**PGREAT ASHFIELD PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday, 19th May 2022 at 7.30pm**

**In the Lord Thurlow Village Hall, Great Ashfield**

**Mr R. Barker (Chairman)\* Mr I. Sadler\***

**Mr A. Peake\* Mrs D. Stick\***

**Mr. B. Fitch\* Mr. R. Dewhirst \***

**Mr. M. Taylor\***

**Present: All marked\***

District Councillor Rick Meyer

Suffolk County Councillor Andy Mellen

One member of the public attended the meeting

Mrs C White took the minutes.

Cllr Barker welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**1. Election of Chairman**

Cllr Barker confirmed his intention to step down as Chairman at the end of the meeting.

Cllr Peake was elected unanimously to take over as Chairman.

**2. Record Councillors’ apologies for absence**

None received.

**3. Declarations of interest**

None.

**4. Reports**

**i) Suffolk County Councillor Andy Mellen**

Cllr Mellen’s Annual Report for the year had been read out at the preceding Annual Parish Meeting and included details of County Council progress during the last year.

**ii) District Councillor Rick Meyer**

A short report for May had been received and circulated reporting that the ground breaking ceremony had taken place marking the start of construction of Gateway 14; MSDC was doing its bit to support Ukranian refugees; payment of council tax energy rebates was underway; and funding had been received for four new more accessible changing places/facilities to be created in key visitor locations.

District Cllr Meyer’s Annual Report was read out at the Annual Parish Meeting preceding the Annual Parish Council Meeting.

**iii) Public Forum**

One member of the public was in attendance to raise concerns about traffic issues, including speeding and HGV’s.

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

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 5th May 2022, had previously been circulated and were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

**6. Appointment of Vice-Chairman and Other Officers**

Cllr Sadler was unanimously elected as Vice-Chairman and all other Officers would continue in their roles for the forthcoming year.

**7. Annual Reviews**

The following Parish Council Policies were reviewed:

i) Standing Orders – these had been circulated prior to the meeting and Cllrs unanimously agreed no alterations were required.

ii) Financial Regulations – these had been circulated prior to the meeting and apart from changes to dates, Cllrs unanimously agreed no alterations were required.

iii) Financial Risk Assessment – this had been circulated prior to the meeting and apart from changes to dates, Cllrs unanimously agreed no alterations were required.

iv) Review of other policies – all other Parish Council policies remain unchanged.

All updated Policies to be uploaded to the Parish Council website.

**8. To Consider Adoption of LGA Model Code of Conduct**

The new LGA Model Code of Conduct had been circulated prior to the meeting and was intended to replace the outdated ‘Suffolk Code of Conduct’. Cllrs unanimously voted to adopt the LGA Model Code of Conduct, and it was to be uploaded to the Parish Council website.

**9. Traffic Issues**

**i) Portable Space Update**

It was generally agreed that in recent weeks there had been fewer abnormal loads/HGV’s along School Road/Daisy Green/Wetherden Road.

However, a recent exchange of emails with the company had raised some issues which Cllrs felt needed addressing. It was proposed that an appropriate response would be drafted for the Clerk to send on behalf of the Parish Council.

Residents’ concerns about abnormal loads using these routes should be reported to the Commercial Vehicles Unit, details of reporting procedure to be included with the next edition of the Newsletter.

Cllrs also agreed that the latest edition of the Newsletter should include more information about the use of Quiet Lanes, as defined in the Highway Code and details of how to report any incidents. Cllr Peake to liaise with the Newsletter Editor on this.

**ii) Speeding/Traffic Calming/Solar Powered SID**

Speeding continues to be a very real concern and some form of physical traffic calming was still the end goal. It was noted that Woolpit has a scheme that may be of interest to Great Ashfield and Cllr Mellen was asked to find out more details and whether there was someone on Woolpit PC who could advise.

The new SID is now up and running, although no data is yet available.

The prospect of a second solar powered SID to monitor traffic entering the village from Elmswell was proving difficult as a suitable pole location had yet to be agreed. The Parish Council however wished to thank the resident who had offered to fund this.

As part of the SCC pilot scheme, the ANPR camera had recently been deployed in the village on two occasions for a week at a time, located on a post on Elmswell Road at the Badwell Ash end of the village near the church. For technical reasons there was no data to report from the first deployment, however, the second had resulted in data showing that 65% of traffic through the village was exceeding the 30mph speed limit. It was hoped that the village would benefit from further deployments in the future.

**iii) Community Speedwatch**

Data for Speedwatch sessions carried out during February were tabled at the meeting and make for shocking reading at the numbers of vehicles speeding. This data is supported by the results of the ANPR deployment. Unfortunately, the number of Speedwatch sessions run is limited by the availability of volunteers. Some members of the group had recently moved so that numbers were further depleted. It was agreed that attempts would be made to try and recruit more volunteers.

The Parish Council wished to thank PC Henriksen for his continued support and advice in this regard.

**10. Planning**

i) No applications had been received since the last meeting.

ii) No applications had been decided since the last meeting.

**11. Finance**

i) A short finance report had been circulated prior to the meeting:

**Bank balances as at 18th May 2022**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Current Account | Balance at 4th May 2022 | **£8,127.96** |
| Less payments | Village Hall Hire (Apr 21-Mar 22)  Village Hall Hire 05/05/22  SALC Subscription | -£114.00  -£12.00  -£188.00 |
| Receipts |  | £0.00 |
| **Balance at 4th May 2022** |  | **£7,813.96** |
|  |  |  |
| **Deposit Account Balance** |  | **£1,001.23** |
|  |  |  |
| **Total** |  | **£8,815.19** |
|  |  |  |

The current account balance includes the following:

Locality Grant Awards of £720.00 and £920.00 for the signs and poles in connection with the Quiet Lanes.

Locality Grant Award of £332.00 towards the village sign refurbishment cost.

CIL Grant in the sum of £1,689.65.

ii) It was agreed that the following payments should be made by cheque:

Keith Rice for Village Sign brickwork - £85.00

Malcolm Saunders (Auditor) - £85.00

**12. Internal Audit**

An internal audit had been carried out and the Audit Report for the year ending 31st March 2022 was read out.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2021/22 had been completed and the following were accepted and signed:

i) Certificate of Exemption – AGAR 2021/22 Form 2

ii) Annual Internal Audit Report 2021/22

iii) Annual Governance Statement 2021/22

iv) Accounting Statements 2021/22

v) Great Ashfield Parish Council CIL Report 2021/22

Above documentation to be submitted as appropriate and uploaded to the Parish Council website.

**13. To consider and comment on Community Governance Review**

This was briefly discussed, and Cllrs unanimously agreed that Great Ashfield wished to remain as an independent Parish Council.

**14. Dog Waste Bins – Long Thurlow/Great Ashfield**

It was confirmed that Badwell Ash Parish Council had bought two new dog bins which had been located within Great Ashfield’s Parish boundary, one located on the bus shelter on Long Thurlow Road and one on the footpath near Braziers Lane. Badwell Ash had purchased the bins and confirmed that they would be responsible for the cost of emptying them and that they would appear on their asset register.

Badwell Ash also wished to install a defibrillator in the bus shelter. Although the bus shelter is located within Great Ashfield’s Parish boundary, it is included on Badwell Ash Parish Council’s asset register. Cllrs unanimously agreed that this was acceptable.

**15. Queens Jubilee – Village Event**

It had been decided that the village would hold a Platinum Jubilee BBQ in the village hall on Friday, 3rd June at 7.30pm. No tickets would be required, but further details and confirmation of numbers would be sought nearer the time.

**16. Correspondence received:**

i) Email 11/05/22 – From Elmswell Parish Council re. Elmswell Neighbourhood Plan – Pre-submission Consultation until Friday 1st July 2022. The Plan stated that future development would not go outside the settlement boundary except in exceptional circumstances. Cllrs only comments were concern at the prospect of further significant traffic through Great Ashfield and that they also wished to see something done about traffic congestion at the level crossing, such as the construction of a flyover or bypass route.

**17. Councillors Reports, Matters Arising and Any New Issues**

i) Cllrs asked District Cllr Meyer that when the proposals for the new Shepherds Grove development were put to the planning authorities that they should consider lifting the weight limit exemption on the A1088, an A class road, to relieve pressure on Elmswell Road a ‘C’ class road.

ii) It was noted that the village sign at the bottom of Hollands Hill had been knocked down and damaged, Cllr Mellen was asked to find out who the Parish Council should contact regarding a replacement and reinstatement.

iii) Residents on Wetherden Road had received a flyer concerning Wetherden Parish Council’s proposal to join Wetherden Road up with Great Ashfield’s Quiet Lanes scheme. To find out more and/or comment Great Ashfield residents are invited to attend Wetherden Parish Council’s meeting on 20th June 2022 at 7.30pm in Wetherden Village Hall.

iv) Cllr Mellen was asked for assistance in finding out who is responsible for the maintenance/surfacing work on Braziers Lane, although this is a public byway and footpath, currently the burden of maintaining it was falling on residents whose properties are located on this lane.

**18. Time and Date of the Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled to be held on Thursday, 21st July 2022 in the Lord Thurlow Village Hall.

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and the meeting closed at 8.35pm.