



SIMPSON AND ASHLAND PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Annual Meeting

Meeting date:	2nd August 2021 at 8pm
Venue:	Simpson Village Hall (socially distanced)
Councillors present:	Cllr Pye – Chair (DP) Cllr Barnes – Vice Chair (PB) Cllr Eatwell (RE) Cllr Thornton (ST)
Also present:	K Harmsworth, Parish Clerk (KH)
Apologies:	Cllr Ezeh (CE)
Members of public:	10 Members of the Public

Ref.	Agenda item and Minutes	Action
210801	Welcome, Introductions and Apologies for Absence	
	Welcome to Cllr Eatwell who was elected in May. Welcome to Katherine Harmsworth who took over as Parish Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer in June. Apologies were received from Cllr Ezeh.	Noted
210802	Declarations of Interest	
	None received.	Noted
210803	Minutes of Meetings on 1.2.21 and 8.5.21	
	Thankyou to Louise Brazier, the previous Clerk, for providing minutes from both meetings. The minutes of both meetings were approved and signed by the Chair. They were passed on to the clerk.	Approved
210804	Open Discussion – To hear and respond to issues and questions raised by residents.	
	Issues discussed included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open Space Management- A resident stated their concern regarding the mowing schedule for public open space in Simpson and asked how the approach would be evaluated going forward as to the potential impact on local biodiversity. ST stated that it was too early to say and that it would continue to be monitored and 	Noted

	<p>that further opportunity for discussions with residents on the management of open spaces would take place in the autumn.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five Acres- A resident asked if there was any update on the Five Acres Planning Application. PB summarised the current state of the planning application and that it is currently in the appeal process with the Secretary of State. 26 responses to the appeal had been made from Simpson Residents and Ward Cllrs Trendall and Hall had also responded. It was noted that the appeal to the Secretary of State is focused on the extent to which the decision made by Milton Keynes Council in 2020 in refusing the development was, or indeed was not correct. There is no confirmed date for when a decision will be made by the Planning Inspectorate, but to note that this decision will be final. <p>The Chair thanked PB, RE and Thomas Walker, the Planning Consultant, for all their hard work and also to the residents who had submitted responses.</p>	Noted
210805	Finance Report and Discussion	
	<p>The Chair thanked the Clerk for the continued work on the finances.</p> <p>PB stated that there was not as much expenditure as normal due to the pandemic, but it was added that there was no income coming from Simpson Village Hall due to its closure during the pandemic. DP added that the Parish Precept has reduced this year to around £42,000.</p> <p>PB stated that the VAT associated with Ashland Meeting Place (AMP) is currently being investigated.</p> <p>The Chair explained that the Parish received a S106 grant of £167,000 to build a meeting place on Ashland and also a grant of £3,200 had been received from Guinness to go towards furnishing the meeting place. This said, there were costs over and above the S106 grant that the PC would be covering to ensure that the AMP was able to open.</p> <p>PB stated that the Parish has approximately £80,000 in the current account and approximately £80,000 in the savings account although some of this is earmarked for specific uses as outlined in the PC budgets.</p>	Noted
210806	Simpson Village Hall (SVH) Feasibility Study	
	<p>The Chair stated that the PC commissioned a Feasibility Study prepared by a local Architect to highlight what could perhaps be done with the SVH going forward. It was noted that the PC had a responsibility to consider both the short but also the medium and longer-term future of the SVH. To this end, the feasibility study provided a series of options about the building itself, but the key issues were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the SVH is and might be used going forward • How it should or indeed could be managed • What investment should be allocated to the SVH in terms of what work is needed to be carried out on the hall now and in the future 	Noted

	<p>Feedback from participants at the meeting highlighted an overwhelming desire to get the Village Hall back in working order so it is able to be used now, before then thinking to the future. ST added that there were a range of issues and perspectives that the PC had received.</p> <p>The Chair thanked anyone who had sent feedback via email or attended one of the open sessions at the Village Hall. The Parish Council will now consider the options going forward.</p>	
210807	Ashland Meeting Place (AMP) – Update	
	The Chair explained that there had been delays in receiving materials. The containers are now expected in September. It is hoped that the Meeting Place will be able to open at the end of the year, or early 2022. Thanks were given to the members of the AMP Steering Group and to the architect and project manager for their drive and determination in ensuring that the meeting place would be built.	Noted
210808	Open Space – Update	
	<p>The Chair explained that the PC is a devolved Parish and therefore has greater control over the management of open space than some other MK parishes. The Serco contract is up for renewal in April 2023 and the PC is involved in the discussions of the arrangements going forward. Milton Keynes Council is developing a Landscape Transformation Plan and we await further details on this too.</p> <p>ST thanked everyone who attended the Zoom Meeting about Trees in Simpson & Ashland. The minutes of that meeting will be circulated to all attendees.</p>	Noted
210809	Planning Applications	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (21/02111/FUL) 18 Newington Gate – Erection of a single storey rear conservatory extension. Reviewed and returned to planning with no comments to make. • (21/02173/FUL) 426 Simpson – Erection of a ground floor front and side extension. PB is currently drafting a response on behalf of the Parish Council before the deadline of 12th August. • (20/01529/FUL) Five Acres – This item was discussed during the open discussion (minute 210804). 	<p>Resolved</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p>
210810	Other Business	
	<p>Noticeboards – RE stated that they have now all been inspected, and any repairs required have been carried out. The PC had approached three firms to carry out the work, and one supplier was selected. The total costs of the inspections/repairs was £888.</p> <p>East West Rail Consultation – PB explained that this is in the pre-consultation stage. The PC submission was submitted in June 2021. There is no further update at this stage.</p> <p>Summer Play Activities – These are now up and running.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p>

	<p>Oxford to Cambridge Arc – ST stated that this is in a pre-consultation stage on the spatial framework.</p> <p>Communications – The Chair stated that the method of communication has changed through the pandemic and asked how we should keep Residents informed? It was resolved that the Parish Council would continue with monthly email bulletins and two newsletters per year.</p> <p>Bowlers Bridge – PB stated that the new lamp post has now been installed.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed the new ward Cllr, Charlotte Hall.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Resolved</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p>
210811	To note that the next meeting of the Full Council will be held on a date to be agreed at this meeting.	
	The next meeting will be held on 1 st November at 8pm in Simpson Village Hall.	Resolved
This meeting closed at 22:00		

Signed Chair Date

Signed Clerk Date