



ASHFIELD-CUM-THORPE PARISH COUNCIL

All Councillors are reminded of their obligations under the Code of Conduct Regulations.

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 18th August 2025 at the Community Hall

Attendance Simon Garrett (SG)

Chris Sharpe (CS)

Myles Hansen (MHa)

Sarah Clare (Clerk)

Public present at the meeting: 7

ACTPC 25-04-01 Apologies for Absence

Robert Grimsey (Chair) (RG) had sent his apologies due to personal commitments. The Council accepted.

In light of the absence of the Chair MHa was nominated to act as Chair for the meeting by SG, seconded by CS and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED.**

Teresa Davis (District Councillor) (TD) and Matthew Hicks (County Councillor) (MHi) had also sent apologies.

ACTPC 25-04-02 Public Forum

Parishioner raised concerns about the smell in the village. SG confirmed that he had checked with the contractor and it was treated human sewage, which was why it had been so offensive. This had then raised further concerns about the safety of the substance, but the contractors were working within the regulations and the sewage sludge had been certified as safe for use by the water company.

CS stated that the problems have been longstanding, with the sludge being stored nearby for a number of weeks, the problem had eased off slightly until the actual spreading started. Although it was acknowledged that the contractor may be working within the regulations, the noxious smells have had a very detrimental impact on the village over the summer months, much more than the usual 'farmyard' smells that are recognised as part of rural living, both in terms of the smell itself and the length of time that it has hung around.

RG had sent notes ahead of the meeting, suggesting that the contractors are asked to consider the prevailing winds and ensure that any storage of the sludge is placed downwind of homes (i.e. east of the village)

A parishioner raised ongoing concerns about speeding in the village, with particular concern about large agricultural vehicles. It was noted that the size of these vehicles means that in order to pass traffic they are often eroding verges, which leaves no safe refuge for pedestrians. It was uncertain what action could be taken and it was acknowledged that many of the roads were simply not built for the size of the vehicles that now use them, but the Council agreed to this being a future agenda item for further consideration.

A parishioner wanted to raise awareness of a large solar array that is being proposed in East Suffolk, between Charlfield and Letherington, covering around 200 acres. The parishioner wanted to urge residents to speak up and raise objections, directing attention to the Stop Deben Solar Group (www.stopdebensolar.co.uk). Concern was expressed that the project had already been given permission without any chance for objections to be raised, SG stated that if this was the case then an appeal would need to be lodged with legal grounds for why the planning permission had been given in error. *(After the meeting it was confirmed that permission has not been granted - objections can be lodged with the East Suffolk Council Planning Authority until 5th September, after which a decision will be taken.)*

It was noted that Ashfield-cum-Thorpe Parish Council was not a statutory consultee on the matter and therefore had no mandate to comment as a corporate body, but members of the public could raise concerns and objections, whether they live in the area or not. SG stressed that any objections raised must list material considerations to be taken seriously by the planning authority.

CS suggested that the parishioner sends the information out on the Ashfield Talk email system, to raise awareness in the community.

SignedS. Clare..... (Clerk) SignedM. Hansen..... (Chair)

10

A question was raised about what could be done should such a proposal be put forward in Ashfield-cum-Thorpe. If an application was put forward then the Parish Council would automatically be consulted, but the decision on whether to grant permission would be taken by the District Council. It was also noted that for large developments that meet the criteria of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects then the final decision could be taken by the Secretary of State and overrule any local objections.

ACTPC 25-04-03 Declaration of Interests

None

ACTPC 25-04-04 Update from County Councillor

The County Councillor's Report had previously been circulated to the Council and has also been posted on the village website <https://ashfield.onesuffolk.net>.

ACTPC 25-04-05 Update from District Councillor

The District Councillor's Report had previously been circulated to the Council and has also been posted on the village website <https://ashfield.onesuffolk.net>.

ACTPC 25-04-06 Minutes of previous meetings

The Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 14th July 2025 as a true and accurate record, were proposed by CS, seconded by SG all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**. The Minutes were signed by the Chair and the Clerk

ACTPC 25-04-07 Matters Arising and Action Points from the July Minutes

1. Summarise incident involving school bus and make formal request to MHi for funding to consider signage/lining to raise driver awareness. DISCHARGED
2. Print A3 posters to advertise Parish Councillor vacancies (CS to forward file to SG). DISCHARGED
3. Contact relevant landowners about cutting back hedges that are overhanging the highway. ONGOING
4. Contact Suffolk Highways to arrange a site visit about reflective posts to mark dangerous ditches at the edge of the road. ONGOING
5. Investigate cross field pathway between Ashfield-cum-Thorpe and Debenham. ONGOING
6. Contact Emergency Planning Officer at the District Council for an informal chat about setting up a plan for the village. ONGOING
7. Complete process of getting CS added to bank mandate and allow for online access. ONGOING
8. Publish re-adopted Councillor Code of Conduct, along with new and re-adopted policies on the village website. DISCHARGED
9. To distribute payments as approved at the July meeting. DISCHARGED

ACTPC 25-04-08 Planning

- a) To consider planning applications that had been submitted since the last meeting:
- i) DC/25/03423- Householder Application – Erection of a single-storey rear extension, conversion of the garage into a habitable room, connecting it to the existing house with a glass roof, internal alterations and adding roof lights. Tanzen, The Street, IP14 6LX

Councillors had all studied the application in advance of the meeting. After discussion it was decided to **SUPPORT** the application.

CS proposed, SG seconded, all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**

- b) To consider any planning applications that have been submitted since agenda was published: None

SignedS. Clare..... (Clerk) SignedM. Hansen..... (Chair)

c) Updates and outcomes on previous planning applications: None

ACTPC 25-04-09 Parish Council Activities

a) To consider co-option to fill vacancies on Council – MHA asked if anyone present wished to be considered for co-option to the Council.

Parishioners Lindsay Pearson (LP), Tom Luxmoore (TL) and Monica Brown (MB) indicated that they were willing to be considered for co-option to the Council, wanting to be involved in helping the community. CS proposed that they be accepted for co-option, SG seconded, all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED.**

The Clerk asked LP, TL and MB to sign the declarations of eligibility and acceptance and will arrange for the other papers relating to completing the Register of Interests, requesting dispensations and consent to receive email summons to be sent across.

The Clerk will also look at sourcing dates from SALC for online training for New Councillors and make arrangements for all three to be booked in at the earliest convenience

b) To address concerns about the unpleasant smell causing problems in the village - Following discussions in the Public Forum, all agreed to try and take a non-confrontational stance with the contractor, who may simply be unaware of just how much of a problem the smell had been and to find out whether this was a one-off, or potentially a regular annual occurrence. If it was to be a regular action, something must be done to reduce the impact on the village.

actions were agreed as follows:

SG will investigate the legal position of what can be done in such a situation. Once the legal position is clarified, CS will make contact with the landowner and contractor to ask for assistance in mitigating the problem. MHA proposed the actions, LP seconded, all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**

ACTPC 25-04-10 Finance

a) To review the Financial Statement as supplied by the Clerk – The Clerk had previously circulated the Financial Statement. There were no queries. SG proposed acceptance, CS seconded and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED.** The Chair signed the corresponding Bank Statements to confirm the figures.

b) To agree payments as detailed on the Payment Schedule
MHA proposed authorisation, CS seconded and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED.**

ACTPC – 25-04-11 Urgent Matters to be brought to the attention of the Council

a) After discussion it was agreed to re-arrange the October to March Parish Council meetings to be held on the second Wednesday of the month, due to an important Monday night booking every week at the Community Hall for these months. The Clerk will advise the District and County Councillors and amend the village website with the new dates.

b) Items for next agenda:

- Insurance Renewal
- Review of Council’s Risk Assessment & Health & Safety Policy

Items for the October Agenda – please notify the Clerk of any further items for the agenda as soon as possible and by Tuesday 30th September at the latest, with any accompanying paperwork ready to be circulated with the agenda upon publication.

There being no further business requiring the attention of the Parish Council, the meeting was closed at 8.36pm. The next meeting is set for **Wednesday 8th October 2025** at 7.30 pm in the Community Hall.

Sarah Clare
Parish Clerk

Robert Grimsey
Chair

SignedS. Clare..... (Clerk) SignedM. Hansen..... (Chair)