



SIMPSON AND ASHLAND PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting held on 13th March 2023 at Simpson Village Hall

Councillors present: Cllr Pye - Chair (DP), Cllr Barnes – Vice Chair (PB), Cllr Ezeh (CE),
Cllr Eatwell (RE), Cllr Tucker (DT)

Apologies: None

Others present: Katherine Harmsworth (Parish Clerk)

70) Introductions and apologies for absence

None received.

71) Specific declarations of interest

No change to current declarations in place.

72) Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting of the council held on 5th December 2022 were received and signed as a correct record.

73) Public forum

No members of the public attended.

74) To consider the cost-of-living crisis and decide how the PC can support the local community.

- a) PB reported that the warm space at Simpson Village Hall ran for three weeks from 10th January. Attendance was low and therefore it was decided by Council not to continue with this.
- b) CE reported that the Ashland Lakeside warm space started 13th March and will continue for four weeks initially. Hot drinks, biscuits and sandwiches were available and eight people attended. As the first time the building was open people were interested to see the new facilities. It was agreed that the PC will complete the four advertised sessions of the warm space and then review.
- c) The PC has considered all options for the use of the grant of £4,000 provided by Milton Keynes City Council (MKCC). As a principle, it was agreed that some of the monies could be used to provide grant to local charities that had confirmed that they had supported residents in Simpson and Ashland. It was agreed to donate £2000 to local charities:
 - £800 to MK Food Bank
 - £800 to Tinkers Bridge Community Food Larder
 - £400 to the Citizens Advice Bureau.

75) Finance report and discussion

- a) The payments from 1st December 2022 – 28th February 2023 were reviewed and approved.
- b) It was agreed to appoint Chris Davies as the internal auditor for 2022-23.
- c) The payments list for 2023-24 was reviewed and agreed.

76) To review insurance cover for the Parish Council and its assets.

- a) It was agreed that Zurich would provide the Parish Council Insurance on a three year deal at a cost of £1958.51 per year.

77) Annual review of the following policies:

- a) Asset Register – reviewed and agreed.
- b) Standing Orders – reviewed and agreed.

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- c) Financial Regulations – reviewed and agreed.
- d) Statement of Internal Control – reviewed and agreed.
- e) Financial Risk Assessment – reviewed and agreed.

78) Planning Applications

- a) 22/01585/FUL Five Acres – PB reported that planning permission was granted on the Five Acres Site, with a number of planning conditions. The owner of Five Acres is currently ascertaining ownership of fencing between the site and the Church, as there is uncertainty as to ownership of the boundary fence. Planning approval may be required for a new fence given the listed status of the church. The PC has been informed that work on Five Acres is planned to begin in May, with internal changes taking place first. It is likely to take between eight and nine months to complete. It was agreed that DP would contact the owner of Five Acres, to develop dialogue with the owner.
- b) 22/03033/CLUE 141 Simpson – a certificate of lawfulness was granted.
- c) 22/03101/FUL Various addresses in Ashland - replacement of concrete copings to flat roof parapets with new powder coated metal copings. The PC is supportive of this application.
- d) 22/03119/PRIOR 1 Thornbury, West Ashland - notification for the installation of a solar PV system. The PC is supportive of this application.
- e) 23/00318/FUL George Amey Centre, 366 Simpson – internal and external alterations. PB reports that they are looking to upgrade the building and entrance. The PC is supportive of this application.
- f) 23/00343/HOU 57 Newington Gate - conversion of existing detached garage into residential annex. PC is supportive of this application but is mindful that going forward it is not used for alternative residential purposes.

79) Open Space

- a) KH informed the PC that MKCC have secured a new contractor to manage the Open Spaces within Milton Keynes. The new contractor, Glendale, starts 1st September 2023. KH is attending a meeting every 2 months with MKCC, however the current contractor does not attend these meetings. The PC does not find this as productive as the meetings used to be and it is hope that relationships with the new contractors will be positive and that MKCC will act as an enabler of these.
- b) It was decided that there would be no changes to the mowing regime from last year, other than the following:
 - To mow all of Hanmer Green, given that it is the 50th anniversary of Hanmer Road and the green will be used for celebrations.
 - To mow either side of the entrance to Five Acres, to keep the area tidy during the building works.
- c) There is a litter pick on 18th March, in both Simpson and Ashland. This coincides with the Great British Spring Clean. It is hoped to be able to run litter picks monthly during the summer, dates will be confirmed based on volunteer availability, closer to the time.
- d) The PC was asked to consider the provision of allotments for Simpson and Ashland residents. This was discussed and it was agreed that there was no suitable land available within the Parish and therefore this could not be progressed.

80) Ashland Lakeside (AL)

- a) DP thanked RE, PB and the project manager, Andrew Armes for their help towards the completion of AL. PB provided a report on the current state of AL, which is now at the final stages of completion with only a few snagging elements left to complete. It was agreed that the warm space running on Monday's would be used as a soft launch to help iron out any issues with the building.
- b) Payments for Ashland Lakeside were reviewed and approved.

81) Simpson Village Hall (SVH)

- a) Payments and hire income for SVH were reviewed and approved. For the first time since covid, hire income is now more than the payments made this year.
- b) The PC was successful in obtaining a grant of £2770 for the replacement of the banquet style chairs from the National Lottery Fund. Members thanked KH for her work in securing bid funding for this.

82) Facilities Manager

- a) The role of Facilities Manager has been advertised on Facebook, the website, noticeboards, and via the mailing list. The closing date for the role is 24th March.
- b) The purchase of a mobile phone for the Facilities Manager was agreed.
- c) It was agreed that interviews for the Facilities Manager will be held on the evening of 3rd April at Ashland Lakeside. The interview panel will consist of PB, CE and DT with KH observing.

83) Young People

- a) It was agreed to run a holiday club for children during the Easter holidays in conjunction with Treetop Childcare at Ashland Lakeside at a cost of £610.
- b) It was agreed to run a breakfast club during the May 2023 half-term holiday at Ashland Lakeside and to pursue the usual summer activity club at Charles Warren Academy.

84) Community Engagement

- a) CE reported that a WhatsApp group has been set up by the street champions to communicate between each other.
- b) CE reported that the street champions are keen to continue events in Simpson and Ashland, such as the Welcome Spring event happening on 18th/19th March.
- c) CWA have asked the PC if they would like to have a representative on their governing body, the Academy Council. It was agreed that it is important for the PC to have a link with the school and that DP will represent the PC.

85) East West Rail

- a) PB reported that the last meeting scheduled for 21st February was cancelled and that there were no further updates.

86) Review of Delegated Decisions

The following delegated decisions for the period of 1st December 2022 – 28th February 2023 were reviewed and approved:

1. Agreed interim insurance for Ashland Lakeside at a cost of £324.90.
2. Agreed to postpone the 10th January opening of the Ashland Lakeside warm space due to works on the smoke alarms not being complete.
3. Agreed to engage Chadwick Town Planning to review the planning appeal for Five Acres, in preparation for the decision panel on 19th January.
4. Agreed PB to attend planning response training at a cost of £45.

87) Other Business

- a) PB received an enquiry about the original building at The Walnuts, which has been empty and boarded up since the day care centre opened. He was advised by a Ward Councillor to contact the property and facilities manager at MKCC for further information.
- b) To note there was an accident on the newly reopened section of the H9 and the junction with Simpson Drive on 3rd February.
- c) There is a significant dip in the inside lane of the westbound carriageway of the H9, shortly after the canal crossing. Ward Councillor, Charlotte Hall, is currently pursuing what can be done to rectify this.
- d) PB, as part of the Simpson History Group, is in discussion with the Living Archive about developing a Simpson contribution to the MK Trails app.
- e) PB, as part of the Simpson History Group, is working with the Parks Trust, on a revised information board to replace the one on the plinth beside the outline of Simpson Manor in Simpson Warren Field. The new board should be in place by early summer and there will be a link to the Simpson trail.
- f) The Parks Trust have informed the PC that the serpent in Ashland will need to be removed for safety reasons.

88) To agree to exclude members of the public and press due to the confidential nature of the following agenda items (confidential report provides further detail).

- a) The issue that a resident raised was discussed and it was agreed that as the PC is unable to support individuals financially, that the PC would be unable to provide assistance in this instance.
- b) Staffing payments were agreed.
- c) The PC has agreed that they will write to all Ward Councillors to agree that they don't use the PC Facebook page during the pre-election period.

89) To note that the next meeting of the Full Council will be held after the Annual Parish Meeting on Monday 15th May at Ashland Lakeside.

Meeting ended at 21:55

Signed (Chair)

Date

Signed (Clerk)

Date