



ASPLEY HEATH PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Denise Batchelor
Tel: 01525 717905
Email: clerk@aspleyheath.org.uk

Minutes of the Aspley Heath Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 26th May 2021 remotely starting at 8.00pm

Present: PCllrs S Smith (Chair) G Clough
P Garratt G Harris
A Jordan A McKay
C Marshall

In Attendance: Mrs D Batchelor (Clerk)
2 residents

2205 To Elect a Chairman

PCllr Smith was duly elected Chairman and took the Chair.

2206 To Elect a Vice Chairman

PCllr Clough was duly elected Vice Chairman.

2207 To Receive Apologies of Absence

Apologies were received from PCllr McQuillan and CBCllr Baker.

2208 To Note Declarations of Interest relating to Items on the Agenda

There were no Declarations of Interest.

2209 To Agree the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 28th April 2021 be signed as a true record of events.

2210 To Co-opt a New Councillor

Mr G Jones had asked to be considered for the vacant Councillor position. He gave a small presentation as to why he wished to be a Councillor. Mr Jones was duly co-opted onto the Council.

2211 To Elect Members on to Associated Positions

- a. **Finance** – PCllrs Smith, Harris and Garrett
- b. **Planning** – PCllrs Harris, McQuillan, McKay and Marshall
- c. **Footpaths including Aspley woods** – PCllrs Harris, Jordan and Smith
- d. **Newsletter** – PCllr Clough
- e. **Friends of St Michael** – PCllr Garrett
- f. **George Wells Educational Trust** – PCllr Smith

Speedwatch Co-ordinator – Lynne Roberts

PCllr Jones was advised that he could join any group. He offered to help Lynne Roberts with volunteering with speed checks as part of the SpeedWatch group.

2212 Open Forum – Members of the Public are Invited to Speak to the Parish Council

A resident was concerned about Aspley Woods and its increased usage particularly new bike trails. PCllr Harris advised that two new bike trails had been marked out by discs and these had been agreed by the Bedford Estate and Greensand Trust. These new bike trails were added to improve safety by separating them from horse and pedestrian routes. It was suggested that cyclists were being given priority over other users of the wood. The Parish Council was unable to change the use of the woods.

2213 Central Bedfordshire Councillor Report

Actions carried forward:

2150a To Discuss Funding from Ward Councillor Grant Budget

The grants had been received from CBC and a cheque was written to forward the funds onto the Church.

Completed

CBCllr Baker was not present at the meeting.

2214 Chairman's Report

Actions carried forward:

1995 Speeding and Parking on Church Road

PCllr Clough had sent a petition to Central Beds Council containing 64 signatures. A response was now awaited.

Action: CBC

There was concern that parking at the top of the woods was very busy and there were also campers staying overnight. There were no signs advising that this was not allowed, CBCllr Baker was to ask the question. The woods were advertised on a cycling website and there were logoed vans parking up which looked like they were offering services to cyclists and promoting their businesses.

PCllr McKay asked if CBCllr Baker could investigate the status of parking bays which were partly on the pavement. (Jul 19)

Completed

2022a The Clerk had sent a letter asking for a .gov domain name for the website and was still awaiting a response.

Action: Govt

2178a To Discuss Advertising the Councillor Vacancy

Co-option had now taken place.

Completed

The Chairman advised of two litter picks, the first was the following day. The second litter pick on 3rd June would be publicised when the

Greensand Brochures were delivered. The information was also on the Council's website.

2215 To Discuss the Accessibility Statement for the Council's Website and to Analyse the Website for Issues

Actions carried forward:

2179 The Clerk would forward the website details to PCllr Jordan for further checking on accessibility issues.

Action: AJ

2216 Roads and Footpaths

Actions carried forward:

1514a A stakeholder meeting was held on 11th May with the representatives from all stakeholder groups present. Bedford Estate acknowledged the increased visitor numbers both within its permissive paths and non-permissive areas. Savills updated on the development of Steetleys. It was hoped that outline approval for leisure use would be granted in June/July 21. The outline is for a leisure facility of 400m² in size to provide a focus for leisure activities in Aspley Woods. Following feedback on the original planning application, parking has been increased to c.100vehicles and discussion with Highways have confirmed there will be a formal highway crossing close to the junction. A key issue to address is how to maintain and manage the current bridleway safely. Once planning consent has been obtained, further expressions of interest will be sought with a view to letting out the facility. It was acknowledged that with the creation of paid parking, enforcement of parking restrictions on surrounding residential and countryside roads will be required. It was asked how Greensand Trust were spending their time in the woods. It was felt the Council should ask them to make information clearer on the different routes and trails within the woods.

Action: Stakeholders

There were now only 10 logs, left by Bedford Estate, for CBC to install. CBCllr Baker would need to ask CBC to get the logs installed.

Action: JB

There seemed to be cars spinning around the BOAT outside Aspley Lodge at the weekends. There had previously been posts which had marked out two emergency access gates, these had been lost some time previously but could be reinstalled. This might then stop the 'wheelies' on the BOAT. There had also been an increase in quad bikes using the BOAT particularly late at night. PCllr Harris agreed to speak to CBC to see what could be done.

Action: GH

The poor condition of the BOAT bordering the car park at the top of Church Road had been resurfaced however, as it is used as a turning circle by a lot of heavy vehicles, it was not known how much longer the repair would last before it needed re-filling.

Although the fencing repairs were unlikely to happen in the short term this would remain on the agenda. (Reviewed July 2020)

Action: CBC

2140a To Discuss Resident Complaints regarding Parking and Traffic on Hardwick Road

Yellow lines were to be re-painted on Hardwick Road but MKC did not see this as a priority, so no date was given for this. PCllr Smith agreed to contact MKC again.

Action: SS

There were still issues with poor parking in the Parish. A discussion was held around the legality of issuing notices to owners of badly parked cars. PCllr Jones agreed to check this. A car which had been left in Church Road had possibly been reported to the police by a resident. Lynne Roberts agreed to see if she could locate the owner.

Action: GJ

2217 Lights

Actions carried forward:

2117 The light outside 57 Church Road which had been hit by a builder's lorry had now been repaired. PCllr Garratt had drafted a letter to the contractor asking for full payment. The Clerk would send the letter, asking for a response by 11th June.

Action: DB

2181 The light outside 13 Church Road was still not working. PCllr Jordan would check whether the repairs had been carried out. If not, the Clerk would chase the contractor.

Action: AJ/DB

2218 Planning

Actions carried forward:

1861b PCllr McKay had sent a letter to CBC detailing the concerns regarding the lack of communication between CBC planning departments. A response was awaited.

Action: CBC

2090 47 Church Road. The breeze block structure erected in the rear garden had been considered permissible by CBC.

Action: Planning

Application updates

51 Church Road – there were no objections.

Narrow Path – there were issues with contractors' vehicles blocking Church Road and inconsiderate parking. The road was a mess and a sign had been knocked over. All access to the site needed to be via Narrow Path. PCllr Smith would chase these issues.

Action: SS

New Applications since the last agenda

41 Church Road (PCllrs Clough and McKay declared an interest and did not take part in the Councillor discussion). Members did not see any problems with the proposed copper cladding to the property.

2219 Village Matters

Actions carried forward:

2155b Re-listing of a Community Asset – the Royal Oak

PCllr Jordan had investigated and had found that new evidence would be required to re-list the pub. Previous evidence could not be used but there was little new evidence as the pub had only just re-opened and events weren't yet happening. The owners were keen to have

the pub listed and so evidence would need to be collected in the future.

Action: PCllrs

2169 Overhanging Hedges - further properties had been identified and the template letter would be sent out.

Action: PCllrs

The re-opening of the pub had seen complaints from nearby residents regarding noise, fireworks, users sitting and standing in their gardens and sitting on walls. There was also concern that Nonna's was increasing their event nights and there was plenty of inconsiderate parking by visitors. A suggestion was made to mark out parking spaces on Church Road to aid visitors in parking more sensibly. It was discussed whether local food and drink businesses could send details of considerate parking out with their booking confirmations. It was advised that the double yellow lines were being enforced. PCllrs offered to visit local businesses to talk about the various issues.

Action:

PCllr Jordan – the Royal Oak

PCllr Harris – House of Hair

PCllr McQuillan – Nonna's

PCllr Jordan would ask CBCllr Baker about the marking of parking bays to encourage more considerate parking.

2220 To Discuss the East West Rail Proposals and Subsequent Response

Actions carried forward:

2201 The deadline for comments was in June so a draft response would be written for next month's meeting. PCllr Clough agreed to accept the box of consultation documents.

Completed

PCllrs Clough and Marshall had attended the East West Rail meeting on 25th May. Notes from this meeting had been circulated to all Members. The issues with Hardwick Road traffic and using allotment land were listened to. It was hoped that residents would send in a response.

East West rail seemed to be more concerned with the building of the railway rather than how local residents would be affected. Members were asked to send any feedback to PCllrs Clough, Harris and Marshall to include in the Parish's response to the proposals. It was also noted that SEMK would have a huge impact on the rail line.

Action: PCllrs

2221 To Receive an Update from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

The group had attracted a new member. At the last meeting Tom Price from CBC had attended and provided helpful information. The Project

Plan was discussed and feedback given. The next step was to apply for funding which would take approximately 4 weeks to come through. The Group was advised to purchase several packages to help them with their Plan including a Design Code and Health Check. Lynne Roberts had offered to get a space for the Group at the Woburn Sands market so that the Group could engage with stakeholders.

2222 Finance

a. To approve payments to be made in May

Payee	Chq No	Amount	Description
TBC		£TBC	Allocated for tree removal on Sandy Lane
D Batchelor	1163	£178.35	Clerk's Salary - May
SLCC	1164	£67.00	Affiliation Fee 2021/22
St Michaels Church	1165	£237.50	CBC Ward Councillor grants - £37.50 Covid Zoom meeting costs, £200 – repairs to clock

The above payments were approved. The chequebook would be forwarded to signatories in the next few days.

b. To agree the financial statements for April

<p>Actions carried forward:</p> <p>2132a To discuss information received from NatWest on switching bank account</p> <p>Paperwork had been sent to the Co-Op regarding switching the Council's main account. However, there would be a monthly charge to maintain the account and this was not felt to be fair. Therefore, the Clerk would apply for the Sandpit account to be switched to the Co-Op with all details remaining the same. It was agreed that the Metro Bank be contacted and the main Parish Council account be switched over to them as they offered free banking for organisations with a balance of over £5000. It was agreed that PCllr Garratt be added as a signatory when this was possible.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action: DB</p>

The financial statements had been circulated before the meeting and were agreed. The bank balance at 5th May was £18,855.57. The Precept had been received from CBC.

c. To approve the Internal Auditor for 2021/22

It was agreed that Lynne Stapleton be asked to carry out the Internal Audit for 2020/21.

2223 To Note Correspondence Received Since the Last Meeting

	From	Subject	Action
1977	NatWest	Bank Statements	
1978	East West Rail	Reminder to sign up for consultation meeting – 25 th May 5-6.30pm	
1979	Central Beds Council	Crime statistics – April (no crime reported)	

1980	Police and Crime Commissioner	Newsletter - May	
1981	NALC	Coronavirus update regarding meetings – should be face to face after 21 June	
1982	Central Beds Council	Remittance Advice - £237.50 Ward Councillor grants received x2	

It was hoped that the next meeting would be carried out face-to-face and so PCllr Smith agreed to book a room for the next meeting on 30th June. The Mary Adams Hall was proposed as the Ellen Petit Hall was not available on Wednesday evenings and social distancing was likely to still be in place.

Action: SS

Signed:

Chairman

The meeting closed at 9.48pm.