

ASHFORD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING IN PUBLIC

Wednesday October 16th 2019 – Ashford Parish Hall – 6.30pm

Members of the Committee

Cllrs Dale Hall (chair), Geoff Holder and Vaughan Lawson

In Attendance

Parish Clerk: Sue Squire

1. Chair's Preamble

- 1.1. The chair explained that this was not a 'public meeting', but a 'meeting in public' of the newly-formed APC Communications Committee. He added that there would be plenty of time for contributions from members of the public.
- 1.2. He explained the formation of the Committee at the Ashford Parish Council (APC) meetings on 13/6/19 and 24/7/19 and read out the Terms of Reference confirmed at the second of those meetings.
- 1.3. The objectives of the Committee are to set up an official APC email network for two-way communications with residents because the Council wishes to be more open and transparent in conducting its business.

2. Apologies

- 2.1. Cllr Lawson is on holiday.

3. Declarations of Interests

- 3.1. Dale Hall said that he is the executive chair and owner of ORS, a social research practice, that gives him advice on IT issues.

4. Minutes and Matters Arising

- 4.1 There were none since this was the first meeting of the Committee.

5. Public Participation

- 5.1 The issues raised by members of the public and others were:

Will the new website continue to combine both APC and community content? How will that be achieved since it would be inappropriate for the APC to run community information pages (Rob Coleman)

It would be cumbersome to have two separate websites (Cllr Mike Moss)

A 'compartmentalised' website is possible, but it is important for the APC to control its own uploading of material, with its own log-in facility (Sue Squire, Parish Clerk)

Will the Communications Committee consider how the Notice Board might be used and improved? (Gill Lawrence)

We should be 'inclusive' by ensuring communications get to people who do not have access to the internet (Cllr Mike Moss and Sue Squire, Parish Clerk).

6. Website

6.1 The APC's webmaster, Geoff Williams, has unfortunately resigned due to his busy schedule that takes him away from North Devon regularly.

6.2 It was agreed that

The Committee will write to thank him for his considerable work

Decisions need to be made about the website and an administrator/webmaster

The Committee will consider the issues in future meetings.

7. Email Domain

7.1 Options for appropriate domain name specific to the APC were discussed, given that it should be simple, memorable and 'official'.

7.2 It was agreed that

The APC should purchase a two-year lease on the domain "APCND.UK" (more normally "apcnd.uk") at a total cost of £15.44 including VAT

8. Email Address for Network

8.1 Options for an appropriate email address for the APC email network were reviewed.

8.2 It was agreed that

The network's email address should be comms@apcnd.uk

8.3 The question of whether councillors should have individual email addresses via the same domain was left for further consideration.

9. Setting-up the network

9.1 It was agreed that the Communications Committee should

Write to all Ashford households to explain the initiative, elicit the email addresses (where available) of all members of the household aged 14 or more (subject to parental consent where appropriate) and ask simple profiling questions – eg sex; age bands; special interests relevant to the APC or Ashford; and whether or not they have access to the internet

Provide a simple, user-friendly form where details of each person in the household could be included and a Freepost return envelope

Send reminder letters to those who do not respond initially

Use a fully registered data controller to: receive Freepost replies; process data; require that any transfer of data should be encrypted; and require advanced data security and quality accreditations from any provider

Seek to outsource some or all of these requirements from a specialist provider if appropriate and cost-effective.

10. Further contributions from members of the public and others

10.1 The issues raised were:

We would be eligible for a Locality Grant via Cllr Chugg for the costs of setting up the website; this could be applied for retrospectively (in order to allow progress to be made meanwhile) (Sue Squire, Parish Clerk)

The APC should provide a series of key-section email addresses in order to allow communications on discrete areas of the council's business (Rob Coleman).

11. Date of next meeting

11.1 To be arranged as appropriate, but the priority is to make progress meanwhile.

12. Closure

12.1 The meeting closed at 7.15.