

East Ilsley Parish Council

MINUTES of the PARISH COUNCIL Meeting

Held on Tuesday 14th January 2020 at 7:30pm

In The Ilsleys Primary School, Church Hill, East Ilsley

Minute Reference: 009/14012020/PCM

Those present: A Sharp (Acting Chair), S Meadows, T Murray, F Woods (Clerk)

Members of the public: 4

The meeting started at 19:32

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from B McGrath and F Wilkins. We are quorate.

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

- 1) Community Orchard – it was commented upon that the area what had been cleared for the new community orchard was quite large. Had we considered allowing some of this space to be used as additional car parking as there is a shortage of this in the village. Due to the location of the orchard there are often horseboxes that use the stables and have difficulty turning around. SM commented that there remains parking available to the left hand side, the area cleared for the orchard should only be used for this purpose and we are not in a position to provide extra parking for the village. We would also not be putting up any additional signage regarding keeping entrances clear or where to identify car parking space as this would 'endorse' it is a car park when it is not.

4 Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on 14th November 2019 were read and signed as a true and accurate representation.

5 Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Council Meeting

There were no matters raised.

6 Assisting St Mary's Church with Grounds Maintenance

The clerk advised that a number of local parish councils assist their parish church financially for grounds maintenance on a yearly basis. It was proposed that East Ilsley Parish Council could do the same. After some discussion and assurance that this would be for grass cutting of the graveyard (and not the fabric of the building) it was proposed the we offer £450 per financial year to support the church with their grass cutting. This figure was proposed by SM and seconded by TM. The rest of the council agreed. We will pay this via BACS to St Mary's church in April of each year and the amount will be reviewed annually at the budget meeting. This money will be allocated under 'Donation's made', cost centre 4320.

7 Parish Magazines

- a) EIC Printing Costs – this financial year we have received five invoices from West Berkshire Council Print room for the cost of printing the EIC for each edition. A verbal agreement was in place (via the editor Matthew Pembroke and Pete Guest from WBC) that each edition would cost between £100 and £150. The five invoices received vary in expense of between £100 and £248 for each edition which is much more than the verbal agreement and with not knowing what the print cost would be, it makes it very difficult to budget and forecast this expense in the future. The clerk has obtained 2 additional quotations from local printers and one from Bradfield Printers has quoted £150 per edition. It was agreed to trial the next print run in February with Bradfield Printers to check the quality and ease of the job. If we are satisfied with the final result, we would like to propose a one

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year contract with Bradfield Printers which will allow us to fix the budget and have more control over our finances. The Clerk will write a letter to the Print Room at West Berkshire Council asking for validation on why there are varying print costs for each issue and advise that the most recent invoice will not be paid (£248.00) until we have resolved the fluctuating pricing.

- b) Compilations – In a previous meeting it was raised that our involvement with Compilations was not only an additional expense, but the information provided was always a duplicate of what was in the EIC. As a council, we no longer are in the position to continue to contribute and support Compilations due to budgetary constraints. All were in support of this (including BMcG via WhatsApp message). The Clerk will write a letter to Compton Parish Council informing them of this decision. It has been proposed that the Clerk will purchase five copies of each new issue from Compton Stores and deliver to the pubs and Hildesley Court as a gesture of goodwill. The Clerk will claim this back as expenses. We will trial this for one year and review at the next budget meeting.

8 2020/2021 Budget Plan / Analysis / Agreement

Prior to this meeting the Clerk had circulated a draft budget proposal for 2020/2021 to the council and this was used as a basis for the discussion and key points are noted below:

- Precept – last financial year this was set at £13,650.00. It was proposed to increase this by inflation (2%) and include an additional £500 to help us with the Pond and Flood alleviation. 2% on to £13,650.00 = £13,928.57, + £500 towards Pond and Flood = £14,428.57. Rounding this number to £14,430.00. The precept is paid in 2 equal instalments so the Clerk will request for £7,215.00 for each payment.
- Playground – the budget proposal states that we will get a number of grant awards totalling £60,000. Although this is our aim, we will amend this to read £45,000. We will still contribute £15,000 but these numbers are more realistic at this stage when we do not have visibility of all the awards due into us. If we gain more income than predicted that is not going to cause us any issues. We will also reduce the proposed expenditure for the Playground from £75,000.00 to £60,000.00 to reflect this. The Clerk will also transfer the £4,700 received from the insurance claim into the Playground EMR.
- Earmarked Reserves – It was agreed that we would move money around our earmarked reserves in the following ways:
 - Create a new EMR called 'Flood' and have an opening balance of £500, the money will come from the additional Precept request
 - Create a new EMR called 'Emergency Planning' and have an opening balance of £5,074, the money is calculated by adding the £3,074.00 cost of the emergency equipment and £2,000 for the cost of a small container to house the equipment in. We will receive 50% back from WBC for the cost of the equipment thanks to the grant awarded last year (£1,536.51 approx.).
 - Remove the EMR for 'Tractor' as we no longer need to buy one. The £1,047.34 currently sat in those reserves will be transferred to the 'Emergency Planning' EMR.
 - Reduce the 'Land Registration' EMR from £2,500.00 to £2,000.00 and transfer £500.00 to the 'Emergency Planning EMR.
 - The 'Play Area Repair / Replace' EMR will be topped up to £15,150.00 (from £500.00) to ringfence the £15,000.00 we will pay towards the upgrade and £150.00 to cover the next playground inspection costs. Also, include the £4,700 from the insurance claim for the damaged train and carriages.
- S.137 Expenditure – this has been increased for the next financial year to £8.32 per resident. We will increase the budget to £3,500.00.
- Clerk Fees – It has been discovered that the Clerk has been paid at the 2018 hourly rate for L1 SCP 15 @ £17,972 per annum (£9.34 per hour) and not the NALC agreed salary award for 2019 which should have been L1 SCP 15 @ £18,795 per annum (£9.77 per hour). As this Parish Council work within the models issued by NALC it was agreed by all present that the Clerk should be 'back paid' the amount owed to her from 1st May 2019 to 31st December 2019. January 2020 salary will be calculated using the revised rate of £9.77 per hour. At her annual review on 1st May 2020 it was agreed by all that this salary would again be reviewed in line with her recent completion of the iLCA qualification and her continued professional development working towards the CiLCA Clerk Qualification. The Spinal Column Points will be adjusted at the annual review to reflect this continuing professional development. The Clerk will adjust the Clerk

Fees budget for 2020/21 to accommodate this and will let the councillors know the cost of the back pay.

The Clerk will make the above amendment to the budget and distribute via email for full council approval.

9 Parish Precept

As discussed above, the precept for 2020/2021 was proposed to increase by inflation (2%) and include an additional £500 to help us with the Pond and Flood alleviation. 2% on to £13,650.00 = £13,928.57, + £500 towards Pond and Flood = £14,428.57. Rounding this number to £14,430.00. The precept is paid in 2 equal instalments so the Clerk will request for £7,215.00 for each payment. The Clerk will complete the application form and send back to WBC before the 31st January 2020 deadline.

10 Appoint the Internal Auditors for March 2020

It was unanimously agreed to appoint Heelis & Lodge again as our internal auditors. They know how we work, and the process last year was seamless. All were in favour of this appointment.

11 VE Day Celebrations – 8th May 2020

It was proposed that we might hold a village event to celebrate VE day on the revised early summer bank holiday on 8th May. Various options were discussed such as a street party. It was agreed that a working party was needed to help with the plans. One area which held potential for a street party was Haydons Lane. This would mean limiting the number of road closures and would allow easy access for residents of Hildesley Court to join in. We can also look into the 'Big Lunch Company' which is a joint venture of the Eden Project and the National Lottery. The official 'Big Lunch' is on 6th and 7th June 2020 so a it later than the bank holiday but there may well be a way of using their resources to help us. It was agreed by all it would be good to hold a village event but there would be no fireworks.

12 West Berkshire Library Donation Request

The Clerk ran a poll on our Facebook page to find out how many people in the village used the Library (or the mobile library). 17% said they used it (plus extras who confirmed face to face from Hildesley Court). AS proposed that we donated £100.00 towards West Berkshire Libraries using S.137 and this was agreed by all present. The justification for this donation was based on the fact that many of our families use the library during school holidays as they run a lot of activities for children. The mobile library is also popular with Hildesley Court residents and we would not like to see the decline in that service. This motion was seconded by SM and agreed by all. The Clerk will make the donation from 2019/2020 budget.

13 Clerk Update

- 1) TM will be added as a signatory on the bank account to relieve the pressure on BMcG and AS. As BMcG was not present to sign the Clerk will bring it to him to sign.
- 2) Finance reports were read out for December (low spend) and January 2020 (as at 14th January). It is predicted to be a higher spend month due to donations explained above and the Clerk's salary and back pay.
- 3) The Clerk has received three quotations for storage containers for the Emergency Equipment. After reviewing the pricing, it was agreed by all to purchase the 10ft newly converted storage container from 'Containers 4 Sale UK' at a cost of £1,795.00 (ex. VAT). Once this is in place, we can order the emergency kit from WBC.
- 4) The Play Inspection Company completed a full inspection of our playground in December 2019. This was scheduled in January 2019 with the previous Clerk and this was not handed over in May 2019. Subsequently, a full inspection and report has been issued at a cost of £180.00. BMcG is speaking with the Director and the payment is pending on our bank account. The report was very good and gave some excellent information on what we need to do. SM will fix one of the damaged benches. He will visit the site at the weekend, collect the wood from Barlow's and they will invoice us for the work. We can use the insurance money from the train to cover this. The Clerk will cancel any further inspections until our playground is complete. We will review the report in full at the next Parish Council meeting in March.

14 Further Questions and Comments from the Public

- 1) It was recalled that Mr William Main of Manor Oak Housing advised last year he could assist with preparing a 'Housing Needs' survey. The Clerk will email Mr Main and find out how this can be started.
- 2) The next District Parish Conference takes place on Thursday 12th March at 6.30pm at WBC Offices in Newbury. Councillors should add to their diaries.
- 3) A reminder was issued about the Pirbright Institute Open Afternoon / Evening happening on 21st January at the Village Hall in Compton. All residents are urged to go and make some noise about how this will affect East Ilsley.
- 4) Storm Brendan has caused a small tree to fall and block the pavement near Maxted Farm. This needs to be logged with WBC on their portal.
- 5) Playground – have we considered a bike / scooter trail? This could help with easing the cost of new equipment and give more opportunity for play down at the recreation ground in a safe way.

The meeting closed at 21:16 and the Chairman would like to thank everyone who joined us this evening.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 10th March 2020, 7.30pm at The Ilsleys Primary School.

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Chair

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Date