

It was agreed that every effort should be made to fill the two vacancies on the Council as quickly as possible. A former Councillor, Geoff Newell had indicated that he was prepared to serve again, but not for the full 4 year term. It was agreed the Clerk should also post the necessary vacancy notices. Action:Clerk

7. Village Visions – Future Growth - Public Consultation

Cllr Oakervee noted that East Cambs District Council's Public Consultation on the future of Ashley was now underway. The period for the return of questionnaires had been extended at the Parish Council's request, to 31 July. This questionnaire sought residents views on what could be changed or improved; what should be protected and what new facilities were needed. Several extra questions had been added, (again at the Council's request), so that residents could opt for "no change" or request that local roads be improved.

It was stressed that a good response was needed from householders in order to strengthen the Parish Council's hand in future discussions.

8. Report on outcome of the Extraordinary Meeting held on 6 July

Cllr Oakervee confirmed that the main purpose of the meeting had been to report on recent contacts with Strutt and Parker, (agents for Darley Estates) about the possible release of a 7.5 acre field for development, situated adjacent to Silhalls Close at the village's southern approach. Strutt and Parker were keen to establish how the village viewed the possibility of development which could involve a mix of market and affordable housing, new facilities (e.g. new Village Hall) and additional green space.

Most of the public attendees seemed to want the field to remain as it is and 4 householders from Silhalls Close enquired about purchasing the land directly from Darley Estates, to safeguard their properties. It was confirmed their interest in purchasing the land had been reported to Strutt and Parker and a response was awaited. However, it was difficult to assess whether the views expressed were representative of the village as a whole, and this was why achieving a good response to the "Village Visions" questionnaire was so important. It was suggested that those wishing no change could help their case by "knocking on doors" to stress the importance of the questionnaire to future planning policy. It was acknowledged that if residents appeared apathetic to development, this could encourage landowners to release further land outside the present village development envelope.

It was also proposed that a separate committee, be formed to look at the pros and cons of development and to respond to any proposals brought forward. This committee would be linked to the Parish Council, but would operate as a separate entity. Membership of the committee would be through self nomination. This was proposed by Cllr Mahony and seconded by Cllr Spurling. Cllr Oakervee agreed to publish a notice about the proposed committee in "About Ashley". Additional posters, to be placed on Notice Boards etc would also be prepared.

9. Play equipment for older children/teenagers

The Clerk was pleased to report that the Cambridge Community Foundation had approved the Parish Council's bid for a grant of £15,000 to support the purchase and installation of an aerial zip wire and youth shelter. However, the grant was offered

subject to a number of conditions which included a requirement that the Parish Council accept responsibility for all costs should it be necessary to move the equipment to another site within 5 years.

Whilst welcoming the Foundation's decision, the Council was concerned that the grant funding had to be paid in arrears. This effectively meant that the Council would need to borrow money commercially whilst awaiting reimbursement from the Fund. It was agreed the Clerk should investigate whether an alternative payment method was possible. Action:Clerk

It had also been questioned as to whether the youth should be "rewarded" with new play equipment in the light of the recent vandalism at the Pavilion and Play Area. However, the Council felt on balance that it would be wrong to punish the majority of young people when the wilful damage had been carried out by a very small minority.

10. Recreation Ground

It was agreed that the Clerk should obtain quotes for the annual hedge trimming on the Recreation Ground. Whilst this would include the cutting of the trees overhanging the Sheltered Housing in Silverley Way (as reported by Mrs Almond – see item 1 above) it was suggested that the Council's liability ended at the boundary. It was agreed that the Clerk would investigate whether Sanctuary Housing would contribute to the cost incurred in the removal of branches overhanging their properties.

In relation to the ROSPA report on playground safety Mr Peter Bridge had looked at the report and had made a number of recommendations. These included making further improvements to the small roundabout and grassing over the present barked area. The latter option was thought to be prohibitively expensive. However, it was agreed that the Clerk should contact the specialist contractor and obtain a quotation to cover both items. Action:Clerk

Cllr Parkes confirmed that this year's fete held on 2 July had proved a success, and that the funds raised, would benefit the East Anglian Air Ambulance and other local causes. The arrangements for next year's fete were uncertain as the organiser, Mrs Janet Stokes, had recently resigned from the Fete Committee

11. Pavilion Trust report

Cllr Mahony had been unable to attend the last meeting and so was unable to provide a report.

12. Finance matters

(a) Approval of expenditure Junel/July

£

Nb: The invoices listed below include those received since the agenda was issued

• Clerks salary (April –June inc)	LC1 -7
• Clerk's expenses	79.64
• Cambs ACRE – renewal of membership	25,00
CGM Cambridge (Grasscutting 6& 26 May)	601.20
CGM Cambridge (Grasscutting 14 June)	300.60

It was agreed that all the above payments be approved. Proposed by Cllr Parkes and seconded by Cllr Spurling.

13. Planning cases

The Clerk confirmed that no applications had been received.

14. Footpaths

It was recognised that with the County Council applying minimum standards it was important to monitor the footpaths to ensure they remained open and clear to users. The Clerk confirmed that he would liaise with Mr Ken Winter, the new Footpath Warden and ask him to present a report to the September meeting. It was also noted that the grass had not been cut along part of Footpath No 8. Clerk to inform grasscutting contractor. Action: Clerk .

15. Urgent matters

Cllr Spurling reported that there had been two accidents last weekend in Church Street near the pond. Thankfully there had been no injuries but this highlighted the fact that more needed to be done to improve safety in this area.

Cllr Oakervee regretted that neither of the two District Councillors had been able to attend. She believed their input to discussions about the possible release of land (see item 8) could have been very helpful.

16. Correspondence

ECDC Consultation – Polling Station review - this consultation on the location of polling stations runs to 31 August. No change is envisaged for Ashley, but written representations from the public are welcome. See www.eastcambs.gov.uk

Cambs County Council Speed Limit Policy - it was agreed that a copy of the document would be circulated to councillors. Under the new policies now agreed, local communities may fix their own speed limits but the full costs of investigation, consultation and the purchase of new signs etc must be funded by the town or parish council.

Withdrawal of Recycling Centre Can Banks - ECDC have taken a decision to temporarily remove the can banks service from District recycling centres pending the negotiation of a new contract. This is unlikely to be in place until October but residents can continue to use the kerbside service to recycle tins and cans.

17. Date of next meeting

This will take place on Monday 8th August.

The meeting closed at 9.00pm