

## THE IVERS PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 16 JANUARY 2023 AT 7.00PM IN THE JUBILEE PAVILION, IVER RECREATION GROUND SL0 9PW

**Present:** Councillors Ciarán Beary, Sam Bhachu, Mohinder Bhatti, Adam Burke, Julie Cook, Vishal Gupta, Sarah Hutchins, Peter Kinchin, Wendy Matthews, Peter Stanhope, Michael Sullivan and Graham Young

**Apologies accepted from:** Councillors Paul Brooksby and Stuart Mills

**In attendance:** Louise Steele (Locum Clerk)  
Seven members of the public

#### **376/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Council received apologies for absence as recorded above.

#### **377/22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members declared no interests in respect of items on the agenda.

#### **378/22 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

One member of the public spoke on behalf of Iver Heath Residents' Association and asked parish councillors to look favourably on the agenda item about nominating Iver Heath Field as an asset of community value.

Another member of the public representing the Iver Heath Residents Association referred to her written questions about the budget and the Chair promised that there would be a written reply to the questions and suggested that the member of the public remain and listen to the discussion on the budget item. The same member of the public asked about the next steps now that the Neighbourhood Plan has been made. The Chair responded that the Neighbourhood Plan Committee will convene and consider the matter.

A member of the public referred to the refurbished path at Iver Recreation Ground and questions that had been raised with the Chair of the Open Spaces and Highways Committee. The Locum Clerk indicated that a response to the individual's freedom of information request had been drafted and would be sent electronically on 17 January 2023.

A fourth member of the public asked if she can be involved in future work on a Neighbourhood Plan and the Chair replied in the affirmative.

Another member of the public representing the Iver Village Residents Association referred to the footpath at Iver Recreation Ground and his perception that there was a lack of transparency in the matter. He felt that there was a perception that the parish council needed to improve its

communication to assist in transparency The Chair responded that the public attendance at meetings of the Council and its Committees was encouraged. Another councillor observed that there were councillor representatives available to each residents association.

Unitary Councillor Luisa Sullivan welcomed the opportunity to speak, said that it was good to see the residents associations present and informed the meeting that she had ensured that the pothole close to the Black Horse public house had been repaired as an emergency.

**379/22 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that:

The minutes of the meeting of Council on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2022 be agreed as an accurate record of the meeting. The minutes were signed as such by the Chair.

**380/22 CHAIR ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chair thanked everyone for being present and informed councillors that, in furtherance of the Council's wish to have training on "Civility and Respect", a training session had been arranged for 6.30pm on Monday 20 February and that the next meeting of Full Council would be deferred from 7.00pm to later the same evening.

**381/22 COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The minutes of the Facilities and Events Committee held on 4<sup>th</sup> January were received.

**382/22 FINANCE**

a. **RESOLVED** that:

The accounts for payment for December 2022 at a total of £49,622.05 be agreed.

and

**RESOLVED** that:

A payment of £40,800 made on 15 November 2022 in respect of the new pathway at Iver Recreation Ground be agreed

Cllr Cook asked that her vote against the resolution be recorded.

b. The Council considered a comparison of expenditure/income against budget for the first nine months of the financial year.

c. Cllr Stanhope reported that he completed 50% of the bank reconciliations for the previous month.

**383/22 GRANT APPLICATIONS**

**RESOLVED** that:

£500 be granted to the Iver Parochial Church Council to fund its Warm Spaces 2023 initiative..

**384/22 BUDGET AND PRECEPT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2023/24**

Council considered the budget report from the Locum Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer. It was suggested that the precept be reduced by a further £29,000 achieved by deleting the £5,500 budget for the Facilities and Environment Committee Contingency (code 7999) and the £11,000 budget for Open Spaces and Highways Committee Projects (code 8800) together with the use of £16,000 of reserves in the form of anticipated underspends from 2021/22. 2022/23?

The Locum Clerk reiterated her advice that it was unwise to continue to balance the budget by using reserves, particularly when the Internal Auditor had raised a question as whether the Council had sufficient reserves, because it creates a budget shortfall which will need to be dealt with in subsequent years.

The suggested changes to the budget were agreed

**RESOLVED** that:

A budget be set for the Financial Year 2023/24 – the agreed budget is attached to the record minutes;

A precept of £647,620 be set for the Financial Year 2023/24;  
and

The Locum Clerk be authorised to make the precept request of Buckinghamshire Council

**385/22 IVER HEATH FIELDS, ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE – EXPIRY OF FIVE YEAR LISTING PERIOD**

Council noted the correspondence received from Buckinghamshire Council confirming that the listing of Iver Heath Fields as an Asset of Community Value was due to expire at the end of the five years listing period on the 28 February 2023 and that Iver Heath Fields would then be removed from the Council's List of Assets of Community Value, and its land registry entry updated to reflect this.

**RESOLVED** that:

The Council should nominate Iver Heath Fields for Asset of Community Value Status again

- 386/22 LOCAL PLAN FOR BUCKINGHAMSHIRE EVIDENCE BASE – SETTLEMENT REVIEW**  
The Local Clerk was asked to draft a response to Buckinghamshire Council and to bring that draft back to the next meeting of Council.
- 387/22 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REFERENDUM RESULT**  
Council noted with pleasure that the referendum held on 12 January 2023 had been substantially in favour of the Neighbourhood Plan and that the Plan was therefore now “made”. The Chair thanked and congratulated all those members of the council and community that had been a part of this successful outcome.
- 388/22 COVID MEMORIAL**  
Council indicated that it was in favour of a local Covid Memorial but agreed to delay consideration until Government guidance was published in March. It was noted that this would be an opportunity for community engagement.
- 389/22 ACTION UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY – SELECTION OF CONTRACTOR**  
Members noted the following action carried out, on grounds of urgency and in consultation with the Chair of the Open Spaces & Highways Committee, using the Clerk’s delegated authority – selection of a contractor to undertake the resurfacing of part of the path at Iver Recreation Ground and some drainage works at the Recreation Ground.
- Noting that anticipated grant income had been credited to the parish council’s accounts in the financial year 2020/21 in respect of works planned to the path at Iver Recreation Ground and knowing that the grant funding body was demanding that the grant be spent immediately or forfeit, in consultation with Councillor Kinchin, the Locum Clerk appraised the six contractors who had tendered for the work and selected DL Collins on the grounds of their price combined with their ability to start the contract promptly and the detail of their method statements and risk assessments supplied with their quote.
- The Locum Clerk further explained that the project dated back to 2018 or earlier, that an unsuccessful grant application had been made in 2019 and that a second application early in 2021 had been successful. That the Council had been given eighteen months to spend the £36,000 on improving the existing path. The July 2022 deadline had passed and the funding body had given an extension of three months – to the end of October 2022 – for

the grant to be spent. It was clear that there would be no further extension. The contract had been advertised on Contracts Finder and the intention was that the quotes received would be appraised by the Open Spaces & Highways Committee on 21 September 2022 with the contract being awarded immediately. The death of HM the late Queen meant that the Committee meeting could not be held and there was insufficient time to call another meeting. The Locum Clerk perceived that she had a choice between exercising her delegated authority and ensuring the project was completed within the grant deadline or forfeiting the grant.

**RESOLVED** that:

The Locum Clerk's use of delegated authority be approved and she be thanked for ensuring that the community benefit of the improved path was delivered.

Cllrs Cook and Stanhope asked that their votes against the resolution be recorded

**390/22 IMPROVEMENTS AND EFFECTIVENESS**

There was nothing to record under this item.

**391/22 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED:**

To exclude the Public and Press from the remainder of the meeting in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as matters which will be discussed are considered to be confidential.

**392/22 RECRUITMENT OF A NEW CLERK**

The Chair gave a confidential report on the recruitment position. The Council agreed some specifics as to an offer of employment to be made, these are recorded elsewhere in a confidential note. The remaining detail was delegated to the Staffing Committee.

The meeting ended at 8.56 pm

Signed ..... Chair

Date .....