

**MINUTES OF THE ICKLEFORD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
MONDAY 7 JANUARY 2019, ICKLEFORD VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30PM**

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

**Officer present:** Mrs Danielle Weetman (Parish Clerk)

**Also present for part of the meeting:** County Cllr D Barnard, District Cllr D Levett, District Cllr H Spencer-Smith, PCSO S Halbert and three members of the public.

**105. Apologies for absence**

105.1 Apologies were received from Cllr R Harper.

**106. Chairman's Notice**

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

**107. Declaration of Interests**

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

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

107.3 No requests for dispensation were received.

**108. Minutes of the previous meeting**

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

**109. Public Participation Session**

109.1 There were three members of the public in attendance at the meeting.

Agenda item 112.1 (The NHDC Draft Local Plan) was discussed at this point of the meeting for expedience to enable residents to discuss the consultation on the Main Modifications with District Cllr David Levett; this information has been noted under item 112.1 in these minutes.

The Co-Chairs of Ickleford Pre-School attended the meeting to introduce themselves to the Parish Council. They explained their roles on the committee, advised that some of the new committee members came from the wider village community and also noted the Pre-School's aim to be involved in the local community.

Two members of the public left the meeting.

A member of the public raised concerns about the speed of traffic along Bedford Road and enquired whether any measures could be taken to address this. This matter was discussed with parish councillors as well as County Cllr David Barnard and PCSO Sam Halbert. It was agreed that County Cllr Barnard and PCSO Halbert would revert to the Parish Council with details of possible resources or equipment that may be appropriate to deal with the speeding concern. **Action: DB/SH**

Fly-tipping concerns in the St Katherines Close/Bedford Road area were brought to the attention of councillors by a member of the public. County Cllr Barnard noted that if the fly-tipping had occurred on public land then North Hertfordshire District Council (NHDC) would be responsible for its removal. It was agreed that County Cllr Barnard would liaise with the member of the public about this incident of fly-tipping. **Action: DB**

**110. Police Report**

110.1 PCSO Halbert advised that five crimes had been reported since the last meeting compared with 10 crimes during the same period last year. An overview of these crimes was given. The usual patrols have been carried out in Ickleford during the last month. Litter has been noted in specific areas of the parish; this will be monitored and action taken as appropriate.

Councillors were informed that there had been a recent spate of thefts and attempted thefts from vehicles across north Hertfordshire, including from unlocked vehicles. It was agreed that

PCSO Halbert would circulate advice about vehicle security to residents via the OWL email; this will also be included on the Parish Council's Village News email. **Action: SH/CIk**

The importance of reporting crimes directly to the police so they can be dealt with in the most appropriate manner was reiterated. It was agreed that this would be communicated to residents via the OWL email and the Parish Council's Village News email. **Action: SH/CIk**

PCSO Halbert left the meeting.

## 111. Reports from County and District Councillors

### 111.1 Report from County Councillor

County Cllr Barnard advised that the new Chief Executive of Hertfordshire County Council is Owen Mapley. Additional funding has been made available for Hertfordshire Highways; Cllr Barber to meet with Highways Management shortly to review projects for Ickleford that could be carried out via this funding stream.

Budget discussion for the next financial year is on-going. The increasing cost of providing some of the core services was highlighted and this may lead to a rise in Council Tax to ensure the Council can continue to provide these services. Officers from NHDC have been liaising with the owners of Pound Farm to check whether a planning application would be required for the work they wish to carry out. It was noted that the cost of cutting back the hedge bordering the land adjacent to Arnold's Farm to assist with improving visibility at the junction of Boswell Drive and Chambers Lane has been covered from County Cllr Barnard's Locality Budget.

County Cllr Barnard and one member of the public left the meeting.

### 111.2 Report from District Councillor

District Cllr Harry Spencer-Smith gave an overview of the NHDC Planning Control Committee meeting held in November and also advised that he had been dealing with a number of enquiries raised by Ickleford residents.

## 112. On-going Projects

### 112.1 The NHDC Draft Local Plan

During the public participation session, a presentation about the NHDC Local Plan was given by District Cllr David Levett, NHDC Executive Member for Planning, Enterprise and Transport. This included a summary of the process to date as well as information on the next steps.

Cllr Maxwell enquired about the format for representations made during the consultation for the Main Modifications. District Cllr Levett noted that advice on this matter could be found in the 'Main Modifications' section of the NHDC website. It is important to state clearly which item(s) from the Main Modifications are being referenced in representations and link these to specific items from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) where possible.

District Cllr Spencer-Smith asked for a summary of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA). District Cllr Levett advised that the aim of the SA is to show that the Local Plan is still sustainable and deliverable when taking the Main Modifications into account.

Cllr Blake questioned why NHDC did not amend the housing numbers in the Local Plan to take account of the revised figures provided by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). District Cllr Levett confirmed that the figures used by NHDC are based on objectively assessed need whereas the numbers indicated by the ONS are projections based on certain criteria to provide demographic information.

Councillors were advised that once the Local Plan has been approved, the Green Belt would be as outlined in that document rather than as previously designated.

District Cllr Levett explained that the traffic modelling method used in the Local Plan had been changed to take account of traffic travelling through the district from Bedfordshire.

Cllrs Goldie and Thurstance referenced the impact that additional housing would have on existing infrastructure such as the sewerage networks. District Cllr Levett advised that NHDC relied on data from the statutory authorities, such as Anglian Water, to highlight any issues arising from housing development. The Parish Council will continue to raise matters such as

these at the planning application stage to ensure that the impact of new dwellings on existing infrastructure is assessed.

Cllr Thurstance enquired about an anomaly in the documents for the Local Plan relating to the Ickleford settlement boundary. District Cllr Levett advised the Parish Council to raise this matter in the response to the Main Modifications consultation.

Cllr Maxwell thanked District Cllr Levett for attending this meeting and answering questions about the Local Plan.

District Cllrs Levett and Spencer-Smith left the meeting.

It was agreed that Cllr Maxwell draft the Parish Council's response to the Main Modifications for consideration at the February meeting. **Action: MM**

#### 112.2 Neighbourhood Planning

The Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group did not hold a meeting in November. It was agreed that Cllr Blake would ascertain the current status of the Group's grant applications.

**Action: RB**

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

The Clerk advised that the Parish Council's existing web and email hosting company, Easily.co.uk, could provide a direct email package at an annual cost of £49.00 (+VAT) for up to ten email addresses using the 'icklefordpc.com' domain name. The Parish Council currently uses an 'alias' system and transferring to a direct email address would assist with GDPR compliance.

Following a proposal from Cllr Goldie which was seconded by Cllr Gooden, it was **resolved** that the Parish Council transfer to a direct email package at a cost of £49.00 (+VAT) per year for up to ten email addresses. This is to assist with GDPR compliance. **Action: Cllk**

The Parish Council's Data Protection Officer (DPO) has passed on details of free encryption software. It was agreed that the Clerk investigate the most appropriate of these for the Parish Council. **Action: Cllk**

#### 112.4 Maintenance of Lower Green

Cllr Goldie has scheduled on-site meetings with three contractors to obtain quotes for the tree work. The quotes will separate the work into three sections as follows:

- Snailswell Lane
- Snailswell Lane – Cadwell Bridge
- Trees along bridleway across Lower Green

#### 112.5 Maintenance of recreation ground

Cllr Crowe reported that the Sports Club would like to install new signs on Arlesey Road, Chambers Land and Walnut Way to improve the Club's visibility and also assist visiting sports teams. Hertfordshire Highways has confirmed that approval would be needed for any new signs.

#### 112.6 Maintenance of the natural river environment in Ickleford

Cllr Gooden gave an overview of the recent meeting with the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust (HMWT) to investigate ways of raising residents' awareness about the natural river environment in Ickleford. The aim is to hold a meeting in Ickleford to engage with residents on this matter; possible venues and dates are being investigated.

Cllrs Goldie and Thurstance summarised the work scheduled to take place in the Ickleford Common area of the River Hiz.

#### 112.7 Renewal of PCSO contract for 2019/20

Hertfordshire Police has not yet finalised the cost of renewing the PCSO contract on a match-funded basis for the year commencing 1 April 2019. As such, Sgt Westwood noted that should a contract be agreed prior to any price increase being publicised by the police, then the current cost of £7,125.00 would be honoured for the 2019/2020 contract. Councillors discussed the PCSO's duties to date and whether they represented good value for money for the village.

Following a proposal from Cllr Goldie which was seconded by Cllr Crowe, it was **resolved** to renew the PCSO's contract for 2019/20 at a cost of £7,125.00. **Action: Cllk**

#### 112.8 Ickleford Burial Ground

Ickleford Burial Ground Trust has received two quotations for the maintenance of the Burial Ground for the three-year period from 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2022. Maydencroft has quoted £5,000 (+VAT) per year and Hislop & Co Horticulture has quoted £7,300 (+VAT) per year for the contract period. The Burial Ground Trustees have indicated that they would like to award the contract to Maydencroft based on the quotes received and Maydencroft's knowledge of the Burial Ground. Furthermore, it was noted that whilst the Burial Ground's finances are in reasonable shape and improving yearly, it is not yet in a position to support this contract. As such, the Trustees have requested the on-going financial support of the Parish Council to provide this important facility for the benefit of residents.

It was noted that the Burial Ground would look to proactively source supplementary funding and grant opportunities to cover the cost of additional work such as purchasing replacement trees. This is in line with other village organisations. Additionally, it was requested that a review of the Burial Ground Trust's finances and business plan be conducted with the Parish Council in the summer of 2020 to give the Parish Council line of sight of any longer-term financial commitments to support this important village asset.

Following a proposal from Cllr Blake which was seconded by Cllr Gooden, it was **resolved** that Ickleford Parish Council would continue to support the Burial Ground by paying for the three year maintenance contract with Maydencroft which runs from 1 April 2019 - 31 March 2022 at a cost of £5,000 (+VAT) per year for the contract period. **Action: Cllk**

#### 112.9 Gardening contracts from 1 April 2019

Councillors discussed the quotation received from Richard Nicholls to cut and strim all of Lower Green / Common in front of Lower Green Farm up to a maximum of 8 times per year between April and October at a cost of £65.00 (+VAT) per cut and £15.00 (+VAT) per strim. The maximum annual cost of this contract would be £640.00 (+VAT) and the contract period would be for three years from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2022. This quotation has the same value as the current contract, however it was noted that the strimming cost was for up to one hour on each occasion.

Following a proposal from Cllr Goldie which was seconded by Cllr Crowe, it was **resolved** to award the gardening contract to Richard Nicholls for the period 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2022 inclusive as per the quotation outlined above. **Action: Cllk**

The Responsible Financial Officer proposed that item 11.1.d from the Financial Regulations be applied to the gardening contract currently held by William Crosse. This is due to the nature of the duties included in the contract, the varying frequency with which these need to be undertaken across the year and the detailed local knowledge required to fulfil the contract. It was further proposed that the contract be reviewed annually to ensure the specification continues to meet the requirements of the parish.

William Crosse provided both one-year and three-year quotations for the gardening contract due to commence on 1 April 2019. These equated to annual costs of £5,105 (+VAT) and £5,311.92 respectively.

Following a proposal from Cllr Goldie which was seconded by Cllr Crowe, it was **resolved** to award the gardening contract to William Crosse for one year from 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020 inclusive at a cost of £5,105.00 (+VAT). **Action: Cllk**

#### 112.10 Installation of a wooden bench adjacent to the footpath by Chapel Field

Following discussion, it was agreed that Cllr Maxwell contact the landowner of Chapel Field to request permission to install the wooden bench adjacent to the footpath by Chapel Field. **Action: MM**

A resident contacted the Parish Council to note concern about the proposed location of the wooden bench. Councillors discussed these concerns. It was agreed that Cllr Maxwell write to the resident to acknowledge the concerns raised and outline the Parish Council's commitment to monitor use of this bench. **Action: MM**

William Crosse has quoted £110.00 (+VAT) to assemble and install the wooden bench; this is comparable with the cost of carrying out the same work for a bench installed at Three Arches in 2017.

Following a proposal from Cllr Thurstance which was seconded by Cllr Gooden, it was **resolved** to authorise William Crosse to assemble and install the wooden bench at a cost of £110.00 (+VAT). **Action: Cllk**

### 113. New Matters

#### 113.1 Annual playground inspection

The report from the annual playground inspection carried out by The Play Inspection Company was circulated to councillors in advance of the meeting. The findings of the report were either low risk or very low risk. CPM provided a quote of £567.50 (+VAT) for the remedial work noted for the gate entrances, the two large multi-activity units, the seesaw and the chain walk.

Following a proposal from Cllr Thurstance which was seconded by Cllr Gooden, it was **resolved** to authorise CPM Playgrounds to carry out the remedial work noted in the annual playground inspection report for the gate entrances, the two large multi-activity units, the seesaw and the chain walk at a cost of £567.50 (+VAT). **Action: Cllk**

It was agreed that the Clerk contact Colin Wainwright for quotes to carry out the remedial work on the gates and wooden bench. **Action: Cllk**

Councillors were concerned to read in the inspection report that the equipment purchased from Wicksteed in 2016 did not meet the new standards introduced in 2017. Whilst the equipment is still fit for purpose, it was agreed that Cllr Blake request a site visit with Wicksteed to review the equipment and safety surfaces they installed in 2016. **Action: RB**

#### 113.2 Replacement litter bin at the recreation ground

Councillors were advised that one of the public litter bins at the recreation ground had been removed by an unknown person. Prior to the meeting, information about a replacement bin of the same style was circulated to councillors. The cost of purchasing and installing the replacement bin is £219.07 (+VAT).

Following a proposal from Cllr Crowe which was seconded by Cllr Blake it was **resolved** to authorise the purchase and installation of a replacement litter bin with a dark oak finish at the recreation ground at a cost of £219.07 (+VAT). **Action: Cllk**

#### 113.3 Amendment to the Financial Regulations of the Parish Council

Councillors reviewed the proposed modification to the Financial Regulations which had been circulated prior to the meeting. This amendment increased the value below which the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) would strive to obtain three estimates for contracts from £3,000 to £5,000; this is to reflect the increasing costs of these contracts.

Following a proposal from Cllr Gooden which was seconded by Cllr Crowe, it was **resolved** to approve the proposed update to the Financial Regulations as outlined above. **Action: Cllk**

### 114. Planning Applications

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

#### 114.1 18/03135/FPH at 4 Chambers Lane, Ickleford, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 3YA

Full Permission Householder: Single storey rear extension and insertion of rear dormer window to facilitate loft conversion

Following a proposal from Cllr Goldie which was seconded by Cllr Crowe, it was **resolved** that the Parish Council had **no objections** to this planning application. **Action: Cllk**

#### 114.2 18/03195/FPH at 36 Greenfield Avenue, Ickleford, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 3XR

Full Permission Householder: Single storey rear extension Please quote the following reference: on all correspondence

Following a proposal from Cllr Goldie which was seconded by Cllr Crowe, it was **resolved** that the Parish Council had **no objections** to this planning application. **Action: Cllk**

#### 114.3 Planning applications received between 28 December 2018 and 7 January 2019

None received.

**115. Planning Decisions**

- 115.1 18/02083/FPH at 14 Claymore Drive, Ickleford, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 3UB  
Alterations to roof and construction of first floor rear extension, single storey side and rear extensions following demolition of existing garage and insertion of front dormer window and gabled roof extension  
**NHDC granted Conditional Permission on 14 December 2018**
- 115.2 18/02510/FP at Land Between Bedford Road And Old Ramerick Farm Bedford Road Holwell Hitchin Hertfordshire SG5 3RX  
Retention of single track **access road for farm traffic to Old Ramerick Farm**  
**NHDC granted Conditional Permission on 21 December 2018**  
It was noted that the conditions attached to the permission granted by NHDC satisfied all concerns raised by the residents and the Parish Council. Specifically, these were a future commitment for the applicant to cover any road repairs where the new track meets the old and would be damaged by turning farm vehicles, and a commitment to maintain the vegetation growth on the earth bank.
- 115.3 18/02999/FPH at 75 Arlesey Road Ickleford Hitchin Hertfordshire SG5 3TH  
Erection of detached double garage  
**NHDC granted Conditional Permission on 21 December 2018**
- 115.4 Planning decisions received between 29 November and 6 December 2018  
None received
- 116. Finance**
- 116.1 To consider that under Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 that the public and press should be excluded from items 12.2 and 12.3 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 at the meeting.
- 116.2 2019-2020 National Salary Award for the Clerk  
Prior to the meeting, councillors received information on the 2019-20 National Salary Award agreed by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC). The calculations for the award have been checked by the ALCC and are based on the changes agreed by the NJC. This award should be implemented from 1 April 2019.  
Following a proposal from Cllr Goldie which was seconded by Cllr Crowe, it was **resolved** to implement this recommended 2019-2020 salary award for the Clerk from 1 April 2019.
- 116.3 Additional hours worked by the Clerk for the period 24 September 2018 to 30 December 2018  
Councillors were advised that the Clerk had worked an additional 38 hours during this period.  
Following a proposal from Cllr Goldie which was seconded by Cllr Blake, it was **resolved** to pay 25 hours of overtime to the Clerk at the current pay scale (SCP 28).
- 116.4 Budget 2019/20  
Councillors discussed the updated draft budget for the 2019/20 financial year which was circulated prior to the meeting. The budget proposal noted an increase of 4.42% on the 2018/19 budget (from £48,650 to £50,799) to maintain the same level of service to residents.  
Following a proposal from Cllr Thurstance which was seconded by Cllr Gooden, it was **resolved** to approve the proposed budget of £50,799 for the 2019/20 financial year.
- 116.5 Precept 2019/20  
Following a proposal from Cllr Thurstance which was seconded by Cllr Gooden, it was **resolved** to request a total precept of £50,799 for 2019/20 in line with the budget, which is a 4.42% increase on the 2018/19 total precept of £48,650. This is to ensure that the services outlined in the budget can be provided for the benefit of the local community.  
The Clerk will forward the Parish Council's precept request to NHDC. **Action: Cllk**
- 116.6 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.

116.7 Approve payments for January 2019 and any payments made between meetings  
Following a proposal from Cllr Crowe which was seconded by Cllr Thurstance, **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**

**117. Date for Next Meeting**

117.1 The next Parish Council meeting will be held on **Thursday 7 February 2019** at 7.30pm

The meeting closed at 10.05pm.

**Signed by Chairman** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Print name of Chairman** \_\_\_\_\_