

THE IVERS PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FACILITIES AND EVENTS HELD ON 1st SEPTEMBER 2021 AT 7.00PM VIA ZOOM CALL

Present: Councillors Peter Stanhope, Kevin Brown, Julie Cook, Graham Young, Ciarán Beary and Wendy Matthews

In attendance: Cllr Michael Sullivan, 4 Members of the Public and Stephanie Bennett (Clerk)

184/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Peter Stanhope and Julie Cook declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in relation to agenda item 10 Allotments. The Clerk advised that the Chair could present his reports and take questions regarding their content and following that both councillors would be required to leave the meeting.

185/21 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Cllr Brown read out the content of an e mail that he had received from the chair of the Iver Heath Allotment Association also on behalf of Iver Allotments Association.. The topics covered included the revised fees and charges, the outstanding issues, and a request to start a collaborative approach between allotment holders, the allotment associations and the Parish Council. The chair of the Iver Allotment Association was in attendance and raised concern over affordability for those on low incomes and the tenants not seeing improvements that are needed.

186/21 MINUTES

RECOMMENDED that

the Minutes of the meeting held on 9th August 2021 be agreed and signed by the Chair.

187/21 FINANCE

The Clerk reported on the Committee income and expenditure for the year to 24th August 2021. Cllr Young requested that the Committee consider balancing income vs expenditure for Iver Heath Pavilion when the budget is set.

RECOMMENDED that

The Finance Report be received

188/21 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

The notes of the working group were not available and the Chair reported that the group agreed to hold an event on 20th November 2021

189/21

ST PETERS BURIAL GROUND AND CHURCHYARD

The Clerk reported that the fencing at the bottom end of the New Churchyard had been completed and councillors requested that signage be placed advising people of the steep drop.

The Clerk also reported that the health and safety assessment was ongoing and that to date 121 memorials have been failed. The Clerk is awaiting a call from the vicar to arrange a meeting to discuss the next steps with regard to all the issues being experienced and has submitted a legal advice request to the National Association of Local Councils.

The Badger Trust has visited and a licence application is being prepared in order to situate gates to discourage badgers to enter the churchyard however it is anticipated that this will not be able to be undertaken until the end of the breeding season in 2022. The area in the New Churchyard that is above the sett has been staked and is taped off and signage is awaited to warn people of the uneven ground and the presence of the sett.

No other items were recommended for action and the Clerk will report back to committee following the receipt of legal advice and the meeting with the church.

190/21

BURIAL GROUND RECORD KEEPING

The report of the Clerk was considered and councillors recognised the difficulties of searching a system that was not filed in an identifiable or searchable system. Councillors requested that effort are still made to encourage the church to share further records but particularly records of new burials in the closed churchyards. A member of the public offered to assist with the excel spreadsheet

RECOMMENDED that

- a. The Council seeks a part time temporary role to separate the scanned documents and file in an appropriate manner on the council burials drive
- b. The Clerk and Business Administrator continue to update the forms, new records and the website
- c. Adobe writer be added to the software to be accessible to 2 users
- d. The church to be requested to re-examine their records for the identified missing records once the records are ordered
- e. Committee to reconsider cloud based software for burial records once the records are ordered

191/21

GRANT APPLICATION

The Chair reported that the Iver Heath fun day was a success and a great many people enjoyed the event. Councillors wished to send their thanks to Doug Grant for his commitment and drive in organising this. Councillors asked the Clerk to provide advice on how the Committee could contribute the cost of the toilets whilst complying with regulation and standing orders.

Councillors expressed a need for toilet blocks at Iver Rec and Iver Heath Recs

RECOMMENDED that

The Committee funds the provision of the toilets at a cost of £1250 inc VAT from the contingency via an invoice directed to the Parish Council

192/21

ALLOTMENTS

The Chair presented his prepared report on allotments to the Committee and covered the pricing structure, things to be considered, issues being experienced, and the need for a long term plan; the Chair took questions to clarify the content.

The Chair also presented on his investigation into the water supply at Iver Heath allotment and raised a concern that there was a leak of 900 litres in an hour; the Chair also took questions to clarify the information he was supplying.

Cllrs Cook and Stanhope left the meeting and Cllr Kevin Brown took the Chair.

It was clarified that the new charges have been agreed by Council in the fees and charges and will come into effect 1 October 2021.

The Clerk summarised the points being made by Cllr Stanhope:

- Allotment tenants need to see that issues are being tackled and that improvements are being made in return for paying more rent
- The Council needs to consider those who will struggle to afford the increase in fees and the recharge of water
- Supporting the formation of the allotment associations and bringing them together with the parish council and other tenants in the form of a working group will enable a long term plan to be developed and delivered
- The allotment associations will be able to leverage external funding
- The water leak needs to be stopped

The Committee discussed these points including balancing the complaints that have been received with the preference to be as cost neutral to the taxpayer as possible, to provide a good community resource that encourages people to grow their own food, and to be accessible. The Clerk was asked to provide an overview of the considerations of Amenities Committee and Council when agreeing the fees and charges.

Cllrs Stanhope and Cook returned to the meeting and Cllr Stanhope resumed the Chair.

The Clerk reported on the risks related to the drainage ditches at Iver Heath allotment and the options for remedial action. It was noted that drainage was an issue at both allotment sites however that was for a long term planning approach by the new allotment working group.

The Committee also discussed the benefits of forming a working group to help to develop the allotment associations and the improvement and maintenance plans and the Clerk was instructed to write to all tenants inviting them to join the working group

RECOMMENDED that

- a. The Clerk seek quotes to replace the water supplies to the three taps at Iver Heath allotments with above ground piping
- b. Clerk to return to committee with the complete income and expenditure with regard to the allotments
- c. Fees and charges to remain at the levels agreed in the budget for 2021-2022
- d. A subsidy scheme to be implemented for those on lower incomes with all persons seeking a subsidy signposted to Cllrs Ciarán Beary and Kevin Brown who will consider the request and grant appropriate subsidy
- e. All allotment surplus to be transferred to Ear Marked Reserves for Allotments
- f. The drainage ditches at Iver Heath allotments that run beside the paths to be filled
- g. A working group to be formed. Cllrs Stanhope, Brown, Beary and Sullivan to sit on the group along with the allotment association representatives and the allotment tenants
- h. All allotment tenants to be written to explaining the outcomes of the Committee meeting

193/21 IMPROVEMENTS AND EFFECTIVENESS

There were no improvements and effectiveness highlighted. It was agreed to undertake communications with regard to the funday

The meeting finished at 9.07pm

Signed Chair

Date

