
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ARDELEY PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 10th January 2022 AT 7.30 PM in the village hall.

Councillors present: Cllr Adrian Waygood, Chairman
Cllr Stuart Norman, Vice Chairman
Cllr Jim Egginton
Cllr Andy Miller
Cllr Michael Stevens
Cllr Simon Peace

Also present: Cty Cllr Ken Crofton

Officer attending: Lorna Ewen, Clerk

Others present: 2 members of the public

22.00 Apologies for absence: None.

22.01 Declarations of interest: None applicable.

22.02 To receive the minutes of the last meeting held 1st November 2021.

Proposed by Cllr Waygood and seconded by Cllr Miller as a correct record, and carried unanimously.

22.03 Matters arising:

- Cllr Stevens reported that he had arranged for the 2 oak trees to be planted on Moor Green which had been planned to commemorate VE Day 2021 and has submitted the contractor's invoice for the supply of the trees, itemised in the financial schedule. Cllr Stevens kindly covered the cost of the labour himself. The council expressed its gratitude to Cllr Stevens.
- Cllr Stevens reported that he had spoken both to Highways and Openreach regarding the tree branch near Moor Green that is resting on the overhead cables; Highways said it was not their asset and therefore not their responsibility.
- Cllr Peace expressed his thanks to the council for their support during his absence.

22.04 Correspondence

An email had been received objecting to the relocation of the litter bin by the telephone box to the playground on the basis that it fills up quickly and requires regular emptying.

The nature of the current use was discussed; the litter is in black bags, suggesting that the bin is being used for off-loading as opposed to the disposal of small items from village walkers. Cllr Egginton had also received feedback that the bin was useful and therefore should not be relocated.

Proposed by Cllr Egginton and seconded by Cllr Norman: The litter bin outside the telephone box should remain. Proposal defeated: 2 in favour, 3 against and one abstention - the relocation of the bin to the playground is therefore to proceed as resolved previously.

22.05 Financial report and cheques as per schedules: litter collection, clerk's salary and PAYE, payment for trees and reimbursement for photocopying of maps of the parish, approved.

22.06 To consider budget/future expenditure and set precept demand for financial year 2022-2023. The council was mindful of the reserve that had accrued; future expenditure had been earmarked for the Cromer road-calming measures as well as possible tree surgery and maintenance of parish land. The current precept was considered low compared to other parishes and had been frozen for a number of years.

Proposed by Cllr Peace, seconded by Cllr Waygood: The precept demand should remain the same as last year's and be set again at £6000. Resolved unanimously, the demand form duly completed and signed.

22.07 Planning:

2 The Close: No objection, proposed by Cllr Waygood, seconded by Cllr Peace: Carried with one against.

3 Bradcotes: It was proposed by Cllr Waygood, seconded by Cllr Peace that no objection should be raised; however the proposal was rejected with 3 against, 2 in favour and one abstention, because of the size of development and lack of affordability. The Clerk to submit an objection to EHDC.

22.08 Highways:

Proposed speed restriction in Luffenhall - update: North Herts will investigate to establish if current usage causes a problem. It is being progressed by Cty Cllr Jarvis the district councillor for North Herts which covers half of Luffenhall.

Proposed reduction of speed limit to 20mph in School Road Ardeley: Cty Cllr Crofton said that it was on the list for consideration, but very low down as the quota has already been allocated to other schemes, so there may be a delay of up to 2 years before any progress is made.

Traffic issues in Cromer: Cllr Egginton has carried out one 'drive safe' session and hopes to complete another two this spring. The speeding mainly occurs from north to south, coming down the hill. Cllr Egginton will progress the relocation of the warning sign to improve its impact on drivers.

Cromer drains: Cty Cllr Crofton reported that the drains will be cleared in March and every 6 months thereafter in the hope that this will result in a reduction of the road surface water. Cllr Miller expressed the desirability of a one-way system for the diversion routes in order to avoid excessive two-way traffic along narrow lanes. Cty Cllr Crofton stated that he would support the council if a request were made.

Cllr Peace drew attention to the poor condition of the retaining timber retaining wall of the first ford from Hare Street in Back Lane, to be raised with the Rights of Way Officer during the course of follow-up arising from 22.11 below.

22.09 Playground: The fencing between the playground and Church Farm needs replacing. Cllr Miller agreed to obtain estimates.

To approve purchase of strimmer: Cllr Waygood had obtained some quotations for a new strimmer and discussion ensued as to the merits of a petrol as opposed to a battery model - to be decided at the next meeting.

22.10 Ardeley: The railings around the pond need renewal.

A quotation had been obtained from Peartrees Furniture for temporary repairs to the railings and also to the telephone box door.

Proposed by Cllr Miller, seconded by Cllr Norman: Peartrees Furniture to be asked to proceed with repairs to railings and telephone box door as per estimate of £250. Carried unanimously.

22.11 Moor Green: Issues relating to BOAT.

A resident had laid limestone to the surface of the track between Moor Green and Church Farm at his own expense which had not bedded down due to the size of the stones; councillors had received complaints from cyclists and horse riders.

Proposed by Cllr Peace, seconded by Cllr Waygood: The council to contact Rights of Way Department, HCC, to request a site visit to look at how the situation can be improved. Carried, 5 in favour with one abstention.

Proposed by Cllr Peace, seconded by Cllr Waygood: Clerk to write to the resident informing him of the council's intention to consult with Tony Bradford, ROW Department. Carried 4 in favour, 2 abstentions.

22.12 Tree planting suggestions for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Cllr Egginton suggested that young lime and willow trees be planted in Cromer to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and along the side of the river in Luffenhall. When considering costs, tree protectors and stakes will be required. Locations for other plantings to be further considered.

22.13 Parish council land management. Maps had been obtained and copied by the clerk and circulated to councillors. Cllr Stevens proposed and Cllr Waygood seconded that the discussion for a plan relating to land management be adjourned until the next meeting. Carried unanimously.

Munchers Green: This has become overgrown; Cllr Stevens to look into what work needs to be done. Cty Cllr Crofton said that grants may be available and the voluntary countryside team at Herts County Council could be approached to assist; Cllr Stevens to make enquiries.

Pond opposite Spring Grange: Cllr Egginton mentioned that that the report for the restoration of the pond had been completed by Herts ecological officers and the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust are also in favour.

Cllr Egginton commended the plans for an ecologically sensitive restoration which will incur considerable expense but no cost to Ardeley Parish Council and proposed that the council support the pond restoration plan. Seconded by Cllr Waygood. 5 in favour, one objection.

22.14 Urgent matters not previously notified. Cllr Peace raised the viability of commissioning a Neighbourhood Plan for the parish; the council had considered this during his time in absence and considered that it was not financially feasible and would be a major undertaking which could not be carried out by the councillors but would need professional input and the support of the whole village and could take up to 18 months to complete. Cty Cllr Crofton suggested that Cllr Peace speak to Walkern PC, albeit Ardeley is a Category 3 village and is not under the same development pressure.

22.15 Date of next meeting: Monday 7th March 2022 at 7.30pm.

Public participation: A resident drew attention to the need for repairs to the byways between Wood End and Ardeley.