

Ashill Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held remotely on Monday 2 November 2020 at 7.30 pm

Present : Cllrs P Lang (Chairman), C Criddle, A Crouch, A Knight, S Freudenberg, County/District Cllr L Vjeh Mrs J Davidson (Clerk), 3 members of the public including Ms L Gabriel (Ashill Primary School) & Mr S Haigh (Radio NineSprings).

45/20 Apologies

It was **resolved** for apologies with reasons given to be noted from Cllr Clay.

46/20 Declarations of Interest/Dispensation Requests

None.

47/20 Public Participation

- Mr Steve Haigh – Radio NineSprings Station Manager – was welcomed to the meeting and invited to speak with regard to obtaining grant funding towards the building of a new FM transmitter for the provision of a local community radio service.
- Ms L Gabriel – Ashill Primary School Head Teacher – was welcomed to the meeting and engaged with a discussion about the request made by the School to be able to use the Village Hall for PE. Cllr Lang advised the Village Hall is unable to be used for the time being for a number of reasons (see Village Hall Report Paragraph 53/20) but – moving forward - would be happy to work in partnership with the School to put in place the necessary health & safety criteria for when the Hall is ready to be reopened so that it can be used by the School. Cllr Lang made positive comments about the work carried out by the Playing Field grass cutting contractor during this year and thanked the School for making this happen.
- Appreciation was conveyed to County/District Cllr Linda Vjeh for her monthly reports and other information which she regularly sends out. Cllr Vjeh's monthly reports and any relevant information are posted on the Parish Council website and also links are provided to information on the Green Ashill facebook page.

48/20 Minutes

It was **resolved** for the minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2020 to be agreed and signed as a true record.

49/20 Planning

- i) The following planning applications which had been submitted to SSDC since the last meeting were received for consideration :

Application No.	20/02866/PIP
Proposal	Permission in principle for the erection of 9 dwellings (Site 1)
Location	Land Adjacent To Former Total Butler Site, Ashill.

Application No.	20/02867/PIP
Proposal	Permission in principle for the erection of 9 dwellings (Site 2)
Location	Land Adjacent To Former Total Butler Site, Ashill.

The Parish Council **resolved** to **object** to both of these proposals and made the following observations:

Location

The application site lies as a section of a strip of greenfield land on the north-western edge of the village of Ashill less than 50m south of the A358 and on the other side it is directly adjacent to the Old A358. Therefore this strip of greenfield land currently acts as a green buffer zone between two significant carriageways both of which are anticipated to become much busier due to the A358 dualling proposals. The Parish Council is of the opinion that the

retention of this green corridor is essential for environmental reasons - not only to help with noise reduction and protect wildlife - but also the trees and hedgerows help mitigate emissions as they sequester carbon by absorbing carbon dioxide and giving off oxygen.

Land Use

Section 6 of the planning statement submitted by the agent overstates the suitability of the site for sustainable development. There are no footpaths, safe pedestrian or cycle routes leaving the village and no public service buses pass through the village. There are no local shops or businesses and there is therefore no one who would benefit in any way during the construction period. The nearest medical facilities are 3 miles away with no safe pedestrian or cycle route. The nearest supermarket and shopping centre is a 7.4 mile round trip away, again with no safe pedestrian or cycle route available, and the major shopping centre and railway station is in Taunton some 9 miles away.

Amount

The Parish Council understands the PIP guidelines allow for applications for minor housing developments i.e. nine residential units or fewer with less than 1000sqm of commercial floor space and/or on a site of less than 1ha. It therefore strongly objects to two PIP applications being submitted for one piece of land and believes these applications should be treated as one application for 18 units with the requirement for a full outline planning application to be submitted. Likewise these two sites are adjacent to a site that has already been granted PIP permission for 6 houses to replace the former Butler Oil distribution depot. All three applications appear to be from the same applicant so theoretically this is a proposal to build 24 homes on one estate (25% of the existing village and making a 97% increase when taking plans already granted into consideration). The Parish Council is of the opinion that an estate of 24 houses would look incongruous in the context of this rural location and has concerns it would set a precedent for further development along this corridor of land.

Application No.	20/02465/FUL
Proposal	Alterations and the erection of a single storey extension to existing warehouse to form additional storage and erection of single storey extension to existing offices to include toilet.
Location	Forest Enterprise Park Wood Road, Ashill.

The original building on this site has been allowed to grow and change significantly over the past 4 years. The Parish Council is supportive of employment opportunities being created within the Parish but has concerns with regard to the extent of which this further proposal will continue to allow an incongruous industrial estate to encroach into the adjacent open countryside and towards the original residential property next door. The application form and bio-diversity report states that the trees and hedges will not be affected but the drawing - showing the plan to the extension to the industrial building - suggests that trees will be removed. The Parish Council would like to see more screening being introduced - not less - and therefore requests that the application is not further progressed until the applicant has submitted a proper assessment of the impact on trees, hedgerows and wildlife for consideration. Therefore the Parish Council **objects** to this proposal.

Application No.	20/02597/HOU
Proposal	The erection of a replacement outbuilding.
Location	Rapps Cottage, Rapps Road, Ashill.

No objections / observations were raised.

- ii) The Chairman voiced concerns with regard to the health & safety of attenuation ponds on housing developments and proposed that this should be a matter for the Parish Council to follow up.

50/20 Playing Field

- a) The Play Inspection Company Annual Inspection Report was received for consideration. It was agreed professional advice should be sought with regard to issues raised in the report and the Clerk was asked to explore who may be able to provide this.

- b) Cllr Crouch agreed to continue to carry out regular Parish Council playground inspections to include checking whether/when the Covid-19 notices would need to be replaced. The Clerk was asked to try to make contact a member of the community - who had previously registered an interest in helping out with carrying out playground inspections – to ask if they might be able to assist Cllr Crouch with this task. It was agreed that the Government Covid-19 Guidelines for Play Areas would continue to be monitored.

51/20 Highways/Footpaths

- a) **Outstanding Highways Work** - it was noted the Wood Road Bridge Safety Barrier has still not been repaired. The Kenny Sign which had been knocked over has now been put back up again but still needs to be secured. These matters have already been reported to Highways but the Clerk was asked to send a reminder.
- b) **Road & Pavements Storm Drain Clearance** – it was noted the first drain at the entrance to Windmill Lane is blocked. The drains along the Old 358 carriageway are also blocked as far as Kenny & water flows over them. The Clerk was asked to contact Highways with regard to this matter.
- c) **Any other matters** – no other matters were tabled.

Correspondence (noted)

Beercombe Parish Council – Radigan Lane

52/20 Health/Environment

- a) Cllr Freudenberg advised she had nothing to report with regard to the Environment Champion / Green Ashill Group due to the ongoing Covid-19 restrictions which limit people being able to get together.
- b) The Clerk reported she had carried out the required monthly checks of the Parish Defibrillator at the end of September and October and the report had been registered by the NHS. It was agreed that Cllrs Clay and Freudenberg would now take on this task as had been previously agreed.
- c) No other matters regarding Health/Environment were tabled.

53/20 Village Hall

Cllr Lang reported the Village Hall is unable to be opened for the time being due to a water leak and also asbestos in the roof is starting to break away. Quotations and sources of funding are currently being explored for the leak to be repaired and the roof to be replaced.

54/20 Christmas 2020

A discussion was introduced with regard to what – if any – arrangements it was thought should be made for Christmas 2020 in Ashill. It was agreed that it would be a positive thing for there to be a Christmas Tree in the Parish but it would not be feasible to hold a Christmas Tree Lighting Event due to the ongoing Covid-19 restrictions. It was agreed that Cllr Crouch would source and erect a tree during the first week of December and he would also support Cllr Lang who would put on the lights. Cllr Lang would arrange for the purchase of any replacement/additional lighting which may be needed.

55/20 Church

Cllr Knight reported the Church is now closed again due to the Covid-19 national restrictions introduced by the Government commencing from 5 November to 2 December 2020. If Churches are permitted to be able to open again in December then some short services - without singing - of half an hour will be held for a congregation of up to 24 people who will be required to pre-book. The Remembrance Service at the Broadway Memorial is not to be held this year also due to the Covid-19 restrictions and wreaths will be laid privately. Cllr Knight also reported he has advised the Church Committee of his intention to step down from his role as Church Warden with effect from the date of the 2021 Church AGM.

56/20 Finance

- i) The October payments/receipts report and a draft budget for 2021/22 was received and noted.

- ii) It was **resolved** for the following payments to be approved :
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| Mr P Lang – November Zoom Registration | £ 14.39 |
| Radio NineSprings – Donation | £150.00 |
| Clerks' Salary & Administration Costs (October-December) | £ TBD |
| Correspondence (<i>noted</i>) | |
| Radio NineSprings – Grant Funding Request | |

57/20 Items for consideration for a future agenda

- 2021/22 Budget & Precept Setting– January
- Emergency Plan – Working Group - TBD

58//20 Date of 2021 Meetings – it was confirmed the dates of the 2021 meetings would be 18 January, 1 March, 10 May (Annual Meeting), 5 July, 6 September and 1 November. It is more than likely that meetings will continue to be held remotely until further notice.

The meeting closed at 10.00 pm

Signed : (Chairman)
18 January 2021