

## DRAFT MINUTES

2025/13



### **ASHENDON PARISH COUNCIL**

**Draft Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held in the Village Hall.**

**Monday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2025 at 7.30pm**

#### **PRESENT:**

**Councillors:** Fiona Jacobs (**FJ**), Luke Jamieson (**LJ**), Sian Miller (**SM**), Chris Rand (**CR**), and Venetia Davies (**Clerk and RFO**).

Richard Phillips (**RP**), Road Safety Lead, Ashley Waite (**AW**), Bucks Councillor.

**Parishioners:** There were no Parishioners present.

#### **Parishioners Question Time (PQT).**

There were no questions.

#### **1. Apologies**

There were none.

#### **2. Declarations of Interests**

Luke Jamieson, Chair of Ashendon Community Pub Society Limited, declared an interest in Ashendon Village Community Pub.

#### **3. Approval of Minutes – Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2025**

The Draft Minutes of the June meeting were accepted as a true record and signed by Chair, Chris Rand.

#### **4. Matters Arising**

- **Ultrafast Broadband.** Lower End and The Close have been added to Openreach Ultra Full Fibre build plans. The whole village is now included and will commence early 2026.
- **Replacement of structure – Dorton brook bridge.** Vehicular access agreed (Point B - Heavy overgrowth – clearance, Point C – Small bridge replacement, Point D – Small bridge replacement). Reconstruction of bridge (Point A) requires Environment Agency approval. Rights of Way intend to rebuild the bridge in this financial year (April 2025- March 2026) using Rights of Way capital projects money. The route will be closed during works.
- **PC Governance - Website.** **ACTION: CLERK** to register Councillor emails with .gov.uk at a cost of £17.49 + VAT per month.
- **Wotton Road footpath.** CR has received a quote for sections of footpath so that the Parish Council can consider staging the works as funding allows. **ACTION: AW** to confirm if planning permission is needed, recommend other contractors for quotations and also funders. **CLERK** to refer to Parish Council financial regulations for tenders.

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- **Salt Bins.** The purchase and installation of new black salt bins were agreed in principle (£249.00 (400L) and £199.95 (200L) plus installation costs) – locations to be agreed but suggestions are Wotton Rd opposite Hill Cottages, corner of Wotton Rd and Main St, Lower End opposite the graveyard, corner of The Close, entrance to Upper Pollicott, bottom of Lower End). The cost of a new salt bin is £249.00 (400L) and £199.95 (200L) plus installation costs. As these will be PC owned, BC has requested a cost of £100 per refill. **ACTION: AW to liaise with Alison Polland over refill costs as this has not been a cost incurred with the current PC owned wooden salt bins.**
- **Removal of debris - Winchendon side of Pollicott ford.** **ACTION: SM to check if this has now been removed.**
- **Hole in hedgerow** (opposite entrance to church). Thank you to new Chair of APFA, Greg Woodford for the repair.

### 5. Co-option of Councillor

It was agreed to advertise the Notice of Vacancy for a Councillor. **ACTION: CLERK to commence process.**

### 6. Contributions from Buckinghamshire Councillor

- **Fire at Bucks Recycling. The Industrial fire at Bucks Recycling's waste transfer station at Westcott Venture has been linked to** a lithium battery from a small electric device. A decision was made within the fire report to conduct a control burn because of closely proximity of the hanger to houses. There have been Issues over air quality. The fire is now almost out. Demolition will take between 8-12 weeks. A more sustainable building may be rebuilt further into the park and will require planning permission. The site and the activity that is carried out is permitted by the Environment Agency (EA), which means that the regulation and oversight for this incident falls within the jurisdiction of the EA, rather than the Council. For queries about the incident the EA can be contacted on 0800 80 70 60.
- Buckinghamshire Council has launched its new Economic Growth Plan for 2025–2035, setting out a vision to boost the county's economy over the next decade. The Plan aims to deliver annual productivity growth above 2% by 2035, focusing on high-value sectors such as space, creative industries, high-performance technology, and life sciences. It also includes valuable, targeted support for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) through business development programmes and strategic partnerships. One of the Flagship projects in the Investment Pipeline include: **Westcott Space Cluster** – A national hub for advanced space technologies, with plans for a National In-Orbit Servicing, Assembly and Manufacturing (ISAM) Facility and a National Drone Centre of Excellence. AW commented this is potentially seen as positive as freight strategy, infrastructure, green waste, school provision, etc would be 'higher on the Agenda.'
- **Littletown Green proposal for 535 houses (Planning Application: 22/03384/AOP).** Objections have been made on this outline planning permission on grounds of direct impact on school places, doctors and traffic on A41 through to Quainton. Status: Awaiting decision.
- **Buckinghamshire Council Spending Review.** Buckinghamshire Council (BC) is facing significant budget pressures due to increased costs for services notably adult social care and children's services, and uncertain funding from central government. BC is concerned that the Fair Funding Review 2.0, a government initiative to redirect funding to deprived areas, could

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result in substantial financial losses for the county. In response, BC has implemented a maximum council tax increase and is working to cut debt, though it faces ongoing challenges to its financial stability.

- **Devolved Services.** Buckinghamshire Council's termination of all existing four-year agreements for Devolved Services will take effect from 1st April 2026.
- **West Bucks Community Boards.** There is no funding available. Community engagement is now the focus.
- **New Local Area Technician.** Alison Poland is the new Local Area Technician for Ashendon.
- **Road Closures.** Ashendon has been inundated with road closures that have not just been inconvenient but has had potential for serious delay in an emergency as well as a significant impact on local business, including the Ash Tree. SM said that whilst it has been fantastic to have Ashendon's roads done, she asked that consideration be given to Ashendon, an isolated village. Ashley Waite confirmed that every roadwork goes on One Network but highlighted contributing issues that result in poor co-ordination/communication. He offered to set up a Community What's App group.  
**ACTION: AW to set up Community What's App group and distribute link. CLERK to promote via the Village website.**

### 7. Reports from Councillors attending meetings and outside organisations

See Item 14. Planning.

### 8. Correspondence

There was none.

### 9. Ashendon Village Community Pub

The pub has extended its opening hours to include Wednesday evening (Wednesday to Sunday excluding Wednesday lunch). Rooms are available to book on the website. There are five local young people now employed which was one of the main aims of the community pub.

### 10. Speed Safety Projects

- **Speed Watch Team.** Since the last report, the Speedwatch team have been out almost every week since, at least 2 days with 2 or 3 members are greeting traffic, although roadworks have distributed the programme over the last few weeks. New speed awareness signs – 30mph and Slow Down for Horses will be rotated and displayed on the poles. Richard to enquire if *the 'this is a community speed watch area'* signs can be included/purchased.
- **Local Electric Vehicle Initiative.** RP awaiting update and meeting date.
- **Waddesdon Area Freight Zone Consultation.** The PC will receive further updates when surveys on Ivinghoe Freight Intervention have been conducted. This has commenced <https://yourvoicebucks.citizenspace.com/roads-parking/copy-of-ivinghoe-freight-tro-2022/> (closes 19th September 2025) and is aimed at amending the existing Traffic Regulation Order to allow those requiring local access and permit holders to enter the current Ivinghoe Freight Zone.
- **Gen6 Speed Indicator Device (Mains) - HS2 Road Safety Fund** (Ref: RSF76). The Road Safety Fund Project Team is now proceeding *with the necessary detailed design work,*

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The Agenda and Minutes of the Parish Council meetings can be viewed at:

[www.ashendonparish.org.uk](http://www.ashendonparish.org.uk)

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*and consultation (where applicable) to obtain costs for delivery of the scheme. If the design and consultation process does not raise any significant construction, cost, or other material concerns, they will then make arrangements for the delivery of Ashendon's scheme (SiD). The decision to proceed will then be taken by the HS2 RSF Project Board. The Parish Council awaits the outcome.*

### 11. Footpath Projects

- **Safe Footpath from Pollicott to Village End.** Ongoing.
- **Footpath/Rights of Way improvements (accessible gates).** **Footpath/Rights of Way improvements (accessible gates).** The North Bucks rRRIPLE (ramblers Repairing and Improving Public Paths for Leisure and Exercise) has identified the most likely route to Ashendon for walking groups - a circular walk that incorporates Ashendon, Musk Hill Farm, Watbridge Farm and Nether Winchendon. It has previously been suggested a Footpath Working Party be formed for regular clearance and to identify access points/routes that are most used. **ACTION: SH to ask Andy Howe to walk the suggested route and report on conditions/restrictions and give recommendations. CR to approach landowner.** rRRIPLE operates Donate-a-Gate scheme, a scheme whereby anyone can donate to (pedestrian gates £350, kissing gates £500).

### 12. Parish Clerk

The new pay scales were **agreed** for 2025-26. **ACTION: CLERK to notify JE Accountants of revised scale. SM to change Standing Order with Barclays Bank.**

### 13. Finance

- a. **Balance from Minutes of previous meeting (23<sup>rd</sup> June 2025 2025): £53,807.97**
- **Receipts: £61.29** (£50.00 Bank Apologies, £11.29 - Clear Insurance)
- **Less Standing Orders/Direct Debits: £932.97** (Clerk Salary £897.00 + Hugo Fox £35.97) and Clerk Salary £299.00 + Hugo Fox £11.99)
- **Balance of Bank Account: £52,936.29** (as at 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2025)  
**Available Funds: £52,936.29** (balance of bank account less unrepresented BACS Standing Orders from May meeting)
- b. **Orders for Payment: £846.84**
  - **Venetia Davies - £18.90** (Clerk travel)
  - **Venetia Davies - £98.94** (June, July and August back pay in line with Local Government Services Pay Agreement 2024). **ACTION: SM to increase standing order.**
  - **MRA Garden Services - £300.00** (Village grass cutting including Boughton's Peace – July cut)
  - **Buckinghamshire Council - £77.00** (Election Charges)
  - **Information Commissioner's Office - £52.00** (Data Protection Fee)
  - **Clare Cook - £300.00** (Bouncy Castle hire)
  - **Also approved: Society of Local Council Clerks - £98.50** (Membership Fees)
  - **BALANCE: £51,990.95** (Available Funds less Orders for Payment)

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#### 14. Planning

- **Neighbourhood Plan for Ashendon.**

Sian Miller and Venetia Davies have met with the Neighbourhood Plan team (Rachael Riach and Ella Wood) to discuss neighbourhood planning for Ashendon.

Buckinghamshire Council has a 'duty to support' neighbourhood planning and offers guidance as a 'critical friend' and ensures compliancy (there are two formal consultations). Whilst the Parish Council would be the qualifying body, responsibility for the Plan would be written and produced by local people. A Steering Group would be formed. Neighbourhood Plans allow communities to shape future growth in a way that reflects local priorities and character. A Neighbourhood Plan for Ashendon could define the vision and objectives of how the community wants Ashendon to be in 10-20 years, designate non-heritage assets, and contain planning policies adopted in line with the Buckinghamshire Local Plan to guide future development. Specific sites could be allocated to have a direct say over where new development goes. This would give the plan more weight in planning decisions and can help protect the area from speculative development. Under Paragraph 14 of the [NPPF](#) a Neighbourhood Plan that is less than 5 years old and includes housing policies and site allocations to meet an identified housing need, can benefit from additional protection against speculative applications. However, allocating sites is a more complex process; it requires a technical evidence base (e.g. site assessments, sustainability appraisals), which can increase both the time and cost of preparing the plan. Therefore, the Steering Group would need to weigh up whether this level of detail would be beneficial for Ashendon. The government has recently announced that there is no grant for Neighbourhood Plan projects going forward for Town & Parish Councils. The team said there isn't necessarily a cost to produce a Neighbourhood Plan. The first step of the process is to apply for Neighbourhood Area Designation to signify the area the neighbourhood plan is for: *(a) a map which identifies the area to which the area application relates; (b) a statement explaining why this area is considered appropriate to be designated as a neighbourhood area; and (c) a statement that the organisation or body making the area application is a relevant body for the purposes of section 61G of the 1990 Act.* The Parish Council was signposted to a number of guidance documents and planning resources, including:

- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2>.
- [How to create a Neighbourhood Plan: Your step-by-step roadmap guide - Locality Neighbourhood Planning](#)

**ACTION: LJ and SM and propose next steps at November meeting.**

- **Planning Enforcement Case NC/25/00039/NAPP - Barns Off Main Road, Upper Pollicott, Ashendon, Buckinghamshire, HP18 0HH.** The case officer has assessed the resultant planning harm and whilst acknowledges a breach of planning, has advised that no further action will be taken and advised the case is now closed. Councillors have been extremely disappointed with this decision and sought advice from Peter Smettem. It was agreed to write again to the Enforcement Officer and ask for the case to be reopened on the grounds of the harm to the prominence to Ashendon – the Barns being the 'entrance to Ashendon.' It was agreed there is a better way to achieve a more traditional feel to the roof via mixing old and new tiles (photograph provided). To also

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comment that the cladding must be timber and not plastic. **ACTION: CLERK to write to Enforcement Officer, cc'd to Ashley Waite.**

- **Planning Update (Forum held on 26th June 2025).** Headlines were as follows:
  - The Bucks Local Plan consultation this Autumn 2025 will be on a growth strategy and not specific sites and allocations. That will happen next July/August 2026.
  - The HELAA methodology and site assessment report will be published at the end of the year. Consideration of planning history will be considered BUT in the context of higher targets for housing which may alter the planning 'balance'.
  - The VALP housing numbers will apply until the new Bucks Local Plan is adopted but the housing supply is only 3.62 years and not the required 5 years. This means that applications for sustainable development could potentially come forward on unallocated sites
  - Bucks Council is working towards a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) proposal for the Aylesbury area by the end of 2026. This will not replace the s106 but supplement it.
  - There is no legal requirement to update a Neighbourhood Plan.

### 15. Items for Information

- **Light Pollution from Wescott Venture Park.** Meeting with representatives from Upper Winchendon Village Meeting and Westcott Parish Council. **ACTION: LJ to attend 16<sup>th</sup> September 2025.**
- **Grass cutting dates.** Approximate dates: 20<sup>th</sup> September and 13<sup>th</sup> October.
- **Town and Parish Council Planning Forum** - 25<sup>th</sup> September at 1.30-3.00pm (Teams)
- **Buckinghamshire Highways' and Transport Stakeholder Conference** - Monday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2025 at 1pm - The Gateway, Aylesbury, HP19 8FF. **ACTION: RP to attend.**
- **CLG Meeting [In-person]** – 6<sup>th</sup> October 2025 at 6.00-7.00pm
- **Remembrance Sunday.** **ACTION: CLERK to order wreath. Deliver to Peter Smettem.**
- **Fraud Prevention Talk by Waddesdon Neighbourhood Team.** **ACTION: SM to discuss dates with Ash Tree. CLERK to book.**

### 16. Date and Time of Next Meeting:

**Monday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2025 at 7.30pm in Ashendon Village Hall**