

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Ashton Parish Council held on Wednesday 13th May
2015 at 7.15 pm at Ashton Primary School**

Present: Cllrs Lemon, Green, Day, Johnson, McAllister, Roychoudhury

Clerk : John Marshall

4 members of the public.

Action

Prior to the meeting being opened, all Cllrs present, having been declared duly elected completed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office that was validated and authorised by the Clerk as proper Officer.

2015/

1. Election of Chairman:

Cllr Green proposed Cllr Lemon; Cllr McAllister seconded the proposal; all in favour. Cllr Lemon was duly elected as Chairman for the coming year.

2. Election of Vice Chairman:

Cllr Lemon proposed Cllr Johnson; Cllr Green seconded the proposal; all in favour. Cllr Johnson was duly elected as Vice Chairman for the coming year.

3. Approval of apologies for absence:

Cllrs resolved to accept apologies from Cllr Bullock (work commitment abroad).

4. Register of Members' Interests:

The Clerk provided each Cllr present with a copy of the current version of the Register of Members' Interest, drawing attention to the time limit of 28 days from the date of election for it to be completed and returned to SNC. Cllr Johnson agreed to act as a collection point for completed forms.

All Cllrs
CJ

5. Adoption of

a) the General Power of Competence:

The Clerk gave a brief outline of the General Power of Competence under the Localism Act 2011 and the advantages it brought to the Council and community. Cllrs noted that once adopted, the Power would be available for use throughout the life of the Council ie the next 4 years. Cllrs then approved the Resolution 'that having met the eligibility criteria as defined in section 8(2) of the Localism Act 2011 and prescribed by Article 2 of and set out in the Schedule to the Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012, Ashton Parish Council confirms that it is entitled to use the General Power of Competence made available by section 1(1) of the Localism Act 2011'.

b) Standing Orders:

The Clerk provided each Cllr present with a copy of the current version of the Council's Standing Orders. Cllrs approved the Resolution 'that Standing Orders be re-adopted'

c) Financial Regulations:

The Clerk provided each Cllr present with a copy of the current version of the Council's Financial Regulations. Cllrs approved the Resolution 'that the Financial Regulations be re-adopted'

6. Appointment of Councillors to Parish Posts:

The Council resolved to make the following appointments;

Footpaths - Cllr McAllister

Neighbourhood Watch - Cllr Johnson

Neighbourhood / Parish Plan Group - Cllr Roychoudhury

Hut Land Trustees - Cllrs Lemon and Green

Cllr Lemon then closed the Annual Meeting at 7.35pm.

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7. Public session:

Vanessa Sutton-Darts introduced herself as the new Landlady of The Old Crown pub. She emphasised her desire and willingness for the pub to continue to be the hub of village activities and as a meeting place for clubs and societies. On behalf of the Council and the community, Cllr Lemon welcomed Ms Sutton-Darts and members of the public commented approvingly of the improvements that had already been made. The resident who is also the applicant for Planning Application S/2015/0963/FUL addressed the Council briefly regarding his application to extend the property.

8. Declarations of interest:

Cllrs Lemon and Green, Hut Land; Cllr Lemon item 12 v grant application by Guerilla Gardeners; Cllr Day item 12 v, grant application by St Michael and All Angels PCC (all non-statutory disclosable interests).

9. Approval of Minutes of previous Meeting:

The Council resolved to accept the Minutes of the meeting of 8th April 2015.

10. Matters arising from the Minutes and Clerk's Report:

The Clerk's Report had been circulated previously; there were no questions.

11. Planning:

i. New Applications

S/2015/0963/FUL, front. Side and rear extension at 23 Hartwell Road,. The Council resolved its response to be no objections with no added comments.

ii. Update on existing Applications

S/2015/0537/FUL, 14 Stoke Road and S/2015/0571/FUL, 43 Stoke Road remain pending.

iii. Other planning matters

None.

12. Finance:

i. Financial Report:

The Clerk reported the financial situation as follows;

Cash at bank at 30th April 2015	£20,215.32
this sum includes 'ring fenced' funds as follows;	
i. play equipment	£1,504.45
ii. election contingency funds	£1,000.00
iii. AVN funds	£ 371.00

ii. Receipts and Bills for Payment:

Receipts

Date	Payee	For	Amount
17.04.15	SNC	1 st half year precept	6,824.00

Payments

The Council resolved to approve the following payments;

Date	Cheque	Payee	For	Amount	VAT
13.05.15	709	JS Landscapes Ltd	Grass cutting March	230.00	
13.05.15	710	David Farrand	AVN issue 146	67.00	
13.05.15	711	Aylesbury Mains	Street light repair	65.40	10.90
13.05.15	712	Post Office Ltd	HMRC / PAYE	61.40	
13.05.15	713	W J M Marshall	Salary + exes for April	361.02	5.32

iii. Changes to the Bank Mandate:

The Clerk advised the Council that it would be necessary to amend the bank mandate to take account of ex Cllr Turvey's departure from the Council. Cllr Johnson and Cllr McAllister agreed to become signatories; the Clerk will arrange for the necessary paperwork to be completed.

SM, CJ,
Clerk**iv. Internal Audit Report:**

The Clerk advised the Council that the Internal Audit had been completed on 16th April; no audit issues had been identified and the Council had therefore received a 'clean bill of health'. As Cllrs new to the process, Cllrs McAllister and Roychoudhury requested sight of the Report.

Clerk

v. Grants:

The Council considered and approved grant applications as follows;

Ashton Guerrilla Gardeners - £500 requested to purchase plants and shrubs for planting at the village gateways and green spaces; the grant to be paid from the Wind Farm Community Fund 2015 payment and the funds to be held by the Council as the Gardeners do not have a bank account.

St Michael and All Angels PCC - £114.20 requested to pay annual electricity costs for the external floodlighting of the church; the grant to be paid from APC funds as this item is provided for within the 2015/16 budget.

The Council considered but did not approve a grant application from Mens Own RFC. The Council felt unable to approve the application for a children's play area and associated equipment as the Council already provides and maintains a recreation area with play equipment within the village. Furthermore, the Council currently holds funds on behalf of the now defunct Ashton Playground Association that are earmarked for the purchase of further items of play equipment, the top request from residents in response to the recent call for suggestions as to how the Wind Farm grant should be used. The Council therefore concluded that to divert funds to another separate facility, elsewhere in the village would not be a sensible or appropriate use of the Wind Farm Grant. The Clerk was asked to advise all applicants of the outcome.

Clerk

13. Highways issues**a) Stoke Road Green footway:**

The Clerk reported that as advised by Helen Howard of NCC Highways, he had submitted the request under s 278 of the Highways Act 1980 to NCC Highways (Gary Thorpe) for approval of the works; he had yet to receive a reply. He will speak again with Helen Howard and NCC Ward Cllr Allen Walker to emphasise the urgency of the matter, given that the availability of the NHB grant provided to the Council is time-limited.

Clerk

b) Other issues:

Cllrs also requested the Clerk to speak to Helen Howard regarding progress with agreed actions from the 24th March traffic meeting with NCC viz the NCC 20 mph speed limit policy, the possibility of obtaining a right of way over land at Stoke Road to provide a wider footway and "slow" road markings outside the school.

Clerk

14. Other issues:**i. Neighbourhood / Parish Planning**

The Clerk, in his report had confirmed that the formal application to SNC for the designation of a 'neighbourhood area' had been submitted on 16 April 2015. Cllr Roychoudhury reported that the village questionnaire was nearly finalised. In response to a request for clarification as to where ownership and responsibility for this stage of the process lay, the Council confirmed that this was a matter for the NHP Group to pursue.

ii. Neighbourhood Watch

PCSO Cooksammy's crime statistics had been previously circulated by Cllr Johnson; there were no questions.

iii. Footpaths

Cllr McAllister was asked to pursue the matter of improvements to KA8 from Pig Lane to Little Ashton, an item that had arisen at the 24th March traffic meeting. The Clerk will provide contact details for Allan Rigby, NCC Rights of Way Officer.

**SM
Clerk**

iv. Water supply to Hut Land

The Council noted the continuing dialogue between the Ashton Allotments Association and Anglian Water regarding a water supply to the Hut Land. The Clerk reminded Cllrs that the legal ownership of the Hut Land was vested in the Parish Council and advised that it would be prudent to obtain Council approval before any application that involved a contract for service or supply was submitted by a 3rd party.

v. Cllr information and training:

New Cllrs were encouraged to attend the "Off to a flying start" training course, the next availability for which is 27th May. Cllr Roychoudhury confirmed his availability; the Clerk will book a place and obtain details of future courses for Cllrs McAllister and Bullock.

**JR
Clerk**

vi. Weekly safety inspection

Cllr Lemon reported that all of the football goalposts were wobbling. A Working Party to carry out work to secure the posts will be raised by Cllr Lemon via the village e-mail and other contact routes.

SL

15. Correspondence requiring a response or a decision:

Cllr Johnson advised that the SNAST group, part of NHW were again offering membership; on his and the Clerk's advice, the Council opted not to join SNAST. The Clerk reported that he had spoken with Alan Beber who had decided that he no longer wished to be responsible for maintenance of the Council's website. Cllr Roychoudhury offered to take on this role and to speak to Alan Beber regarding a hand-over.

JR

16. Items for next meeting:

None.

Cllr Lemon closed the meeting at 9.10pm

Date of next meeting:

Wednesday 10th June 2015