

## ASHFIELD-CUM-THORPE PARISH COUNCIL

**All Councillors are reminded of their obligations under the Code of Conduct Regulations.**

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> July 2022 at the Community Hall

Attendance	Robert Grimsey (Chair) (RG)	Chris Sharpe (CS)	Ruth Hart (RH)
	Simon Garrett (SG)	Sarah Clare (Clerk)	
	Matthew Hicks (County Councillor) (MHi)		

Public present at the meeting: 0

### ACTPC-22-04-01 Apologies for Absence

Myles Hansen (Vice-Chair) (MHa) had sent apologies due personal commitments. The Council accepted.

MHi gave apologies on behalf of District Councillor Kathie Guthrie (KG)

### ACTPC 22-04-02 Public Forum

None

### ACTPC 22-04-03 Declaration of Interests

None

### ACTPC 22-04-04 Update from County Councillor

The County Councillor's Report is due to be released in the next day or so and will circulate to the Council and posted on the village website [www.ashfield.onesuffolk.net](http://www.ashfield.onesuffolk.net)

MHi brought attention to the following:

The East Anglia Green pylon network from Norwich to Tilbury is to be opposed by Suffolk County Council, who are pushing for alternatives to be considered, including an off-shore ring main.

There is ongoing investment in the provision of SEND places for Suffolk.

Following concerns raised by RG about the legality of the signage for the new 40 mph speed limit on the A1120, MHi has spoken to Suffolk Highways, who have confirmed that all signage is in place as per the scheme agreed by the traffic regulation order and as a result the speed limit is fully enforceable.

MHi has also been in contact with Suffolk Highways regarding Grove Lane and the ongoing dispute about where the boundary is and which parts of the road should be resurfaced by Suffolk Highways. RG expressed concern that at present there is a 'no-mans-land' between the end of the surfaced road and the marked start of the bridleway and whether the right of way could be stopped up as a result. MHi said that the landowner could not stop the right of way, but could in theory put gates across the lane, as long as these gates can be safely opened and closed to allow the public to pass through. Suffolk Highways are regarding the issues as a land ownership case and nothing to do with them, RG asked that the matter is brought to a resolution and MHi asked him to email with full details, so that he can direct the query to the right department at the County Council.

### ACTPC 22-04-05 Update from District Councillor

No report has been received from the District Councillor since the Annual General Meeting of the Parish Council.

Signed  (Clerk)

Signed  (Chair)

ACTPC 22-04-06 Minutes of previous meetings

The Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2022 as a true and accurate record, were proposed by RH, seconded by RG all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**. The Minutes were signed by the Chair and the Clerk

ACTPC 22-04-07 Matters Arising and Action Points from the May Minutes

1. Advise former councillor of outcome on 40 mph speed limit application and advise the wider village via Ashfield Talk. ONGOING
2. Make contact with parishioners who have raised concern about the state of the road surface in Grove Lane and liaise with MHi to arrange a resolution. ONGOING – see ACTPC 22-04-04 above for details.
3. Submit responses to Planning Department at District Council as agreed. DISCHARGED
4. Item for Parish Newsletter about vacancies on the Council. DISCHARGED
5. To distribute payments as approved at the June meeting. DISCHARGED
6. Change booking dates for Parish Council meetings to 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of the month. DISCHARGED
7. Provide response to parishioner in relation to queries raised about funding form on the village website. DISCHARGED

ACTPC 22-04-08 Planning

- a) To consider planning applications that had been submitted since the last meeting:  
i) DC/22/02755 – Planning Application – Stopping up existing vehicular access onto the A1120 and creation of access onto Cretingham Road. Ashfield Place Farm, Main Road, IP14 6LU.

Councillors had all studied the application in advance of the meeting. After discussion it was decided to **SUPPORT** the application.

SG proposed, RG seconded, all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**.

- b) To consider any planning applications that have been submitted since agenda was published: None

- c) Updates and outcomes on previous planning applications:  
i) DC/22/02418 – Planning Application – Erection of 1 no. dwelling and cartlodge (following demolition of building approved for conversion under DC/18/01402) – Pear Tree Farm, The Street, IP14 6NA - Granted

ACTPC 22-04-09 Parish Council Activities

- a) To consider co-option to Council – No members of the public were present. The Clerk confirmed that there are two vacancies on the Council and these are listed on the village website. RG has put an article into the parish magazine, but no response has been received. SG suggested that with an election next year, it would be good to have an active push early in 2023 to recruit new council members.

- b) Highways & Footpaths: Report on activity since the last meeting

- i) Verge Cutting – RG reported that the roadside verges have not been cut in the parish at all this season. This is now the second year that no verge cutting has taken place. Road safety is now being seriously impaired in many cases with dangerous bends and junctions. The lack of verge cutting has led to no safe refuge being available for pedestrians and cyclists have reported getting their pedals snagged in overhanging vegetation.

The issue was raised with MHi who explained that the work is subcontracted to various farmers in the area and they have a given window of time in which to do the work. Different classifications of roads have different windows allocated to them. The Clerk will check to see if the window of time for the work to be carried out has passed, if it has then she will raise a query on the matter through the Online Reporting Tool. CS suggested that the work needs to be scheduled to take place earlier in the year

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to avoid the grass becoming dangerously long, but MHi countered with weather variations year on year being difficult to factor in to the schedules in this way.

- ii) Visibility Splays – RG raised a specific concern relating to the junction of The Street and the A1120. After a fatal road accident in the early 1960's visibility splays were created, however, these splays are not being maintained beyond the 1m verge. The result is a dangerous lack of visibility at the junction. RG stated that the vegetation should be cut back to where the bank rises to make the junction safe and will use the Online Reporting Tool to raise this particular junction as an urgent concern
- iii) Overgrown Hedges – RG updated the Council that despite reporting the overgrown hedges on the A1120 on several occasions no action has been taken. MHi responded that Framsdon Parish Council have checked the area and don't feel that the hedges are encroaching on the road and Suffolk Highways have inspected and advised that there is a historic pinch-point on the A1120 at the relevant point, which means that unless the road is widened there will always be a problem.  
  
RG felt that as the road was not wide enough for two large vehicles to pass and that damage is taking place on the opposite side of the road to the hedges due to over-running then Suffolk County Council should undertake the work and bill the landowners. MHi explained that although the powers exist in theory it is difficult to enforce and taking landowners to court to recoup costs is not a good use of tax-payers money, as well as the fact that the area has been inspected following RG's reports and Suffolk Highways do not agree that any remedial work is necessary.
- iv) Surfacing – Concerns were raised about the way that roads that were apparently fixed are then needing to be resurfaced again and the cost implications to tax-payers, particularly in respect of recent work on the A140. MHi explained that the stories run in the media about the road 'melting' in the heat were inaccurate. The problem had arisen due to faulty machinery and the repairs were being carried out by the original contractor, with no additional cost to the tax-payer.
- v) Footpaths – A few paths in the parish are in need of cutting back, RG is pursuing the cases. SG raised concerns about a stack of bales that are dangerously close to a footpath. RG will make contact with the agents that manage the site.

ACTPC 22-04-10 Finance

- a) To review the Financial Statement as supplied by the Clerk – The Clerk had previously circulated the Financial Statement. There were no queries. RH proposed acceptance, RG seconded and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**. The Chair signed the corresponding Bank Statements to confirm the figures.
- b) To agree payments as detailed on the Payment Schedule  
RG proposed authorisation, CS seconded and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**. The Clerk will issue cheques accordingly.

ACTPC – 22-04-11 Urgent Matters to be brought to the attention of the Council


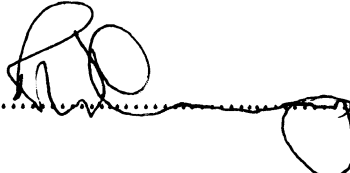
- a) A brief discussion took place about how to encourage public attendance at meetings, including additional publication of meeting dates and emails being sent out a week or two before the meeting to remind people.
- b) Items for next agenda:
  - Virements
  - Online Banking

Items for the September Agenda – please notify the Clerk of any further items for the agenda as soon as possible and by Monday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2022 at the latest, with any accompanying paperwork ready to be circulated with the agenda upon publication.

There being no further business requiring the attention of the Parish Council, the meeting was closed at 8.54 pm. The next meeting is set for **Monday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2022** at 7.30 pm in the Community Hall.

Sarah Clare  
Parish Clerk

Robert Grimsey  
Chair

Signed  ..... (Clerk) Signed  ..... (Chair)