



SIMPSON AND ASHLAND PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting held on 10th July 2023 at Simpson Village Hall

Councillors present: Cllr Pye - Chair (DP), Cllr Barnes – Vice Chair (PB), Cllr Ezeh (CE), Cllr Tucker (DT)
Apologies: None
Others present: Katherine Harmsworth (Parish Clerk)

25) Introductions and apologies for absence

None received.

26) Specific declarations of interest

PB declared an interest in the table tennis group.

27) Minutes of last meeting

a) The minutes of the last meeting of the council held on 15th May 2023 were received and signed as a correct record.

28) Public forum

No members of the public attended.

The PC extended its condolences to the family of David Baume, after he passed away recently. He served as a Parish Councillor from 2010-2015 and more recently had been a member of the Ashland Lakeside Steering Group.

29) Pensions

- a) Three pension schemes were discussed and compared: NEST, LGPS and Peoples Pension. It was unanimously agreed that the PC would use the NEST pension scheme.
- b) It was unanimously agreed that the employer contribution from the PC would be 4% for all employees, with no minimum earnings threshold.

30) Finance report and discussion

a) The payments from 29th April 2023 – 30th June 2023 were reviewed and approved.

31) Actions from Audit:

- a) To following actions from the internal audit were completed:
 - i) The Financial Regulations were reviewed and approved - removing reference to making payments by cheque (6.2) and increasing the emergency expenditure budget from £500 to £1000 (3.4).
 - ii) The Financial Risk Assessment was renamed as the Risk Register and details of computer backup were added.
- b) To note the following actions from the internal audit have been completed:
 - i) The Register of Interests for DT was updated.
 - ii) The Finance Councillor (PB) is now making a note on the monthly bank reconciliation to confirm which payments and invoices have been checked.

32) New Internal Auditor

a) Three quotes from internal auditors were reviewed and discussed. It was unanimously agreed to contract Joanna Simonds as the internal auditor for 2023/24, the fee for this will be £150.

33) Planning Applications

- a) 22/01585/FUL Five Acres – to note that the planning conditions have now been approved and work has started on site.

34) Open Space

- a) DP and KH gave an update on open spaces. The new contractor Glendale will be taking over the management of the open spaces from 4th September 2023. There has been a significant increase in the budget and MKCC hopes to see improvements over the course of the next few years. MKCC/Glendale have been asked to provide quotes for top-up services in Simpson such as increasing the number of times the grass is mown and maintaining the external landscaping around SVH.

35) Ashland Lakeside

- a) Payments and hire income for Ashland Lakeside were reviewed and approved.
- b) A budget of up to £600 was agreed for the Ashland Lakeside opening event on 16th September 2023.

36) Simpson Village Hall

- a) Payments and hire income for Simpson Village Hall were reviewed and approved.
- b) It was agreed to give the old chairs from Simpson Village Halls to charitable causes.
- c) It was agreed to purchase a new table tennis table for the Village Hall with a budget of up to £300 + VAT.

37) Young People

- a) CE gave a report on the May half term brunch club. There was limited take up each day. Initial feedback was that it was thought to be targeted at younger children. The PC may consider running activities aimed at older children in the future.
- b) Arrangements for the summer holiday club were confirmed. There will be two sessions per week for the six weeks of the summer holidays. Charles Warren Academy will be used for outdoor activities on Tuesday mornings and AL will be used for indoor activities on Wednesday mornings. These will be advertised on the website, Facebook, the email list, the noticeboards and leaflets will be available in AL and SVH. The PC will ask the providers for a robust evaluation to decide whether to continue holding these events in the future.
- c) To note that DP now represents the PC on the governing body of Charles Warren Academy.

38) Community Engagement

- a) CE gave a report on the street champions group. They are interested in starting a coffee morning/afternoon at AL like the one held at SVH, but need to gauge interest first.
- b) Litter picking on Saturday 8th July was postponed due to inclement weather. A new date will be confirmed shortly.

39) East West Rail

- a) PB attended the last EWR meeting. There is still uncertainty surrounding the plans however it is currently thought that the Fenny Stratford level crossing will remain open.

40) Review of Delegated Decisions

The following delegated decisions for the period of 29th April – 30th June were reviewed and approved:

1. £200 was received from MKCC to go towards celebrating the Kings Coronation. The PC did not hold any events itself so instead contributed this to one event in Simpson; a concert at St Thomas' Church and an event in Ashland; a party held at Ashland Lakeside.
2. Purchase of a paper cutter to aid in poster and leaflet making, at a cost of £45.70.
3. Purchase of new chairs for SVH with the grant from The National Lottery Fund (as agreed in the March 2023 meeting – minute 81.b)
4. £50 paid as chairs allowance to purchase thankyou gift for Parish Councillor who recently stepped down.

41) To note that the next meeting of the Full Council will be held on a date to be agreed at this meeting:

Monday 4th September at 8pm at Ashland Lakeside

The meeting closed at 21:20

Signed (Chair)

Date

Signed (Clerk)

Date