

Meeting Minutes

Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held in Ashill Primary School on Monday 08 January 2024 at 7.30 pm



ASHILL
PARISH COUNCIL
Serving Ashill and Surrounding Hamlets

ASHILL, HASTINGS, KENNY, RAPPS, SOUTHTOWN, STEWLEY,
WINDMILL HILL & WOOD

Present : Cllrs P Varney (Chairman), R Fry, A Crouch, N Harvey, B Pyle., J Crocker

In attendance: L Gowers (Clerk), Cllr Sue Osbourne (Somerset Councillor and 5 members of the public.

101/23 Apologies

None

102/23 Casual Vacancies

It was noted the Parish Council has one Casual Vacancy to be filled by co-option.

103/23 Chairmans' Opening Statement

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the January meeting and wished all present a Happy New Year. He also thanked the school for hosting this meeting of the Parish Council. Cllr Varney introduced the Council to the members of the public attending.

104/23 Public Participation

- A member of the public raised the issue of a potential breach of a planning application at Hastings in Stewley. A changed of access and drainage had been made and there was concern of a potential risk of contamination to a water course due to old cars being stored on the site.
- There was also concern that a bank had collapsed on Windmill Hill Lane.
- A bridge at the bottom of the footpath opposite The Flying Fish had been swept away and Cllr Fry would report this online.

105/23 Declarations of Interests / Dispensation Requests

Cllr Fry and Cllr Crocker registered an interest in the school as PTFA treasurer and related to Head of School, respectively. Cllr Pyle registered an interest in St Mary's PCC.

106/23 Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** for the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 6th November to be agreed & signed as a true record.

107/23 To acknowledge the contribution of Mr Chris Harper to both the Parish Council and the village.

Cllr.Varney acknowledged Chris Harper's death and all at Ashill Parish Council passed their deepest sympathies to his wife Margaret and his family and friends. The Parish offered thanks for the frequent and committed contribution Chris made to the community; he served on the council as Chair and continued to offer his services to the parish until ill health prevented it.

108/23 Planning

- a) The council noted the following planning applications received for review since the last council meeting held in September 2023.

Application No.	23/02923/HOU
Location	Ashlea Windmill Hill Lane Ashill. TA19 9NT
Proposal	3-bay garage plus 1-bay workshop. Widening of driveway access.

The agent explained the plan for the water run-off from the workshop was to egress via the existing water course as there was no guttering planned for the building. A neighbour was concerned that the drop off for the water would empty into old drainage that was no longer

in use, but which ran under an existing property. The neighbour requested clarification of the direction for the water run-off.

b) The following Planning Decision Notices had been received from Somerset Council.

23/02642/S73A Hermans Well, Folly Drove, Ashill. TA19 9NW

S73A application to vary conditions 2 (approved plans) and 3 (materials) to change tiled pitched roof over new side porch to flat roof with glass balustrade around, providing a balcony for the main bedroom. In relation to planning approval 23/00974/HOU for removal of existing conservatory to rear and erection of two storey front and rear two storey extensions and single storey side porch.

APPROVED

22/01242/FUL Southtown Farm, Thickthorne Lane, Ashill. TA19 9LS

Change of use of land to allow for the siting of a shepherds hut for tourist accommodation, provision of parking and turning facilities and access thereto and installation of package treatment plant and planting.

APPROVED

3 members of the public left the meeting.

109/23 Playing Field

a) Cllr Fry had previously circulated her playing field report. Nets and signage had been replaced but the moles were causing problems once again and Cllr Fry would investigate a solution. Cllr Varney thanked Cllr Fry for all the work that she had done at the playing fields.

110/23 Highways / Footpaths

- a) Cllr Varney reported that the DCO had definitely been postponed for the A358 duelling project. No further dates had been given by National Highways. There had been a change of Chairman at the Community of Parishes, who were co-ordinating the response to the project on behalf of parishes affected. The new chairman was keen to create a membership subscription to the Community of Parishes and had asked each parish to contribute.
- b) It was noted that:
- The footpath mentioned by the member of public would be reported
 - There was grass growing along the old A358 from the Village to Stewley Cross, the drains required clearing and the blocked drains caused excess water at Kenny.
 - The condition of the roads and the pot holes outside Southtown Farm were very bad and should be reported online.
 - The potholes on Butts Lane were very bad, but each time the potholes were repaired, the repair didn't last. Cllr. Varney noted that a complete re surface would be preferable.
 - The drains on Ashill Straight were full of mud and over flowing. This caused water to flow on to the A358. There was also vegetation along the footpath that should be cleared. It was suggested that the Parish Council hold a Volunteer day to clear the drains and vegetation. All agreed and set a £20 budget for hot drinks afterwards. The date was to be advised.

111/23 Health / Environment/ Parish Assets

a) The works to replace the noticeboard at Southtown Farm were still to be completed. Cllr Harvey would replace this when the weather improved.

The bus stop had been recently damaged, possibly by a vehicle. Roof tiles had moved and the fascia cracked. An Insurance Claim would be raised. There was also graffiti inside. It was agreed that Cllr Fry would arrange for some quotes to repair the bus shelter. There were Duke of Edinburgh volunteers who would paint the bus stop as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Award. It was estimated that masonry paint would be approximately £50 and it was agreed that this could go ahead.

112/23 Village Hall

It was noted that scaffolding was erected on the village hall and work on the roof was due to begin. Councillors agreed that the £1700 grant should be paid to the Village Hall as one payment.

113/23 Church

Cllr Pyle reported that the carols and mulled wine along with the Christmas fair and services had all been well attended.

It was confirmed that lights were to be installed in the tower which had been part of quinquennial report for the church.

A recent defibrillator training session had been very successful and twenty-seven people had attended.

114/23 Communication

a) Cllr Crocker had attended the previous meeting of the Local Community Network and would be happy to attend the next. Cllr. Varney would also attend. There was a discussion regarding the lack of budget for the LCN and communication from Somerset Council regarding the financial situation of Somerset Council.

b) **To receive for consideration any other matters regarding communication / processes.**

There was discussion regarding improving the communication to the parish from the Parish Council as the Parish Council only met every other month. The Clerk was asked to create a monthly update for the website and notice boards. There should also be a process for questions asked by Members of the Public. Cllr. Varney and Cllr. Crocker would meet to discuss this.

20.50 Cllr. Pyle left the meeting.

115/23 Finance

i) **To consider and approve the budget for 2024/25**

The budget was discussed and it was **Resolved to accept the budget at £7580 which was an increase of 13% and equivalent to £3.07 annually on a band D property.**

ii) **To receive the bank reconciliation reports for Quarter 1 and Quarter 2.**

The bank reconciliation reports were complete but had not yet been checked by a Councillor. Cllr. Varney volunteered to check them following this meeting.

iii) **The Council acknowledged and approved the following payments:**

Cost description	Total Value	VAT	Date Paid	Invoice Reference
½ cost of VAT 126 course attended by Clerk. Split with Curry Mallet PC	£30.00	-		2901
Expenses – R Fry	£266.31	-		
Expenses – B Pyle	£25.41	-		
Clerks salary – L Gowers. Q3 (Oct – Dec 2023)	£502.24			

116/23 Action Status Report

The Clerk requested that this item was deferred to a future agenda.

117/23 Items for consideration for a future agenda

- Updated standing orders (using most recent NALC model)
- Updated financial regulations (using most recent NALC model).
- Council “Mission Statement” for the landing page of the website.

118/23 Date of Next Meeting

It was confirmed the next meeting would be held on 4th March 2024 at 7.30pm.

The meeting closed at 21:13 pm

Signed : (Chairman)
08 January 2024