

ASH-CUM-RIDLEY PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 17 October 2024 at Ash Village Hall,
The Street, Ash TN15 7HB

Present: Cllr S Fishenden (Chairman)
Cllr M Aspinall
Cllr J Clucas
Cllr A Jauch
Cllr P Kirtley
Cllr I MacLeod
Cllr G Pender
Cllr J Scott

In attendance: Alison de Jager – Parish Clerk
Cllr D Brazier – Kent County Council
Cllr M Lindop – Sevenoaks District Council
Cllr Penny Cole – Sevenoaks District Council
Cllr Perry Cole - Sevenoaks District Council
PC Caleb Guest – Kent Police
2 members of the public

Cllr S Fishenden welcomed Cllr Anna Evans (Meopham Parish Council), Sandy Stevens (Meopham Community Cupboard) and PC Caleb Guest to the meeting.

8863/24 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs R Brammer (family commitment), C Clark (Governors Meeting), F Cottee (prior engagement), C Gorton (family commitment) S Hobbs (prior engagement), M Manley (holiday) and V Ngwenya, (work). Cllr J Clucas PROPOSED that the apologies and reasons for absence are accepted. SECONDED: Cllr P Kirtley and AGREED.

8864/24 Declarations of Interest

a. None

8365/24 Minutes

It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 19 September 2024 be approved and signed as a true record PROPOSED: Cllr J Clucas SECONDED: Cllr M Aspinall and AGREED.

The meeting was suspended at 7.46pm

- **To receive a introduction from PC Caleb Guest, Kent Police.**
- **To receive reports from the County and District Councillors**
- **Public Session**

The reports from the above are attached to these minutes

The meeting reconvened at 7.56pm

8866/24 Assistant Clerk's Report

a. The Assistant Clerk's Report was RECEIVED and NOTED.

8867/24 Council Administration

- a. **Grass Cutting Contract** – Following discussion, Cllr J Clucas PROPOSED that the grass cutting contract for the 2025/26 year is awarded to Kent Grasslands. SECONDED: Cllr P Kirtley. FOR: 7 AGAINST: 0 ABSTENTIONS: 1
- b. **QTRA – Ash War Memorial and Ash Burial Ground** – The tree risk assessment reports were NOTED. It was NOTED that quotes will be sought for the required work.
- c. **Dignity at Work Policy** – Cllr P Kirtley PROPOSED that the Dignity at Work Policy is adopted with the addition of an auto referral to the Monitoring Officer. SECONDED: Cllr M Aspinall and AGREED.
- d. **Grants Policy** – Cllr M Aspinall PROPOSED that the Grant Application Form is approved with the addition of tick boxes to indicate a range of amounts of grant being applied for. SECONDED: Cllr G Pender and AGREED.

8868/24 Finance and Governance

- a. **Current Financial Position** - In the absence of the Deputy Clerk/Finance Officer, the following was reported by the Clerk. As of 11 October we were holding £232,951 showing a surplus of £96,411. General Reserves after adjustments currently stand at £66,888.29 which is £5,717 more than our 3 month/redundancy costs. The second precept payment of £100,559 was paid on 30 September. £2,000 contribution to Northfield has been paid. £1,222.82 has been received from the insurance company for the replacement of the Speed Indicator Device Pole. We are awaiting the invoice from Kent Highways.
- b. **Approval of Payments** – Cllr S Fishenden PROPOSED that the payments from 19 September 2024 are APPROVED. SECONDED: Cllr I MacLeod and AGREED.
- c. **Additional Charge Card** - Cllr A Jauch PROPOSED that an additional charge card is obtained for the Deputy Clerk and that the limit of £1,000 on the charge card account is split £750.00 on the Clerk's card and £250.00 on the Deputy Clerk's card. SECONDED: Cllr P Kirtley and AGREED
- d. **Account Software** – Cllr S Fishenden PROPOSED that we continue with RBS for the next financial year. SECONDED: Cllr A Jauch and AGREED.

8869/24 Community Events

- a. **Christmas Afternoon Tea:** Cllr S Fishenden PROPOSED that an afternoon tea is arranged on 7 December 2024 for the elderly and socially isolated residents of the Parish and to APPROVE a delegated budget of up to £500 to be vired from the Youth Provision Reserves. Arrangements for the event will be delegated to the Clerk in consultation with the Chairman. SECONDED: Cllr J Clucas and AGREED.
- b. **Christmas Family Fun Day** – Cllr M Aspinall PROPOSED that £300.00 from the Youth Reserve is AUTHORISED to supplement the £1,000.00 donation for the event received from Kent County Councillor D Brazier. SECONDED: Cllr A Jauch and AGREED.
- c. **VE Day 80th Anniversary 2025** – Cllr J Clucas PROPOSED that Ash Church and New Ash Green Scouts are approached to hold a beacon lighting event on Thursday 8 May 2025. SECONDED: Cllr I MacLeod and AGREED.

8870/24 New Ash Green Solar

- a. Cllr S Fishenden reported that seven questions have been received from residents to put to the developers. We are exploring the possibility of borrowing broadcasting equipment. A meeting attended by Cllrs S Fishenden, C Clark, M Aspinall and the Assistant Clerk will be held with the developers to confirm the expectations of the meeting. The developers will be asked to bring additional information and photographs.

8871/24 Planning

- a. **Applications** – there were no applications for consideration.
- b. **Planning Applications Working Group** – the notes of the meeting of the meeting of 2 October 2024 were NOTED.

8872/24 Ash Green Sports Centre

- a. **Current Financial Position** – In the absence of the Deputy Clerk/Finance Officer, a report was read to the meeting, a copy of which is attached to the minutes.
 - b. **Approval of Payments** – Cllr M Aspinall PROPOSED that the payments made from 19 September 2024 are APPROVED. SECONDED: Cllr I MacLeod and AGREED.
- a. **Kent Highways Consultation** – Cllr J Clucas PROPOSED that the consultation for the installation of the Double Yellow Lines on North Ash Road is supported. SECONDED: Cllr S Fishenden FOR: 5 AGAINST: 4 ABSTENTIONS: 4

8873/24 Items for Information

Cllr J Clucas advised that the Thursday Lunch Provision Christmas lunch will be held on 12 December 2024. Additional invitations are extended to the volunteer driver, the volunteer who helps with setting up the tables, the officers and the Chairman of the Parish Council. The choir from New Ash Green Primary School will also be in attendance.

Cllr P Kirtley asked for an update on the possible sponsorship of the Community Warden. A meeting will be held with KCC and Hartley Parish Council on 30 October 2024.

Cllr M Aspinall asked for confirmation that the £1 offer on racket sports at Ash Green Sports Centre will be available during the October half-term. This was confirmed, available from 9am – 4pm weekdays and on the weekends.

Cllr S Fishenden reminded members that a Service of Remembrance will be held on 11 November 2024 at Ash War Memorial. A Councillor and Staff social will be arranged in January and the back room at the Pavilion will be booked.

8874/24 Progress Tracker

- a. The Progress Tracker was NOTED

The meeting closed at 8.38pm

Signed:
Chairman

Date:

ASH-CUM-RIDLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Agenda Item: **Full Council (17 October 2024)**

Report Title: **Police, County and District Councillor's Reports**

KENT POLICE

PC Caleb Guest introduced himself as the PC covering New Ash Green, Hartley, Crockenhill, Wellhill, South Darenth, Horton Kirby and Farningham. He has been with Kent Police for two years and started this new role in September 2024. He is aware of the issues with the use of nitrous oxide use. He carries out local patrols, depending on pressure of work from other areas that he covers. Speed gun training enables him to check for excessive speeding. The use of nitrous oxide moves around the village and most of the areas covered by PC Guest experience some level of use. When found, the cannisters are seized. Cllr M Aspinall asked if any work is done in schools and PC Guest confirmed that visiting the school is on his list and confirmed that the Schools Officer works on prevention with young people. Cllr J Scott noted that fly tipping was on the increase and an industrial level of waste is commonly dumped. Is there a co-ordinated approach at a higher level to deal with offenders, clearance and prevention. PC Guest advised that it is best to liaise with Kent County Council and Sevenoaks District Council. Keep Britain Tidy is a charity that works with councils in this regard.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

The draft budget for 2025/26 will see a further reduction in services. The cabinet member for Highways and Transport is getting together a group of members and officers to tackle road closures from utility companies. Currently, utility companies can enter into road works if they are emergencies and have to advise the County Council within 24 hours of the closure which results in uncoordinated closures. Cllr Brazier noted that this Council is still interested in retaining the services of a Community Warden and gives his full support.

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr M Lindop advised that an abandoned property in New Ash Green has been reported as sold. The delivery of the new recycle sacks is being rolled out. Spring Cross in New Ash Green received sacks erroneously. These sacks were for Spring Croft in Hartley and the new sacks have been collected from Spring Cross. The District Councillors will attend the public meeting on 13 November regarding the Solar Farm. North Ash Manor – the owners of the North Ash Manor have advised that they will be submitting a planning application to convert the space from office to residential use. Toilets at North Square – the landlords want too much from SDC to repair the toilets. SDC have commissioned their own supplier to quote to repair them.

Cllr Penny Cole advised that she had sent an email to the Parish Office regarding the Solar Farm.

ASH-CUM-RIDLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Agenda Item: **4 – Full Council 17 October 2024**

Report Title: **Assistant Clerk's Report**

BULLETIN – The bulletin is being delivered to all residents this week.

Community Warden – I have reached out to Eynsford and Farningham Parish Councils to see if they would be interested to discuss a shared sponsorship of the community warden. Both have said they will take this to the Parish Council meetings and will let us know of an outcome. Eynsford has responded and decided not to take this any further.

Next Meeting Dates

- **HIP** – 21st October at 10am on Teams
- **Sports Centre** – 23rd October at 7:30pm in the Viewing Gallery at the Sports Centre
- **Northfield** – 18th November at 11am in the Viewing Gallery at the Sports Centre
- **Focus Group** – 13th January at 4pm on Teams

Sports Centre – October Half Term - The racket offer will be available throughout the half term, so any children wishing to play racket sports the charge is only £1 per person.

NAG Solar Meeting – A meeting has been arranged for Wednesday 13th November at 7:30pm to be held at the New Ash Green Youth and Community Centre. I have put this out on Social Media and have asked for questions to be sent in. Currently I have received no questions.