

East Ilsley Parish Council

MINUTES of the PARISH COUNCIL Meeting

Held on Tuesday 16th July 2019 at 7:30pm

In The Ilsleys Primary School, Church Hill, East Ilsley

Minute Reference: 005/160719/PCM

Those present: B McGrath (Acting Chair), S Meadows, C Culver, A Sharp (arrived 19:47), F Woods (Clerk)

Members of the public: 19

Members of the Press: 1

The meeting started at 19:37

1 Apologies for absence

No apologies were received but A Sharp had advised that due to arriving back from London he would miss the start of the meeting.

2 Any declarations of pecuniary interests by members or the Clerk

There were none.

3 To receive: Questions or comments from the Public and Declarations of Interest

Stuart Hall – on behalf of the residents of Sunrise Hill regarding the planning application for Ilsley Farm Barns.

Mr Hall advised that the residents were to object to the Planning Application made by Beeswax Dyson for the redevelopment of Ilsley Farm Barns from disused agricultural barns to a small business development. There were several factors contributing to their objection and they are: Highways impact, AONB, viability, Ecology and limited public consultation on the matter.

Mr Hall explained each one in turn:

- 1) Highways – currently there is a single-track road which can't support the traffic this would bring to the development. The plans include 'roller shutter doors' which lead to the impression that larger vehicles would be present on the site. This would have a burden on local infrastructure not just Sunrise Hill. The junction is dangerous and will increase traffic through the village and to the A34. The A34 slip road is notoriously short and dangerous.
- 2) AONB – We are in an AONB and this development would bring an increase in traffic. The proposals to the buildings are good, they retain an agricultural look, but the large area of car parking and increased flow of traffic is not conducive to an AONB.
- 3) Viability – Currently, in our surrounding area there are several other units that are unlet. We should consider why those are not filled. Why build more if there is no requirement for them. Local jobs could be hindered as opposed to increased.
- 4) Ecology – The report stated that there was nothing of interest there. What about bats, badgers and the large area of grassland for other animals. This has not been considered. Most old barns have roosting bats which are protected. This needs to be looked at in more detail.
- 5) Public Consultation – The pre-application report advised there was a community consultation, the residents are unsure if this was the case. The standard orange site notice was put up but was not there long. No letters were sent to the 6 dwellings that are immediately impacted by West Berkshire Council.

Due to all this new information they would like the Parish Council to consider amending their previous submission of 'No Objection'.

Other areas of concern were raised such as light pollution – lights are not going off outside of office hours as there will be security for the units installed. This will cause light pollution and there is a concern for the wildlife, particularly Owls. The hours of work are currently undisclosed which could impact the residents of Sunrise Hill. Refuse and litter – building materials refuse collections for units and large piece of foam insulation left abandoned. It is a windy site so litter will move around the area. This was the end of the 12 minutes public speaking time allocated.

The councillors spoke after to address some of the issues:

C Culver – 5 objections had been made already. If 10 are received it is sent to the Western Planning Meeting. The Planning Department are waiting for more information from Highways regarding the safety of the junction. AONB have not replied yet to the application. The orange sign is the only thing that West Berkshire Council are obliged to do. The letters sent to residents close by was abandoned to save costs. Potentially, better communications with residents on the planning procedure should be made by the applicant. C Culver is happy to send information to people if they request it.

S Meadows – There was a presentation in Autumn last year by Beeswax Dyson regarding this very proposal. Only one person turned up to the initial meeting. A Planning Meeting was held on 24th June 2019 which was published using the usual channels (Noticeboard, Website, Facebook, Twitter) but was not well attended (two members of the public were present).

West Ilsley have an email list – can we have the same thing? Direct communications might be a better way to inform people of meetings taking place. Not everyone has social media, visits the noticeboard or looks at the Parish Council website.

Communications: The village needs to engage more and get people to the meetings. How else can we advertise these meetings?

Dog Owners / Dogs in Villages – there is a serious delay in the cutting of the pathways. Can we buy something or contract someone to undertake this in between WBC cuts? We don't have the finances to pay for all the areas to be cut regularly.

4 Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting on 28th May 2019 (minute ref: 003/280519/APM) and the minutes of the Planning Meeting on 24th June 2019 (minute ref: 004/240619/P) were read out, agreed and signed by the Chair.

5 Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Council Meeting

There were no matters raised.

6 Election of a new Councillor

Tracey Murray would like to stand as Councillor on the Parish Council. Tracey was proposed by A Sharp and seconded by S Meadows. Tracey is now a member of the Parish Council and will be referred to in the minutes henceforth as T Murray.

7 Councillors Response to the Internal Audit Recommendations

There were five actions points from the Internal Audit and each were discussed during this meeting. Recommendation 1: To update Standing Order to incorporate a reference to the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

- The Councillors agreed for this inclusion and the Clerk will make the amendments
- Public speaking time at Parish Council Meetings – it was proposed to change the speaking time to 10 minutes at the start of the meeting and 10 minutes at the end of the meeting. The Chairman can use their discretion to allow for extra time. All were in favour of this. It was agreed that the Chair could allow an extra 5 minutes to each section totalling 15 minutes at the start and 15 minutes at the end of the meeting. Clerk will make the necessary amendments to the document.

Recommendation 2: The Council should review their Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

- Both documents were circulated to the Councillors prior to the meeting. With the inclusion of the above amendments the Councillors have reviewed and accepted the documents for this financial year.

Recommendation 3: To include reference to GDPR in the Council's Risk Assessment

- The Clerk was unable to find examples of this via NALC / BALC so will investigate this further and present the findings at the next meeting.

Recommendation 4: To comply with the Transparency Code in accordance to the guidelines

- The Clerk has confirmed that all documents required to be displayed both on the Parish Notice Board and the Website were actioned in the specified time frame. We have met this recommendation for this financial year.

Recommendation 5: The Council's response to the Internal Audit Recommendations should be contained in the minutes of the meeting

- The Clerk has confirmed that the Councillor's responses will be recorded in the minutes.
- The Councillors would like to thank our Internal Auditors, Heelis & Lodge for all their work on this and we will duly respond to all actions required of us.

8 Review of Standing Orders

Please see above for the Council's comments on this.

9 Review of Financial Regulations

Please see above for the Council's comments on this.

10 Review of the Risk Assessment

Please see above for the Council's comments on this. An example to include GDPR will be sourced and presented at the next meeting.

11 Review of the Asset Register

The Clerk spend some time in the village checking all the contents of our Asset Register. This has depleted in the past year in terms of equipment still in use. The Clerk will remove the items no longer in our possession and update accordingly. A query was raised as to whether we need to calculate depreciation value of items. Since this meeting the Clerk has investigated and discovered this:

Local councils must maintain an asset register to ensure fixed assets are appropriately safeguarded. Once recorded on the asset register, the value of assets must not change from year to year until disposal. Concepts of depreciation and impairment adjustments are not appropriate for local councils.

The Clerk will make the necessary changes and update the register.

12 Community Emergency Plan

As a village we do not have one in place. West Berkshire Council has sent a template and we plan to get a working party together to prepare this document. This will be re-visited after the summer holidays so the School, Church and Public Houses can all work together on devising a plan. The Clerk will set up a meeting and attend some training to assist with drafting a proposal.

13 Funding for Wildflowers and Community Orchard

Wildflower funding – We would like to see more areas devoted to wildflowers. WBC cut back less verges in rural areas, as a result some wildflowers start growing but we have the chance to develop this. It was agreed to provide £50 from the Parish Council to purchase seeds and C Culver will seek match funding from WBC. All agreed to give the funding.

Community Orchard – We would like to see more tree planting for an orchard in each village. We can use part of the common field, but we would need to fence it. There is match funding available to help us. Quote has been received for £1500 for 140m of fencing. We need to work out whether we can we get the money, and can we use the common field for this? Are there any regulations on the common field? C Culver to speak to Natural England and find out. We could lose the grant we get for Prestwell Field.

14 Clerk's Financials

Monthly statements were discussed and the in / out of money was explained for June. The Brush Cutter purchase is to go ahead with the quotation from Kalehurst. Money will be taken from Earmarked Reserves to help fund it. The split of finances was agreed as 50% from the Tractor Fund, 40% from the CIL fund and the find 10% to come from the current bank account funds. The Clerk will arrange all this, and S Meadows will collect and receive the training on how to use it.

15 Matters for future consideration and discussion including correspondence received

Swimbrels, Newbury Hill, Hampstead Norreys, Berkshire, RG18 OTR
07912 565665 clerk@eastilsley-pc.gov.uk

The Council will consider the purchase of a Generator to aid in heating should there be any issues with power in the village.

Pond & Flood Warden: Ours has now retired and we need to fill the vacancy. We have work to do on the pond as it is not emptying properly as silt stops it from flowing freely. Work needs to be done soon to get this ready for Autumn / Winter. The Clerk will try and locate the 2008 paperwork on what was done.

A request for new Housing in the Village– The Clerk has received information on housing that could be built in the village. Clerk will send this to C Culver. The plan has been altered from the last submission. It was suggested to invite them to a meeting and the Clerk will action this.

Water Bill at the Allotment – We are not metered. No switch as will become metered and that will impact the cost.

16 Reports of Meetings Attended

No meetings were attended.

17 To receive: Further questions or comments from members of the public

Stuart Hall asked the Council if we would consider revoking our support based on the arguments given today. A Sharp explained about the provision of mph. The Council have agreed to meet with Beeswax Dyson for a further meeting so we can discuss the new information and we will decide on our course of action after that meeting. We will communicate the decision with the Villagers and West Berkshire Council after the meeting with Beeswax Dyson. C Culver re-iterated that importance of 10 or more letters of objection and confirmed that we can advise West Berkshire Council of any new decisions after this meeting.

The meeting closed at 21:15 and the Chairman would like to thank everyone who joined us this evening.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 17th September 2019, 7.30pm at The Ilsleys Primary School.