

GREAT ASHFIELD PARISH COUNCIL (“the Council”)

Minutes of the meeting held:

At 7.30pm

On Monday 7 July 2025

At The Lord Thurlow Village Hall, Great Ashfield

Present:

Councillors:

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

District Councillor: Mr R Winch (‘RW’)

County Councillor: Mr A Mellen (‘AM’), as indicated

Clerk: Mr D Ogden (‘DO’)

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Mrs D Stick,

1. Record any Councillors’ apologies for absence

See above

2. Declarations of interest

No such declarations were made

3. To consider the minutes of the meeting of 10 April 2025 and the Parish Meeting of 30 May 2025, and confirm as true records of those meetings

The minutes of both meetings were approved as true records and duly signed by the Chair

4. Report from District Councillor Richard Winch

RW advised that a cycle path that would facilitate journeys between Elmswell and Woolpit over the A14 had been approved. Discussion followed re journeys from Great Ashfield to Elmswell. RW noted that Great Ashfield had not registered any requests for improved routes and encouraged the Council to do so if they believed there was a good case. **ACTION ALL** to consider and revert at the next meeting. It was noted that the outstanding maintenance on relevant footpaths would be discussed later in the meeting.

RW also advised that the District Council operated a ‘REACT’ team that could be contacted to address any short-term emergency issues regarding footpaths etc.

RW sought two volunteers to assess vehicle movements associated with Portable Space Ltd. The general perception was that the situation was much improved but it was important to record appropriate data to confirm this ((or not). Councillors Barker and Livens volunteered.

ACTION BB/ML

5. Report from County Councillor Andy Mellen

AM presented his report; no questions arose. He highlighted the ongoing progress being made towards local government reorganisation. He advised that a new mayoralty for Norfolk and Suffolk was likely to be in place in mid-2026 combining the county authorities.

(note, AM joined the meeting at 8.15. This point was therefore dealt with out of sequence.)

6. Review of the Outstanding Actions Log

(note, this incorporated item 9. On the agenda re village maintenance & projects)

- (i) Now able to regularise clerk's salary arrangements post audit sign off and the resolution of banking access issues. Agreed that a backdated payment would be made in respect of 2024-25 and subsequent payments to be bi-annual, in August and February.
- (ii) Quotes for verge maintenance reviewed. Decision made to engage Countryside Conservation to carry out the required work. **ACTION BB**
- (iii) Agreed to progress with engaging David Leaver to provide a new noticeboard (outside the village hall). We will seek a Pride in Your Place grant to cover all or part of the cost **ACTION DO (grant)/JM (liaison with contractor)**
- (iv) It was noted that the damaged footbridge at Kiln Lane had been fully repaired – **CLOSED**
- (v) It was concluded that the salt boxes were rarely used. As their condition had deteriorated, it was concluded that they should be removed and that replacement would not be an effective use of funds. **ACTION BB to ask whether Countryside Conversation could include their removal in maintenance work.**

7. Planning Matters

It was noted that two planning approvals related to Rookery Barn, Daisy Green had been granted. The matters had been discussed at previous meetings with no points raised. An application for work at Snowdrop Cottage raised no concerns.

8. Financial Report

DO confirmed that the accounts had been signed off by the Internal Auditor. He added that the issues with banking access to TSB had now been resolved but that the finalisation of the accounts had been delayed beyond the end of June deadline and that this would be reflected in the submission to the external auditors. Points to note included:

- (i) A number of liabilities relating to the financial year 2024-25 had been settled after year end and that therefore realistic cash position was c. £1600 less than shown in year-end bank balances. He stressed this was purely due to timing and that the precept had covered what could be considered to be routine expenditure.
- (ii) Attempts to sell the speed gun belonging to the Council (unused in the absence of volunteers) had been halted pending overall clarity of potential use. It was now clear that there was no merit to retaining the equipment.

- (iii) DO reported that a bid of £105 had been received via EBay. JH offered to buy the unit personally for £106 and this was accepted. **ACTION DO/JH**
- (iv) The reviews of assets had revealed ownership of a laptop and printer which were surplus to requirements. **ACTION DO** to attempt to sell

Invoices for £90 (re internal audit) and £60 (village hall hire) were approved for payment

DO suggested that a gesture of thanks be provided to the previous Clerk, who had helped to keep matters in order during a challenging period. An appropriate gift was approved. ML volunteered to organise. **ACTION ML**

9. Village Maintenance & Projects

See item 3., above

AM reported that the village sign at the foot of Ashfield Hill was poorly positioned, making viewing at the junction with Elmswell Road difficult. **ACTION DO** to contact Highways and ask for the sign to be repositioned.

10. Public Forum

No members of the public were present

11. Time & Date of Next Meeting

Monday 6 October, at 7.30pm in the village hall. JM to chair

The meeting closed at 8.40pm

Confirmed to be an accurate record of the meeting

Jonathan Myers,
Chairman, 6 October 2025

David Ogden
Parish Clerk, 6 October 2025