

Ashton Keynes Parish Council

Present: Cllrs I Woods (Chairman), M Carter, M Cooper, B Ellison, J Hughes, S Jefferson, M Seymour, A Stefanovic, E Tidmarsh, R Thomas and D Wingrove. County Cllrs C Soden and C Berry

Public representations

Mr Ashley Seymour raised his concern that the BT cable at the end of Church Walk was now visible and in a dangerous state of repair. The Chairman confirmed that this had been raised previously with BT and asked the parish Clerk to contact Matt Perrott in Wiltshire Highways for an update on the situation.

Action: The Clerk

Minutes of a meeting held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 10 April 2013

Parish Clerk

The Chairman informed the council that the Parish Clerk (John Marsh) had notified his intention to retire from the post. Due to impending parish elections and an imminent audit both the Clerk and the Chairman had agreed that an August retirement date would allow time for a hand over to both the new Council and the new Clerk.

The Chairman thanked the Clerk for all his hard work during his nine and a half year tenure, and the Council showed their appreciation with a round of applause.

It was also noted that one of the County Councillors – Carol Soden – was not standing for re-election. The Chairman thanked her on behalf of the Parish Councillors for all her endeavours on their behalf and again the Council showed their appreciation with a round of applause.

2013/27 New Councillors

The Chairman welcomed Cllrs M Cooper and B Ellison to their first Parish Council meeting

2013/28 Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

2013/29 Declarations of Interest in items on the Agenda

The Chairman declared a personal interest in an item to be discussed under item 2013/34 namely the awarding of the Open Space Maintenance Contract. For this item the Deputy Chairman (Cllr Jefferson) would take the chair.

2013/30 To confirm the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 13th March 2013

The Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 13th March 2013 were approved with minor adjustments and signed by the Chairman.

2013/31 Matters arising from the Minutes

The following Matters Arising were raised:

- The Village Hall has been booked for Wednesday 15th May for the meeting with the County Councillor S Killane to discuss the Neighbourhood Plan.
- The Clerk discovered that £25,340.00 of S106 money has been ring fenced by Wiltshire Council. A further £8,900.00 is being discussed by Wiltshire Council in relation to two properties in the Village.

2013/32 Clerk's Report

The Clerk's report was read out by the Chairman:

- The Clerk said he would like to give the members the end of the financial year **unaudited** report on the financial position of the Parish Council as at 31st March 2013;
 - at the beginning of the financial year the Parish Council had £25,113 in the three bank accounts
 - during the year the Parish Council received a Precept allocation of £32,050 and further income of £10,370 giving a total of £67,533
 - During the last 12 months the Parish Council has spent £40,230 leaving a current total in the bank account and National Savings Bond of £27,303
 - The Parish Council ended the financial year with an increase in funds of £2,190
 - the Business Select 14 day account, which only had a balance of £5.57 and had accrued no interest, has now been closed
 - the £6,000 loan to the Village Shop two years ago can count as part of the Parish Council's reserves for the future
 - the Savings Bond is accruing interest which is currently estimated at £1,000
- The Clerk then said a few words about his impending retirement.
- The Clerk asked for any items which require action by the Highways Team. The following items were listed for action:
 - Cllr Stefanovic raised the issue of the potholes in the Mead. The Chairman asked Cllr Soden for her response to the general perception that since the Local Government changes resources have been diverted away from villages towards towns. Cllr Soden asked for a formal written complaint to allow Wiltshire Council to make a formal response. Cllr Berry confirmed that a promised report on allocation of resources is not yet on stream.

Action: The Chairman

2013/33 Financial Transactions

Payments Made

The Council noted that the following payments had been made:

▪ AK Village Hall (March Room Rental)	£ 17.00
▪ UKHost4u (Basic Hosting Parish Council Website)	£ 47.99
▪ The Chairman (Purchase of Envelopes)	£ 3.80
▪ Clerk's Salary (March)	£ 751.75
▪ Clerk's Expenses (March)	£ 21.00
▪ HMRC (Tax and NI)	£ 231.34

2013/34 Open Space Maintenance Contract

The Chairman left the room as an interested party and Cllr Jefferson assumed the Chair.

Cllr Jefferson confirmed the contract had gone out to tender and 7 compliant tenders had been received. All the Councillors agreed that the tender process and resultant decision were rigorous and commercially sound.

Cllr Wingrove proposed the contract be awarded to A.K. Services; Cllr Ellison seconded and the vote to accept this proposal was unanimous.

The issue of the disposal of green waste was discussed. This was part of the tender but it was felt by all the Councillors that the contractor's obligations should be further outlined before contracts are signed.

Action: The Clerk

All those that submitted tenders will be notified of the decision and contact details would be kept on file for future reference

Action: The Clerk

During the discussion concerns were raised about the bonfire site. It was agreed that this should be an agenda item for the next Parish Council meeting.

Action: The Clerk

2013/35 Committees, Working Groups and Representatives' Reports

The Chairman invited members to give their reports:

Planning Committee

Thomas told the meeting that only one Councillor attended the last meeting. The Chairman and Cllr Thomas both expressed concern that Planning is not getting the priority treatment it deserves. The issues surrounding Planning are to be an agenda item to be discussed when the Parish Council convenes after the May elections.

Action: The Clerk

The planning application for change of use at the former Horse and Jockey public house has now passed to Sarah Gostling at Wiltshire Council. A survey of Parishioners via a leaflet drop and an online questionnaire is currently underway. The Clerk confirmed that some responses have already been received and these will be analysed in the coming week.

Cllr Berry undertook to advise the Council on the correct process for the next planning stages.

Action: Cllr Berry

Playing Fields Committee

The Chairman reported with some regret that the Senior Football Team is no longer playing at the Bradstone. Outstanding rent arrears meant the situation was no longer tenable and litigation could follow unless resolution could be reached amicably. The Chairman is to email Rocky Sharrock to try to negotiate a way forward.

Action: The Chairman

Footpaths Committee

A member of the public reported that the stile on the corner of Happy Lands/Rixon Gate is in a state of disrepair. Cllr Ellison confirmed that the farmer had been approached about this and about the state of the roads following his activities. Despite assurances the situation had not improved. The Chairman suggested that the landowner be approached directly.

Action: Cllr Ellison

Cllr Tidmarsh reported that the footpath at Kent End had been restored and was now fully open.

Neighbourhood Planning Committee

Cllr Carter reported that a document has been drafted to designate the area under consideration. Cllr Wingrove suggested that to avoid confusion this document needs to explain why this area is appropriate. Cllr Carter agreed to include this amendment in his script.

Cllr Wingrove suggested an entry in the next village Newsletter. It was agreed that this should be done as a separate item rather than included in the monthly Parish Council news. The article should be quite explicit about the purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan; the potential pitfalls of not agreeing such a plan; and should publicise the May meeting.

Cllr Carter said that the recently attended Cricklade meeting was successful largely due to its format which included a presentation and speakers. Cllr Wingrove asked the Parish Council to endorse speakers in principle which they unanimously did. Cllr Carter will speak to Dave Sheppard about the meeting and the committee will make necessary arrangements.

Action: Cllr Carter

Cllr Berry said he had some information on the impacts of localism which he would forward to The Chairman.

Action: Cllr Berry

2013/36 Policing

Cllr Wingrove asked for an update on policing in the village. Cllr Soden reported that so far things appeared to be going well with the emphasis on community policing and speeding. Cllr Berry commented on recent developments with Police Forces in Scotland and shared his view that there will be more changes to come.

2013/37 Section 106 issues

Cllr Jefferson reported on research he had done which tried to link monies spent to S106 provisions. This was not an easy task as there appeared to be little evidence of a robust audit procedure in the past. The rules around S106 are complex and vary from county to region incorporating a range of payment schedules. Cllr Soden confirmed that there is a S106 monitoring officer in Wiltshire Council and that their task was not made any easier by incomplete record keeping and misunderstanding of the rules e.g. when is a new dwelling not a new dwelling.

The Clerk had contacted Colin Kennerson asking for clarity around S106 money and affordable housing. So far no response had been received.

Cllr Thomas asked why there are different rules applied across Wiltshire. Cllr Berry responded that part of the formula for deriving S106 amounts depended on land and build costs which varied across the county.

Cllr Jefferson asked about the proposed improvements to cycle path provision around the village. The Chairman reported no further progress to date. On a separate point the Chairman confirmed that if S106 monies are not spent within the designated time frame they are returned to the developer.

2013/38 Memorial in the Church Yard

Cllr Stefanovic reported that she had now received quotations for the work: one included cleaning as well as restoration but the other did not. She had also received notification of a grant of £934 from English Heritage towards the cost of the work. A grant of £100 from a parishioner has also been received specifically for this task.

The Chairman proposed that the Council accept that higher quotation and the memorial would be cleaned and restored. Cllr Hughes seconded this proposal. Cllr Jefferson proposed that the lower quotation should be accepted as there is a view that sympathetic restoration does not mean cleaning as well. No seconder for this motion meant there was a vote only on the Chairman's proposal. All the Councillors voted in favour except Cllr Jefferson.

Cllr Stefanovic agreed to complete the documentation and start the process of engaging the contractor.

Action: Cllr Stefanovic

2013/39 Roads, Highways and Footpaths

This item was deferred for discussion by the new Parish Council following the May elections

2013/40 Cycle routes out of the Village

No update

2013/41 Flood Risk

Cllrs Wood and Tidmarsh confirmed they had completed their actions and this will now form part of the Neighbourhood Planning process.

2013/42 Village Shop Update

Cllr Hughes stated that the recent Village Shop AGM had reported 30% growth and prospects for future trade remain good. This item will remain on the agenda until such time as the loan is cleared.

2013/43 Annual Parish Meeting

The date for this meeting is 27th April at 2pm in the Village Hall

2013/44 Bus Shelters

The Chairman is in negotiation exploring the possibility of a shelter on the shop side of the High Road

A member of the public and several Parish Councillors noted that the new bus shelter on the corner of Happy Lands and the High Road has been vandalised. Cllr Jefferson is to investigate further.

Action: Cllr Jefferson

The business of the meeting was concluded at 9.55pm.

The next meeting of the Parish Council, in conjunction with the Annual Meeting will be held on Wednesday 8th May 2013