

**ASHFORD PARISH COUNCIL.**

**DRAFT Minutes of meeting held on Thursday, 18<sup>th</sup> February 2021 at 7.30pm.**  
**The meeting was conducted remotely, via Zoom owing to the Covid-19 pandemic.**

Meeting was Chaired by Councillor P. Hughes	Clerk – Mrs. Katherine Cole.
<u>Councillors Present:</u> Mrs. J. Bosley, Mr. D. Hall. Mr. P. Hughes. Mr. G. Holder. Mr. V. Lawson. Mr. M. Moss. Mrs. S. Sampson.  Nine members of the public were in attendance.	<u>Agenda:</u> 1. Representations from the public. 2. Apologies for absence. 3. Declarations of interest from members. 4. Approval of minutes relating to the meeting held on 21 <sup>st</sup> January 2021. 5. Matters arising. 6. Reports. 7. Correspondence. 8. Items to discuss. 9. Financials. 10. Planning. 11. Email Network. 12. FOI Request. 13. Matters to be carried forward. 14. Date of next meeting.

ITEM:		ACTION:
	<b>Chairman’s welcome:</b> The Chairman welcomed attendees to the meeting and reminded everyone that the meeting was to be recorded to allow for accurate minute taking. (The Chairman confirmed that the recording will be deleted upon approval of the minutes it relates to).	
1.	<b>Representations from the Public:</b> No matters were raised by the Public.	
2.	<b>Apologies for absence:</b> District Councillor Davis offered her apologies after being delayed at a DCC budget meeting. No further apologies.	
3.	<b>Declarations of interest from members:</b> Item 9.6 - Cllr Hall declared a personal interest in this item since ORS contributed to the report for CPRE.	
4.	<b>Approval of Minutes for meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2021:</b> 4.1: Prior to the minutes being approved there was a discussion regarding minutes and circulating them to the public before they were approved. It was agreed to circulate draft minutes with the agenda for the next meeting as had been the norm for many years. The Chairman apologised for a recent change to that pattern which was at his request. It was noted that the January minutes had been circulated to Councillors at a late stage. The Clerk apologised for the delay and agreed that in future draft minutes will be sent to Councillors shortly after the meeting which they cover. 4.2: The minutes of the January meeting were approved by Councillors subject to two amendments being made: Payment to Mr. G Williams corrected from £27.22 to £57.22.	Clerk to amend & send.

	<p>Amendment of item requested by Councillor Hall – Item 7.2. Section relating to the local plan suspension due to the apparent shortfall in the five year land supply. The amended minutes will be circulated via the Email Network.</p>	
5.	<p><b>Matters Arising:</b> No matters arising.</p>	
6.	<p><b>Reports:</b> 7.1: No reports from County Councillor Chugg or District Councillor Davis. 7.2: Defibrillator Check: Councillor Lawson confirmed that he has carried out the regular monthly check on the defibrillator and advised SWAST of a positive maintenance check.</p>	
7.	<p><b>Correspondence:</b> 7.1: The resumption of face to face meetings: DALC have indicated that the legislation allowing remote Parish Council meetings expires in May and may not be extended. The Chairman expressed his concerns as the strong stance of the Church regarding use of the Church Hall at present prevents APC from renting the hall. Unless the situation changes this will affect the annual meeting. 7.2: The request from a local journalist to be provided with calendar dates of APC meetings: Councillors agreed that information should be made available to the communicant and working with local networks should be encouraged.</p>	<p>Clerk to provide information &amp; C.Lawson to add to website.</p>
8.	<p><b>Items to discuss:</b> 8.1: Ian Worby Memorial bench: The family of the late Ian Worby would like to donate a bench to the Parish in Ian’s memory. A suitable bench has been selected and will bear an appropriate inscription. (The Parish Council will also add an inscription for security purposes). Councillors expressed their gratitude to the Worby family. The bench will be situated at the Church corner. The Council agreed for the Chairman to pursue the purchase of the bench and associated matters. 8.2: The Colonel Slatter bench repair: The Chairman confirmed that the bench is being stored safely whilst awaiting repair- the repairs are to be carried out free of charge by a local firm. The bench will be relocated to a new site in the village when the repairs are completed. 8.3: Additional seating mid-way along Meadowside: Councillor Moss asked Councillors to consider creating an additional seating area on Meadowside, particularly as there are limited options in the village for parishioners to meet in a socially distanced fashion. The area concerned will shortly be cleared of undergrowth thus opening up the view. It was agreed that a hardstanding will be needed.</p>	

	<p>Councillors indicated their approval of the suggestion and this matter will be discussed again as work progresses.</p> <p>8.4: Neighbourhood watch in Ashford. The late Ian Worby had initiated the Neighbourhood Watch scheme in Ashford, and his family have indicated that they would like the scheme to continue. It was agreed to ‘advertise’ for a local co-ordinator in the Ashford Update as well as the Ashford Society networks. Councillor Sampson will also mention the role in her North Devon Journal article.</p> <p>8.5: Excessive mud on Strand Lane: The Chairman suspended Standing Orders to allow a Member of the Public express his concerns. The Parishioner explained that this seems to be a year round problem when it rains, and is unlikely to improve as topsoil is being washed away. Another Parishioner added that previously a trench had carried the mud and dirty water away, which had proved to be effective. A smaller trench, which has since been dug, is not so effective. The Chairman confirmed that he has conversed with the landowner on three occasions, and soon a site visit will be made. The landowner involved has been helpful and co-operative. The Chairman pointed out that the Parish Council have no authority to impose solutions and can only work with the owner and tenant to try and mitigate the problem. Councillor Sampson added that historically there had often been a problem with run off at this location. Standing Orders were reinstated.</p> <p>8.6: To receive and discuss a CPRE briefing on the implications of NDC being deemed not to have a Five Year Housing Land Supply. Cllr Hall commended the Devon CPRE’s Briefing document to APC which had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. It offers four main points, all of which are material planning considerations. It shows that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Councils can still refuse planning applications for new housing and win appeals even if, like North Devon and Torridge, they do not have a 5-year housing land supply. The document was influential at the NDC Planning Committee Meeting on February 10<sup>th</sup> in the refusal of the Chivenor Cross application for housing on a tourism site.</li> <li>b. There is ever-increasing evidence that the government’s 300,000 new homes per year target for England is excessive – ORS has shown the true figure for England should be 230,000 per year.</li> <li>c. Devon’s overall target figure for new housing has just reached 5,000 new homes per year – but ORS has shown the figure need only be 4,300 per year.</li> <li>d. Not only are their targets too high, but most councils in Devon have exceeded their delivery targets – ORS has shown that North Devon and Torridge have exceeded their joint target for the delivery of new homes by an average of 41% for the last three years.</li> </ul>	
9.	<p><b>Financials:</b> 9.1: The Clerk confirmed the bank balance: <b>Ashford Parish Council – Financial statement 17<sup>th</sup> February 2021.</b> Opening Balance - £9129.41</p>	

	<p>Less Cheque 1137 - £ 57.22p (Mr. G. Williams)  <b>Balance 17/02/21 - £9072.19p.</b></p> <p>NB:  Cheque No 1138. £440 (Mrs. K Cole – Unpresented at 17/02/21).</p> <p>9.2: Clerks Fee: To be settled at March meeting. Timesheets were delayed owing to technical issues.</p> <p>9.3: Invoices: There were no invoices to be paid.</p>	
10	<p><b>Planning:</b></p> <p>10.1: Planning Application 72866 – Riverside, Braunton Road. EX31 4AU. Extension to dwelling &amp; replacement of existing decking with extended patios and landscaping works. Councillors were all familiar with the detail of the application, and no issues were raised. Recommending approval was proposed by Councillor Holder and seconded by Councillor Sampson. All were in favour.</p> <p>10.2: There was no further planning correspondence.</p>	Clerk to Respond to NDC.
11.	<p><b>Email Network:</b></p> <p>The Clerk confirmed that a welcome letter had been the initial communication via the Email Network and had been sent to in excess of ninety individuals. The meeting Agenda has also been circulated to those who are registered on the system.</p> <p>A small number of Parishioners have requested copies of documents to be posted to them.</p> <p>It was again confirmed by the Chairman that draft minutes will, in future, be circulated together with agendas via the email network.</p> <p>The Clerk added that Parishioners must be reminded to update their contact details to avoid not receiving information.</p>	
12.	<p><b>FOI Request:</b></p> <p>The Chairman confirmed that relevant information is being compiled, and some further data has been received from Mrs. Sue Squire, the previous Clerk.</p> <p>Councillor Holder asked when the information requested is likely to be sent to the requester. It was agreed that before the March meeting (18<sup>th</sup> March) would be aimed for. The Clerk to finish collating the information, and to pass the data to Cllr Moss for audit before sending it to the requester.</p>	
13	<p><b>Matters to be carried forward:</b></p> <p>The Chairman expressed his pleasure in recently seeing a young family litter picking in Strand Lane.</p> <p>It was agreed that the annual Village clean up, normally held in May, should be organised when current situations allow.</p>	
14	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting:</b></p> <p>The date of the next meeting of Ashford Parish Council was confirmed as Thursday, 18<sup>th</sup> March 2021 at 7.30pm via Zoom.</p> <p>The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 20.21 hours, after thanking all participants for their attendance.</p>	

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