



**SIMPSON AND ASHLAND PARISH COUNCIL**  
**FULL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

<b>Meeting date:</b>	1 February 2021 – 8 pm
<b>Venue:</b>	Zoom Online Meeting
<b>Councillors present:</b>	Cllr Pye – Chair (DP) Cllr Barnes – Vice Chair (PB) Cllr Ezeh (CE) Cllr Thornton (ST)
<b>Also present:</b>	L Brazier, Parish Clerk (LB)
<b>Apologies:</b>	None
<b>Members of public:</b>	5 members of public

Ref.	Agenda item and Minutes	Action
<b>20066</b>	<b>Welcome, Introductions and Apologies for Absence</b>	
	Councillor Pye welcomed everyone at the meeting and introductions were made. No apologies for absence.	
<b>20067</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	
	None	
<b>20068</b>	<b>Open discussion</b>	
	<p>Cllr Pye invited those on the call to raise any issues that they wanted to discuss. Issues raised included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How the findings and recommendations of the Simpson biodiversity survey could be taken forward and how members of the community could take action to mitigate the impact of climate change. It was agreed that a working group would be formed to take forward the climate emergency/environmental work.</li> <li>• The cleaning of our Redways was discussed, particularly the areas around Bowlers Bridge and another example north of The River Ouzel. Cllr Barnes highlighted that part of the issue around Bowlers Bridge on the road has been caused by the development and will improve once the development is complete. Cllr Thornton commented in the past Serco had performed a one off clean in the area around Bowlers Bridge, but the work is not performed on</li> </ul>	<b>Action: ST</b>

	<p>the routine schedule as the path in questions (steps running down from the Redway on the side of the canal bridge are not primary paths. Issues should continue to be reported by residents via MK Council. The Clerk will investigate further to see how the highlighted areas of concern are currently covered in terms of cleaning and maintenance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cllr Thornton reported on the high level of litter in the area and noted that she and another resident had collected several bags full. Whilst collecting the litter she was approached by residents who said they would like to be involved. It was agreed a regular socially distanced litter picking day could be arranged, using pickers and bag hoops collected from the hall and returned with rubbish at the end.</li> <li>• Cllr Pye reported he had been in discussions with Canal and River Trust regarding ownership of Bowlers Bridge. it was agreed that further work would continue with relevant agencies to ascertain legal ownership of the Bridge.</li> <li>• Concern was expressed regarding the condition of the open space surrounding the Bowlers Bridge housing development. Cllr Barnes noted that he is in contact with the site manager and will raise the issues again. It was noted that residents would appreciate it if there was similar discussion with the developer of the Five Acres site, if and when development takes place there, so similar issues can be avoided.</li> <li>• A report of vandalism at the bus stop opposite the church was highlighted.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Action: ST &amp; LB</b></p> <p><b>Action: DP</b></p>
<b>20069</b>	<b>Finance Report and discussion</b>	
	<p>Cllr Pye confirmed the amount raised through precept for the 2021/22 financial year will be a reduction of 9.2%. As discussed in earlier meetings the SAPC precept rise request for the coming financial year has been set at 2% and this was formally submitted to Milton Keynes Council last month.</p> <p>The Clerk provided an overview of the current and projected situation for the end of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. The figures are based on several assumptions given the current pandemic. The estimated income for 21/22 is £62,400.00, with PC running costs in the region of £35,700.00.</p> <p>At March 31<sup>st</sup> 2021, the projected total accounts will be £306,477.37. This figure is considerable but includes the funds provided through S106 for the development of the Ashland Meeting Place. The PC has several allocations in earmarked</p>	

	<p>reserves for the areas of devolved services, village hall maintenance, election costs, operational float and Ashland Meeting Place. The projected total of all allocated reserves (as in the funds that have been allocated for a specific purpose) is £264,332.82, leaving a figure of £42,144.55 in projected general reserves.</p> <p>To note regarding the Finance Summary for January 2021, a £150 grant ward budget has been gratefully received to contribute towards landscaping around the site of the Ashland Meeting Place from Cllr Paul Trendall. The allocated reserves for Ashland Meeting Place will also increase by up to an additional £10,000 as agreed in the delegated decision. It was noted that a grant of £3,200 has been offered by Guinness towards the cost of the AMP equipment and the funds will be shown when received. The PC formally noted its thanks to Guinness and its partner Engie.</p> <p>A group discussion followed on the finances and it was suggested that there could be expenditure on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of existing and new community activities.</li> <li>• The Village hall, investment, repairs, to investigate new uses and groups.</li> <li>• Potential budget allocation to garden group to purchase extra flowers.</li> <li>• Local environmental focus and development.</li> </ul> <p>Also, Ideas to bring the community closer together:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finding ways to engage the community and understand why some community members engage less.</li> <li>• Make greater use of our open spaces to improve our environment and enjoyment of them.</li> <li>• Intergeneration involvement, all age groups together.</li> <li>• Encouragement for residents to take on responsibilities to support our activities, particularly the community spaces.</li> <li>• A need to connect to Ashland.</li> </ul> <p>From the discussion it was evident that the issues that were raised related to the community and to the local environment and supporting and caring for both.</p>	
<b>20070</b>	<b>The Lockdown</b>	
	Cllr Ezeh explained the new concept of Street Champions being developed for Simpson and Ashland. This approach provided an opportunity for local members of the community to be a focal point for their street, and for people to reach out to if required and	<b>Action: CE</b>

	<p>be a point of contact for information shared via the Parish Council. This is an informal role, and the PC hopes to collect further ideas from residents. The first meeting of the Street Champions was scheduled for 9<sup>th</sup> Feb at 7 pm via Zoom.</p> <p>It was noted that some residents do not have access to the internet and could therefore not access communications sent via email or Facebook. It was agreed that anyone known to be without the technology, with approval from the individuals, could pass contact details onto Cllr Barnes, so a list can be collected and thought given to a solution.</p>	<b>Action:PB</b>
<b>20070</b>	<b>Simpson Village Hall</b>	
	<p>The hall remains closed. Cllr Barnes explained the staff room is being cleared out, ready for consideration for its future use or layout.</p> <p>Cllr Pye highlighted that following a Zoom meeting last week, it was agreed to review several options to improve the Village Hall, including keyless entry, online booking, reuse of space and fittings, a Facebook page. The fact that the hall is currently not being used provides an opportunity to reflect its use and make improvements.</p>	
<b>20071</b>	<b>Ashland Meeting Place</b>	
	<p>Cllr Thornton updated that construction would start shortly. Three hibernacula have been built to support the local great crested newt population.</p> <p>In addition, it was noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meetings have been held to discuss the impact of the electric charge car sharing scheme, with regards to restrictions of access in the car park and construction site.</li> <li>• An informal meeting had been held with the ASG and residents, and further opportunities for resident engagement will also start soon.</li> </ul> <p>Cllr Pye thanked everyone involved in the development of the Meeting Place.</p>	
<b>20072</b>	<b>Buses</b>	
	<p>Cllr Thornton reminded everyone that Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) will be taking over from the No 18 bus at the end of March, as detailed in the last bulletin. For information, you will be able to use a booking phone number or use an app. It will operate for longer hours than the bus and offer greater flexibility in routes.</p>	
<b>20073</b>	<b>Serco Contract and Open Space</b>	
	<p>Cllr Thornton and the clerk continue to make progress with the management of the Serco contract. The clerk provided an update and noted that all current and new requests from Simpson are now logged in a spreadsheet to assist tracking and progress. Access to the GIS system is being arranged. It is hopeful that</p>	

	apple tree saplings will soon be planted in Hanmer Green, with support from Serco.	
<b>20074</b>	<b>To approve minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 7th Dec 2020</b>	
	Approved.	
<b>20075</b>	<b>Planning Applications</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (20/03307/FUL) 42 Old Groveway</li> <li>• (20/03226/FUL) 44 Old Groveway</li> </ul> Noted and no further comments.  Cllr Pye responded to a request for an update on Five Acres. No further correspondence has been received since the last application had been declined by Milton Keynes Council Development Control Committee	
<b>20076</b>	<b>Delegated Decisions</b>	
	The Clerk and Cllr Thornton explained the agreement and plan to plant 1000 snow drops in Hanmer Rd and around trees on the green.  Cllr Pye commented on the decision to support the expanded cost of the Ashland Meeting Place containers and steels for up to an additional £10,000 for the Ashland Meeting Place.	
<b>20077</b>	<b>Any other business</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cllr Sheila asked the Clerk to investigate funds from last year allocated to a pop up café in Ashland MP.</li> <li>• It was agreed that repeat dates should be set for further coffee morning Zoom catch ups.</li> <li>• A resident expressed recognition and thanks to all the Councillors for the support they provide to Parish.</li> <li>• Cllr Pye explained that Local Elections are currently still planned for May 6<sup>th</sup> and all four Councillors will be up for re-election. If any residents are interested in becoming a candidate for election, please speak to any member of the S&amp;A Parish Council.</li> </ul>	
<b>20078</b>	<b>Date of next meeting TBC</b>	
	The next meeting will be held via Zoom and a date will be circulated to residents	
The meeting closed at 9:40pm		

Signed ..... Chair Date .....

Signed ..... Clerk Date .....

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