ASHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held in the Jubilee Hall on Monday 5th September 2022 at 7.00pm

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

In attendance: Paul Thompson (Clerk) and District Councillor Alan Law

1. **Apologies**: Councillor Alex Dick

2. **Declaration of Interests:** None

3. **Minutes:**
The Minutes of the last Ordinary Meeting, held on 4th July 2022, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

4. **Matter Arising Not Covered in the Agenda**: There were none.

5. **District Councillor's Report:**
District Councillor Alan Law was pleased to report that there had been a significant increase in library services in recent months. In addition, parks in Newbury and Calcot had been given Green Flag awards. It has been established that West Berkshire now has a population of 166,400 in 66,000 households. The main concern for the District Council is that there has been an increase of 20% in the over 65s, This has put considerable pressure on the social care budget.

6. **Police Matters:**
Councillor Alex Dick had advised prior to the meeting that he had nothing to report.

7. **Footpaths and Byways:**
Councillor Colin Butler confirmed that he had nothing to report.

8. **Roads:**
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. This is similar to the plan for previous years. Salt bins are available on Noakes Hill, Palmers Hill and Pykes Hill to help clear those particular roads. The Clerk was asked to check salt levels.
Maintenance review: Notices had been put up concerning road closures for the repairs to Palmers Hill, Holly Lane and Noakes Hill. Councillor Rita Butler advised that she had put the details on the website. The Chairman advised that he had contacted WBC regarding the poor information provided in connection with the 4 day closure of the B4009 from Hermitage to Streatley. The Clerk advised that he had received a response shortly before the meeting which indicated that the work of clearing gullies would have separate phases

over the 4 days. Sections of the road would therefore only be closed for one day at a time. The Chairman will issue details to residents via the local WhatsApp group.

9. Open Spaces:

Parking at The Green: It was agreed that the Chairman and the Clerk should talk to residents regarding regular parking on the green which may be contrary to the terms of the Parish Council's lease with the Estate. The layby was created for visitor parking and also to provide a passing point on that narrow road.

Maintenance Review: Councillor Graham Light confirmed that ART were considering the removal of the fence and the bench which are in a poor state of repair. A decision will then be made as to how best to improve the playground from the overall funds available. The District Councillor advised that he may be able to help the project through a 'member's bid' to WBC. This is likely to be available in February 2023.

10. Planning:

Updates:

22/01287 - Walnut Tree Cottage, Ashampstead Common: Construction of new garage. Awaiting decision from WBC.

22/01437 - The Grain Store, Wyld Court Farm: Change of use to B8 storage. Awaiting decision from WBC.

11. Community Infrastructure Levy Reserve:

Update: The Clerk confirmed that £7,151.05 is currently held but that this must be spent by October 2024. This has been earmarked for the playground project. Councillor Graham Light confirmed that he was currently obtaining quotations to replace equipment and fencing.

12. Defibrillator Training:

The Chairman confirmed that there were 12 residents to attend the course on 28th September.

13. Finance:

The Clerk presented his report for the year to date and explained that he has not assumed any savings from budget at this stage as it is intended that part of the maintenance budget will be used for playground improvements.

Payments were authorised for the following:

Grass cutting for two months	£619.60
Clerk's net salary and expenses for two months	£237.80
PAYE on Clerk's salary for three months	£ 88.00

Donation requests: It was agreed that no further donations would be made as the remaining budget was committed to charities which benefit residents.

Annual Return 2021/22: The Clerk confirmed that no requests for information had been received from residents in response to the notice of public rights.

14. Any Other Business:

The Clerk advised Councillors that the SAAA were to appoint external auditors for local authorities for the next 5 year term. There was little point in appointing our own auditors as the parish council is currently exempt from an external audit as its annual income or

expenditure is below £25,000. The External Auditors may, however, deal with any enquiries from residents regarding the annual return.
The Clerk was asked to write to the Estate to thank them for the work on the trees in Dog Lane which has greatly improved their appearance and also for cutting the grass on some footpaths and byways.

15. Date of the Next Meeting:
The next ordinary meeting would convene at 7.00pm on Monday 7th November 2022.

16. There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.58pm.

17. Parishioners' Questions. There were none.