

ASHWICK PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Held on Wednesday 11th May at Ashwick and Oakhill Village Hall

Cllrs Bryan Wells, Jessica Elliott, David Barlow, Phil Briscoe, Sarah Emery, David Thorley, David Hine and five members of the public

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from two members of the public

2 To receive the Chairman's Annual Report

Cllr David Barlow – Chair of the Parish Council read out the Annual Report

3 Report from Andy North – Chair of Ashwick and Oakhill Village Hall

Andy North – Chair of Ashwick and Oakhill Village Hall gave a verbal report on the activities of the village hall over the past year

4 Matters to Consider

(a) A resident spoke about the speeding traffic through the village and whether the Parish Council would consider installing a speed indicator device.

(b) A street light on the junction of Laundry Lane and Pound Lane has been out of action for about a year. Cllr David Barlow will investigate and report it to Somerset County Council.

Meeting closed 7.20pm

Annual Report from the Chair of the Parish Council

Following two challenging years during which we were all introduced to Zoom and Kate had the ability to mute everyone, we got back to normality this year.

During this year the Council has been presented with the usual mix of planning applications ranging from roofing issues, stable blocks, boundary issues, tree works, extensions to properties single or two storey and of course the possibility of building a mini-estate of 26 houses off of Chapelfield! which involved 2 public meetings. In the cases of tree works the council refers those to the Mendip Officer to make the final decision.

Finally we discussed the conversion of a mechanical premises and agricultural store to a rural enterprise hub.

The council is consulted and our recommendations are dispatched to Mendip to be included in their discussions, however Mendip may not agree with our recommendation!

With this being the Platinum Jubilee year, the Council has been involved in the planning for the Jubilee weekend 2-5 June and we are grateful to Ann Ralls who agreed to stage the Family Picnic on the Recreation ground on Sunday 5th June.

The Council also intends to plant an Oak tree commemorating the 70th year of the Queen's reign. The Village Hall has agreed to our request to plant the oak somewhere on the recreation ground - Thank you!

During the year young members of our community have completed Litter picks as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Award. Thank you - although its a sad reflection that it was needed! Volunteers should give feedback which feeds into the report submitted to the D of E Committee.

The council has during the year given grants to Citizen;s Advice Bureau, recognising the work it carries out and the support that is given to parishioners, the Village Hall to meet the cost of grounds maintenance and the Beacon Magazine. We have also made grant applications to SCC on behalf of the Village Hall from the 'Opening Up Safely and Reconnecting Communities Fund.

During the year the Council has minuted the fact that it acts as Custodial Trustee for the Village Hall and Recreation Ground. It plays no part in the day-to-day management of the charity - merely holds the deeds.

After some discussion the Council chose to increase the Precept this year to £14300, in recognition of increased running costs, £1000 had been budgeted for election costs and money has been budgeted for bus shelters and fighting a possible appeal concerning the 'Chapelfield' development

There has been discussion during the year about the bus service through Oakhill and the provision of bus shelters recognising the fact that those waiting have no means of sheltering from the rain.

Councillor Jes Elliot composed an excellent response to The consultation document Bus Recovery Grant Funding

Nothing moves very quickly!

Such has been the decision to increase street lighting in two areas along the High Street. The order was placed back in July 2021 and at the time of writing this report the work has still to be done!!

Likewise we continue to request that the 30mph along Galley Batch be extended out to the last property where it should be. After requests to the County and via the County Councillor, we have still been unsuccessful.

It was noted that the legendary hump was reinstated and various potholes reported! It should be recorded that Parishioners, via the County website can report issues such as fly tipping, faulty lights and potholes! Don't wait for a parish council meeting!

The Council now has a Facebook page giving yet another means of promoting the Parish Council and help signpost any enquiries about events and gives an opportunity to seek local opinion. This will be implemented by Jessica Elliot with assistance from Kate.

We have received comments about the state of the Badger's Cross junction at the end of Simbriss Lane. Sadly vehicles pay little attention to grass verges, and farm entrances often cause excess mud to be spread along the road. But farm animals do need to be moved around.

Recently we have again discussed our response to 'London Bridge' the protocols to be put in place on the announcement of the Death of the Queen. Protocols followed would be Palace directed and if required, it was agreed with Richard Priestley that a Book of Condolence would be opened at All Saints Church where the flag would be flown at half mast for the period of mourning

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the councillors for their contribution to the meetings during the year including those councillors who stood down prior to May 5th. and thank Kate for the expert guidance she has given during too,

When composing this report I am aware we are now a council of 7, so we will hopefully be co opting interested parishioners to bring our number up to 11. Please take the opportunity to speak with us to register an interest!

Parishioners are welcome to attend our monthly meetings, held on the 2nd Wednesday of every month during the year barring August,

Thank you