

WEST ILSLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the West Ilsley Parish Council (“WIPC”) held virtually on Tuesday 26 May 2020 at 7.30pm (the “Meeting”)

Present: Rollo Duckworth (Chair)
Justin Gilbert
Alan Bloor
Graham Wood
Anna Sugden

Apologies: Alan Beaumont

In attendance: District Councillor Carolyne Culver
Ten members of the public

1. **Chair and Apologies**

- Rollo Duckworth (RD) chaired the meeting, via Zoom hosted by Martin BW.
- 1.1 Rosamund Duckworth took the minutes. Apologies from Alan Beaumont. RD thanked everyone for attending the meeting. RD reported that Inna Fauler (IF) had resigned as clerk, and that this meeting was being conducted without a clerk. RD had previously informed our Ward Councillor and West Berkshire Council of the situation, and Moira Fraser was content for the meeting to proceed. RD thanked IF for her good service to the village and the council over the last five years.

2. **Changes to Declarations of Interest and Councilors, and annual voting.**

- 2.1 No changes to declarations of interest were received nor were there any changes to the Councilors at that time, although Anna Sugden (AS) gave notice of her wish to retire during the summer. The council agreed to appoint RD as Chairman for the coming year. Alan Beaumont (ABe) was voted for as Deputy Chairman, and Graham Woods (GW) was voted as Responsible Financial Officer (RFO).

3. **Minutes of the Meeting of the West Ilsley Parish Council held on Monday 9 March 2020.**

- 3.1 The draft minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2020 had circulated prior to the meeting. The draft minutes were approved and signed by RD as a true record.

4. **Matters arising from the Minutes.**

- 4.1 RD confirmed the following actions had been taken since the previous meeting.
- a) Finance. The AGAR had been prepared and the internal audit report had been signed off. The Certificate of Exemption and Governance Statements and the Accounting Statements were then approved. The Notice of Public Rights will be published on 1 June 2020. The good work by GW is reclamation of VAT during the year was noted.
 - b) All other matters arising will be covered in the rolling agenda.

Actions

RD to file the minutes.

RD and GW to complete the AGAR and supporting papers and publish

5. Correspondence.

5.1 Inna Fauler has informed the council that she wished to resign as Parish Clerk, the Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Officer with effect from 18 May 2020.

them.

6. Community Matters.

6.1 Finance. The council still has CIL money which needs to be spent or it is to be given back. The playground needs some new equipment and some repairs to the fence line. It was agreed that through the WIN we should ask the village for their views other infrastructure items that could benefit from this money.

A survey for CIL bids is to be undertaken.

6.2 WIN, Website, and communications. RD commented the editors of the WIN for superb efforts during lockdown to help with the passage of information around the village. The website traffic has increased and the adjustments to the layout sought at the last meeting have improved its display particularly on smaller or phone screens. Take up by sub-editors of the individual village activity pages of the website has been patchy. The Tennis Club page is up to date and the Harrow has also started using its page. It transpired later in the meeting that the Cricket Club page might be pointing to a now-obsolete website.

Justin Pilditch to supply new address

6.3 All village activities have been stopped or suspended during lockdown, save the Tennis Club which has just reopened under controlled circumstances, with many renewals of memberships and a record number of bookings at present. The Cricket Club has also opened the nets under controlled circumstances and details have been provided to members.

6.4 SPECIAL ITEM. A report on how the village has coped during lockdown. AS reported that 26 volunteers were helping 7 households. Andrea Cook had been helpful in circulating information and Angela Ryan had also been busy liaising between the Downlands Practice and distributing prescriptions. ABI told the meeting of his own experience as a recipient of help and described it as excellent. RD thanked all volunteers.

7. Environment and Upkeep.

7.1 The spiked railings outside Manor Barns were discussed. They could be construed as a hazard to cyclists or horse riders, and various remedies were discussed such as removing the spikes. However, it transpires that the railings are on private land and therefore is not considered to be council issue.

7.2 The water level at the pond was discussed because it was suggested that dredging should take place. Last time it was done by highways as part of the flood alleviation scheme. ABI agreed to have a look at this, noting that particular care was needed to ensure the clay lining did not get damaged.

ABI

7.3 The playground. The RoSPA inspection has taken place and reported quite a few shortcomings. Despite the remedial work of the last few years older pieces of wood are now rotting, and the slide needs replacing. The chip surface needs topping up does well. Lockdown is proving a difficult time to get quotes for this work. GW suggested that the playground would be a good use of CIL funding.

GW

7.4 The Cricket Club nets project. The council had not had long to consider this paper submission for help with funding. However, we opened the debate with more questions than answers. Should we be using village funds in support of such a specific sport when there are other activities that might require our support? Could CIL have a role to play in this? Is improving the cricket club facilities a

village asset or for the benefit of the broader community? To be continued.

8 Safety and Services.

8.1 Vehicle activated signage. JG had put in a lot of effort into this project and wished to know if we were ready to make a decision. RD remarked that he was pleased that Carolyn Culver was present to hear the debate. Carolyn undertook to establish that the funding plan was still valid which would not entail use of village funds for this project. The location of the VAS was discussed however JG told the meeting that experts from the highways Department had already expressed a view on its best position. It is understood that the residents closest to the sign will also be allowed a say in the matter. The meeting voted that if Carolyn could confirm the funding was still available, we would like the VAS to go ahead proposed by JG seconded by ABI. The debate also covered reduction of the speed limit to 20 miles an hour as well as a 40 miles an hour buffer zone between East and West Ilsley. It is JG's view, supported by Carolyn Culver, the buffer zone idea was most unlikely to happen.

Carolyn Culver was kindly asked to keep us informed.

8.2 Telephone and broadband. RD spoke to Martin BW to inquire whether an increase in working from home had put pressure on our broadband. It appeared that we are managing and indeed this Zoom meeting with 16 participants had been working well.

9 Working village.

9.1 Asset of community value register. Neil Fowler has volunteered to help ABI with the application to register the Harrow as an asset of community value. ABI agreed to sign the letter to the Watling family, explaining the rationale behind the scheme.

ABI, assisted by Neil Fowler.

10 AOB.

10.1 Ducks. ABI was concerned about the number of ducks on the road and their presence by the pond encouraging rats. AS wanted a humane solution to the problem and not the flighting of duck.

10.2 VAT. GW was concerned that we might have been overpaid on one of our VAT reclaims, and we should not be surprised if a repayment is asked for in due course.

GW to monitor

10.3 West Berkshire council matters. Carolyn Culver updated the meeting on COVID-19 and the actions the council is taking. she went on to discuss possible funding for the village Hall. She reminded us there was a COVID-19 questionnaire from the council regarding the recovery phase. She mentioned that Northbrook St is now car free. Council tips are now open though you should book. She touched on the Sunrise Barn development issue which is causing a lot of concern in East Ilsley. She fears it will have a major impact on the community.

11 Open forum.

11.1 Patrick MacKenzie-Charrington raised the issue of the number of additional users that would be associated with the new Nets. AS has concerns that these users would be coming from outside the village. This could have an impact on the parking around the recreation ground.

11.2 Alan Muir raised three issues. He understood that the railings issue had been raised some 28-30 years ago when he was a councillor and we should look in the minutes. GW asked he could be a bit more specific with the dates. He also urged us to take care of the clay lining in the pond which he remembers as being an

expensive item at the time. Lastly he pointed out that he believed the terms of the lease of the land of the recreation ground has a clause that requires the village to turn the land to its original state and therefore the Cricket Club and/or the council should hold financial reserves in order to do this.

- 11.3 David Carlisle raised his concern that the railings outside the village hall were flimsy/rotten and needs replacing. ABI notes that it is the black top rail at the side of the wheelchair access into the village hall.
- 11.4 Neil Fowler reminded us that the documentation project that he has been working on, now needs the assistance of a lawyer located by Allison Banks that will probably cost a fee of £300 pounds.

There being no further business RD thanks Martin BW for hosting the meeting and the meeting closed at 8.43 PM

Chair

Date
