

ASHMANSWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council

Date: 12th February 2013 **Time:** 7.30 pm
Place: Ashmansworth Village Hall
Present: Alan Cox (Chairman) Carol O'Shaughnessy (Vice-Chairman)
Councillors: Mark Benzing Kieron Black
Johnnie Johnson
In Attendance: Maxta Thomas (Clerk)
Visitors: Hugo Haig Janey Haig

Action

1. Apologies

No apologies received.

2. Minutes of Last Meeting

Minutes of the meeting of 8th January 2013 were unanimously agreed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

3. Planning Matters

a) Hallam, Ashmansworth

Cllr Benzing noted an interest in this item, as he is a neighbour.

Presentation by Hugo Haig of proposed planning application.

Mr Haig has hired a tree consultant to look at the trees on the property, and this will result in a separate application for the tree work. The lime trees are very high, and understood to have not been pollarded since around the late 1980s. It was stated that they are structurally unsound as a result, and will need further pollarding. This will need to be repeated every 3 to 5 years.

Three ash trees are also to be removed, as will a douglas fir, as part of the separate building application.

David Hill at BDBC has been made aware of these proposals.

Main entrance – access will be changed to be via the main road through the village, and current access will be closed off, with just a pedestrian gate. Highways consultants claim that the existing access is dangerous as it is close to a junction – the new access is safer.

Existing garage and shed will be removed. New build will be to the south of the property, including a garage with office space/bedroom above. Cllr Cox queried height of new build – Mr Haig stated that it will be lower than the rest of the building, and should not come above the level of the pollarded trees (except possibly the very top of the roof). He also noted that the grass verge and hedge at the rear of the new build will be re-instated. Mr Haig pointed out that the new plans are smaller than previous lapsed plans. Cllr Cox advised that Mr Haig should carry out a search to ensure that he owns the land that the new proposed entrance will be on.

Cllr Cox reiterated that these are proposed plans that have not been submitted to BDBC, and therefore any comments will be in open discussion.

The main concern from councillors was how far the lime trees

would be pollarded, and how significant the impact would be on the village aspect. After much discussion, Mr Haig agreed to contact the tree specialists to see if a compromise could be reached. It was also questioned as to whether the neighbour's lime trees would be done at the same time for consistency, but this had not been progressed.

Cllr Johnson also asked about the planting under the limes – Mr Haig said existing planting is to be removed, and new plants placed further back under the limes. He said that it should not affect the breadth of the verge, and may even make it a little wider than currently, thus not affecting sight lines through the village.

With respect to the property extension it was noted that the new extension will make the whole building very large in comparison to the overall plot size. There was also discussion on the inclusion of the dormer windows, which Mr Haig stated had been included with careful consideration to how much they overlook other property. It was agreed that the studio was an 'add on'.

Cllr Benzing stated his support for the cellar but not for the fact that the new build was distinct from the existing property, joined by a glass boot room.

Cllr Cox asked if neighbours had been consulted. My Haig said he has spoken to some who were supportive but he had not so far reached all of them.

Cllr Benzing noted that a bat survey may need to be done. Mr Haig said that this was done for a previous application, and there are already bat boxes incorporated in the plan.

4. Local Roads

a) A343

No progress on access, although Cllr Cox has responded to a consultation on Hampshire Highways with the council's concerns on this matter. Clerk has been in touch with Highways. The bank clearance has still not occurred as they are waiting additional resources. Cllr Cox to contact Highways for appropriate regulation re double white lines, as Highways have stated that the current format is within regulations.

Cllr Cox

b) Crux Easton signpost

Still awaiting progress – it is on order, but original company has ceased trading, so an alternative is being sought.

c) Ditch Clearance

The clerk has been in touch with Steve Goodall of Highways about the Crux Easton ditches. He advises contact the landowners in the first instance. If that is not successful, then Highways may be able to do the work, but not until April 2013 at the earliest. Cllr O'Shaughnessy stated that the recent weather has caused problems for residents. Cllr Cox noted that Highways will clear drains where necessary, but the drains are not the problem in this instance. Cllr O'Shaughnessy suggested that local residents may be able to do the work themselves. She will investigate.

Cllr O'Shaughnessy

d) Potholes

There has been a dramatic increase in potholes around the parish since the recent inclement weather. Cllr Cox has photographed these and sent them to Steve Goodall at HCC Highways. Steve has replied that several have already been reported previously, and their contractor is due to repair them. Unfortunately, they are unable to respond as quickly as they would like due an increase in workload because of the weather.

5. **Telephones/Broadband**
No progress. Response unlikely until spring 2013.
6. **Neighbourhood Watch**
No report.
7. **Council Business**
- a) Clerk's Report**
I have written to HCC confirming the removal of the diseased beech tree by the village hall, and they have acknowledged the council's response.

The precept and grant request has now been submitted to BDBC, and there have been no queries. Payment of the first half will be in April/May 2013.
- b) Grass Cutting**
The draft tender has now been distributed and updated as a result. The council thanked Cllr Black for preparing this and it was unanimously approved after a minor update to the text. Clerk to co-ordinate distribution. She and Cllr Black will consult once the tenders are in, and make a recommendation to the rest of the council. This will be via email, as it is likely that the first cut of the season will be required prior to the next full council meeting. It was unanimously agreed that half the field will be cut regularly. **Clerk, Cllr Black**
- c) Parish co-operation**
There have been no formal meetings. No further progress to report on Lengthsman Scheme.
- d) Planning Guidelines**
This has now been distributed and updated as a result. Apart from a few minor changes to the text, this was unanimously agreed, and formally handed to the clerk for final version control and proof reading. Once this is done, it will be added to the website. Cllr Cox officially recorded the council's thanks for Cllr Benzing's hard work on the guidelines. **Clerk**
8. **BDAPTC, HALC**
No further progress on BDAPTC website.
9. **Finance Matters**
- a) Payments Approval**
Please see appendix A for the financial statement. Unanimously approved. The clerk noted that the council is very close to budget for the end of the financial year, with outgoings being slightly under budget, and income being on target. She also noted that the council has finally received the VAT refund, and that there would be one further claim at the end of the financial year. Cllr Cox noted that the final invoice for hall hire was due.
- b) Council Bank Account**
The clerk suggested moving the council's bank account from HSBC to Unity Bank plc. Unity Bank specialise in online banking for small organisations such as parish councils, and have the necessary procedures in place to enable dual authorisation of payments online. There may be a charge for the use of the Small Organisation Custom Account, although the clerk's other council have a similar account that does not incur a usage charge. The clerk has not been in touch with the bank directly as yet. **Clerk**

It was unanimously agreed that the clerk get in touch with Unity Bank with a view to moving the council's accounts.
10. **Date of Next Meetings**
Tuesday 26th March 2013 at 7.30pm, Ashmansworth Village Hall
AGM - Tuesday 14th May 2013 at 7.30 pm, Ashmansworth Village

Hall

The meeting closed at 9.50pm. Cllr Cox thanked the councillors for a productive, busy meeting.

Appendix A – Financial Statement

Financial statement : Ashmansworth Parish Council

Meeting date : 12/02/2013

Balances:

Bank Statement 330 - 28/01/2013	Balance after reconciliation - 12/02/2013
671.98	542.04

Payments since last meeting date :

Cheque No	Payee	Details	TOTAL COST
100503	Mrs M J Thomas	Clerk Salary	92.09
100504	SLCC	Membership	25.40
100505	E M Christian	Grass Cutting	98.00
100506	Mrs M J Thomas	Clerk Salary	92.09
100507	HMRC	Tax/NICS	69.00
100508	Vision ICT	Domain Fee	66.00
TOTAL			442.58

New Items for payment

Cheque No	Payee	Details	TOTAL COST
100509	Mrs M J Thomas	Clerk Expenses	85.32
100510	Mrs M J Thomas	Clerk Salary - February 2013	92.09
100511	Mrs M J Thomas	Clerk Salary - March 2013	92.09
TOTAL			269.50

Receipts since last meeting date :

Receipt Date	Payer	Details	TOTAL AMOUNT
07/02/2013	HMRC	VAT refund July 2011-October 2012	266.65
TOTAL			266.65

Payments not yet presented

Cheque No	Payee	Details	TOTAL COST
100499	Crux Easton Church	Hire for Meetings	35.00
100506	Mrs M J Thomas	Clerk Salary - January 2013	92.09
TOTAL			127.09