

**MINUTES OF THE ICKLEFORD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
THURSDAY 4 OCTOBER 2018, ICKLEFORD VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30PM**

Present: Parish Councillors M Maxwell (Chairman), R Blake (Vice Chairman), M Barber, P Crowe, C Gooden, R Harper and C Thurstance

Officer present: Mrs Danielle Weetman (Parish Clerk)

Also present for part of the meeting: County Cllr D Barnard, District Cllr H Spencer-Smith and 1 member of the public.

66. Apologies for absence

66.1 Apologies were received from Cllr K Goldie and PCSO S Halbert. District Cllr H Spencer-Smith sent apologies for late arrival.

67. Chairman's Notice

67.1 Cllr Maxwell read out the announcement on openness and transparency.

68. Declaration of Interests

68.1 No declarations of interest relating to items on the agenda were received.

68.2 No written requests for dispensation for declarable interests relating to items on the agenda were received.

68.3 No requests for dispensation were received.

69. Minutes of the previous meeting

69.1 Following a proposal from Cllr Crowe which was seconded by Cllr Blake it was **resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 6 September 2018 be approved and the Chairman of this meeting was authorised to sign them as a true record of the meeting.

70. Public Participation Session

70.1 There was one member of the public in attendance at the meeting in relation to agenda item 73.1. This agenda item was therefore discussed at this point of the meeting for expedience. The information relating to item 73.1 can be found under that item.

71. Police Report

71.1 PCSO Halbert sent a report noting that eight crimes had been recorded for September compared with four crimes for the same period last year. An overview of these crimes was given.

Following on from concerns raised by parents, PCSO Halbert has attended on Upper Green during school pick-up time in the afternoon to monitor parking on double yellow lines; formal letters will be posted to owners of vehicles that have parked here illegally. Sgt Oliphant is in the process of organising a meeting with the school to discuss how this matter can be dealt with going forward. High visibility patrols have been conducted in the parish during the daytime and evening, including at Ickleford Burial Ground and Little Park allotments.

Councillors were advised that there had been low attendance from residents at the monthly drop-in sessions this year. Following discussion, it was agreed that a more effective use of our PCSO resource might be increased walking patrols in Ickleford and that this will be introduced for a trial period instead of the drop-in sessions.

The Clerk will advise PCSO Halbert and St Katharine's Church accordingly. **Action: Cllk**

72. Reports from County and District Councillors

72.1 Report from County Councillor

County Cllr Barnard confirmed that the replacement bus shelter had been installed on Bedford Road. Councillors noted thanks to County Cllr Barnard for his assistance in this matter. Salt supplies for dealing with winter weather are now available from Hertfordshire County Council should parish or town councils wish to replenish their stocks. There has been a recent wave of crime in rural areas which targeted outbuilding and vans; an OWL message was issued from Hertfordshire Police with advice on measures that can be taken to help prevent theft.

County Cllr Barnard has agreed to contact the owners of the land adjacent to Arnold's Farm to request that the overgrown hedge is cut back to improve visibility for vehicles. Funding has also been made available from County Cllr Barnard for new white lines at the junction of Boswell Drive and Chambers Lane; these will be brought out from the current location to assist with visibility.

Councillors were advised that funding is available via the Locality scheme if there are any eligible projects that would benefit from this.

County Cllr Barnard left the meeting.

72.2 Report from District Councillor

The Inspector for the Examination in Public of the North Hertfordshire District Plan (NHDC) Local Plan has indicated that his report will be published in the next few weeks. Following on from the publication of his report, a public consultation will be held about these amendments only.

Councillors were advised that the bin collection service seems to be improving. Both the UK Director and also the Regional Director of Urbaser attended the recent NHDC Overview & Scrutiny Committee to report on the issues experienced by residents of north Hertfordshire. Ongoing problems with bin collection in Ickleford were highlighted; these have been reported to NHDC, and District Cllr Spencer-Smith will also follow up on these.

The large number of responses to the revised planning application at site LS1 was noted. The earliest date this application is expected to be considered by the NHDC Planning Control Committee is November.

District Cllr Spencer-Smith left the meeting.

73. **On-going Projects**

73.1 Neighbourhood Planning

Councillors noted receipt of the minutes from the Neighbourhood Plan meeting which was held on Monday 24 September 2018.

The Steering Group also sent a report outlining their current activities and priorities which included distribution of a flyer about the Neighbourhood Plan to all households in Ickleford, and the development of dedicated website and Facebook pages for the Neighbourhood Plan project.

The member of the public left the meeting.

73.2 Reform of Data Protection legislation and introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

The Clerk is investigating alternative options to the current format of the Parish Council's email address and will update on this at a future meeting

73.3 Centenary of the First World War armistice

Councillors noted the report circulated by Cllr Maxwell prior to the meeting which included the finalised timetable of events in Ickleford and estimated cost of the village's commemoration of the First World War armistice.

Arboriculturalists have advised that the proposed location at Ickleford Burial Ground would be appropriate to site the commemorative oak tree and that the roots of this tree would not affect the graves. In addition, Ickleford Burial Ground Trust has confirmed its agreement with the proposed siting of the tree and also the commemorative tree planting ceremony which will be held at the Burial Ground. Cllr Maxwell noted that Bowman's has offered a financial donation towards the cost of purchasing the tree. Two local businesses have also offered financial support for Ickleford's armistice commemorations.

A musician will be sought from one of the Hitchin secondary schools to play 'The Last Post'.

Action: RB/MM

Following a proposal from Cllr Crowe which was seconded by Cllr Gooden it was **resolved**:

- To purchase a wreath from the Parish Council to mark the centenary of the First World War armistice at a cost of £18.99.
- That the Parish Council co-ordinate the purchase of additional wreaths on behalf of village organisations as a one-off gesture to facilitate the First World War centenary armistice commemorations in Ickleford. The cost of each wreath is £18.99 and each organisation will be responsible for the entire cost of their wreath.
- That the Parish Council contribute up to a maximum of £400.00 towards the cost of the commemorations in Ickleford marking the centenary of the First World War armistice.

Cllr Maxwell proposed that one of the readings at the tree planting ceremony be given by Cllr Crowe and that Cllr Thurstance lay the Parish Council's wreath in recognition of their service to the village.

- 73.4 Maintenance of Christmas Common and Common Land to the north of Longmeadow Drive
Cllr Thurstance confirmed that the quote of £600.00 (+VAT) from Phil Kirk included all labour and materials for the remedial work on Common Land to the north of Longmeadow Drive. The work will involve cutting back the trees, strimming and tidying this area, cultivating the cleared area and sowing with a good quality grass seed.

Following a proposal from Cllr Thurstance which was seconded by Cllr Gooden, it was **resolved** to authorise Phil Kirk to carry out the proposed remedial work on the Common Land to the north of Longmeadow Drive for a total cost of £600.00 (+VAT) for labour and materials.

Action: Clk

District Cllr Spencer-Smith joined the meeting.

- 73.5 S106 funds
NHDC has advised that it may be possible to use the available S106 funds to replace some of the safety surfaces around the equipment at the children's play area. Whilst the current surfaces meet safety requirements, the Parish Council is mindful of the increasing maintenance costs of the bark pits at the play area.

It was agreed that quotes be obtained for replacement safety surfaces for the three bark pits at the children's play area: **Action: PC/Clk**

Agenda item 72.2 (Report from District Councillor) was discussed at this point of the meeting due to the arrival of District Cllr Spencer-Smith. The information relating to item 72.2 can be found under that item.

- 73.6 Yellow lines on Witter Avenue by the junction with Arlesey Road
Cllr Barber gave an overview of his meeting with Sgt Oliphant and PCSO Halbert to discuss the safety concerns raised by residents and the Parish Council. The police noted that it may be possible to increase the length of the yellow lines and/or take other remedial actions.

Hertfordshire Highways have confirmed that they intend to carry out a site visit to assess the current situation and will also provide a report on this matter.

- 73.7 Road traffic sign for ducks
Councillors discussed the available options for a road traffic sign for ducks to be installed near the bridge by Bowman's Mill.

Following a proposal from Cllr Crowe which was seconded by Cllr Harper, it was **resolved** to obtain one road traffic sign for ducks up to a maximum cost of £50.00. **Action: CG**

- 73.8 Maintenance of Lower Green
The meeting was advised that quotes for a tree survey will be requested from three contractors for consideration at a future meeting. **Action: KG/CT**

Cllr Barber reported that as the work due to be carried out on the ditch under Arlesey Road was not carried out as planned in August, he would remain in contact with the contractor to ensure a new date is confirmed as soon as possible. **Action: MB**

73.9 Installation of a Christmas Tree with lights on Upper Green and hosting a 'Lights Switch-On' evening this year

Cllr Harper updated the meeting on this project. The date of the tree lights switch-on evening has been changed to Friday 7 December as County Cllr Barnard is unable to attend on Friday 14 December. PCSO Halbert has been advised of the revised date and Cllr Harper will contact him to confirm attendance from the police. **Action: RH**

A local business has offered to supply this year's Christmas Tree, assist in putting it up on the Village Green, and also storing items related to the Christmas Tree.

It was agreed that the Clerk contact Ickleford School to request access for emergency vehicles. **Action: Clk**

Following a proposal from Cllr Blake which was seconded by Cllr Gooden, it was **resolved** to authorise expenditure up to £200.00 for items relating to this project and subject to presentation of receipts for reimbursement.

73.10 Road safety concerns at the junction of Boswell Drive & Chambers Lane

Cllr Barber summarised his recent meeting on site with Hertfordshire Highways to discuss the concerns raised by residents and the Parish Council as well as possible solutions.

As noted under item 72.1 (Report from County Councillor), it has been agreed to install new white lines at the junction of Boswell Drive and Chambers Lane; these will be brought out from the current location to assist with visibility. In addition, the owners of the land adjacent to Arnold's Farm will be contacted by County Cllr Barnard to request that the overgrown hedge is cut back to improve visibility for vehicles.

73.11 Maintenance of recreation ground

Cllr Crowe advised that repairs were carried out to the wooden fence along the edge of the sports field near to the children's play area by Colin Wainwright between meetings at a total cost of £115.00 for labour and materials. Some of the teams based at the sports club had contacted the Parish Council again between meetings to request this work be carried out urgently as their playing season had already started and they continued to lose a large number of balls underneath this fence into the shrubbery behind. The remedial work only included repairs to the wooden fence, and not the purchase and installation of mesh that had previously been requested by the teams.

Following a proposal from Cllr Crowe which was seconded by Cllr Harper, it was **resolved** to formally authorise Colin Wainwright to carry out the repairs to the wooden fence along the edge of the sports field near to the children's play area for a total cost of £115.00.

It was agreed that the teams based at the sports field could attach a suitable mesh fence to the existing wooden fence at their own expense if they felt this would assist in reducing the number of balls lost in the shrubbery.

The groundsman has obtained a quote outlining the proposed maintenance schedule for the pitches. Further quotes will be requested for consideration.

74. New Matters

74.1 Ickleford Pre-School events

Ickleford Pre-School has requested permission to hold a Halloween event on Upper Green on Monday 29 October to raise funds.

In addition, councillors discussed the possibility of providing authorisation at this meeting for future fundraising events by Ickleford Pre-School on Upper Green, subject to appropriate conditions, rather than approval being sought for each individual event.

Following a proposal from Cllr Thurstance which was seconded by Cllr Crowe, it was **resolved**:

- To approve Ickleford Pre-School's request to hold a Halloween event on Upper Green on Monday 29 October to raise funds. The Pre-School will be responsible for its own risk

assessment and insurance, and will also ensure litter relating to the event is cleared from Upper Green.

- To authorise future fundraising events by Ickleford Pre-School on Upper Green subject to the following conditions:
 - Ickleford Pre-School will notify the Parish Council about any such events in advance
 - Ickleford Pre-School will be responsible for its own risk assessment and insurance, and will also ensure litter relating to the event is cleared from Upper Green.

The Clerk will advise the Pre-School accordingly. **Action: Clk**

74.2 NHDC Southern Rural Committee Meeting

The NHDC Southern Rural Committee has asked parish councils if there are any specific items they would like to be included on the agenda for the Committee's December meeting. Following discussion, it was agreed to suggest S106 funding. **Action: Clk**

74.3 Proposed community litter pick in Ickleford

Cllr Blake proposed the weekend of 13-14 October for the next community litter pick in Ickleford. NHDC has confirmed that the usual litter picking equipment, including litter pickers and hi-visibility jackets, could be used during that weekend.

Following a proposal from Cllr Crowe which was seconded by Cllr Gooden, it was **resolved** to carry out a community litter pick in Ickleford during the weekend of 13-14 October. Cllr Blake will co-ordinate this project and prepare an appropriate risk assessment. **Action: RB**

74.4 Maintenance of the natural river environment in Ickleford

Cllr Gooden outlined the concerns raised by a resident about the condition of the River Hiz in Ickleford, which is one of the few remaining chalk rivers in England. This matter has also been discussed with the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust (HMWT) and they would be willing to provide information that can be circulated to residents about how we can all assist in conserving the natural river environment.

It was agreed that Cllr Gooden contact the HMWT to discuss what information is available and how this can be disseminated to residents. **Action: CG**

74.5 Parking concerns raised by St Katharine's Church in relation to the car park located by St Katharine's Church, The Old George and No.39

Members of the public contacted the Parish Council about two cars displaying 'For Sale' notices that had been parked in the public car park by the church entrance for a number of days. Concerns were raised this restricted use of the car park by members of the public wishing to use the facilities located in this part of the village. The Parish Council requested advice from the appropriate authorities about this issue, however, the cars were moved on from these spaces before any action was taken.

Following discussion, it was agreed that this matter would be monitored. Should the issue persist, it will be raised at a future meeting.

74.6 Damage to boundary fence at Little Park allotments

A section of the boundary fencing near to the entrance gate at the Little Park allotment site was damaged between meetings; the incident has been reported to Hertfordshire Police. Following site visits by the Parish Council and PCSO Halbert, it would appear that entry was not gained to any of the outbuildings at the allotment site. However, allotment tenants have been asked to check their plots, sheds and greenhouses for any possible damage or missing items.

Approval was given between meetings for the boundary fence to be repaired by William Crosse up to a maximum cost of £60.00 (+VAT) to secure the allotment site.

Following a proposal from Cllr Blake which was seconded by Cllr Crowe, it was **resolved** to formally authorise William Crosse to repair the boundary fence at the Little Park allotment site up to a maximum cost of £60.00 (+VAT).

75. Planning Applications

To consider the following planning applications, including appropriate requests for infrastructure improvements:

75.1 18/01622/FP at Land to the east of Bedford Road and west of Old Ramerick Manor, Bedford Road, Ickleford, Hertfordshire

Erection of 144 dwellings, new vehicular access onto Bedford Road, associated garages and car parking spaces, public open space, landscaping and attenuation areas

Councillors noted the large number of objections submitted by residents during the consultation period for this planning application. Objections were also submitted by some of the consultees such as the Local Lead Flood Authority and CPRE – The Hertfordshire Society.

The Parish Council has been advised that that NHDC would like to consider the planning application in the context of the Inspector's report from the Examination in Public.

75.2 18/02510/FP at Land between Bedford Road and Old Ramerick Farm, Bedford Road, Holwell, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 3RX

Retention of a single track access road for farm traffic to Old Ramerick Farm

Following a proposal from Cllr Gooden which was seconded by Cllr Crowe, it was **resolved** that the Parish Council objected to this planning permission based on the impact of this access road on users of Footpath 1.

However, the Parish Council would like to propose the following remedies, and should these be implemented, the objection would be withdrawn:

- The dividing bank between Footpath 1 and the proposed new track should be planted and generally kept mown and tidy by the applicant to prevent excessive growth impeding the passage of vehicles/pedestrians. This is of particular concern as Footpath 1 is the road access point for the households at Old Ramerick Farm, and clear passage for refuse and emergency vehicles is necessary.
- At the eastern boundary, where the proposed track meets both Footpath 1 and the Bedford Road A600, the applicant should commit to maintenance of the road seal as a condition of retrospective planning permission being granted. This is due to heavy farm machinery turning sharply causing increased damage/wear at this location.

Action: RH/CIK

75.3 Planning applications received between 27 September and 4 October 2018

75.3.1 18/02564/FPH at The Round House, Westmill Lane, Ickleford, Hertfordshire, SG5 3RN
Full Permission Householder: Single storey rear extension and single storey side extension

The Clerk has requested an extension to the response deadline to enable discussion at the November meeting.

75.3.2 18/02083/FPH at 14 Claymore Drive, Ickleford, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 3UB

Full Permission Householder : Alterations to roof and construction of first floor rear extension, single storey side extension following demolition of existing garage and insertion of front dormer window

The Clerk has requested an extension to the response deadline to enable discussion at the November meeting.

76. Planning Decisions

76.1 18/01886/FPH at 33 Turnpike Lane

Full permission householder: Insertion of rear dormer window and front and rear velux windows to facilitate loft conversion

NHDC granted Conditional Permission on 10 September 2018

76.2 Planning decisions received between 27 September and 4 October 2018

None received

77. Finance

- 77.1 To consider that under Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 that the public and press should be excluded from item 55.2 of this agenda in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted

There were no members of the public and press present.

The Clerk left the room.

- 77.2 Clerk's annual appraisal, review of contracted hours and salary review
Councillors discussed the Clerk's appraisal and current contracted hours.

Following a proposal by Cllr Crowe which was seconded by Cllr Gooden it was **resolved** to increase the Clerk's salary from SCP 27 to SCP 28 with immediate effect and to pay overtime from September 2017 to September 2018 as per the Clerk's timesheet. It was further **resolved** to award a bonus of £250.00 to the Clerk in recognition of the work carried out for the NHDC Local Plan and Examination in Public.

It was also agreed that there would be no change to the Clerk's contracted hours and a record of hours worked would continue to be maintained.

The Clerk returned to the room.

Cllr Maxwell noted thanks to the Clerk for her work with the Parish Council and the wider village community.

- 77.3 Quarter 2 financial summary and bank reconciliations

A summary showing payments and receipts to the end of the second quarter was circulated prior to the meeting. This included information on the main areas of expenditure for the financial year to date.

Cllr Crowe has reviewed the bank reconciliations for this quarter and confirmed they were all satisfactory.

- 77.4 Annual Return 2017/18

The Clerk reported that PKF Littlejohn had completed their audit and there were no matters arising from this. The Notice of Conclusion of Audit, audited Annual Return and external auditor's report have been displayed as required.

It was agreed that the audited Annual Return and external auditor's report be accepted.

- 77.5 Notification of receipts since the last meeting and payments made between meetings

The Clerk noted receipts and payments made between meetings as detailed in Appendix A which was circulated prior to the meeting.

- 77.6 Approve payments for October 2018 and any payments made between meetings

Following a proposal from Cllr Thurstance which was seconded by Cllr Harper, **approval** was given for the accounts as listed in Appendix A to be paid, including payments for the Ickleford Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group as confirmed by the Group's Treasurer. **Action: Clk**

78. Date for Next Meeting

- 78.1 The next Parish Council meeting will be held on **Thursday 1 November 2018** at 7.30pm

The meeting closed at 10pm.

Signed by Chairman _____

Date _____

Print name of Chairman _____