ASHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held in the Jubilee Hall on Monday 1st November 2021 at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors R Fisken (Chairman), A Keeley, R Butler and G Light

In attendance: Paul Thompson (Clerk)

1. **Apologies:** Councillors A Dick and C Butler and District Councillor Alan Law

2. **Declaration of Interests:**
The Clerk confirmed that the Councillors held dispensations to consider the draft budget for 2022/23 under item 15 of the agenda. There were no other declarations of interest.

3. **Minutes of the Last Ordinary Meeting:**
The Minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 6 September 2021 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

4. **Matters Arising Not Covered in the Agenda:** There were no matters arising that were not covered by the agenda.

5. **Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on 12 October 2021:**
The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman.

6. **District Councillor's Report:**
District Councillor Alan Law had circulated a detailed report prior to the meeting. The main points affecting local residents were Alan's support in enforcing planning conditions at Redwood, Burnt Hill and WBC's concerns regarding overgrown vegetation. WBC will be asking landowners to cut back vegetation where it is considered to be a risk to pedestrians and motorists, due to it overhanging or otherwise interfering with a public highway.

7. **Police Matters:**
Councillor Alex Dick had submitted a report from the Thames Valley Police Rural Crime Group prior to the meeting. The Chairman said that it was pleasing that action being taken against organised crime groups, regarding the theft of machinery for sale overseas, is now having some success. Alex had also updated his WhatsApp group.
Alex also advised that criminals are known to take advantage of the clocks changing with walk in burglaries shortly after you return from work and before you have locked up. This has happened in the parish before!

8. **Footpaths and Byways:**
Councillor Colin Butler had advised Councillors prior to the meeting that he had nothing to report other than that Highways had installed the steps leading from Footpath 13 onto the Aldworth Road. The Chairman advised that he had also visited the steps but thought that the footpath sign had been removed. The Clerk was asked to check and advise WBC if necessary.

9. Roads:
Lay-by at The Green: The Chairman reported that the work had been completed.
SID training: The Chairman will seek resident's views at the next pub evening.
Highways winter service plan: It was noted that the B4009, Aldworth Road and Yattendon Lane were the only parish roads included in West Berkshire Council's snow clearance and primary treatment routes. Roads through and within the main village will qualify for secondary treatment only. Salt bins are available on Noakes Hill, Palmers Hill and Pykes Hill to help clear those particular roads.
Maintenance review: The Clerk was asked to report drainage issues which were causing flooding on the Aldworth Road to WBC. He was also asked to write to the landowner regarding a hedge leaning significantly into the road on Palmers Hill.

10. Planning Applications:
Updates:
21/01014 - Gate Cottage, Haw Farm, Hampstead Norreys (as adjacent parish): Two storey and single storey rear extension and other alterations. Approved by WBC.
21/01678/HOUSE - Lye View, Holly Lane, Ashampstead: Infilling the rear under croft and conversion of the loft. Approved by WBC.
20/01336/OUTMAJ - The Institute for Animal Health, Compton: Hybrid application for up to 185 residential units. Awaiting decision from WBC.
21/02346 - Quicks Green House, Quicks Green: Replacement of existing attached annexe with new single storey extension to accommodate new swimming pool, gym, plant and changing room. Awaiting decision from WBC.

11. Open Spaces Review:
WBC 'Blossom into Spring' project and 'Greening Campaign': The Clerk confirmed that WBC would not provide bulbs. The Chairman will seek residents' views.
Playground: Councillor Graham Light advised that ART had set up a funding page on 'The Good Exchange' to raise monies for the proposed improvements to the playground.
Trees on Flowers Piece: No problems reported.

12. Community Infrastructure Levy Utilisation:
Update: The Clerk confirmed that a sum of £2,812.25 had been received regarding the development at Redwood. The funds held now totalled £6,434.62. It was suggested that picnic furniture could be provided on the recreation ground.
Proposed flagpole: The Clerk produced one quotation in the sum of £1,936.00 plus VAT. No response had been received from the other firm that he had approached. It was agreed that this should be considered further at the next meeting as there were a number of issues involved.

13. Website Accessibility:
Councillor Rita Butler confirmed that she was carrying out an audit of the accessibility to the website. Rita was not convinced that it met all criteria and that it may be advisable to have a website solely for the Parish Council hosted by a company geared to the new legal requirements. This would probably cost £250 per annum with a set up cost of £500. The

Clerk advised that this could be met within the overall budget. It was agreed that Rita should provide her recommendation for approval at the next meeting.
It was also agreed that the Parish Council would continue to meet the cost of the village website. Links could be provided between the two.

14. Demand Responsive Transport Survey:
The Chairman advised that one bus was provided fortnightly for shopping trips to Newbury. He will try to ascertain the number of regular users.

15. Finance:
The Clerk produced his financial report for the year to date which showed that income and expenditure would be broadly in line with the revised budget. It was likely, however, that much of the maintenance budget and also the CIL reserve would be carried forward.

Payments were authorised as follows:

Scofell Landscapes Ltd	£607.46 Grass cutting for September and October
P Thompson	£228.80 Clerk's salary for October and November
P Thompson	£76.88 Clerk's Expenses

It was agreed that the Council would subscribe to the mapping software provided by Parish Online for one year at a cost of £50.
Donation requests: It was agreed that a donation under Section 137 of £30 would be made to Sue Ryder Duchess of Kent Hospice.

Draft Budget 2022/23:
The Clerk presented his draft budget for the year to 31st March 2023 which indicated that the precept should be increased by 2% to £6,910. The eventual outcome would very much depend on maintenance requirements for Flowers Piece. Any underspend on maintenance would be carried forward as a separate reserve due to the very high cost of tree surgery when carried out. Most other costs are not subject to significant variations. The final budget would be approved and the precept formally set at the next meeting.

16. Any Other Business: There was none.

17. Date of Next Meeting:
The next Ordinary Meeting will be held on Monday 10th January 2022 at 7.00pm.

18. The meeting closed 8.37pm

19. Parishioners' Questions: There were none.