

ASHMANSWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council

Date: September 13th, 2011

Time: 7.30 pm

Place: Crux Easton church

Present: Alan Cox (Chairman)

Carol O'Shaughnessy (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors: Mark Benzing

Johnnie Johnson

Ruth Kent (Clerk)

Action

1. Apologies

Kieron Black, Cllrs Mitchell, Izett and Thacker

2. Minutes of Last Meeting

Minutes of the meeting of July 28th 2011 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

3. Planning Matters

a) Cross Lane We were very pleased that the occupants of this site have now departed.

b) Crux Easton House This was a re-application for one rejected a year ago. The pool house is now smaller and other changes have been made, apparently in response to comments from the previous case officer. We could not see where the material of the new wall alongside the road was stated, although we assumed it to be similar to the other walls. We actioned the clerk to report that we had no objection but hoped that the wall material would be sympathetic. *Post meeting note:* Alan received a call from the applicant's agent who explained that he was in discussion with Basingstoke regarding this material and that he was keen to ensure its sympathy with its surroundings.

Ruth

c) Trees We were notified of a request to lop trees at the old Plough, Ashmansworth and held no objection.

4. Local Roads

a) Pot Holes HCC have repaired pot holes in Ashmansworth as requested but have missed some, especially on the road from the Yew Tree. Alan has reported details to HCC. *Post meeting note:* Steve Goodall reports that he has now actioned these repairs as requested.

b) Access to A343 We are still concerned at the poor visibility at all our access points to the A343. Alan is in dialogue with HCC to try to get some improvement. *Post meeting note:* Steve Goodall reports that he has commissioned improvements to sight lines at the Cross Lane junction.

c) Sign Posts The Crux Easton sign post still swings in the wind despite several attempted repairs. Alan has contacted HCC to seek a proper repair. *Post*

meeting note: Steve Goodall reports that he has given an order for its repair.

d) Footpaths

As a result of complaints received, Alan has spoken to several residents who walk on the paths across Steeles Farm. They report that some of the stiles are dangerous and/or too high for easy crossing. He has now inspected these and discussed this with HCC. They recommend metal kissing gates which are long lasting and practical. However, the council was strongly opposed to these since they have an inappropriate appearance and are expensive, even with the 50% grant on offer. The council proposed to pursue repairing the stiles which should be much cheaper and easier, and retaining the visual amenity. Alan will speak again with HCC to seek materials and advice. He will also identify and speak to the relevant land-owners. We should set up a working party of volunteers to repair the stiles once we have obtained the materials.

Alan

e) Grass Cutting, Crux Easton

It had been reported that the grass by the telephone box was not cut regularly. It is now reported that a nearby resident has indeed been cutting the grass, so this topic is now closed.

5. Broadband.

Alan reported that Hampshire has been awarded a grant towards providing faster broadband primarily in locations currently poorly served. Cllr John Izett is working to highlight the needs of Ashmansworth and Crux Easton, and will keep us informed of progress.

6. War Memorial.

We have received complaints that the war memorial is in poor condition and that, in particular, the legibility of the lettering is bad. Alan reported that he has sought advice from the War Memorials Trust and talked (so far) to two companies for advice and quotations for cleaning and restoration. We should be able to receive a 50% grant from the WMT and Alan has already received several financial offers from residents. It is proposed that we select a contractor, apply for a grant and seek funding from residents for the balance. The council should be able to reclaim the VAT.

Alan

7. Septic Tank Registration.

Alan had previously notified residents that domestic septic tanks had to be registered with the Environment Agency by the end of 2011. However, due to protests, the government has now withdrawn this for consultation, so registration is optional.

8. Neighbourhood Watch.

Nothing to report.

9. Waste Bins, Crux Easton

It was proposed that we consider obtaining a waste bin to replace the present one, which is in disrepair. Ruth will enquire what is available.

Ruth ongoing

10. Council Plans

a) Parish Co-

Alan has forwarded to councillors the latest task list for co-operation with Highclere and East Woodhay parish council chairmen. Next meeting due

operation	in October.	
b) Localism	Kieron has reported that Cllr Mitchell had not yet called his meeting on Localism.	
c) Emergency Planning	Awaiting next meeting	
d) Local Transport	We still await a decision on our bus service, but are led to expect that it may be cancelled. In that case, we will have to examine alternatives. Some funding is likely to be available but we are still unclear how that might benefit us. The most likely solution is to invite residents to offer lifts to their neighbours in case of need. Any further ideas will be considered with interest.	All ongoing
e) Mobile Library	Our mobile library service now has a larger van. Alan has notified residents to encourage them to use the service.	
g) Village Plans	Alan has received advice from John Dawson at Basingstoke and forwarded this to councillors just before the meeting. Alan has located examples from local villages and will show to councillors. If we decided to go ahead at our next meeting, we will need volunteers to work on preparing plans.	Alan
11. HALC & BDATPC		
	Alan reported that there would be a meeting of BDAPTC on Thursday 15 th .	
12. Finance Matters		
a) 2010/11 Reporting	Ruth confirmed that she had submitted all the paperwork and was overdue to receive the final information from the Audit Commission.	Ruth
b) Invoices	We approved 2 cheques: EM Christian, Grass cutting, Cheque no. 100479, £240.00 Ruth Kent, Clerk, Cheque No 100480, £200. For the record, cheque no. 100477 for £186 payable to HALC for the Internal Audit, which had been approved at our meeting of 5 th July, minute 10a), was issued but not recorded in the minutes of 28 th July.	
11. Correspondence		
	We received a questionnaire regarding the Local Development Framework – opportunities for small scale development in rural communities. Alan was actioned to respond to this.	Alan
12. Dates of Next Meetings		
	Tuesday 1 st November in the Village Hall at 7.30pm The Meeting closed at 9.30pm	