

Minutes

Meeting of Ambrosden Parish Council

Held online – 7:30pm

Thursday 18th June 2020

Present: Mark Longworth – Chair, Gemma Jennings – Clerk, Maureen Cossens, Dawn Seaward, Phil Blazdell, Tom Duff, Chris West, Vicky Rose

Serial No **Issue**

523-20-21 Welcome

524-20-21 Apologies

No apologies were received

525-20-21 Declaration of Interests/Gifts

No statements of gift or hospitality were received.

526-20-21 Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting of 23rd May 2020, meeting number 134, were reviewed and approved.

The minutes of the meeting of 19th March 2020, meeting number 132, were received and approved.

527-20-21 Matters arising

The action grid was reviewed and ongoing items were discussed.

It was underlined that declarations of interest from all Councillors must be sent to the Clerk as soon as possible

528-20-21 Public speaking

Nothing raised.

529-20-21 District and County Councillor Reports

Nothing raised

530-20-21 Village Matters

i Maintenance of Parish Council notice boards: The Parish Council noted that some maintenance work was required on both the Parish Council noticeboards. **Clerk to research quotes for the work.**

ii Trees on the green: It was noted that some trees here were not growing well and the oak memorial tree had died. **Chair to ask tree surgeon to review.** It was noted if a replacement was required, this would need to be planted around October/November

iii Village Planters: The Council discussed the design and maintenance of the village planters, noting a concern that the current plants may grow too large and obscure the village signs. The Council also considered how best to maintain and water the plants. The Council agreed to open a village competition for local residents to 'adopt' a planter, with a budget for costs of plants/materials to be funded by the Council.

531-20-21 Planning

Decisions:

Application number: 20/00285/F
Large Solar Farm to be accessed off Ploughley Road at Brook Farm.
Land between Ambrosden, Merton and Arncott
Approved

Awaiting decisions:

Application number: 19/01191/OUT

Proposal: Alexandra House of Joy

Location: Care home near Rodney House roundabout

Application number: 20/01069/F

2 West Hawthorn Way

Demolition of existing rear conservatory and erection of single-storey front of single story porch/w.c. extension and part single-storey, part extension and two-storey rear extension and timber garden shed

Application number: 20/00907/F

7 Honesty Way

Proposed Garage Extension and Conversion. Loft conversion with associated internal and external works

20/00871/F: Erection of egg farm in Lower Arncott was discussed, noting that planning permission had been refused due to concerns about impacts on residents and flooding, although the company was set to appeal this decision`

532-20-21 Village Hall Update

The Council discussed the current status of the Village Hall, currently closed due to coronavirus. A number of concerns were raised, particularly around Health and Safety, including water and electrical safety as well as the car park surface. The Council strongly recommended the Hall should not be re-opened until key concerns had been addressed, suggesting the first step would be a thorough Risk Assessment.

The Council considered how best to support the Village Hall Committee at this time, taking account of its own position as the Custodian Trustee of the Hall. The Council agreed as a first step to invite the Village Hall Committee to a joint meeting with the Council to discuss the concerns and consider an action plan. It was noted that a number of Councillors had professional expertise that could support the Committee, particularly in the areas of finance and grant applications as well as risk assessment and management.

Clerk to invite the Village Hall Committee to a Zoom meeting to be held on Tuesday 7th July at 8pm.

533-20-21 Allotments Update

i The Council received the Allotment Liaison officer report and Maintenance Plan Update

The Council noted the concerns received from the Liaison Officer, Committee and plotholders about some plots not being tended to, particularly as weeds now impacting other plots. The Council noted a deadline of 1 August had been given for works to address these issues to be undertaken on these plots, otherwise tenancies would have to be terminated.

It was also noted that the Parish Council needed an accurate water reading and bill to be able to set rents appropriately and monitor costs. Clerk to contact Bloor and Thames Water. The Council also suggested signage on the allotment parking spaces to indicate this was private parking- Clerk to action

ii The Council reviewed and approved the suggestion that the 'path to nowhere' on site one could be incorporated into the impacted plots, for use with pot plants.

The Council reviewed and approved the amended Tenancy Agreement, subject to the inclusion of an 'opt in/opt out' clause on sharing contact details with the Allotment Committee and other plotholders.

534-20-21 Finance

a. The reconciled accounts were reviewed and approved

b. Payments of wages £286.12 and £493.23 (wages at £467.23 and £26 for HWA) and HMRC PAYE costs of £214.60 were approved. A donation of £30 to St Mary's Church for room rental was also approved.

It was noted that the amount for Chairman's Allowance, discussed at the previous meeting, was suggested at a rate of £660 p/a and would be paid through payroll. The Council voted and approved the payment

c. A Donation Request from Oxfordshire Association for the Bind was reviewed and a donation of £100 was approved.

d. Grasscutting quotes. The quotes were reviewed, considering ease of logistics, quality of service and cost. The Council voted and approved the quote from M Dempsey, Garden and Grounds Services, including the community land and grass along the A41. Council to review status of contract in one year.

e. Weeding and Hedge Cutting quote. The quotes were reviewed considering ease of logistics, quality of service and cost. The Council voted and approved the quote from M Dempsey, Garden and Grounds Services, subject to confirmation of hedges required. Clerk to action

f. Cyber security insurance quote. The Council reviewed the quote, and questioned whether cyber security was an appropriate measure and high priority given the level of risk. Council Blazdell to take professional advice on the issue and suggested policy coverage and report back at next meeting.

g. Fixed Assets Review: Clerk and Chair to action over the summer and report back by September meeting

535-20-21 Policies and Governance

a. Storage of Documents Policy: Reviewed and Approved

b. Councillor email addresses: The Council noted it was best practice to use set Councillor email addresses rather than personal accounts for council business. Chair to set up a Councillor email address and recommended all Councillors do the same

c. Financial Regulations: The amended Financial Regulations were reviewed and approved

536-20-21 Commemoration Plaques

The Council reviewed the quotes for memorial stakes and plaques and voted for the installation of brass plaques. The Council stressed that the tree stakes would need to be concreted into the ground- **Clerk to get quotes.**

537-20-21 Correspondence / News

i Art contribution: The Council suggested that this funding be used for a decorative village sign on the green outside the village school. Clerk review quotes and funding available.

ii Broken gate on the horseshoe, the memorial tree & jubilee bench: The Council noted that the gate on the horseshoe was on private land and there was little action the Council could take. It was noted that the suggestion to install a form of access here had previously been raised with the developers but that there was no public right of access. It was suggested that the bench may need varnishing and paving slabs repaired- Clerk to get quotes

iii Planning inspectorate communication: The Council reviewed the communication raising concerns about the proportion of appeals being upheld by the planning inspectorate. It was noted that in general terms this figure was around 20% although locally this had been higher.

537-20-21 Matters carried forward for Next Agenda

Traffic Calming Proposals

Any agenda items for June meeting to be sent to Clerk by 6th July

538-20-21 Next Meeting

7.30 pm Thursday 16th July
Online via Zoom.

The meeting ended at 22:05

Signed:

Chair of Ambrosden Parish Council