

THE IVERS PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 20 MARCH 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

In attendance: Jeremy Day (Deputy Clerk)
Five members of the public

463/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Council received apologies for absence from Councillors Paul Brooksby and Stuart Mills

464/22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members declared the following nonpecuniary interests in respect of items on the agenda:

Item 12

Cllr Ciarán Beary expressed an interest as a member of the Iver Village Residents Association.

Cllrs Peter Stanhope & Julie Cook as members of the Iver Heath Residents Association.

Cllr Peter Stanhope as a member of the Iver Royal British Legion Branch.

465/22 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

One member of the public spoke on behalf of Iver Village Residents' Association to the Grant Application made at item 12. It was stated that the Association had approached other businesses for funding opportunities. Based on this they would be grateful of a Grant from the Parish Council and would be willing to return some funds should they receive other funding. It was further stated that the last event run for the community was a great success.

Another member of the public made representations concerning the Iver Recreation Ground Path and particularly referenced concerns about the way his requests for information and representations generally had been poorly received and dealt with and expressed a strong view that he required an apology from the Chair of Council. He further made an accusation that the Council had paid a fraudulent invoice from the contractor who completed the

work. He alleged that there were major health and safety concerns following the construction of the path which had now been identified by the Parish Council with areas being identified by blue paint and the installation of trip hazard warning signage.

A member of the public referred to the status of the application to re-register Iver Heath Fields as a Community Asset and that despite this having been brought up several times no response or action appeared to have taken place. The following questions were raised:

1. Has the re-registration request for Iver Heath Fields been submitted and, if not, specifically when will this be done?
2. What is the process regarding timing, confirmation and acceptance of the re-registration and can we be advised accordingly when the re-registration is successful?

The Chair advised that he would ask the Locum Clerk to respond with this information within a week. It was also stated that the Parish Council will review the current Community Asset register.

A fourth member of the public referred to an initiative called Trees for Streets and asked if something regarding trees could be looked into for grass verges which may prevent cars parking on verges. Cllr Wendy Matthews (also a Unitary Councillor) stated that the responsibility for this laid with Buckinghamshire Council and that there is an application process to follow. Cllr Luisa Sullivan (Unitary Councillor) supported the idea and stated working with the Local Area Technician was needed.

466/22

MINUTES

Resolved that:

The minutes of the meeting of Council on 16th January 2023 be agreed as an accurate record of the meeting. The minutes were signed as such by the Chair.

467/22

CHAIR ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair referred to enforcement action at Mud Wharf / Clisby's Bridge stating that previously legal advice had been sought and provided and that enforcement action was underway. The Chair had ask Officers to provide an update on the actions taken by the Parish Council regarding this. Cllr Julie Cook raised that she had asked for a motion to be placed on this Agenda. The Chair confirmed this had been omitted by error.

The Chair announced that we are moving into Phase 2 of the Neighbourhood Planning process and that the committee for this would be reconvened including members of the Resident's Associations.

Reference was made to the recent Civility and Respect training in February and Councillors were reminded that they had received the slides from the event for their reading. It was also pointed out that there is an expectation that the behaviours highlighted within that document should be demonstrated during the meeting.

468/22

COMMITTEE MINUTES

The following minutes of Committee meetings were received:

- i. Planning Committee – 10 January, 7 February & 7 March 2023
- ii. Open Spaces & Highways Committee – 25 January 2023
- iii. Staffing Committee – 23 January, 9 February & 7 March 2023
- iv. Facilities & Events Committee – 1st March 2023

A query was raised concerning the attendance lists at Staffing Committee meetings and the Officers would review these and make any appropriate amendments.

469/22

MOTION IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER 9

The following written motion had been moved, in accordance with Standing Order 9, by Councillor Stanhope:

That, regarding the path at Iver Recreation Ground the parish council should:

- require the contractor to make good all the faults along the path;
- calculate the distance of the path.
- change the drain run to make safe; and
- seek professional advice and quotes for further drainages works as discussed at the March 2022 meeting of the Open Spaces & Highways Committee.

In a lengthy discussion, concerns were raised about the current standard of the path as constructed, the actual length of the path versus what had been paid for and the health and safety aspects of the current stoned French drainage in place.

It was explained that the construction took place early autumn and there was always a plan to revisit the construction in early spring noting that there had been significant rainfall in December and January that would have hampered any attempt to 'make good' the grassing around the path as grass seed

would have been washed away. It was further pointed out that the Contractor was returning during week commencing 20th March as previously agreed to look at the current state of the path particularly considering the recent poor weather and to plan remedial work required.

It was further stated that the drainage solution had dramatically reduced flooding at the end of the recreation ground but inevitably in the very bad torrential rain flooding was unavoidable. This fact was challenged as part of the discussion. The plan has always been to remove a layer of the stones, place a membrane in the ditch and topsoil and re-seed.

It was suggested that a contract known as JCT (Joint Contracts Tribunal) should have been in place for this project.

A further discussion took place concerning the process and a member of the public interjected raising concerns that the Council were not acting as a 'team' and that it appeared attempts were being made to apportion blame and that needed to be stopped in order to move forward.

One Member raised some serious health and safety concerns around the French drain and the size of the stones used highlighting the Recreation Ground was a play area for children. The Deputy Clerk pointed out that it was planned that, once it had been confirmed the drainage was working, a layer of the stones currently in place would be removed, a membrane put in place, top soiled and grass seeded.

Resolved that:

- a) The contractor returns to make good all the faults along the path.
- b) The distance of the path is not re-calculated.
- c) The drainage is changed to make the area safe.
- d) The Chair does not apologise to the member of the public. This is based on a majority vote by Council.

The item concerning seeking professional advice for further drainage works was not carried.

470/22

FINANCE

a. **RESOLVED** that:

The accounts for payment for January 2023 at a total of £40,386.15 and for February 2023 totalling £52,128.70 be agreed.

b. The Council received the comparison of expenditure/income against budget for the period of 01/04/23 to 13/03/23.

c. Cllr Stanhope reported that he had completed all bank reconciliations to date.

471/22

EARMARKED RESERVES

The current list of Ear Marked Reserves at Appendix 9.1 were received. Some comments were made about the descriptions, it was advised that where possible, unless the current description identified an 'expected spend date' should be identified. One Member raised a question regarding the entry of £57,350 at the top of page 3. The Deputy Clerk stated that he would need to take that question away as he was not the Responsible Financial Officer and in the absence of the Locum Clerk who is the RFO he could not answer that question.

Resolved that:

That the two earmarked reserves described respectively as "Grounds Maintenance Van" and "Tractor" be amalgamated into one reserve to be described as "Vehicles".

That the earmarked reserved described as "Iver Heath Rec LHR funding" (with a nil balance) be deleted.

That (as indicated during budget 2023/24 discussions) an earmarked reserve described as "Projects to Reduce Building Energy Costs" be created and the sum unspent as at 31 March 2023 against code 8400/1 (Heat & Hot Water Systems Pavilions) be transferred there. This sum is £48,270.00 as of 13 March 2023.

That (as indicated during budget 2023/24 discussions) an earmarked reserve described as "Highways Lighting Projects" be created and the sum unspent as at 31 March 2023 against code 8530/4 (same description) be transferred there. This sum is £19,384.60 as of 13 March 2023.

472/22 CORPORATE RISK REGISTER

The Corporate Risk Register at Appendix 10.1 was received. It was noted that there was an outstanding action at line 38 listed as Councillors at risk of assault was denoted in red as to be debated by Council 2022 and this had not occurred.

473/22 A CONSULTATION ON THE FURTHER DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WARD BOUNDARIES IN BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

Having considered the Boundary Commission report and recommendations it was

Resolved that.

the Locum Clerk would respond to the consultation to say that the Council supported the alignment of the unitary ward boundary with the Ivers Parish boundary but would request that there were 3 Councillors allocated to the ward, given the very high workload experienced here.

474/22 KING'S CORONATION

This item was moved up the Agenda as any decisions made in this item might impact the Grant Applications at Item 12.

A further discussion took place concerning the change in budget for the event taking into account the Officers view, the initial proposal of £5,000 was reduced to £2,500 in order to assist with the reduction of the tax burden on residents.

It was noted that £400 had been committed to provide toilet facilities at the Iver Recreation Ground for the event. Officers have already reserved these with the contractor used last summer.

A question was raised as to whether the regular summer hanging baskets could be delivered in time for the Coronation weekend. The Deputy Clerk confirmed that the provider had said this would not be possible. It was not agreed to hire winter hanging baskets that could be in place across the Parish in time for the Coronation.

It was **Resolved** to provide each child at the schools in the Parish with a disposable Coronation cup and for them to be encouraged to attend the event with their families on the 8th May where they could use the cup.

The idea of re-usable fabric bunting for use across the Parish was suggested and ideas of costings were raised.

Resolved that:

£300 be spent on Bunting.

The matters above to be further considered by the Facilities and Events Committee.

475/22 DATE, VENUE AND AGENDA FOR THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

To note that when the calendar of meetings was set for the current civic year a date for the Annual Parish Meeting was omitted. By law the meeting must be held between 1 March and 1 June each year and Council is asked to consider when and where this meeting should be held in 2023 and what the keynote item should address. The agenda of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on 7 March 2022 is attached at Appendix 14.1 for information.

It was agreed for the new Locum Clerk to arrange the Annual Parish Meeting and arrange a date to enable the Locum Clerk to attend.

476/22 GRANT APPLICATIONS

12.1 – Iver Village Residents Association.

It was further noted that the Resident's Association had approached various other businesses / organisations to seek funding for the event on 8th May 2023. The Chair highlighted that for the last event Pinewood Studios kindly supplied staging and sound equipment, and this could be an opportunity to explore again.

Resolved that:

A grant of up to £2,000 be made available with the RA returning money should other financial assistance be successful.

12.2 – Iver Heath Residents Association

Resolved that:

£150 is granted towards the cost of refreshments for volunteers participating in the Great British Clean / Ivers Community Challenge on 1st April 2023.

12.3 – Ivers War Grave Working Group

After discussion, it was **Resolved** that the grant isn't made but that the Parish Council would purchase small wreaths from the Royal British Legion

that could be placed on all the War Graves at both Churchyards / Burial Grounds in the Parish.

12.4 – Iver Village Infant School and Nursery

Resolved that:

The request for a grant of £1,275 is not made and it is suggested the school encourages attendance at the main Ivers event on Monday 8th May in the Iver Recreation Ground.

476/22

CIVILITY AND RESPECT – NEXT STEPS

The Chair highlighted the training that had been held on 20th February 2023 and the fact that the slides from that session had been shared with Council. He encouraged other Councillors to take up training opportunities around this subject. Concerns were raised around the lack of pre-training documentation including an Agenda and learning outcomes. A Councillor highlighted that they had requested some further information highlighted in the slides but had not received any to date. The Deputy Clerk pointed out that the signing of the charter was as a council in whole and not by individual councillors.

477/22

IMPROVEMENTS AND EFFECTIVENESS

The point was raised about moving the Full Council meeting around venues across the whole Parish to make the opportunity to attend more feasible for residents in other parts of the Parish.

The meeting ended at 8.59pm

Signed Chair

Date