



ASHFIELD-CUM-THORPE PARISH COUNCIL

All Councillors are reminded of their obligations under the Code of Conduct Regulations.

Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 10th June 2020 remotely via Zoom.

Attendance	Myles Hansen (Chair) (MHa)	Ruth Hart (RH)	Sarah Clare (Clerk)
	Robert Grimsey (Vice-Chair) (RG)	Paul Whayman (PW)	
	Kathie Guthrie (District Councillor) (KG)	Matthew Hicks (County Councillor) (MHi)	

Public present at the meeting: 1

Public Contributions

None

ACTPC 20-04-01 Reports from County & District Councillor

The County Councillor's Report had previously been circulated to the Council and has also been posted on the village website www.ashfield.onesuffolk.net.

MHi brought attention to the following points:

Credit must be given to all the workers in the region who have stepped up to help their communities during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Home But Not Alone scheme set up quickly in response to the crisis has received over 23,000 calls, the majority regarding help getting food and/or medications. This is coupled with the Tribe App, which has had 2,000 volunteers come forward, way more than have actually been needed, but it shows the amazing network that is out there. It will be important not to lose the impetus of volunteering that has come about from this crisis and find ways once the pandemic subsides of tapping into the wealth of help that is being offered to the community.

Care homes in Suffolk have had statistically a slightly higher death rate than many neighbouring counties, but part of this is due to the high number of nursing beds available within the County's care homes, offering end of life care in a familiar setting, rather than having to send patients to hospital.

Despite many headlines about the shortages of PPE, Suffolk has never had any shortages, although at one point there was only about two weeks supply available. The County Council is the supplier of last resort and the staff have been incredible in keeping on top of demand.

Unfortunately, there has been an increase in the number of calls to helplines for domestic abuse, but Suffolk County Council, in conjunction with Anglia Care Trust has been able to extend the helplines to offer 24-hour support. Anyone with any worries or concerns is urged to make contact on 0800 977 5690.

Two positives points: 1) during the lockdown period Suffolk Highways has completed 1,000 extra road improvements as the network has been quieter. This is despite some roadworkers being subjected to abuse by members of the public who did not regard them as essential workers! 2) The County's recycling centres are open again, although only working at 30% capacity due to social distancing measures, the County learnt from other areas around the country and had an appointment system in place before opening, this has proven very effective.

Finally, MHi gave a short update on the application to extend the 30 mph speed limit in the village. First impressions are not good as the road does not meet the national criteria set for 30 mph, additionally the officers looking at the application were under the impression that there had not been a history of accidents on the stretch concerned. PW stated that there had been a very serious accident, which was included in the application report and asked that this be looked at again, if a 30 mph was not deemed viable, could a 40 mph be considered instead. MHi will speak to the officers concerned again and report back.

Signed (Clerk) Signed (Chair)

The District Councillor's Report had previously been circulated to the Council and has also been posted on the village website www.ashfield.onesuffolk.net.

KG brought attention to the following points:

The response to the COVID-19 pandemic within the ward has been great, with £5K being available to provide food parcels to the most vulnerable in the community.

The car parks in the area are now open again, with a mobile phone app called My Permits that enables residents to pay for their parking without touching money or machines. There are plans to re-open public toilets too, but they will need to undergo legionella testing first.

During the pandemic homeless people in the area have been accommodated at The Cedars Hotel in Stowmarket. Although funding for this scheme is coming to an end, it is hoped that permanent solutions will be found for all that have been helped through this period. It is a positive move that these vulnerable people have been properly identified and their needs can now be met.

Finally, there has been a grant of £250 million to Suffolk from central government for the promotion of cycling in the wake of the pandemic. Mid-Suffolk has a small slice of the funds and will be looking at implementing cycle schemes as soon as practicable.

ACTPC 20-04-02 Apologies for Absence

Simon Garrett (Parish Councillor) (SG) was unable to attend due to personal commitments and had sent his apologies. The Council accepted.

ACTPC 20-04-03 Declaration of Interests

None

ACTPC 20-04-04 Minutes of previous meetings

Regarding the meeting held on Wednesday 11th March 2020, KG requested an amendment under item ACTPC 20-03-01 that the wording "but the Parish Council can remove any signs that are not authorised with no concerns" be removed as this was not correct and apologised for any misunderstanding. The Parish Council should instead raise a complaint with either the County or District Council and ask for the signs to be removed.

Subject to the above amendment the Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 11th March 2020 as a true and accurate record, were proposed by RH, seconded by MHa, all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**. The Minutes were signed by the Vice-Chair and the Clerk

ACTPC 20-04-05 Matters Arising and Action Points

4.1 Forward all correspondence regarding the speed limit application to MHi. DISCHARGED

4.2 Monitor, chase up and report back to the Council on when the SID machine will be on the rota for the village. To be discussed later in meeting.

4.3 Publish dates for 20-21 Parish Council meetings. DISCHARGED.

4.4 Contact organisations to speak and present reports at the Annual Parish Meeting. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic SALC has advised Parish Council's not to hold Annual Parish Meetings this year.

4.5 Publish agreed Standing Orders on the village website. DISCHARGED

4.6 Publish new Financial Regulations on the village website. DISCHARGED

4.7 Submit exemption certificate to external auditors when requested. ONGOING

4.8 To distribute payments as approved at the March meeting. DISCHARGED

ACTPC 20-04-06 Parish Council Activities

Signed (Clerk) Signed (Chair)

- a) To consider co-option to fill vacancies on Council – MHa asked whether anyone present wished to be considered for co-option to the Council. Nobody came forward. The Clerk confirmed that the vacancy is published on the village website.
- b) To report back to the Council on the SID machine rota – PW confirmed that both machines will be put up in the village between 16th-30th June and again 28th July-11th August. Thereafter the village is now on the rota and the machines should be in place at regular intervals.

MHa asked the Council to consider whether the dates should be published. After a short discussion it was agreed that getting the SID system installed in the village was an achievement worth recognising and a short note on the Ashfield Group email would be a good way of both publicising the Parish Council's work and enabling residents to know the first couple of times the machines would be in situ. MHa will draft an email and circulate to all Councillors before publishing.

ACTPC 20-04-07 Finance

- a) To review the financial statement for the quarter – The Clerk had previously circulated the Financial Statement for June. There were no queries. RH proposed acceptance, RG seconded and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**. The Chair signed the corresponding Bank Statements to confirm the figures.
- b) To confirm Exemption from External Audit for Accounting Period 2019-2020 – Although this was agreed at the March 2020 meeting, new audit regulations require this exemption to be confirmed at a meeting of the Council after 31st March, when final figures are known. The Clerk had circulated the Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) of which page 3 is the Exemption Certificate. PW proposed the submission, RH seconded all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**. The Chairman and the Clerk signed the forms on behalf of the Council, the Clerk will submit the Exemption Certificate.
- c) To approve Annual Governance Statements for Accounting Period 2019-2020 following Internal Audit – Following circulation and consideration of the Governance Statements (p.5 of the AGAR), MHa proposed approval, PW seconded all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**. The Chairman and the Clerk signed the forms on behalf of the Council, the Clerk will publish the AGAR on the village website.
- d) To approve the Accounting Statements for 2019-2020 following Internal Audit – Following circulation and consideration of the Accounting Statements (p.6 of the AGAR), RG proposed approval, RH seconded, all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**. The Chairman and the Clerk signed the forms on behalf of the Council, the Clerk will publish the Accounting Statements on the village website.
- e) To consider applications for funding as received – None have been submitted
- f) To agree payments as detailed on the Payment Schedule
MHa proposed authorisation, PW seconded and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**. The Clerk will issue cheques accordingly.
- g) To agree the setting up of a Direct Debit to pay the annual Data Protection Fee to the Information Commissioners Office – The Clerk explained that payment by this method would ensure continuity and gained the Parish Council a £5 per annum discount. RG proposed paying the bill by Direct Debit, RH seconded, all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**. The Clerk will make arrangements.
- h) To agree transfer of £200 from current account to Council reserves, as per 2020-2021 budget - MHa proposed the transfer be carried out, RG seconded, all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**. The Clerk will make arrangements.

ACTPC 20-04-08 Planning

- a) To consider planning applications that had been submitted since the last meeting:
 - i) None Received.
 - ii) Any other applications submitted since Agenda published - None

b) Updates and outcomes on previous planning applications:

Signed (Clerk) Signed (Chair) 10

- i) DC/20/00112 – Application for Listed Building Consent – erection of front porch (following removal of existing). Repairs and alterations as per schedule of works. Grove Farmhouse, Grove Lane – Granted.

ACTPC 20-04-09 Feedback from External Meeting & Additional Officers' Reports

None

ACTPC – 20-04-10 Urgent Matters to be brought to the attention of the Council

- a) The personal email of MHa had been hacked and members of the Council had received scam emails. All were advised to delete the emails immediately. Concerns were raised about whether individual Councillor's should have their email addresses published on the village website. It was agreed to remove the emails with immediate effect, leaving on the Clerk's email as the official contact point. Phone numbers for Councillors will remain on the website.

ACTPC 20-04-11 Items for the September Agenda

- Update on the speed limit application.
- Report on how the SID machines have worked within the village.
- Review and approval of Parish Council's insurance cover.
- Review of compliance with Transparency Code

There being no further business requiring the attention of the Parish Council, the meeting was closed at 8.27pm. The next meeting is set for **Wednesday 9th September 2020** at 7.30 pm at the Community Hall.

Sarah Clare
Parish Clerk

Myles Hansen
Chair