

**MINUTES OF THE ICKLEFORD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
THURSDAY 7 FEBRUARY 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, R Harper and C Thurstance

Officer present: Mrs Danielle Weetman (Parish Clerk)

Also present for part of the meeting: 14 members of the public and four representatives from Anglian Water.

118. Apologies for absence

118.1 Apologies were received from County Cllr D Barnard, District Cllr H Spencer-Smith, Sgt G Westwood and PCSO S Halbert.

119. Chairman's Notice

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

120. Declaration of Interests

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

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

120.3 No requests for dispensation were received.

121. Minutes of the previous meeting

121.1 The following amendment to the draft minutes of the meeting held on 7 January 2019, indicated in bold text, was noted for accuracy:

Item 111.1 (Report from County Councillor): 'Cllr Barber to meet with **Highways Management** shortly to review projects for Ickleford that could be carried out via this funding stream'

121.2 Following a proposal from Cllr Goldie which was seconded by Cllr Gooden it was **resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 7 January 2019, including the amendment noted above, be approved and the Chairman of this meeting was authorised to sign them as a true record of the meeting.

122. Public Participation Session

There were 14 members of the public and four representatives from Anglian Water in attendance at the meeting. This was in relation to agenda items: 125.1 (The NHDC Draft Local Plan); 126.1 (Anglian Water); and 127.3 (18/02785/FP at Land at Turnpike Lane and adjacent to 4 Manor Close, Turnpike Lane, Ickleford, Hertfordshire). These agenda items were discussed at this point of the meeting for expedience and also to enable residents to discuss these matters with representatives from Anglian Water and parish councillors:

123 Police Report

123.1 PCSO Halbert sent a report noting that there had been five crimes since the last meeting compared with eight crimes for the same period last year. An overview of these crimes was also given.

124 Reports from County and District Councillors

124.1 Report from County Councillor
None received.

124.2 Report from District Councillor

District Cllr Spencer-Smith sent a report advising his comments and feedback on the Parish Council's draft response to the North Hertfordshire District Council (NHDC) to the Main Modifications consultation. It was noted that information from the developers is still outstanding in relation to the Ickleford Mill planning application.

District Cllr Spencer-Smith also provided an update on other matters, including the removal of fly-tipping from Westmill Lane.

125 On-going Projects

125.1 The NHDC Draft Local Plan

During the public participation session, councillors discussed the Parish Council's response to the public consultation on the proposed Main Modifications to the NHDC Local Plan which had been circulated prior to the meeting. The proposed Main Modifications are detailed in five documents and councillors reviewed all of these documents to assess the impact of the proposed amendments on Ickleford parish and the four sites included in the NHDC Local Plan for the parish (IC1, IC2, IC3 and LS1). Furthermore, it was noted that responses can only reference the changes proposed in the Main Modification documents.

The proposed response for Ickleford Parish Council outlines several issues from the Main Modifications:

- The revised Sustainability Appraisal continues to have significant errors and inappropriate assessments which render it a flawed document on which to base judgements. It cannot be considered as an adequate and proportionate evidence base, as required by the NPPF (section 31).
- The re-classification of Ickleford from 'Category A' to a 'village identified for growth' (MM010, MM012, MM035, MM266) is invalid. The rationale for inclusion as a 'village identified for growth' fits other villages which have not been included in this category. It cannot be considered as an adequate and proportionate evidence base, as required by the NPPF (section 31).
- The issues we highlighted during the Examination in Public in relation to flooding in parts of Ickleford are acknowledged by the requirement that a 'detailed drainage strategy identifying water infrastructure required and mechanism(s) for delivery.' (MM 268, 269, 270) However, the issue residents face is not with 'delivery' but **removal** of foul water/ drainage water.
- The Main Modifications requiring transport assessment to consider the cumulative impacts of sites IC2, IC3 and LS1 on the junction of the A600 and Turnpike Lane (MM269, 270, 272, 320 and 321) are welcome. However, this assessment must also include the impact of several thousand new homes in adjacent villages in Central Bedfordshire, which will add to the traffic volumes through Ickleford.

Knebworth Parish Council has approached the parish councils of Ickleford, Codicote, Wymondley and Barkway as members of 'villages identified for growth' in the Main Modifications about submitting a joint response - written by a planning lawyer - objecting to the re-classification of our parishes in modifications SP2 (MM010) and SP8 (MM035). The cost for the letter would be £500.00, which equates to £100.00 per parish council.

Following a proposal from Cllr Goldie which was seconded by Cllr Thurstance, it was **resolved** to approve:

- The Parish Council's response to the proposed Main Modifications to the NHDC Local Plan as detailed in Appendix B. **Action: MM/CIk**
- That the Parish Council's approved response be circulated to residents via the usual methods of communication. **Action: CIk**
- That the Parish Council join with the other villages identified for growth to submit a joint response to modifications SP2 (MM010) and SP8 (MM035) at a cost of £100.00. **Action: CIk**

Eight members of the public left the meeting.

125.2 Neighbourhood Planning

Councillors noted receipt of the minutes from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group's (NPSG) January meeting and also the report about the Group's recent activity. Cllr Blake reported that some members of the NPSG have carried out a walking tour of the village to consider the different housing styles as the first stage of a character assessment.

Cllr Maxwell highlighted the importance of Neighbourhood Plans in relation to the planning process. This was recently evidenced in an appeal to the Planning Inspector for a proposed development in Pirton as their Neighbourhood Plan was referenced as part of the

development plan for the area. It was agreed that Cllr Blake share this information with the Ickleford NPSG. **Action: RB**

125.3 Maintenance of Lower Green

Cllr Goldie summarised the findings of the on-site visits with the three tree experts, noting that all had identified a number of matters that needed to be dealt with urgently for health and safety reasons. Evolution Tree Works demonstrated in-depth knowledge about the work required and offered sound advice as well. Accordingly, approval was given between meetings for this work to be carried out by Evolution Tree Works at a cost of £1,816.67 (+VAT).

Following a proposal between Cllr Crowe which was seconded by Cllr Thurstance, it was **resolved** to formally authorise Evolution Tree Works to carry out the tree remedial work on Lower Green for a total cost of £1,816.67 (+VAT) for payment between meetings. **Action: Clk.**

The Parish Council has also been advised to carry out a tree survey on Lower Green later this year to assess whether any further remedial work will be required. It was agreed to assess the trees on Christmas Common at the same time.

125.4 Annual playground inspection

Colin Wainwright has quoted £40.00 to carry out the remedial work on the gates and wooden bench identified in the inspection report.

Following a proposal from Cllr Crowe which was seconded by Cllr Thurstance, it was **resolved** to authorise Colin Wainwright to carry out the remedial work noted in the annual playground inspection report for the gates and wooden bench at a cost of £40.00. **Action: Clk**

Following on from the findings of the inspection report, a representative from Wicksteed has confirmed that they use a high quality chain on their equipment; however, due to the manufacturing process, it is right on the limit of what is allowed under current legislation. Moreover, the latest legislation notes that while the 8mm chain may not meet the current standard of 8.6mm, this should be risk assessed and not failed. Concern was also noted about the current condition of the safety surfacing installed by Wicksteed. It was agreed that Cllr Blake request a site visit from Wicksteed to assess this matter. **Action: RB**

125.5 Maintenance of the natural river environment in Ickleford

Cllr Gooden advised that the proposed date for the meeting with residents to raise awareness about the natural river environment in Ickleford is Monday 1 April. Ickleford School is available on this date and the hire charge would be £15.00. An overview of the proposed format of the meeting was given and it was noted that the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust (HMWT) would also be involved. Councillors discussed this important initiative.

Following a proposal from Cllr Goldie which was seconded by Cllr Gooden, it was **resolved** to approve expenditure of £15.00 for the meeting with residents on Monday 1 April at Ickleford School. **Action: Clk/CG.**

126 **New Matters**

126.1 Anglian Water

During the public participation session, Cllr Maxwell summarised recent communications with Anglian Water representatives and also noted the problems with flooding and effluent overflow experienced by residents in Laurel Way and Duncots Close. Previously, Anglian Water employees have acknowledged publicly that the capacity of the drainage network is limited - having been constructed many decades ago when Ickleford was a fraction of its current size. The Parish Council remains concerned about the impact that discharge from new developments built, being built and proposed in Ickleford will have on the network

Anglian Water confirmed that they have looked at the potential increase in housing numbers in the parish in relation to the Ickleford network; this includes the sites in the Local Plan as well as planning applications. Moreover, Anglian Water has previously asked NHDC to place conditions on planning applications to enable them to engage with developers and deal with any mitigation that might be required for the proposed application; this includes the current application for Ickleford Mill. Anglian Water agreed to investigate whether the flow from the Ickleford Mill site could be directed to Hitchin.

There was a detailed discussion about the constraints of the current one-pipe Victorian system in Ickleford and when the issues with effluent overflow occur. Anglian Water noted high rainfall is a key factor in this type of systems; they also advised that surface water from any new developments would be dealt with by SuDS (Sustainable Drainage System) rather than flowing into the current network. It was also confirmed that Anglian Water's modelling system takes high rainfall and storm events into account.

In response to enquiries from members of the public and parish councillors, Anglian Water confirmed that they are not statutory consultees for planning applications and do not have any legal powers to object to applications; indeed all developers have a right to be connected to the network. It was noted that water companies are currently lobbying for a change in the law to allow them to object.

In relation to site IC3 in the Local Plan, Anglian Water asserted that they would ask the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to include a condition so they could negotiate with the developer about the most appropriate connection point to the network from this site and also deal with any mitigation that might be required.

The Parish Council asked for an update on the flooding scheme put forward for Ickleford. Anglian Water advised that it has been submitted and if passed, the earliest implementation date would be 2020. The scheme may include upgrading pumping stations if this is felt to be the most appropriate solution. Furthermore, they will check that the annual jet cleaning maintenance programme is being undertaken as set out in the agreed schedule.

Councillors referenced the 2014 Annual Parish Meeting (APM) held in Ickleford where Anglian Water representatives mentioned that our system needed updating but there were no funds available to do so, and enquired whether this was still applicable. Anglian Water confirmed that funding for any projects to upgrade systems is carried out on a priority basis according to need. The proposed scheme for Ickleford has been submitted and will be reviewed based on data and reported incidents. As such, residents were requested to continue to report any incidents to Anglian Water so these can be taken into account when schemes are being assessed.

Referring back to the 2014 APM, a member of the public noted that Anglian Water representatives at that meeting had advised that the largest possible pipes that can be used in Ickleford are being used. Anglian Water indicated that flow within these pipes could be increased through the use of additional pumps should the need arise.

A member of the public raised a concern about the capacity of the pumping station at Cadwell, particularly in periods of heavy rainfall, as tankers seem to have been used at such times. Anglian Water advised that tankers are employed for maintenance work as well as for assisting with the capacity at the pumping station; they will provide a breakdown of how tankers have been used at the Cadwell pumping station.

Members of the public referenced concerns about further flooding and effluent overflow in the Lower Green and Laurel Way/Duncots Close areas of the village and the impact this could have on the environment. Anglian Water requested that residents continue to report any incidents of this nature to them, with photographic or video evidence if possible, as this will help them to understand the situation and investigate solutions.

Another member of the public asked for clarification on how the requirements of a system are calculated. Anglian Water confirmed that a base model is used as a starting point and then projected flows are added in based on current planning application proposals. Anglian Water committed to supplying data relating to Ickleford subject to confirmation about what information can be released into the public domain.

Anglian Water confirmed that incidents of sewerage in a river should be reported to the Environment Agency in the first instance.

Anglian Water confirmed that they had submitted recommendations for the current planning application at Land at Turnpike Lane and adjacent to 4 Manor Close. It was agreed that the Parish Council would forward the relevant report from the documents submitted to the LPA for

this site so that Anglian Water could confirm the information included in the report accorded with their recommendation. **Action: MM**

The Parish Council enquired whether all new developments in Ickleford could be diverted towards Hitchin. Anglian Water stated that they would investigate this with the engineers to see if it would be possible.

Cllr Maxwell outlined the questions that the Parish Council had previously posed to Anglian Water via email. It was noted that Anglian Water would respond to these questions in due course.

On behalf of the Parish Council, Cllr Maxwell noted thanks to the representatives from Anglian Water for attending this meeting and taking on board the current situation for residents and our concerns about the impact that new developments would have on the system in Ickleford.

All Anglian Water representatives and two members of the public left the meeting.

126.2 Annual Parish Meeting 2019

Councillors were informed of the dates available at the Village Hall for the Annual Parish Meeting.

Following a proposal from Cllr Blake which was seconded by Cllr Harper, it was **resolved** to hold the Annual Parish Meeting on Thursday 23 May. **Action: Clk**

126.3 Invitation to the NHDC Parish Council planning briefing workshop on 27 February

NHDC has extended an invitation to parish and town councils to attend a planning briefing workshop on 27 February. The workshop will include items on the Local Plan, national policy and S106 obligations. It was agreed that Cllr Blake plus, possibly, one other, would attend on behalf of the Parish Council. **Action: RB**

126.4 Recent changes to bus services and impact on secondary school children

Residents have been in contact with the Parish Council about the recent changes to the bus services through Ickleford which are run by Stagecoach. The new timetable means that secondary school pupils at Hitchin schools do not always arrive in time for morning registration. County Cllr Barnard recommended contacting the bus company to raise this matter; Stagecoach has noted that they will take this feedback into consideration when reviewing the bus timetable.

126.5 Additional funding for Hertfordshire Highways

Cllr Barber reported that an additional £7.8m has been given to Hertfordshire Highways; it appears that these funds would be allocated for repairs to road; however, we will be advised in due course as to which projects will be eligible for this scheme. It was agreed that the main priorities for Ickleford would be road improvements on Arlesey Road in the section between Bowman's Bridge and the roundabout junction with Turnpike Lane.

Councillors also discussed whether average speed cameras would be beneficial for Ickleford. It was agreed that Cllr Barber contact County Cllr Barnard for further information about average speed cameras. **Action: MB**

It was also agreed that Cllr Maxwell approach the Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire to enquire about the possibility of installing average speed cameras in Ickleford. **Action: MM**

On-going concern about repairs to the speed humps was noted as recent repairs do not seem to conform to the previously-agreed specification. It was agreed that Cllr Maxwell contact County Cllr Barnard to request that any future repairs are carried out in accordance with this specification. **Action: MM**

126.6 PCSO for Ickleford

Councillors were advised that PCSO Halbert would be leaving Hertfordshire Constabulary in March to pursue a new career opportunity. PCSO Sarah Brown from the Hitchin Safer Neighbourhood Team has been appointed as the new PCSO for Ickleford; PCSO Brown has been in the role for a number of years and brings experience from working in a number of different areas. Cllr Maxwell and the Clerk will be meeting with Sgt Guy Westwood and PCSO

Brown shortly to discuss the transition period prior to PCSO Halbert's departure as well as the policing priorities for Ickleford.

126.7 Rand's Educational Foundation

Cllr Thurstance noted that Brian Frederick, the Clerk to Rand's Educational Foundation had passed away in December. It was agreed that a note of condolence be sent to Mr Frederick's widow. **Action: MM**

126.8 Mink activity in Ickleford

Cllr Gooden updated the meeting on a report received from the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust (HMWT) about mink activity in the Ickleford Common area. It was noted that the Common Holders had given permission for a trail camera focused on the mink raft to be installed on Ickleford Common and also for any mink found on the Common to be humanely dispatched. It was noted that a mink raft has been moored in the river on a resident's property to monitor mink activity in that area as well.

127 Planning Applications

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

127.1 19/00028/FPH at 3 Ryder Way, Ickleford, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 3XL

Full Permission Householder: Single story front extension and single story side/rear to provide annexe following demolition of existing garage

Following a proposal from Cllr Goldie which was seconded by Cllr Blake, it was **resolved** that the Parish Council had **no objections** to this planning application, but would like to make the following observation:

- That consideration be given to installing obscure glass on all ground floor windows facing no.5 Ryder Way to maintain privacy for all parties

Action: Clk

127.2 19/00104/FPH at The Annexe, Pinchgut Hall, Bedford Road, Ickleford, Hertfordshire, SG5 3RS

Full Permission Householder: Single storey side extension

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

127.3 Planning applications received between 31 January and 7 February 2019

127.3.1 18/02785/FP at Land at Turnpike Lane and adjacent to 4 Manor Close, Turnpike Lane, Ickleford, Hertfordshire

Full Planning Permission: Erection of four 4-bed and four 5-bed dwellings including widening of existing access road and creation of new pedestrian footpath and vehicular access road (as amended on 17/1/19 and 5/2/19)

During the public participation session, residents outlined their concerns about this planning application. These included: the location of this site in the current Green Belt; loss of privacy due to the position of the proposed dwellings in relation to existing houses in Manor Close and Lodge Court; limited visibility for vehicles when entering and exiting the proposed site, and concern about the capacity of the existing foul sewer in Ickleford.

Following a proposal from Cllr Blake which was seconded by Cllr Crowe, it was **resolved** that the Parish Council objected to this planning application for the following reasons:

- This land lies within the current Green Belt.
- The site is not within the current Ickleford settlement boundary.
- In the NHDC 2016 SHLAA, the site was classified as not meeting the tests in the SHLAA.
- The NHDC 2016 SHLAA noted that the development of this site would lead to potentially substantial implications in terms of the setting of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Area. This site could also be impacted by the Steer judgement (Steer vs the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and Ors (2017)).
- The site is located in an area of heritage interest, and could be of archaeological interest.
- The design and layout of the development is not in keeping with its surroundings.

- There is not enough distance between the proposed dwellings and the existing dwellings on Manor Close and Lodge Court to maintain a minimum degree of privacy.
- We have serious concerns about the capacity of the foul sewer in Ickleford to accommodate the proposed residential development of this site.
- We are concerned that the development of this site may lead to flooding in the surrounding area as well as the site itself.
- There does not seem to be sufficient access on this site for refuse vehicles when taking into account vehicles that may be parked on the road.
- There appears to be inadequate parking provision for residents and visitors based on the current minimum guidelines for four and five bedroom houses.
- Insufficient consideration has been given to pedestrian safety in and around this site, including pedestrians from the proposed development of the Ickleford Mill site.
- We have safety concerns about the increased number of vehicles that would use the access road onto Turnpike Lane, this is a busy road linking the village centre to the A600.
- The ecology of this site has not been fully assessed.

Three members of the public left the meeting.

127.4 NHDC Planning Control Committee February 2019 - to consider the Parish Council's representation for the following planning application and approve any actions:
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

NHDC has confirmed that this planning application will be considered at the next Planning Control Committee meeting on Thursday 14 February. The Parish Council has secured the five-minute slot to speak against the application

Following a proposal from Cllr Gooden which was seconded by Cllr Goldie, it was **resolved** to prepare a five-minute presentation based on the objections submitted to NHDC in the formal consultation process for this planning application. It was further resolved that the presentation be given by Cllr Maxwell, with Cllr Harper being in attendance to answer questions from committee members, as necessary. **Action: MM/All Cllrs**

128 Planning Decisions

128.1 18/03195/FPH at 36 Greenfield Avenue, Ickleford, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 3XR
 Full Permission Householder: Single storey rear extension

NHDC granted Conditional Permission on 17 January 2019

128.2 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

NHDC noted a 'Split Decision' on 22 January 2019

128.3 Planning decisions received between 31 January and 7 February 2019
 None received.

129 Finance

129.1 Quarter 3 financial summary and bank reconciliations

A summary showing payments and receipts to the end of the third 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.

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

The Clerk noted receipts as detailed in Appendix A which was circulated prior to the meeting.

129.3 Approve payments for February 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**

130 Date for Next Meeting

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

The meeting closed at 10pm.

Signed by Chairman _____ **Date** _____

Print name of Chairman _____