



ASPLEY HEATH PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Aspley Heath Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 22nd May 2019 in the Council Offices at the rear of the Ellen Pettit Memorial Hall starting at 8.00pm

Present: PCllrs S Smith (Chair) G Clough
A McKay S McQuillan
A Shirville C Southgate

CBCllr Baker

In Attendance: Mrs D Batchelor (Clerk)
4 prospective Councillors – G Harris, J Wilson, A Jordan and L Roberts
1 resident

1956 To Elect a Chairman

PCllr S Smith was proposed by PCllr A Shirville for the position of Chairman and seconded by PCllr G Clough. PCllr S Smith was duly elected Chairman and took the Chair.

1957 To Elect a Vice Chairman

PCllr Clough was proposed as Vice Chairman by PCllr S Smith and seconded by PCllr C Southgate and was duly elected.

1958 To Agree the updated Code of Conduct

PCllrs had received a draft Code of Conduct and agreed that it should be approved. It was **RESOLVED** that the updated Code of Conduct be agreed.

1959 To Co-Opt New Councillors onto the Council

Five residents had shown an interest in becoming a Parish Councillor and therefore a vote would need to take place as there were only three vacancies. Each Councillor and the Clerk introduced themselves. The four candidates present gave a short speech about their reasons for wanting to be a Councillor and were asked questions. Mr Garratt was unable to attend the meeting so the Chairman read out his statement. A vote took place with the three candidates receiving the most votes co-opted on to the Council. Alison Jordan, Peter Garratt and Gill Harris were duly co-opted and those present; PCllrs Harris and Jordan signed

their Acceptance of Office, PCllr Garratt would need to sign his before the next meeting.

1960 To Receive Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence although CBCllr Baker had stated he would be attending the Milton Bryan meeting before the Aspley Heath meeting and would therefore arrive late.

1961 To Note Declarations of Interest relating to Items on the Agenda

There were no Declarations of Interest.

1962 To Agree the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 27th March 2019 be signed as a true record of events.

1963 To Elect Members on to Associated Positions

a. **Finance** – Bank signatories were agreed as S Smith, G Clough and C Southgate

b. **Planning** – A Shirville, S McQuillan, A McKay

c. **The Sandpit, Footpaths including Aspley woods** – C Southgate, A Jordan and G Harris

d. **Newsletter** – G Clough

e. **Friends of St Michael** – S Smith

f. **George Wells Educational Trust** (currently R Robson Green)

The following additional responsibilities were also identified:

g. **Noticeboard** – C Southgate

h. **Neighbourhood Watch** – C Southgate

1964 Open Forum – Members of the Public are Invited to Speak to the Parish Council

Actions carried forward:

1700 CBC had been unable to forward the connection of the street light in Sandy Lane. The matter had now been passed on to the developer to organise reconnection.

Action: Developer

A resident expressed his concern over Aspley Woods and the organised leisure activities within them that affected the tranquillity. The boundary for the bike jump area had been moved and was now designated by posts marked with orange. The resident felt that this area had been extended and that there was also an increase in bike use of the woods. Members were aware of the new posts laid out and were also worried that the new Cycle Hub would encourage even more users. The resident also advised that these well used areas were causing an increase in pests in other parts of the woods which would then move to residential areas. A letter would be sent to Greensand Trust who manage the woods to let them know of these two issues.

Action: DB

1965 Central Bedfordshire Councillor Report

(To be postponed until CBCllr Baker arrived)

1966 Chairman's Report

Actions carried forward:

1856 The 'Tommy' silhouette had been moved next to WWI graves in the churchyard. J Wilson kindly agreed to bolt the silhouette into place so it could not be moved.

Action: JW

1901a To Consider an Application for the Highways Rural Match Funding Scheme

PCllr Hobbs had designed an initial drawing for a new crossing across Hardwick Road. The details were agreed and the application had been submitted to CBC. If the crossing received funding then there would be a consultation with residents. A response from CBC was still being waited on.

Action: CBC

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. The funeral of former Councillor Piers Wilmott had taken place earlier that day and was well attended. It was felt that the website should include some information on this.

1966a To Agree a Charitable donation

Following the death of PCllr Willmott a donation of £100 to Arthritis UK was suggested and **APPROVED** by all Members. A letter to Mrs Wilmott regarding the service and the Parish Council's donation would be sent.

Action: SS/DB

1967 Speeding and Parking on Church Road

Actions carried forward:

1948 There was currently a lot of building activity in the Parish. Another Speedwatch session was to be organised for 9-22 June. PCllrs Smith and Southgate agreed to attend. Lowering of the speed limit had previously been discussed but there was little enforcement available and so was not deemed viable. A permanent speeding sign was also discussed. A sign was thought to cost approximately £4000-5000 and match funding might be available from CBC. Members expressed preference for a smiley face rather than a slowdown sign. This idea would be discussed at a further meeting.

Action: SS/CS

(CBCllr Baker arrived)

1965 Central Bedfordshire Councillor Report

CBCllr advised that one of his first tasks as a Councillor was to email different department within the Council to gauge a response time. CBCllr Baker was aware that speeding on Church Road was a big problem and that there were some concerns with planning applications being approved in the Conservation Area. CBCllr Baker was advised that the application for 102 Church Road had been refused. CBCllr Baker stated that the Planning Officers were overstretched, Members were concerned that this led to incorrect decisions being taken within the Parish. A letter had been sent to Siobhan Vincent and it was

hoped a meeting would be set up in the Parish to show the Officer the problems with applications being agreed.

PCllr Shirville asked about a letter sent to her regarding a tree felling by CBCllr Baker. CBCllr Baker was unable to identify which tree was mentioned and would look through his records to get the information. There were issues with human waste being left in Aspley Woods close to the layby on Woburn Road. It was thought this was a much-used place for lorry drivers.

It was reported that Highways were completing 75% of their jobs on time. They only had a budget of £400,000 for the ward's roads.

1967a To Discuss Church parking on and around Church Road

The Chairman had spoken with the vicar who had advised that cones were being put on Sundays and at funerals and attendees were asked to park in Woburn Sands or in the pub car park. The number of large vans on Church Road were causing problems with parking. PCllr Jordan had operated a stop/go system and had organised traffic to help the situation but felt more volunteers were needed. It was thought that non residents were not using the passing places appropriately and were also driving on the verges. The Church was to be asked if more than 2 cones could be put out so passing places were larger. PCllr Jordan offered to continue monitoring the parking on Church Road.

Action: SS/AJ

(CBCllr Baker left the meeting)

1968 Roads and Footpaths

Actions carried forward:

1514a The bollards at the top of Church Road were rotting away and there was a huge puddle forming outside the gates. A quote had been received by CBC to fill in the hole and an order placed. CBCllr Wells asked to be copied into emails with Chris Nicolls. PCllr Hobbs was to ask CN if all works could be completed at the same time. Paul Williams would also be chased for the Estate's contribution. Chris Nicolls had advised that funding would be sought during the new financial year for the works.

Action: CBC

The fence on both sides of the car park was falling apart but it was felt that Bedford Estates would not carry out any further works to the fencing. Paul Williams from Bedford Estates had responded that work on the footpaths had been completed. However, Members were not happy with the level of work and PCllr Willmott stated he would contact Paul Williams again to express this. There was also a report of a new fence.

Action: CBC/PW/PW

1933 Holly Walk Steps - The steps were under the remit of Central Beds Council. PCllr Smith had emailed Chris Nicoll to ask that the steps be assessed for safety.

Action: CBC

1969 Upgrade Project/Enhancement of the Heath

Actions carried forward:

1845 The new bench in Sandy Lane had been installed. PCllr Shirville agreed to organise the

plaque which was to be engraved with the words '1918 – 2018 We will remember them' and Aspley Heath Parish Council added below. PCllr Shirville agreed to organise the plaque and a lasered stainless steel design was agreed.

Completed

1970 Lights

1971 Planning

Actions carried forward:

1861b An enforcement notice for a house in Silverbirches Lane regarding its brickwork being smoothed over was still in force. CBC were awaiting a non-material amendment from the resident.

Action: CBC

The Chairman thanked PCllrs Shirville and McQuillan for their reports to CBC.

There were builders on the site of Tavistock although the application had not yet been approved. Permission had been granted for a change of wood in the design.

Four tree applications had been received as well as an application for 41 Church Road.

PCllr McQuillan would send comments for the application regarding 17a Church Road.

Additions to 3a and 3b Church Road were objected to by the Parish Council. A resident commented that no correspondence had been sent to them although they lived opposite the site. The Clerk would check this.

Action: DB

1972 Village Matters

Actions carried forward:

1862 At present it was agreed that the current website be maintained. Members agreed that the domain name for the Council's email would be transferred to the Council at a cost of £40 for 2 years. A direct debit would need to be set up to pay the fees. The possibility of gaining a .gov email address was to be investigated.

Completed (add to agenda in 2021)

1893a PCllr Smith had now sent photographs of the overhanging Holly hedge on Church Road to the Clerk who would contact both houses that had hedges overhanging.

Action: DB

1937 Speakers for the AGM were discussed. PCllr Southgate agreed to speak about Neighbourhood Watch. Mr Ballard would be invited to speak on behalf of the Poor's Coal Charity and it was suggested that Mr Holland could report on Aspley Woods. Other proposals for speakers were welcomed. It was suggested that a small survey could be produced to ask residents what their concerns were.

Completed

1953 PCllrs agreed to take part in the Big Spring Clean and agreed on Sunday 28th April. Litter pickers would need to be collected. PCllr Smith agreed to organise and advised that helpers should meet at the top of Church Road.

Completed

1953a Final comments needed to be sent to PCllr Clough for inclusion in the next newsletter which was due for delivery by the end of April.	Completed
1953b Some new plants had been planted in Jubilee Gardens.	Completed
1953c A Smart car with a flat tyre had been parked on Sandy Lane for some time. PCllr Southgate had chased this up and the car was illegally parked. PCllr Southgate agreed to contact the DVLA.	Action: CS

There was an overhanging laurel outside 102 Church Road which was partially obstructing the pavement. The Clerk would email the owner.

Action: DB

Following a complaint by a resident about the lowering of a hedge and spraying weed killer a few Members had visited the site. The ownership of the site would need to be identified before any further comments could be made.

1972a To Discuss Designating buildings in the Parish as an Asset of Community Value

Members discussed the Royal Oak and the current owner's plans to sell the pub. Although the current lessee had first refusal Members hoped that the pub would continue to operate as a pub. With this in mind they wanted to designate the pub as an asset of community value. PCllr Jordan agreed to lead on this.

Action: AJ

1973 Finance

a. To approve payments to be made in May

Payee	Chq No	Amount	Description
Forde & McHugh	1053	£149.92	Street light maintenance Apr – Sept 2018
E.on	1054	£743.86	Street lighting 1/4/18-31/3/19
Cultivation Ltd	1055	£90.00	Maintenance of Jubilee Garden
D Batchelor	1056	£240.00	Clerk's Salary April and May
SLCC	1057	£63.00	Membership fees 2019
S Smith	1058	£16.35	Refreshments for AGM
A Shirville	1059	£41.70	Engraved plaque for Sandy Lane bench

The above payments were agreed for payment.

b. To agree the financial statements for April

<p>Actions carried forward:</p> <p>1893d To consider cheque payments for Sandpit expenditure due to issues with Sandpit Charity bank account PCllr Willmott had contacted NatWest who advised that any transfer of funds would need</p>

to be done by letter. As the interest in the Business Reserve account was negligible it was **APPROVED** that the account be closed and all funds moved to the Current Account. The Clerk would write up the letter and forward for signing.

Completed

Copies of financial statements were provided for the new Councillors. The Precept for 2019/20 of £7938 had been received. The balance in the Council's accounts was £18,472.72 as of 3rd May.

c. To approve the Internal Auditor for 2018/19

It was **APPROVED** that Lynn Stapleton carry out the Internal Audit for 2018/19.

d. To Agree the Clerk's salary for 2019/20

NALC had issued new pay scales for 2019/20. The Clerk's present spinal point was 19 which related to SP8 on the Scale from April 2019. Members discussed increasing the Clerk's salary and agreed that her salary be moved to SP11. The new salary was **APPROVED** on SP11 £11.00 per hour, which was equivalent to £21,166 per annum. The Clerk's actual salary would be £1980 per annum.

e. To review the risk assessment

This would be deferred to a future meeting.

1974 To Note Correspondence Received Since the Last Meeting

	From	Subject	Action
1796	NatWest	Bank Statements	
1797	BATPC	Practitioner's Guide – Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities	
1798	Central Beds Council	A421 closure	
1799	BATPC	Beds Bugle	
1800	Beds Police and Crime Commissioner	newsletter	
1801	Beds Police	Crime statistics - March	
1802	Central Beds Council	Parish nominations - uncontested	
1803	Beds Police and Crime Commissioner	Invitation to Third Year Launch Report – 20 May 10.30-1.00	
1804	Beds Police and Crime Commissioner	Invitation to Annual Parish Roadshow – 1 October 6-7.30pm	
1805	Central Beds Council	Declaration of Acceptance of Office information	
1806	Central Beds Council	Closure of A421 31 May – 1 June	

The meeting closed at 10.15pm.

Signed:
Chairman