**GREAT ASHFIELD PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday, 24th August 2023 at 7.40pm**

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

**Mr A. Peake (Chairman)\* Mr I. Sadler (Vice-Chairman) \***

**Mrs D. Stick Mr R. Dewhirst\***

**Mr. M. Taylor Mr. S. Miles\***

**Present: All marked\***

Suffolk County Councillor Andy Mellen

District Councillor Richard Winch

One member of the public present

Mrs C White took the minutes.

Cllr Peake welcomed everyone to the meeting.

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

Apologies were received and accepted by the meeting from Cllr Stick and Cllr Taylor.

**2. Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**3. Reports**

**i) Suffolk County Councillor Andy Mellen**

A report had been received and circulated including details of: Annual Safeguarding Report; Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report & Children in Care Council; Suffolk Libraries & running services after end of current contract; Dental Services crisis in Suffolk and plans to tackle the issue; Motion denied on safer speeds in Suffolk; Motion passed on upholding minimum parking standards.

**ii) District Councillor Richard Winch**

A report had been received and circulated including details of: New ‘Pride in Your Place’ grant scheme; Annual Canvas & Residents’ Survey; MSDC Meetings and holding them out in the community; Greenhouse Gas Report 2021-22; Review of Elections May 2023 & issues arising; Norwich to Tilbury National Grid Proposals; Solar Farms; Portable Space progress.

**iii) Public Forum**

There was one member of the public present, who raised the on-going issue of traffic, in particular HGV’s using School Road, this was continuing to cause disturbance to residents not only during the day but overnight also.

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

The minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting on 17th May 2023 and the minutes of the Planning Meeting on 17th July 2023, had previously been circulated and were accepted and signed as a true record of the meetings.

**5. Traffic Issues**

**i) Portable Space & Planning Application DC/23/01506**

The Parish Council were advised that meetings had been held between the various parties to discuss this including councillors, enforcement, and the chief planning officer to try and find a way forward to mitigate some of the impacts of HGV traffic. There has been a provisional extension of time until mid-September and the Parish Council will be advised as soon as a date is agreed for review by the Planning Committee. Councillors confirmed that they wished to attend and address the Committee.

**ii) HGV Blue Advisory Signs**

The Clerk confirmed that some of the Council’s Neighbourhood CIL could be used to purchase ‘Unsuitable for HGVs’ Blue Advisory Signs. Councillors therefore agreed that three signs should be purchased to be installed on the posts below existing Quiet Lane signs on the entrance to School Road, Daisy Green & Wetherden Road, the cost of this, including the appropriate fixings would be £322 (including VAT).

**iii) Community Speedwatch / SID Data**

In the absence of Cllr Stick no Speedwatch Report was presented.

Current SID statistics indicate that 75% of traffic passing through the village is still speeding.

It was noted that the SID device near Tudor Lodge was potentially reading inaccurately and may need to be looked at, new batteries are also required. Clerk to investigate whether CIL money can be spent on this.

**iv) Report on ‘20s Plenty’ Campaign**

Cllr Peake reported he had joined a Zoom call in June to discuss this initiative to encourage Parish Councils to lobby SCC to adopt 20mph as the default speed limit. Cllrs agreed that they did not wish to join this campaign as they felt it had little chance of success, it was noted that other local councils had decided not to join this campaign or were pursuing their own initiatives regarding speed limits within their villages.

**6. Planning:**

i) Applications received:

DC/23/02759 Householder Application & DC/23/03738 Application for Listed Building Consent re Erection of single storey rear extension at Thatched Cottages, Long Thurlow Road.

Councillors were unanimous in their support of this application, as it would significantly improve the property.

ii) Applications decided since the last meeting:

DC/23/02936 – Householder Application, The Elms, Elmswell Road. Full planning has been granted.

**7. Annual Review of:**

i) Newsletter Costs & Sponsorship – cost of printing remains unchanged at £24.00 for a black and white edition and £42.00 for a colour edition. Sponsorship of £22.00 is sought for each edition to cover additional cost of colour printing. Sponsorship for the current Autumn 2023 edition had been received, but sponsorship is needed for future editions, an appeal for sponsors to be placed in the next edition.

ii) Asset Register, Risk Assessment & Insurance Renewal Documentation had been circulated aside from a small amendment to the Asset Register to be updated by the Clerk, all documentation was agreed to be in order.

**8. Proposed Publication of “Here We Are Again**

In the absence of Cllr Stick it was agreed to defer discussion of this to a later date. It was suggested that in the meantime Cllr Stick might consider approaching Elmswell History Group in this regard.

**9. Finance**

1. A short finance report had been circulated prior to the meeting:
2. **Bank balances at 16th August 2023**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Current Account | Balance at 9th May 2023 | **£8,004.48** |
| Less payments | MSDC (Dog Bins)  SALC  LTH Hall Hire  PBS  M. Saunders (Auditor)  LTH Hall HIre | -£223.34  -£198.28  -£22.50  -£42.00  -£85.00  -£5.00 |
| Receipts | Newsletter Sponsorship  Newsletter Sponsorship  Newsletter Sponsorship (cash) | £18.00  £22.00  £10.00 |
| **Balance at 16th August 2023** |  | **£7,478.36** |
|  |  |  |
| **Deposit Account Balance** |  | **£1,007.25** |
|  |  |  |
| **Total** |  | **£8,485.61** |
|  |  |  |

1. **Receipts Outstanding**

None.

1. **Payments to be agreed:**

See below.

1. **Current Account Balance**

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.

1. **Payments to be considered:** Cllrs agreed that the Clerk could make the following online payments:

Insurance Renewal Premium - £420.05

Clerks Salary - £350.00

Admin Expenses - £37.00

PBS Autumn Newsletter - £42.00

1. **TSB Bank Mandate Alterations**

Cllr Miles advised that he had yet to visit the branch for identity checks but would endeavour to do this when time allows.

**10. Future of the Parish Council, Councillor Vacancy**

Following an appeal in the Newsletter Cllr Peake advised that one resident had volunteered to join the Parish Council. All Cllrs present voted in favour of co-opting Neil Jones onto the Parish Council and the Clerk was asked to forward the necessary forms and details to him for completion and everyone looked forward to welcoming him to the next meeting.

**11. ‘Pride in Your Place Funding’**:

Details of this new grant had been circulated prior to the meeting, in which parishes with a population below 1500 could apply for a grant of up to £250 to fund initiatives such as litter picking, sign cleaning and maintenance/enhancement of open spaces.

It was agreed that the Parish Council should apply for a grant to cover the cost of equipment for sign cleaning and litter picking. Cllr Peake to research details of equipment required and Clerk to complete the necessary application form.

**12. Correspondence received:**

i) Email 31st May 2023 – from resident re School Road/Daisy Green – complaint relating to cones/posts either side of the road near Oak Cottage/Rookery Barn. Cllr Peake advised that the cones were only temporary and had now been removed.

ii) Email 26th July 2023 – from Walsham le Willows Parish Council – report on Stanton Development and concerns about significant increase in traffic in the area as a result. A second outline planning application had now been submitted on behalf of Equatation/Copart and all Cllrs agreed that Great Ashfield Parish Council wished to join with other local villages and strongly object to this and to request that proper traffic management protocols be implemented to try and mitigate the effects on surrounding communities. The Clerk was asked to submit the Parish Council’s objections.

1. Email 5th August 2023 – from the son of an American Captained stationed in Great Ashfield during the war. This email had been forwarded to others to respond to.
2. Email 10th August 2023 – ‘Free Trees, Hedgerows and Wildflowers Scheme’ – applications open for schemes to plant hedges and wildflowers to help wildlife in areas where there was public access. As local landowners already have tree and hedge planting schemes in progress and in the absence of public areas in which to plant, it was agreed that no application would be made.

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

i) The Clerk was asked to Contact the Management at Ashfield Grange to ask them to deal with 3 or 4 dead trees on the boundary near to the road that needed to be removed.

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

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held at on Thursday, 23rd November 2023 at 7.30pm in the Lord Thurlow Village Hall.

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and the meeting closed at 8.30pm.