

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

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

Officer present: Mrs Danielle Weetman (Parish Clerk)

Also present for part of the meeting: District Cllr H Spencer-Smith and six members of the public

131. Apologies for absence

131.1 Apologies were received from County Cllr D Barnard, Cllr K Goldie, Cllr R Harper and PCSO S Brown.

132. Chairman's Notice

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

133. Declaration of Interests

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

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

133.3 No requests for dispensation were received.

134. Minutes of the previous meeting

134.1 Following a proposal from Cllr Crowe which was seconded by Cllr Gooden it was **resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2019 be approved and the Chairman of this meeting was authorised to sign them as a true record of the meeting.

135. Public Participation Session

There were six members of the public in attendance at the meeting.

One member of the public attended in relation to item 126.7 (Repairs to potholes in the access road off Greenfield Avenue and to the rear of Turnpike Lane). This agenda item was therefore discussed at this point of the meeting for expedience and the information has been noted under that heading in these minutes.

Three members of the public discussed agenda item 139.1 (Proposed hustings in Ickleford for 2019 NHDC District Council elections) with councillors and the information has been included under that heading in these minutes.

A member of the public raised concerns about the condition of the recreation ground car park located adjacent to the children's play area and the Burial Ground following on from an incident at the car park during a burial earlier this week. Cllrs Thurstance and Crowe confirmed that the Parish Council had been made aware of this matter. As a result of this incident and also the concerns raised recently by residents about the condition of the car park, the Parish Council is in the process of reviewing the remedial work required and obtaining quotes for discussion at a future meeting. As previous quotes for this work have been around £40,000, additional funding sources will also need to be investigated to enable this work to be carried out.

A member of the public enquired about the possibility of installing an external community bookcase in Ickleford to enable residents to exchange second-hand books. Councillors noted that it would be useful to share this proposal with the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG) as they are seeking feedback from residents about community facilities for Ickleford as part of the process for developing a Neighbourhood Plan. It was agreed Cllr Blake would forward this information on to the NPSG.

Two members of the public left the meeting.

136 Police Report

136.1 PCSO Brown 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 given. The usual patrols have been undertaken in Ickleford during the last month and PCSO

Brown has carried out introduction visits to local organisations and businesses. A visit to Ickleford School is scheduled for later this month.

Councillors were advised that the 60+ group, which meets at St Katharine's Church, has requested that the monthly PCSO drop-in sessions be reinstated as they are beneficial to those that attend the group. Following discussion, it was agreed to reintroduce the monthly drop-in session at St Katharine's Church on a trial basis. The Clerk will advise PCSO Brown accordingly. **Action: Clk**

Cllr Maxwell and the Clerk met recently with Sgt Westwood and PCSO Brown to discuss the transition period prior to PCSO Halbert's departure and review policing priorities for Ickleford.

137 Reports from County and District Councillors

137.1 Report from County Councillor

None received.

137.2 Report from District Councillor

District Cllr Spencer-Smith reported that the time had elapsed for any appeal to be submitted in relation to the Planning Inspector's dismissal of the Gladman Homes appeal for the residential development of land off Holwell Road in Pirton. An update was also given on other planning matters including: the access for construction vehicles to the new site in Pirton; the on-going communication between the North Hertfordshire District Council (NHDC) and the owners of Pound Farm about whether a planning application would be required for the work they wish to carry out on this site; and correspondence from Ickleford residents about current planning applications in the parish. Councillors advised District Cllr Spencer-Smith about on-going correspondence between the Parish Council and NHDC relating to Pestol Farm.

The public consultation period for the Main Modifications to the NHDC Local Plan has been extended to 11 April to allow members of the public review and comment on the additional work produced by NHDC in support of the Examination in Public and following on from the hearing sessions. District Cllr Spencer-Smith pledged to assist the Parish Council in reviewing this additional work.

District Cllr Spencer-Smith confirmed that he had supported a grant application made to the NHDC Southern Rural Committee by a football team based at the recreation ground for mobile goalposts. In addition, he facilitated the removal of litter from Arlesey Road near to the border with Central Bedfordshire. A road closure will be in place between Holwell and Pirton from late March to enable utilities work to be carried out on the new site for residential development in Pirton. Details about the road closure will be included in the Village News email to residents once the timing has been confirmed. **Action: Clk**

District Cllr Spencer-Smith left the meeting.

138 On-going Projects

138.1 The NHDC Draft Local Plan

Councillors discussed the response to modifications SP2 (MM010) and SP8 (MM035) prepared by the planning consultant on behalf of the five 'villages identified for growth' (Barkway, Codicote, Ickleford, Knebworth and Wymondley), which was circulated prior to the meeting.

Following a proposal from Cllr Gooden which was seconded by Cllr Thurstance, it was **resolved** to approve the Parish Council's proposed amendments to the draft response to modifications SP2 (MM010) and SP8 (MM035) prepared by the planning consultant on behalf of the five 'villages identified for growth' (Barkway, Codicote, Ickleford, Knebworth and Wymondley) as detailed in Appendix B. **Action: MM/Clk**

138.2 Neighbourhood Planning

Councillors noted receipt of the minutes from the NPSG's February meeting.

138.3 Maintenance of Lower Green

Cllr Barber confirmed that the remedial work on the ditch under the road in this area of the village has been added to Hertfordshire Highways' work schedule.

138.4 Maintenance of the natural river environment in Ickleford

Cllr Gooden noted that the agenda has been finalised for the meeting with residents to raise awareness about the natural river environment on Monday 1 April. Representatives from the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust (HMWT) will also be in attendance. Information about the meeting was included in the March edition of St Katharine's Wheel. The meeting will be publicised via the Parish Council's usual methods of online communication and posters will be displayed on the village noticeboards. **Action: CG/Clk**

138.5 NHDC Parish Council planning briefing workshop held on 27 February

Cllr Blake summarised the meeting, noting an informative discussion about the differences between s106 funding and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), and the reasons that NHDC use the s106 funding method. Useful information on the type of projects local councils can request funding for at the planning application stage was provided.

139 New Matters

139.1 Proposed hustings in Ickleford for 2019 NHDC District Council elections

During the public participation session of the meeting, three members of the public discussed the possibility of a hustings event in Ickleford for the forthcoming local elections for Cadwell Ward with the parish councillors; these members of the public are prospective candidates for Cadwell.

These three prospective candidates for Cadwell ward advised the Parish Council that they would aim to hold a hustings event in Ickleford. It was agreed that the Parish Council would publicise this event to residents via the usual methods of communication. **Action: Clk**

Cllr Maxwell noted the increasing importance of the district councillor that would represent Ickleford residents, particularly in relation to planning matters and the NHDC Draft Local Plan.

139.2 Parish Council Elections 2019

Councillors received information on the forthcoming Ickleford parish council elections prior to the meeting. The Clerk noted that local councils are being asked to publicise elections to residents to raise awareness and also encourage them to consider standing as local councillors to represent their community.

Following a proposal from Cllr Crowe which was seconded by Cllr Gooden, it was **resolved** to publicise the 2019 Ickleford parish council elections via the village noticeboards, Village News distribution list, 'Community News' section of The Comet, and the Parish Council's website and Facebook page to raise awareness and encourage residents to consider standing as a Parish Councillor. **Action: Clk**

139.3 Little Park Allotments

The 2018/19 financial summary showing income from rent agreements and expenditure to date for the allotments was circulated prior to the meeting. Based on the 2018/19 financial summary, it was noted that the current level of rental income should cover anticipated expenditure in the 2019/20 financial year for Little Park.

Following a proposal from Cllr Crowe which was seconded by Cllr Blake, it was **resolved** to maintain the same allotment rental for the 2019/20 financial year.

139.4 Benches and plaques in Ickleford parish

The meeting was advised that two Ickleford residents, Mike and Glenys Palmer, had approached the Parish Council to offer a financial donation towards the cost of purchasing and installing the bench by Chapel Path; this donation is noted in Appendix A. The Parish Council noted formal thanks to Mr & Mrs Palmer for this donation. In addition, it was agreed that a letter of acknowledgement and thanks be sent from the Parish Council. **Action: MM**

Further to receipt of this donation, councillors noted the importance of having guidelines in place to assist with managing the process for any future financial donations offered by individuals and organisations towards specific items, projects or initiatives within the parish; this includes appropriate acknowledgement of any such donation. Draft guidelines to assist with this matter were circulated prior to the meeting and discussed by councillors.

Following a proposal from Cllr Blake which was seconded by Cllr Gooden, it was **resolved** to accept the Guidelines for donations for items, projects and initiatives. The Clerk will upload this information to the Parish Council's website. **Action: Clk**

In accordance with the Guidelines for donations for items, projects and initiatives, the wording of the plaque on the new bench by Chapel Path was discussed. It was agreed that the text would read 'Chapel Path'; a quote for the plaque will be obtained for consideration at the April meeting. **Action: Clk**

139.5 'Save our Green Belt' (SOGB) meeting held on 21 February

Cllrs Crowe, Gooden and Thurstance provided an update on this meeting which was chaired by Mr Adrian Hawkins from 'Save our Green Belt' (SOGB). Mr Hawkins advised that the Inspector for the NHDC Draft Local Plan had not yet made his decision on the Green Belt, but the expectation was that this would be made soon. Furthermore, Local Plans for neighbouring authorities in Hertfordshire have been delayed. The possibility of a further legal challenge from SOGB was raised at the meeting; this would probably be based on the criteria of openness provided by the Green Belt and exceptional circumstances under which Green Belt boundaries can be modified. The estimated cost was between £55,000- £60,000, compared with £35,000 for the previous legal challenge. Discussion at the SOGB meeting concluded that the only way to fund this legal challenge would be to request donations as was the case in the previous legal challenge. Mr Hawkins will forward further information about the proposed legal challenge and funding options in due course.

Councillors considered the information from the SOGB meeting. It was agreed to await the Inspector's report following on from the public consultation of the Main Modifications of the NHDC Draft Local Plan before making a decision on whether to make a financial contribution towards the proposed legal challenge. Cllr Maxwell will advise Mr Hawkins accordingly.

Action: MM

139.6 Request from Bim Afolami MP for support of the Churchgate redevelopment in Hitchin

Bim Afolami MP contacted the Parish Council to request support for an application by NHDC to the 'Future High Streets Fund' with regard to the redevelopment of the Churchgate area in Hitchin. The 'Future High Street Fund' is a government initiative started by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government to invest in redeveloping and revitalising High Streets, and Mr Afolami is seeking the support of those living in villages around Hitchin to highlight to the Ministry that the local area surrounding Hitchin will also greatly benefit from this redevelopment.

Following a proposal from Cllr Crowe which was seconded by Cllr Thurstance, it was **resolved** to write to Mr Afolami to express the Parish Council's support for an application by NHDC to the 'Future High Streets' fund to demonstrate the benefits of the redevelopment of the Churchgate area for those living in the surrounding area. **Action: MM**

139.7 Repairs to potholes in the access road off Greenfield Avenue and to the rear of Turnpike Lane

During the public participation session, a member of the public outlined their concerns about the condition of the access road off Greenfield Avenue and to the rear of Turnpike Lane. They noted that there were a number of large potholes which were causing difficulties for users of this access road. Information about the poor condition of the road had also been circulated prior to the meeting.

Councillors acknowledged these concerns and also the impact that the condition of the road had on residents. Cllr Crowe advised that the Parish Council had made enquiries with the relevant authorities about ownership and responsibility for maintenance of this access road, and NHDC has confirmed that they own this access road. An overview of the on-going communication about with NHDC was given. It was agreed that the Parish Council would continue to investigate this matter, with the assistance of District Cllr Spencer-Smith, and update the member of the public as appropriate. **Action: PC/CT/HSS**

The poor condition of the pavement in the Greenfield Avenue area was also noted by a member of the public. It was agreed that Parish Council would look into this matter, with the

assistance of District Cllr Spencer-Smith, and update the member of the public as appropriate.

Action: PC/CT/HSS

139.8 Annual hosting renewal for 'icklefordpc.com'

The Clerk reported that the annual renewal of the icklefordpc.com domain name hosting for email and website was received for payment between meetings. As per the Financial Regulations, payment of this invoice was authorised to ensure continuity of service for the Parish Council website and email addresses.

Following a proposal from Cllr Crowe which was seconded by Cllr Gooden, it was **resolved** to formally approve the payment of £29.99 for the annual renewal of the 'icklefordpc.com' domain name hosting for email and website.

140 Planning Applications

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

140.1 19/00284/FPH at 13 Freewaters Close, Ickleford, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 3TQ

Full permission householder: single storey rear infill extension and replacement of flat roofs on existing garage and existing extension.

Due to the response deadline, the Clerk and planning advisors responded between meetings, noting **no objections**.

Following a proposal from Cllr Blake which was seconded by Cllr Crowe, it was **resolved** to formally approve that the Parish Council had **no objections** to this planning application.

140.2 Planning applications received between 28 February and 7 March 2019

None received

141 Planning Decisions

141.1 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 (as amended by drawings LD278-P01B; P02B and P03B received 08/02/2019)

NHDC granted Conditional Permission on 14 February 2019

141.2 Planning decisions received between 28 February and 7 March 2019

141.2.1 CB/18/01615/OUT at Land adjacent to Wilbury Hills Cemetery, Stotfold Road, Letchworth

Outline: Erection of crematorium, including vehicular access to Arlesey New Road, internal access roads, car parking and service areas, alterations to levels, landscaping and memorial gardens and related works.

Central Bedfordshire Council refused planning permission on 5 March 2019

142 Finance

142.1 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.

142.2 Approve payments for March 2019 and any payments made between meetings

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

143 Date for Next Meeting

143.1 The next Parish Council meeting will be held on **Thursday 4 April 2019** at 7.30pm

The meeting closed at 9.25pm.

Signed by Chairman

Date

Print name of Chairman
