

GREAT ASHFIELD PARISH COUNCIL (“the Council”)

Minutes of the meeting held:

At 7.30pm

On Thursday 10 April 2025

At Limes Farm, Great Ashfield

Present:

Councillors:

Mr M Livens (Chair) ‘ML’, J Myers ‘JM’, Mr S Miles ‘SM’, Mr B Barker ‘BB’, Mr N. Jones ‘NJ’,

Clerk:

Mr D Ogden (‘DO’)

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Mrs D Stick, Councillor Mr J Harding, Mr R Winch (District Councillor)

Mr A Mellen (County Councillor)

1. Record any Councillors’ apologies for absence

See above

2. Declarations of interest

Cllr Miles advised that he had a personal interest in a planning matter which would be raised later in the meeting

3. To consider the minutes of the meeting of 15 January 2025 and confirm as a true record

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2024 were agreed to represent a true record of that meeting.

4. Review of the outstanding actions log

DO confirmed that the work to replace the cul-de-sac streetlight had been advised as completed and that a submission had been made in respect of the grant. Item remains open until receipt confirmed

Banking access continues to be very problematical. It was agreed that the only logical course of action was to identify an alternative provider. **ACTION DO**

MM & BB confirmed they had completed the scheduled councillor training courses provided by SALC and advised that the exercise had been a useful one in explaining their responsibilities. One subject that had arisen was that Councillors were advised to use a dedicated email address for all council business rather than personal ones. **ACTION ALL**

DO confirmed he had attended the first of three planned Clerks' sessions and that it, also, had been useful.

SM provided a quote he had obtained to clear the pavement of the main Elmswell Road. It was agreed that the quote seemed to be very good value but that it was good practice to obtain one additional quote.

ACTION BB

After further discussion it was agreed that the Council should formalise a policy to obtain at least two quotes for any work which exceeded £500.

ACTION DO

JM advised that he was waiting for quote for a replacement for the village noticeboard. It was agreed that once this had been received the possibility of grant funding would be assessed. **ACTION DO**

5. Report from District Councillor Richard Winch

This report had been circulated prior to the meeting. No issues rose for specific discussion.

6. Report from County Councillor Andy Mellen

This report had been circulated prior to the meeting. No issues rose for specific discussion.

7. Neighbourhood Planning – Report on recent meeting attended by Cllr. Harding

Unfortunately, Cllr Harding was unable to attend due to illness. This item to be carried forward.

ACTION DO/JH

8. Report on training attended and planned for:

(i) **Parish Councillors**

(ii) **Parish Clerk**

See above, under outstanding actions

9. Financial Report and Invoices for Approval

DO reported (despite ongoing issues with banking access) that the bank balance currently stood at £8,217.52 with outstanding invoices (for approval):

£2,160.00 in respect of streetlight replacement.

£642.00 in respect of routine power supply to and maintenance of streetlights.

Both invoices were approved for payment.

ACTION DO

DO confirmed that the first tranche of this year's precept had been received. Coincidentally it exactly matched the invoice for the streetlight replacement. Note, pending a resolution of banking access the Clerk has not yet taken salary.

It was agreed that the current situation with banking access had become unacceptable, and that the clerk should research alternatives and make a recommendation.

ACTION DO

10. Village Maintenance, including potential litter-pick exercise

DO noted that a resident had reported a maintenance issue with the footbridge at Kiln Lane and undertook to check on the issue's status **ACTION DO**

BB asked to check on the council's policy on accepting advertising in respect of service provision. **ACTION DO** to circulate the policy which was approved in October 2024. It was agreed, with specific relevance, to gardening around the village sign that signage should be no bigger than A3.

BB reported that the drainage channel affecting the grass triangle remained locked and that work was ongoing to establish responsibility for clearance.

BB suggested a community litter-picking exercise, suggesting that this would be an opportunity for newly appointed councillors to interact with villagers. A date of 13 May 2025, meeting at the village hall at 6pm was set. It is understood that appropriate equipment is stored at the village hall. This activity needs to be publicised. **ACTION ALL** to address that and consider how best to achieve.

The condition of the village salt boxes was raised; their replacement possibly being grant funded. In advance of considering that we need a full 'survey' of their location and condition. **ACTION ALL** to report to DO

11. Planning

It was agreed that planning matters, regardless of any live and/or contentious matters should be a standing agenda item. **ACTION DO**

One matter was discussed involving additional access to the airfield, SM having declared an interest. In response to ML, SM confirmed that access would be via locked gates. There were no objections.

12. Public forum

No members of the public were in attendance.

13. To confirm time and date of next meeting

Councillors agreed it would be appropriate to set dates for the next three meetings and agreed on:

7 July

6 October

26 January

Preference for meetings at the village hall. SM kindly offered to host in the event of unavailability.

ACTION DO to book