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## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ASHURST PARISH COUNCIL, HELD AT ASHURST VILLAGE HALL ON THURSDAY 30<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2021 AT 7.30PM

### Attendance.

Chairman	Clr Fischel
Ashurst Parish Council (APC)	Clrs Hedley, Knight, and Russell
Horsham District Council (HDC)	Clr Platt
Clerk	Elizabeth Leggo remotely via Zoom due to recent surgery and working a phased return
Public	Five members of the public were present

### To discuss any questions submitted by the public.

One member of the public was concerned about the state of repair on School Lane, given the extensive works being undertaken. The Chairman answered that this is the responsibility of the County Council but she had already received assurances that any damage would be repaired at the conclusion of the works.

A second question was raised about a problem with the footpath leading off the Recreation Ground. The Chairman informed the meeting that this has been discussed with the access ranger and the landowner in question had been advised of the concerns.

The Chairman congratulated the Dog Show Committee on the amount raised at the recent Dog Show.

Representatives of the Ashurst Dog Show Committee asked the Council to consider the future of both the Cricket Pavilion and the John Eaton Hut, given their poor condition. The suggestion was to either repair these buildings or, preferably, to replace them with a single building. They felt that a number of current funding opportunities were available. Note: This question was considered at some length in Section 7 below.

### 1. Apologies for Absence.

Apologies were received and accepted from Clr Nicholson (APC), Clr Lloyd (HDC) & Clr Lineham (WSCC).

### 2. Declaration of Members' Interests.

None for this meeting.

### 3. Approve the Minutes of the Meeting of 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021

The minutes were circulated to all councillors and taken as read. It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes are a true record of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman.

### 4. Update on Covid-19.

Meetings can now be held face to face. Face coverings are optional but Councillors and the public should still be socially distanced.

## 5. Reports from District & County Councillors.

Cllr Lineham was unable to attend but provided the Clerk with an update, as below:

*He is keen to assist APC in getting Broadband installed in the village. He is willing to join any activity including knocking on all residents' doors to encourage the pledging of their vouchers to BT. Since WSCC have a limited budget for topping up the voucher scheme, this should be done sooner rather than later.*

*Cllr Lineham was disappointed to see that NO mention was made of Ashurst in the WSCC response to Rampion II. APC should review that report and where appropriate write to the Cabinet Member, Deborah Urquhart, so that any concerns APC have are recorded with her. (Cllr Lineham to be copied in if possible.)*

*He is available to receive requests for support by direct email or phone call from any APC Councillor on any issue they may wish to raise.*

Cllr Platt (HDC) advised that councillors had been asked to attend a briefing on the revised HDC Plan. A vote on the Local Plan had to be postponed at the last minute due to an unexpected government requirement for a 30 year vision to be included in any local plan. A rescheduled vote is now due to take place in November.

Wilder Horsham District joint project between HDC and the Sussex Wildlife Trust has now come up with a plan. HDC have got a plan to introduce cycling and walking routes into Horsham town centre.

He had also attended two briefings on Rampion 2, where there was little of interest to report.

## 6. Outstanding Actions.

Action	Outcome
Cllr Fischel to speak to the Landlord of the Fountain Inn regarding registration as an Asset of Community Value.	Can now be actioned
Cllrs Fischel and Russell to keep an eye on issues raised by HDC, when carrying out the weekly play equipment inspections.	Ongoing.
Cllrs Russell and Hammond to undertake repairs on the rubber matting.	The matting has had a power wash. Gaps to be kept under review.
Rampion consultation. Cllr Knight agreed to keep the Council informed on dates for the public consultation as these become available.	Done – See Item 10 below.
Cllr Fischel and the Clerk agreed to meet over the coming year with a view to reviewing and suggesting amendments to the Council's documents to better reflect the requirements of Ashurst Parish Council.	Ongoing.
Clerk to circulate the most recent Horsham District Council playground inspection to the Trustees.	Complete – See 7 below
Cllr Fischel to contact Ashurst Arborists re timings for surgery on the oak tree.	Complete – See 7 below
Cllr Fischel would arrange for the erection of a temporary deer fence.	Ongoing - See 7 below
Clerk to send Cllr Knight details of RWE meeting on 19 <sup>th</sup> July	Complete
Clerk to invite Enso representative and, if possible, the landowner to the next meeting to discuss possible Solar power installations at Huddleston.	Complete - See 11 below. Despite approaches, no response.
The Clerk would circulate the internal audit report to councillors.	Complete
The Clerk was asked to check that we have adequate public liability cover inside the 2 buildings not insured.	Complete - See item 13 below.
The Clerk was asked to put contact details for Broadband – as per the Newsletter - on the Parish Website	Complete.
Cllrs Knight and Nicolson continuing to work on the Broadband project.	Ongoing – See Item 14 below.
Cllr Russell to follow up Watershed Grant possibility with Ms Furlong.	Ongoing – See 17 below.
Councillors should contact the Clerk if they want to attend any WSALC courses.	No courses were booked for this period.
Clerk to add 'How to improve parish communications' to the next agenda.	Put back to next meeting.
Councillors to read the Local Government Association Model Councillor Code of Conduct in advance of discussion and approval at the next meeting.	Put back to the next meeting.

## 7. Recreation Ground Matters.

The bank balance at HSBC as at 20<sup>th</sup> September 2021 was **£11,623.47**

<b>Income received 1<sup>st</sup> July – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021</b>		
West Sussex County Council	Hire fee for School to use Recreation Ground	£1,250
<b>Expenditure authorised 1<sup>st</sup> July – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021</b>		
EDF	Electricity – Aug & Sept	£8
The FA Bartlett Tree Expert	Oak tree treatment	£192
Wicksteed Leisure Ltd	Playground inspection (2020 – invoice late)	£72
Sussex Land Services Ltd	Grass cutting July	£230.40

The Trust is still in credit with Business Stream for water.

The Clerk has submitted the annual return to the Charity Commission for 2020/21.

The Clerk has ordered the annual play inspection from Wicksteed. The most recent Horsham District Council playground inspection had been shared with the Trustees.

Cllr Fischel informed the Trust that the large oak tree has had its first treatment, and that it will have a 'severe' trim back after Christmas to try to preserve it for longer.

Cllr Fischel updated the meeting on the deer fence. It was agreed that only a short stretch of fencing was needed between the stile and the far corner. The risk of deer coming onto the Ground was currently reduced due to the building work nearby.

### **Current use of the Ground and Buildings**

Cllr Fischel said it was pleasing to see how well the Recreation Ground had been used throughout Covid by dog walkers, joggers, individuals playing football and even someone honing their golf skills! The Cricket Club and the Football Club had been unable to use the Ground and the Buildings during Covid. It would take some time for 'normal usage' to return.

It was accepted that the two buildings were gradually deteriorating. The Trust thought that amalgamating the two buildings was a good idea and that only one Sports building should be erected in their place. This would include changing rooms and a facility to provide refreshments. Before any replacement is undertaken, however, the Council needed to assess what the new 'normal' usage might be since the specifications of any replacement building needed to be tied in with anticipated demand.

Cllr Fischel said that the AGM for the Recreation Ground will take place immediately prior to the next Council meeting in November. The Football and Cricket Clubs would be approached by the Council prior to that date, in order to try and get a basic understanding of both clubs' future plans and their anticipated use of the Recreation Ground. (Representatives from both clubs would be invited to attend and speak at the AGM.)

The Trustees aim to meet up annually on the Recreation Ground to see what maintenance work is needed to be done to both the Ground and the Buildings. Particular attention would be given to the state of the buildings, this time round.

**Action Point: Cllr Fischel would send out some proposed dates to councillors for meeting up at the Ground..**

## 8. Planning Matters.

### **DC/21/2142**

Retrospective application for the Change of Use of agricultural land for the storage of No.14 shipping containers (Class Sui Generis). New Wharf Farm Horsebridge Common Ashurst Steyning

**Stance:** Object

**The Clerk was asked to submit the following comments:** Ashurst Parish Council objects on the basis of the scale and the proximity to a Grade 2 listed building. There should be various conditions about the usage of the containers, and an undertaking that they should not be used for the storage of hazardous materials.

**DC/21/1068:** *Cannot comment*

*Application to confirm the substantial completion of building works of a single Shepherds Hut rented out for holiday use on a date four years previous (Lawful Development Certificate - Existing). Small Piece of Woodland Known as Furlong Shaw. Approx 200M North of 1 Merrion Cottages RH13 8EH.*

#### 9. Planning Decisions from HDC.

Application Number: DC/21/0663

Site: Timbers Ford Lane Ashurst Steyning West Sussex BN44 3AT

Description: Partial conversion of existing garage/studio into a self-contained annexe ancillary to the main dwelling.

Decision: Application Permitted.

Date of Decision: 29/06/2021

Application Number: DC/21/1465

Site: Cedar Cottage Steyning Road Ashurst Steyning West Sussex BN44 3AN

Description: Variation of condition 1 to previously approved application DC/17/0479 (Demolition of existing single storey dwelling and erection of a replacement two storey dwelling) to allow for amendments to the front elevation and installation of a rear first floor.

Decision: Application Permitted

Date of Decision: 20/09/2021

#### 10. Rampion 2 Windfarm Update

The Clerk has added up to date information to the Parish Council website.

Cllr Knight attended a briefing, but advised that the consultation about alternative routes or protecting wildlife seemed inadequate. He advised that everyone at the meeting thought that communication had been poor and RWE was behaving as though it was a done deal. People felt that they are not being listened to.

Cllr Fischel had also recently attended a zoom meeting held by Andrew Griffith MP for councillors whose parishes were affected by Rampion 2. The sentiment expressed was much the same ie that only lip service is being paid to the consultation process and those affected do not feel their viewpoint is being listened to.

#### *Action points:*

*Cllr Knight to contact Cllr Lineham for a copy of the WSCC report.*

*Cllr Fischel to follow up with Andrew Griffith MP about his response to the Rampion Consultation which he had promised to circulate to all those attending his zoom meeting.*

#### 11. Proposed solar farm at Huddlestone Farm, Steyning

Both the Clerk and Cllr Fischel had made contact with ENSO to invite a representative to this meeting, but unfortunately neither had received a response.

*Action: Clerk to re-invite a representative of ENSO to the January meeting.*

#### 12. Financial Matters.

The bank balance at Lloyds TSB as at 16<sup>th</sup> September 2021 was **£7,644**

<b>Income received 1<sup>st</sup> July – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021</b>		
Horsham District Council	2 <sup>nd</sup> half precept (not included in the above balance)	£6,525
<b>Expenditure authorised 1<sup>st</sup> July – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021</b>		
Information Commissioners Office	Data protection fee	£35
E Leggo	Office Allowance July-Sept 2021	£40

*Draft minutes of the Meeting of Ashurst Parish Council on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021  
Minutes subject to approval by the Council at the next meeting*

E Leggo	Salary July-Sept 2021	£713.92
HMRC	E Leggo Tax July-Sept 2021	£178.40
Public Works Loans Board	Village Hall repayment	£1,456.75

### 13. Parish Council Insurance

It was noted that a three year agreement has been entered into with BHIB. The Clerk had contacted BHIB to query public liability insurance for the buildings, given that the Council had opted to not insure them for replacement costs. The response received is below:

*If the buildings are in a good state of repair and regularly maintained by the Council in accordance with Health and Safety requirements the Council's legal Liabilities will be covered as far as the policy terms and conditions apply.*

The Clerk reminded councillors that, given the low usage of the two buildings, they had previously opted to adopt a simplified approach of regular water testing for legionnaires' testing to that officially recommended.

WSALC further advised that other annual safety inspections should include that of play equipment and trees.

It was noted that the play equipment has a monthly inspection by HDC and an annual one from Wicksteed.

The Tree Warden makes regular tree inspections in Ashurst and provides feedback on any issues of concern. Earlier this year, extensive work was carried out on all the Recreation Ground trees by way of taking away any deadwood. Additionally, following professional assessment, major surgery is due on the large Oak. It was agreed, however, that Cllr Fischel would ask the Tree Warden to please provide an annual written report.

#### *Actions:*

*Clerk to contact the Football Club to find out if it intends to use the John Eaton Hut this winter.*

*It was agreed that Cllr Russell would wait to switch the water off at the mains until Partridge Green Football Club had advised APC of its intentions this winter.*

*Cllr Fischel to ask the Tree Warden if she would mind writing an annual report for the Rec Ground Trust.*

*Cllr Fischel to check the dates on the labels for PAT testing.*

### 14. Broadband in Ashurst

Cllr Knight advised the Council that the application to Open Reach for the estimate had come back with a fee that would be covered by the voucher scheme available from DCMS and WSCC. There have been delays but this is a nationwide delay, and the application retains its place in the queue. At present Cllr Knight is waiting to hear back from Open Reach. For Broadband South, BT has advised that it is ready to start the build for fibre to the premises in 17 households. A start date is awaited.

### 15. Community Speedwatch

Cllr Nicholson submitted the following update: Speedwatch has been operating since 23rd June and has been getting lots of favourable and supportive feedback from local residents.

Of 933 vehicles logged, 60 have been recorded going at 36mph or above (6.43%) - of those one had no tax, one no MOT and another was driving whilst the vehicle was registered as SORN. It wasn't about catching people but rather increasing awareness and prevention. Sessions were being held every week to get the message out there on a consistent basis. Days and times are varied. Thanks go to all the 9 volunteers.

### 16. Trees and footpaths

Cllr Fischel has spoken to the local Access Ranger about a number of Ashurst footpath issues raised by residents. This was prior to the Public Rights of Way inspections due to be carried out in September. She would follow this up shortly to see what routine maintenance work has been carried out as a result.

### 17. Operation Watershed

Cllr Russell has submitted information requested by WSCC back in May but, to date, has received no reply.

*Action: Cllr Russell to chase up WSCC for a response and update.*

#### **18. WSALC Update**

The Clerk has circulated all of the current training courses to councillors.

#### **19. HALC Update**

Cllr Fischel advised that there had been a change of personnel at HALC, with Cllr Eastwood taking over from Cllr Oliver as Chair and Anna Beams taking on the role of Secretary and Treasurer. High priorities of the new Chair were to get HDC and local parish councillors talking to each other and for HDC to recognise the urgent need to have its Local Plan in place..

#### **20. Local Plan**

Cllr Fischel had attended a Horsham Local Plan Workshop with the Strategic Planning Team of HDC where the need to have a local plan in place, as well as a number of local related issues, were discussed. She had queried again the proposed reclassification of Ashurst to a secondary settlement on the basis that nothing has changed but there is obviously no appetite at HDC to consider this further.

Cllr Fischel asked the meeting what they thought of putting together a Neighbourhood Plan for Ashurst, now that it is due to be reclassified as a secondary settlement. It was felt we had no option but to do one.

*Action: Cllr Fischel will arrange to meet with Norman Kwan of Horsham District Council to talk about the potential of starting a new Neighbourhood Plan for Ashurst. She would also raise again the issue of Ashurst's proposed reclassification as a secondary settlement.*

#### **21. How to improve communication with the Parish**

It was AGREED to carry this over until the next meeting when the Clerk should be present.

#### **22. Local Government Association Model Councillor Code of Conduct:**

It was AGREED to carry over the formal adoption of the NALC Code of Conduct sent by Horsham District Council until the next meeting, so all councillors could consider its contents further.

#### **23. Grants**

None for this meeting.

#### **24. GDPR**

The Council was reminded to delete all emails over 6 months old.

#### **25. Correspondence**

None for this meeting.

#### **26. Reports from Outside Bodies**

Flix in the Stix has its next showing on 16<sup>th</sup> October.

#### **27. Information Items.**

Cllr Russell has ordered a new hard drive for the Parish Council laptop. Hopefully this will improve the running speed. If not, a new laptop will be needed as the current one is 5 years old and very slow.

It was agreed to add an item to the next agenda to agree future meeting dates for 2022.

**Date of next meeting: Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2021 –  
Annual Recreation Ground Meeting at 7.00pm and Parish Council Meeting at 7.30pm.**

**The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.05pm**

Signed ..... Chairman Dated .....