

## MINUTES of the ASPENDEN PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> JULY 2024 at 7.00pm in THE FOX ASPENDEN.

Present                            Cllr Richard Blackburn (Chair)    Cllr Joe Murphy  
   Cllr Tom Poulton  
   District Councillor Sue Nicholls  
   County Councillor Jeff Jones  
   PCSO Paul Dearman  
   0 members of the public

Officer attending                Denise Anderson (Clerk)

### APOLOGIES

24.62 Apologies were received from Cllr Tracy Devonshire due to work commitments.

***It was resolved to approve Cllr Devonshire's absence***

Apologies were received from Cllr Stuart Chambers due to testing positive with Covid but he sent a report on the Agenda items he was investigating.

***It was resolved to approve Cllr Chambers's absence***

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

24.63 None

### PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

#### 24.64 Police Report

The Police Report was brought forward as PCSO Dearman was on duty.

PCSO Dearman reported that there had been no reported crimes in Aspenden during July to date.

The police were aware of the Aspenden Fete Day on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> August and as there would be no Neighbourhood Officers on duty on that day the Aspenden area would be covered by Hertford police.

### District Councillor's Report

#### Vistry Appeal

The appeal started on Tuesday 16th July and is scheduled to run until 25th July and the closing statements on 31st July.

Three Interested Parties spoke on the first day against the planning application:

I spoke as a local District Councillor and I focussed on the detrimental effect of the proposed development on local people's quality of life, including the loss of countryside and increase in traffic.

Graham Bonner, a member of Buntingford Town Council and Chair of the Planning Committee spoke about lack of infrastructure to cope with large development on this scale including water supply and treatment.

Chris Berry, Planning Manager at the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England, Herts spoke in defence of the countryside, about national planning policy and the importance of land beyond the green belt.

The Appellant's lawyer and technical expert challenged East Herts Council's 5-year land supply on the first day and have been relentless in their challenges on subsequent days. Today they were looking at the Neighbourhood Plan and suggesting that it is out of date.

#### **Development Management Forum for the application for around 200 houses and medical centre on Land North of Hare Street Road**

On 31st July the first ever Development Management Forum (DMF) will be held in the Council Chamber at Wallfields. To request a meeting the community needs to raise a 25-signature petition which is presented to East Herts Council and this mechanism is available for planning applications of 50 houses or more. It is a chance to raise material objections and other concerns about the proposed development. The public meeting gives the opportunity for up to 3 community representatives to have a one-off meeting with the developer in order to raise any issues and talk about any suitable compromises. Planning Officers are there for technical support and members of the Development Management Committee are invited to attend to hear any evidence put forward and it forms part of the planning process for that application.

As the lead petitioner for the upcoming DMF I will be representing the community alongside Steve Baker, a local resident, retired town planner and planning advisor to CPRE Herts and Cllr Graham Waite from Buntingford Town Council.

Cottered and Throcking Parish Council have also just submitted a petition to hold a DMF for the 600 houses on land West of the A10.

### **Upcoming Events**

There is a quiz at the Seth Ward Community Centre this Saturday from 7pm to raise funds for the Ward Freman Community Pool. It's a family friendly event and there is a link to the Ticketmaster page on the Pool Group's Facebook Page to Ticket [www.tickettailor.com/events/saveourpool/1297534](http://www.tickettailor.com/events/saveourpool/1297534)

Tickets £5 each Teams of up to 6 people.

### **Energy Hub at the Buntingford Car Show 7 September, Buntingford High Street 11.00am – 4.00pm**

I will be hosting the first local Energy Hub at the Buntingford Car Show. This is an East Herts Council initial to share information about sustainable energy including heat pumps and solar panels, ways of insulating your home and saving on your bills and information about available grants. We will have lots of information and resources to share. It's a good way to start a conversation with local residents about choices that are available to them to reduce their energy consumption and carbon footprint without being too overwhelming.

### **County Councillor's Report**

The Aspenden Road will be resurfaced overnight from London Road to the A10 flyover from 5<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> August. Traffic calming measures to be installed at Neale Drive and Ermine Street and Neale Drive and the A10 junctions.

Herts Lynx Buses are using the old Household Refuse site as a recharging point.

HCC have reported a rise in Covid cases but hospital admissions still remain low. Data on the new FLIRT KP3 strain limited.

### **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

24.65 The minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2024 having been circulated previously, were before the meeting and signed as a correct record.

### **CHAIR'S REPORT**

#### **24.66 Aspenden Parish Council Chair's Report**

##### **Play Area**

CDS Environmental Solutions have been instructed to undertake a survey of the Children's play area as the first stage of identifying the problem and finding a solution. The costs have been funded through S106 funds. East Herts have also confirmed funding from the UK Prosperity Fund is available for any works that are likely to be required to address the flooding.

##### **Dog Bin**

A new dog bin has been installed on the Village Green. Our thanks to Chris Newman for undertaking this on our behalf.

##### **Salt Bins**

Two new salt bins have been installed on the Village Green by Chris Newman – one will be used to store salt and the other used to store refuse sacks for the village green bins. Our thanks to Chris for undertaking this on behalf of the Parish Council.

##### **Highways**

We have been advised by Jeff Jones that Herts Highways will be fully resurfacing Aspenden Road from the London Road junction to the A10 bridge. The works are scheduled to take place overnight between 5<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> August and the road will be closed (except for emergency access) between 8pm and 5am whilst the works are underway. A diversion route through Westmill will be fully signposted and residents will be notified of the planned closure and works.

##### **Planning**

A planning application submitted by Countryside Partnerships Home Counties North comprising 350 dwellings on land east of the A10 was refused by East Herts in February 2024. An Appeal is currently underway and a decision is expected by 27<sup>th</sup> August 2024.

A planning application submitted by Wheatley Homes for the demolition of 16 London Road and the erection of 68 dwellings was refused by East Herts on 24th May 2024.

A planning application submitted by Taylor Wimpey for 200 houses & a new medical centre off Hare Street in February 2024 remains undecided by East Herts.

A planning application was submitted in May 2024 by Hallam Land Management for the development of up to 600 dwellings, elderly accommodation, mixed use local centre, first school, informal and formal open space, a new access from the A507 and pedestrian bridge over the A10.

### **Dandara Phase 2**

In respect of the highways works, which are to be documented via a S278 Agreement, we are advised by HCC that discussions have taken place with the developer to satisfy a pre-commencement Stage 2 Road Safety Audit and they are close to finalising this.

Phase 2 was completed and occupied without agreement between the Developers and East Herts in respect of satisfying the planning conditions relating to the highway works which were to be completed before occupation. This matter was raised with East Herts and we understand Planning Enforcement are still looking into the issue.

### **A507 Update**

A weight limit restriction along the A507, effectively banning over 7.5T HGVs from the Buntingford A10 Roundabout to the Clothall Road, South Road and Wallington Road Roundabout at Baldock. HGV traffic will be rerouted to the A602 and A505 has been implemented by HCC. There will be an 'except for access' arrangement in place allowing deliveries and operational needs of business and farms. Works will begin in two phases as follows:

- Phase 1 – the installation of advisory signs on smaller roads in and around the A507 to inform HGV drivers that they are 'unsuitable for HGVs';
- Phase 2 – the installation of the formal weight restriction signs on the A507;

Further information can be found on [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/A507WeightRestrictions](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/A507WeightRestrictions)

### **80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of D Day**

A commemoration service was held at St Mary's Church on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2024 to mark the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of D-Day - photographs and a report of the event can be found on the Parish Council website <https://www.aspendenpc.org.uk/>

### **Diary Dates**

Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> August (1pm to 6pm) – Aspenden Fete

### **PARISH COUNCIL DOCUMENTATION**

24.67 The Clerk reported that the new NALC Financial Regulations document was still being amended to suit the needs of Aspenden Parish Council and would be presented at the next Parish Council meeting for approval and adoption by the Council.

### **FINANCE**

#### **24.68 Finance report and payments authorised**

To receive the finance report. The report is an appendix to the minutes.

#### **24.69 Annual Governance and Accountability return (AGAR) 2023-2024**

The Clerk reported that the audit process had been completed and Aspenden Parish Council were fully compliant.

#### **24.70 Parish Council Bank Account**

***Resolved that the Clerk should facilitate the transfer £5,000 from the Barclays Community Account to the new Lloyds Treasurers Account.***

The Clerk drew to the Council's attention the letter she had received from Lloyds Bank stating that the Treasurers Account would not be covered under the FSCS. A further communication via HAPTC suggested that this was incorrect. Cllr Blackburn stated he would make enquiries with regard to this matter.

#### **24.71 Funding**

##### **I. S106 Monies**

An application for S106 monies of £3071.50 has been made and agreed by EHC to fund the survey of the Children's Playground with a view to resolve the flooding issue.

## II. UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF)

Aspenden Parish Council will be applying for a grant over the coming months to fund the design solution the Children's Playground flooding issue.

### PLANNING

#### 24.72 Planning Report

To receive the updated Planning Report. The report is an appendix to these minutes.

#### 24.73 Planning Applications since the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2024

3/24/1195/ADV 3/24/1196/LBC	The Fox The Street Aspenden Hertfordshire SG9 9PD	No objection
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#### 24.74 Planning Applications

None

#### 24.75 Neighbourhood Plan

Buntingford Town Council had asked Aspenden Parish Council to update the section on Aspenden in the Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr Nicholls and Cllr Blackburn had a discussion on the extent of the content. In view of the recent announcement after the election with regards to planning it was felt that it was important to take a look at the protected views that should be included in the detail. Cllr Blackburn suggested that Councillors walk around the village and compile a proposal of public/private land. Cllr Nicholls suggested Aspenden Parish Council looks at the Walkern and Braughing Neighbourhood Plans.

#### 24.76 Village Hierarchy Study 2024

Cllr Blackburn completed the required information and returned the form.

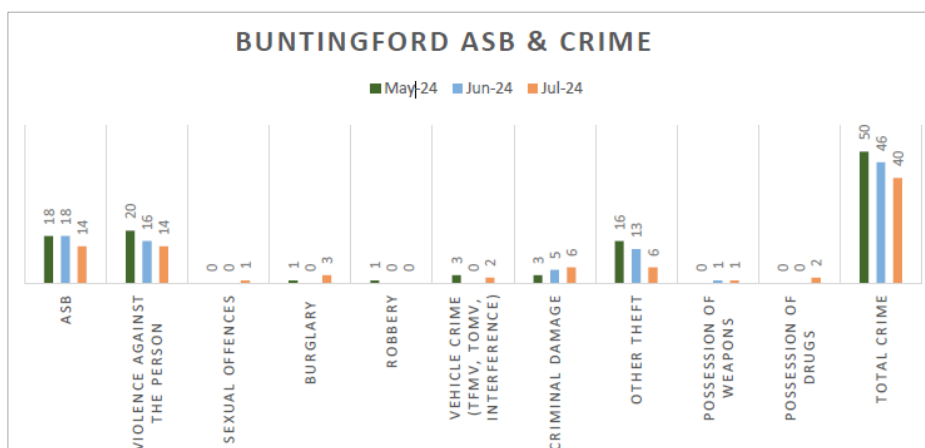
### HIGHWAYS

24.77 Highways matters were addressed in the County Councillor's Report and Chair's Report.

### PARISH MATTERS

#### 24.78 Police Report

This had been circulated previously to Councillors.



#### Aspenden

0 crimes recorded in July 2024

#### Buckland and Chipping

0 crimes recorded in July 2024

#### Wyddial

0 crimes recorded in July 2024

#### Local Policing Priority activity update (July 2024).

Reduce offences of Shoplifting from retail stores in Buntingford Town Centre

Covert and Overt patrols conducted in Sainsbury and COOP

Fewer shoplifting crimes reported than in previous months (5)

New priorities to be set in August

#### Herts Connected:

Local specific messages:

- Summer Holiday Sports and Fitness events for 11–19-year-olds – Norfolk Road Playing Fields
- Bike Marking event 09/08/2024- Norfolk Road Playing Fields

**24.79 Pavilion Management Committee PMC**

No further update. A meeting pending. Cllr Blackburn will report back at the next Parish Council meeting.

**24.80 Pavilion Project Working Group**

Cllr Blackburn and Cllr Murphy are working together seek architect suggestions costing in the region of £1,500 to update the Pavilion. Cllr Blackburn will liaise with EHC who had indicated that they would be supportive of funding for the project via the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF).

**24.81 Children's Playground annual works and drainage solution**

Cllr Murphy reported that this was a two-stage project; firstly, the investigations and surveying of the site followed by the design proposal for a long-term solution.

Due to the ongoing flooding issues at the Children's Playground the low-risk works identified on the Annual Playground Inspection Report hadn't been addressed. It was agreed to wait for the updated Inspection Report, due soon, and address all the works thereafter.

**24.82 Your Tree Our Future free tree initiative**

Cllr Chambers Reported Aspenden Parish Council are on the list for 2025 as the supply had already run out when applied for immediately after the last meeting.

**24.83 Aspenden Millenium Sign Refurbishment Hundred Parishes Funding Application**

Cllr Chambers reported that he had applied several coats of wood stain remover to a small patch on the inner side of the sign and said it hasn't made a lot of difference. He suggested that a new top would be needed or a new sign completely. He did not report on any progress with the Hundred Parishes Funding Application. Cllr Blackburn said he would follow this up with Cllr Chambers.

**24.84 Request for new Memorial Bench on Village Green**

Councillors agreed that they would be happy to accommodate another donated memorial bench on Aspenden Village Green and asked that the Clerk liaise with the applicant to arrange this.

**24.85 General Village Matters****I. Cutting of Village Green Perimeter and Children's Playground**

Cllr Blackburn thanked Cllr Poulton for his work in maintaining the perimeter of the Village Green and Children's Playground area and for the forthcoming work he will carry out to ensure the green looks good for the Village Fete on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> August.

Christine Newman had volunteered to take over the maintenance of the village entrance planters. Cllr Blackburn will coordinate with Cllr Chambers and his wife.

**CLERKS REPORT AND CORRESPONDANCE****24.86 Clerks Report and Correspondence**

The Clerk reported that she had contacted EHC with regard to emptying the newly installed dog bin.

The Clerk had received an email from EHC about the viability of a Tree/Hedge Planting project to run in November. Councillors agreed that there was no suitable area in Aspenden to accommodate such a project.

**DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS**

Date	Meeting	Venue
Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup> September 2024	Parish Council meeting 7.00pm	The Fox (Restaurant)
Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup> November 2024	Parish Council meeting 7.00pm	The Fox (Restaurant)
Tuesday 25 <sup>th</sup> February 2025	Parish Council meeting 7.00pm	The Fox (Restaurant)

Agendas will be put on the Parish Council website [www.aspendenpc.org.uk](http://www.aspendenpc.org.uk) and the village noticeboard.

The meeting closed at 8.20pm.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_