

ASHFORD PARISH COUNCIL.

Draft minutes of the Annual Meeting of Ashford Parish Council (AGM) which was held on Thursday, 6th May 2021 at 7.30pm.

The meeting was conducted remotely, via Zoom, to comply with social distancing measures in place owing to the Coronavirus pandemic.

The meeting was initially chaired by
Councillor P Hughes.

Clerk – Mrs. Katherine Cole.

Councillors Present:

Mrs. J. Bosley.

Mr. D. Hall.

Mr. P. Hughes.

Mr. G. Holder.

Mr. V. Lawson.

Mr. M. Moss.

Mrs. S. Sampson.

Agenda:

1. Election of Chairman 2021-2022.

2. Chairman to read & sign declaration of office.

3. Election of Vice- Charman 2021-2022.

4. Appointments for the Municipal Year 2021/22.

5. Apologies.

6. Declarations of Interest from members.

7. Items raised by members of the public.

8. Approval of minutes.

9. Matters arising from the minutes.

10. Financials.

11. Planning.

12. Training.

13 Correspondence.

14. Matters raised by the Clerk.

15. Items to be carried forward.

16. Date of the next meeting.

Nine members of the public were in attendance.

Item:	Action:
<p>1. <u>Election of Chairman 2021-2022:</u> The Chairman, Councillor Hughes, opened the meeting by explaining that he had decided not to stand as Chairman for the year ahead, and requested nominations for a new Chairman. Councillor Lawson proposed that Mike Moss be elected as Chairman and this was seconded by Councillor Holder. Councillor Moss confirmed that he was prepared to stand, and as there were no other nominations was duly elected Chairman. Councillor Moss duly took the Chair and thanked Councillor Hughes for his work whilst Chairman, pointing out that much had been achieved under his leadership and confirmed that he looks forward to working with him and the rest of the council in the coming twelve months.</p>	
<p>2. Chairman to read and sign the Declaration of Office agreement: The incoming Chairman, Councillor Moss, read and signed the Declaration of Office.</p>	<p>Chairman to scan to Clerk.</p>
<p>3. <u>Election of Vice-Chairman: Councillor Bosley proposed that Councillor Lawson stand as Vice-Chairman, and this was seconded</u></p>	

by Councillor Hughes. There were no further nominations.

Councillor Lawson agreed that he was prepared to continue as Vice-Chairman and was duly elected.

4. **Appointments for the Municipal Year 2021/22:**

The following positions are held as indicated. The Chairman proposed their re-election en-bloc:

Internal Auditor – Mrs. J. Snooks.

Internal Parish Council Auditors – Councillors Mrs. Bosley and Lawson.

Footpath Warden – Councillor Lawson.

Tree Warden – Councillor Holder.

Wildlife Warden – Councillor Moss.

Press Liaison Officer – Councillor Mrs. Sampson.

Taw & Torridge Estuary Forum – TBC. Councillor Hall confirmed that he would step down if Councillor Moss is happy to be the sole representative from APC.

Councillor Moss agreed to this proposal and Councillor Lawson will attend when available.

Councillor Sampson proposed the re-election of officers en-bloc and this was seconded by Councillor Bosley. All in favour.

5. **Apologies for absence: Apologies were received from District Councillor Davis and County Councillor Chugg. (C.C Chugg had provided a report which had been circulated prior to the meeting).**

6. **Declarations of Interest from members: None.**

7. **Items raised by members of the public: The Chairman cancelled standing orders at this point in the meeting.**

The Clerk read a statement provided by a member of the parish which related to an issue raised at the Annual Parish Meeting. After the statement was read the Chairman ruled that he would not allow any further discussion on the matter. The parties involved in what was essentially a neighbour's dispute had both had an opportunity to express their concerns on the issue. The matter was considered to be outside the jurisdiction of the Parish Council.

Standing Orders were reinstated.

There were no further matters raised by the public.

8. **Approval of minutes:** The minutes relating to the meeting held on Thursday, 22nd April had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Councillor Hall raised a query regarding their content, and requested that an amendment be made.

However, fellow Councillors were happy with the original version, and the minutes were approved by a majority of six to one, with Councillor Hall objecting.

9. **Matters arising from the minutes: None.**

10. **Financials:**

10.1: Confirmation of Account Balance:

10.2: Payment of invoices – None.

10.3: Insurance Cover 2021/2022:

The Chairman confirmed that there had been a substantial increase in premiums with the current provider. Quotes are in the process of being obtained from two other companies, and the quotations compared closely for comparable levels of cover.

The Chairman requested that, owing to Covid restrictions and the ending of remote meetings, a majority decision be made by email to select the provider for the year ahead. The Clerk to then forward payment. This was authorised unanimously.

10.4: Clerks salary: The Clerk had provided timesheets of hours worked to the end of March 2021. Councillors approved the figures and payment,

10.5: Annual Accounts: The Chairman expressed his concern that Councillors had not received a copy of the annual accounts, owing to the high volume of work caused by meetings held in close succession. Though the accounts had been prepared there had not been sufficient opportunity for Councillors to look at them.

The Clerk confirmed that the Accounts are due to be with the Auditor on 17th May. It was agreed to postpone approving the accounts until June.

11. **Planning:** No planning or planning correspondence.

12. **Training:** The Clerk reminded Councillors that training opportunities are available through DALC. Councillor Moss indicated that he would like to attend a course for new Chairman. Clerk to advise/book

12.1: The Clerk confirmed that she is continuing CILCA training with support from DALC. There is a requirement that a learning agreement is approved by the Clerk's Parish Council where appropriate. This was agreed by Councillors.

13. **Correspondence: There was no correspondence. However, Councillor Hall brought the ongoing FOI request to the attention of the meeting.**

There was a brief discussion regarding the ongoing situation, and the outstanding queries. All Councillors agreed that the matter must be resolved, and treated as a priority.

14. **Matters raised by the Clerk:**

14.1: August recess: Councillors were invited to consider an August recess. All Councillors agreed it preferable to hold regular meetings throughout the summer, particularly as there will be a break when remote meetings cease.

14.2: Clerk's Annual Leave: The Clerk requested leave from 6th -10th September. (Emails will be monitored). This was approved.

15. **Items to be carried forward: None.**

16. **Date of next meeting:** The provisional date of the next meeting of Ashford Parish Council is Thursday, 24th June. This will be dependent on guidelines at the time, and with risk assessments in place.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance, and declared the meeting closed at 8.35pm.

Signed, as approved:

Dated: