

ASHMORE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting

held in the Village Hall

On Thursday 12th September 2024 at 7pm

Present :- Chairman – Richard Coplan (RC) Councillors –Philippa Kelway-Bamber (PKB), Gilly Forge (GF), Colin Elford (CE)

County Councillor Jane Somper

Clerk Vivian Hitchmough

There were 15 members of the public

Apologies:- Cllrs James Grazebrook (JG) John Ball (JB), Angie Newnham (AN)

2024.36 Minutes of the meeting of Thursday 16th May 2024 were deemed to be a true record and duly signed.

2024.37 Declarations of interest. The Chairman reminded Councillors of their responsibility to declare an interest or a company interest whether personal, via a trust or a company in any item on the agenda and take no part in discussions or decisions regarding that interest.

2024.38 Matters arising. The Chairman reported that a traffic survey had been carried out over the Air-Show weekend with approximately twice the number of vehicles travelling through the village, which was not a surprise as 400 vehicles were tracked .

2024. 39

Cllr James Grazebrook was unable to attend the meeting .

The Chairman read his report.

PRE-AIRSHOW

1. Jason Hammond took over from Andrew Wood as Airfield Manager in May. JG met him on May 16th and circulated detailed notes that week. He has a good name with the local pilots.
2. Jason inherited the air show. All was in place prior to his arrival with Aero Legends (Ben Perkins) as the show organiser and the airfield providing the facility. We do not know the contractual arrangements.

AIR SHOW AND AFTERWARDS.

3. We noted in July that the airport road would be closed. We then discovered that the AA, providing signage for the airshow, planned to divert all traffic from this road

through Ashmore. A concerted effort succeeded in changing this so the diversion was routed via the A354 and Blandford. James Igoe at the Council was particularly helpful.

4. The actual show, on 10th and 11th August, caused modest additional traffic through Ashmore. Actual figures will come from the traffic counter. Bad weather prevented the air show on the Saturday. There was modest overflying of Ashmore on the Sunday. Not excessive and welcomed by many. The park and ride from Claysmore worked well, but there was real anger that the closed airport road was used to park cars with £200 VIP tickets.
5. Our concerns centre now on the very evident distress in Compton and Melbury Abbas and the prospect of the airshow repeating and growing in a road system which is overstretched, with visitors crowding into the Melbury AONB. There are seven more weekends this year.

The Chairman then introduced Jason Hammond, the new Airfield Manager.

Mr Hammond thanked the Chairman for inviting him to speak at the meeting. He assured everyone that it was not the intention to park cars on the road outside the airfield and he realised it had caused a lot of distress and confusion. Permission was granted without his knowledge in this instance and should there be another similar event contract wording will prohibit parking. Mr Hammond assured everyone that although the air-field is a business looking to make a profit, they are very aware of their commitment to residents in the surrounding villages. To this end arrangements are being made to meet with all the Parish Councils and representatives to give accurate account and dispel the misinformation that has circulated.

The Chairman opened up the meeting for a Q & A session

Mr Hammond was asked about flying days and he said they are restricted. The airfield was approached by Aero Legends to put on the air-show and all was in place before Mr Hammond was in post. He is aware the car park could not facilitate as many places as needed, hence the parking issues. He said the Traffic Management Group had carried out a survey, but unfortunately this was flawed. CE suggested more people on the gate, but apparently there was a breakdown in communication in this area. A leaflet drop to villagers was suggested outlining a similar event and parking arrangements in future. Mr Hammond said he had a long list of items he would change if another Air-show took place next year. The restaurant at the moment has restricted hours, but more chefs will be trained for the next season. Mr Hammond said a footpath was being diverted to make it safer for walkers. He reported that poachers were a problem but this is being dealt with. When asked about Spitfire weekends he said the routes covered differ as noise abatement issues must be respected and the safety of the pilot and passengers. The Chairman asked about overflying the village and what happens to complaints. Mr Hammond said complaints are logged in order for them to look for trends. Mr Hammond was asked about drone flying and he said that within the fly zone the airfield must be contacted for permission.

The Chairman thanked Mr Hammond for attending the meeting.

2024.40 Updates from Officers

Planning The Chairman reported there had been no building applications since the May meeting.

DAPTC The Chairman advised Councillors that there is training available for new Councillors.

Trees *Tree report GF and CE*

A new tree preservation order has been placed by Dorset Council on a stand of trees on Manor Farm land, just beyond the farm buildings.
TPO/2024/0057

Permission has been given for a mature Yew to be felled at Noade Cottage due to it being dangerous and diseased. P/TRC/2024/04732

Permission has been given for various tree maintenance works to be undertaken at Long Close in Noade Street. P/TRC/2024/04020

We would like to thank Philippa and Martin Kelway-Bamber for planting an Elm to replace the Horse Chestnut which had to be cut down at the Bowling Green entrance to the village. It will be a beautiful big tree which future generations can enjoy.

Footpaths CE thanked local landowners for keeping the Rights of Way clear of brambles He has received helpful literature regarding Rights of Way from Graham Stanley. CE asked the Chairman if he should approach other local land owners in this regard and the Chairman suggested that if he had good rapport with them it would be appropriate. CE recommended walkers to take a pair of secateurs with them on their rambles to snip brambles obstructing the footpaths.

Pond A report from JB was read by the Chairman in his absence.
JB has reviewed the need for safety equipment for the pond and he has written to ROSPA and received a response. JB considers there is a very little risk of an accident and/or not much chance that it would be prevented by any provision the Parish Council could make, the highest risk is with the winter ice. The response from ROSPA makes suggestions such as throw lines with signage and this will be discussed at the next meeting. JB reported that Constantine continues to maintain the pond by clearing the invasive weeds and adding chemical as appropriate to suppress them and help clear the water.

Playground JB's report made known there is a new bin in the playground . Following the ROSPA report which noted wear on the shackles on the swing Paul and JB

agreed on replacement which has taken place at a cost of £42.44. JB said Paul continues to do a sterling job with all regular maintenance.

Defibrillator The Chairman announced that the equipment fortunately has not been used but regularly checked and is in good order. The Parish Council has donated £500 to the Village Hall Committee to purchase a defibrillator and installation and future maintenance has been arranged by the Village Hall Committee.

2024.41 Mast Working Group

The Chairman advised there had been no communication from Sinclair Dalby nor any application for planning permission from Wiltshire/Dorset councils since our letter sent to them on 7th February. The website design for opposing a mast proposal should one arise is in a fair state and consequently, the Mast Working Group have not met since our last Parish Council meeting.

2024.42 Finance

The Chairman reported that the final 50% of the Precept is due to be paid by Dorset Council some time this month.

2024.43 Dorset Councillor's report

Cllr Jane Somper explained that due to an administrative error people who had made written representations on the planning portal for Dinah's Hollow were not informed of the date of the committee meeting and therefore did not attend to speak to the committee or hear the debate. Cllr Somper identified the error before a formal decision notice was issued and consequently the report will now be brought back to the strategic and technical planning committee on September 30th thus giving time to ensure people are informed of the date of the meeting.

Cllr Somper's report mentioned the local heritage list project which is a list of properties, structures and spaces of local historic importance and some residents are receiving letters to this effect.

Cllr Somper has met with Dorset Council to ensure a family hub is set up in North Dorset. The six hubs already set up have all been in the South of the County.

Cllr Somper asked if power cuts had been an issue of late in the area and short bursts of cuts were a problem in Ashmore. Cllr Somper suggested contacting the M.P. as she is unaware what is causing the problems.

2024.44 Questions from the Public - none

2024.45 Any Other Business

The Chairman asked if there was a need for another WhatsApp Group to be set up. Generally it was considered there were enough communication opportunities and email was sufficient.

2024.46 Items and Date for Next Meeting

1. Discussion safety equipment for pond.

Date of next meeting :- **Thursday 9th January 2025 7pm Village Hall.**

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.15pm.