality budget for equipment and bin stickers.
- iii. Neighbourhood Watch: Cllr Stick updated the Council and confirmed that the village WhatsApp Group had proved very helpful during the recent lockdown, for disseminating information and warnings.
- iv. Clerk: nothing to report.

7. To agree Tree planting in village: Nothing specific to report.

8. To consider donation to Community Speed Watch: This was put on hold while Cllr Stick makes an application to the Locality Budget for funding, as detailed above (item 6(ii)).

9. Salt Boxes /Village Sign Review and to consider any further works needed: A salt box at Daisy Corner was reported to have been damaged. The post for the Village Sign was reported to be rotting. Cllr Barker agreed to investigate what repair work was required and to report back to the Council.

10. Annual review of Asset Register & Risk Review

After consideration the Council confirmed that no changes were currently required to the Asset Register or Risk Review.

11. Annual review of Newsletter costs

Council discussed and advised all were happy with the current cost of Newsletter printing.

12. Update on 'Here We Are Again' Booklet

Cllr Stick confirmed that the 'Booklet' was completed and ready to launch once current restrictions were lifted. It was suggested that an event could be linked to the end of lockdown celebrations, whenever that may be.

13. Update on War Memorial/Roll of Honour

Cllr Stick advised that some progress had been made in this regard and that there was potentially another residents' name to be included. This ties up with the 'Here We Are Again Booklet'.

14. To consider Footpath Map

A resident had reported some issues with footpaths needing clearing. Cllr Barker had investigated and would speak to the relevant landowners where appropriate. Some footpaths highlighted were under the jurisdiction of other Parish Councils. Cllr Stick to give feedback and advice to the resident concerned.

15. To consider End of Lockdown Celebration

As Covid-19 restrictions continue, this matter to be kept on the agenda to be considered at a later date.

16. To consider Historical Research Volunteers.

Cllr Barker advised that all historical footpaths and bridleways were up to date and no further action required in this connection at the present time.

17. Correspondence

The Regulation 16 Adoption Letter concerning the Suffolk Minerals & Waste Local Plan had been circulated and its contents noted.

18. Planning

i) **Application Ref: DC/20/03551** – Water Hall, Wheelers Lane, IP31 3HP. Full Application – Change of use from annexed accommodation to form 1No. residential dwelling.

All Councillors in agreement - no objections raised.

ii) **Applications decided by planning authority:** none received.

No further planning applications had been received.

19. Finance Report and to consider the payment of invoices

Current account balance as of 28th July 2020, £3,426.53. Payment of the invoices detailed below will leave an uncleared balance of £2,716.86.

Deposit account balance as of 31st August 2020 indicates a cleared balance of £803.30. Interest of .12p received for July and August.

Second instalment of the precept in the sum of £1,207.50 expected no later than 30th September 2020.

Parish Council's Insurance renewal documents had been circulated and it was agreed that no alterations were required.

All Councillors were in agreement for the payment of the following invoices:

- i) Insurance premium £218.00
- ii) Clerks salary & expenses: Mrs Sandra Brown - £280.00 & Mrs Carol White - £116.67.
- iii) HMRC payment - £70.00.
- iv) Ladywell Accountancy Services - £25.00.
- v) It was requested that a change of address letter be sent to the bank to ensure that future bank statements be sent to the new Clerk. An appropriate letter to be prepared for signature by the Chairman.

No further invoices had been received

20. Councillors' reports and items for future agenda

Cllr Calderbank advised that a resident had reported problems of anti-social behaviour and noise nuisance in the church car park. The church car park is not under the Parish Council's jurisdiction, however, Cllr Barker undertook to advise the PCC and see what action could be taken to mitigate this. Problems of this nature should be reported to the police. If the 101 telephone line to the police is busy, then it is possible to report via the 101 online reporting page. The URL link for this to be shared via the village WhatsApp Group and published in the Village Newsletter.

There was some discussion of the condition of some pavements/footpaths along Main Road & Elmswell Road and it was agreed that if at all possible tidying up and hedge trimming could be carried out at the same time as the Highway Works scheduled for 21st-25th September. Cllr Barker agreed to look into this.

21. Date of next meeting

The next meeting is scheduled to be held on Thursday, 19th November 2020 in the Lord Thurlow Hall at 7.30pm.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.45pm.