

THE IVERS PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE POLICY, FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON

29th JULY 2020 at 6.00PM VIA ZOOM CALL

Present: Councillors Wendy Matthews (Chairman), Chris Jordan, Julie Cook, Peter Stanhope, and Carol Gibson,

In attendance: Stephanie Bennett (Clerk) and 1 member of the public.

F.001/20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Sylvia Lidgate, Chris Woolley, Karanveer Bembey, Jyoti Kaushal

F.002/20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None were received.

F.003/20 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No questions or addresses were received

F.004/20 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman reported on the work to consider replacing the diseased tree at Iver Heath that was previously dressed at Christmas, with a Living Christmas Tree. Costs had been obtained and this will need to be considered in the budget setting for 2021 – 2022.

Views were being sought from the Council by Chiltern 'Save Our Pubs Group' on whether the Council would support seeking Community Asset registration for any pub under threat of closure. The Council's previous experience in relation to the Bull was raised and it was decided that views would be sought from tenants and managers on the sustainability of pubs before this be considered. Cllrs Julie Cook and Carol Gibson to make contact with the pubs in the area and report back to the next meeting.

The Chairman reported on the Pension consultation being undertaken with regard to the changes necessary to the pension scheme following the legal challenge. Cllr Julie Cook offered to look at the consultation and offer a response.

The Chairman offered an idea to run a pilot pop up market of a couple of stalls one Saturday outside of the office. Councillors received this idea enthusiastically with many ideas on how this could be developed in the longer term and they particularly wished to offer a similar approach in Iver Heath and Richings Park recognising that venues would need to be arranged. It was noted that care must be taken not to affect existing traders. It was agreed to look to arrange a couple of stalls one Saturday, managed by councillors on the day.

1810 Cllr Mayling joined the meeting

The Chairman also reported on the appearance of the retail centres being a bit overgrown and in need of a bit of weeding and trimming; it is felt that Covid has impacted heavily on street scene work. Councillors recognised the very hard work by volunteers who complete constant litter picks and wished to devote three separate afternoons to clearing the vegetation and sweeping in order to bring the areas back to a good standard.

It was agreed to undertake 3 'Councillor Day of Action' at the centres of Iver, Iver Heath and Richings Park. Other local groups will be invited to join in.

F.005/20 COVID-19

The Chairman updated the Committee on the planned reduction of Community Kindness Kit work and reported that a thank you event would be arranged for all the volunteers. The Vice Chairman reported on a growing evidence of need for a local foodbank and the Chairman confirmed that both herself and the Vice Chairman were investigating different models including pop up food banks that can provide fresh food stuffs.

The Vice Chairman confirmed that in conversation with those receiving the CK kits no recipient had raised a question regarding their access to PPE.

It was also recognised that the operation to supply the kits could not have been possible without the assistance of volunteers and the large input of time from councillors. Councillors emphasised that it was important to target the assistance available to those that needed it the most and that using the new charity further assistance could be made available if funding applications were successful. It was recognised that debt advice and management was key to many in the local community however the Council is not currently able to assist with this other than to offer the Hub to the visiting CAB officer.

The Clerk presented the account transactions of the council and community related covid related income and expenditure and reported that the Council's insurers had advised that the insurance policy did not cover for loss due to Covid-19.

F.006/20 INTERNAL AUDIT

The Clerk reported on the Internal Audit process and presented the recommendations and Clerk's response. It was also reported that the External Auditor had confirmed that all documents had been received.

RESOLVED that

the Internal Auditors report be received and noted

1842 Cllr Bennett joined the meeting

F.007/20

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS AND EVENTS

The Clerk reported that the events and entertainment that had been booked have now been cancelled. Councillors wished to continue with a switch on event held remotely and to look at arranging for schools to remotely switch on the lights in the 3 different areas with video conference and live transmission .

The Chairman reported that consideration was being given to running a remote Santa's Grotto from the Jubilee Pavilion.

Discussion was had over the planned Advent Calendar windows and it was recognised that this is a brilliant project but would need to be delivered in a reduced format for 2020.

RESOLVED that

- a. A Christmas Lights switch on that involves the schools and that is co-ordinated, remotely activated, recorded and transmitted to be investigated by Cllrs Cook, Stanhope and Beary and a costed proposal be brought back to the committee;
- b. The provision of a living Christmas Tree replacement in Iver Heath for the previously dressed tree that is now diseased to be considered within the budget for 2021 – 2022;
- c. The committee to consider lighting the previously dressed tree at Iver Heath via projectors. Cllrs Cook and Stanhope to investigate the proposal and costs and report back to the committee;
- d. The additional mistletoe balls for the trees at Richings Park to be contracted at a cost of £1500;
- e. Cllr Beary to liaise with the chairs of the residents' associations of Iver, Iver Heath and Richings Park and encourage them to deliver the advent windows projects. All windows to be notified to the council who will compile a list. The council to complete an advent calendar for the noticeboard outside the office building;
- f. The unwrapping of the remaining wrapped tree in Richings Park to be included in the budget for 2021 - 2022

F.008/20

COMMUNICATIONS ACTION PLAN

The draft communications action plan and service map were considered. Cllr Cook offered that the plan should be based on a strategic evaluation of communication needs of the council and stakeholders and the Clerk confirmed that this had not been undertaken. Cllrs agreed that it was not necessary at this time.

RESOLVED that

- a. The Communications Plan for 2020 – 2021 be agreed
- b. The service map not be reproduced but that a list of contacts is produced, printed with visuals for those who might have difficulty reading and made available at pick up points as well as being on the website

F.009/20 FINANCE

The committee noted the reports of the committees and that it was anticipated that the income for 2020 – 2021 would be greatly reduced.

F.010/20 IVERS COMMUNITY CONNECT

Considerable discussion took place regarding the evidence base for the potential new charity and what it was aiming to achieve.

Cllr Cook asked whether the Council had the resource to manage the new charity. The Clerk explained that resource was available to set up the charity and to undertake basic secretariat work however the charity would need to seek resource for the projects. Councillors felt that a lot of the work would be undertaken by themselves and that it was important to be able to use the charity as soon as possible to seek funding for the work to continue the Covid-19 recovery work.

RESOLVED that

- a. The Charitable Objectives be agreed
- b. The Clerk to apply for registration of 'Ivers Community Connect' as a CIO with councillors as sole trustees

F.011/20 FINANCE, FACILITIES AND ALLOTMENT SOFTWARE

The Clerk briefed the committee on the ongoing work to source a suitable software system for the council to use for finance, facilities and allotment management, and online bookings. A report would be brought to committee as soon as possible.

F.012/20 SCHOOLS LIAISON COUNCILLORS

Discussion took place on the possibility of offering liaison councillors to each school

RESOLVED that

The proposal be referred to Council for consideration

F.013/20 REPLACEMENT WEBSITE

The three quotes from website providers were considered.

RESOLVED that

The Clerk to approach Vision ICT and Aubergine for a clarification on costs and a further report be brought back to committee

F.014/20 WEBSITE/PRESS RELEASES

The committee requested that the community be informed of the Christmas Plans already made and that other plans are in the process of being considered

The meeting closed at 7.44pm

Signed Chairman

Date