

East Ilsley Parish Council

MINUTES of the PARISH COUNCIL Meeting

Held on Tuesday 19th November 2019 at 7:30pm

In The Ilsleys Primary School, Church Hill, East Ilsley

Minute Reference: 008/191119/PCM

Those present: A Sharp (Acting Chair), S Meadows, B McGrath (arrived 19:39), F Wilkins, F Woods (Clerk)

Members of the public: 3

The meeting started at 19:32

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from T Murray. We are quorate.

2 Any declarations of pecuniary interests by members or the Clerk

There were none.

3 To receive: Questions or comments from the Public and Declarations of Interest

- 1) Common Land Grazing Agreement – concerns were raised regarding the management of this. This will be answered during Correspondence (item 14) below.
- 2) Christmas – The village would like to continue with the tradition of 'lighting up the Pond' for the festive season and the volunteers have requested a financial contribution from the Parish Council. All councillors were in favour to present a cheque to Kim Richardson for the value of £100. The cheque will be signed during the Clerk Update (item 13) below.
- 3) Blocked up Gullies – it has been noted that a number of gullies and channels around the village are blocked up with debris and need to be cleared to aid the drainage of rainwater so the pond can cope with the heavy rainfall predicted. This will be covered during Pod Update (item 10) below.
- 4) Container Storage for Emergency Equipment – this will be discussed in full in item 12 below.

4 Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on 17th September 2019 were read and signed as a true and accurate representation.

5 Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Council Meeting

There were no matters raised.

6 Thanking Carolyne Culver for her work on the Parish Council

Our District Councillor for the Ridgeway ward, Cllr. Carolyne Culver has formally submitted her resignation letter to the Acting Chairman from the Parish Council. We are extremely thankful for all the work Carolyne did for the us and the village and we understand that her work as District Councillor takes precedence. We look forward to continuing to work with Carolyne in her new role.

7 Housing Analysis

Compton – The Pirbright Institute Information Day has been postponed due to 'purdah' – all work must be suspended during election time. It will be rescheduled in January 2020 and the Parish Council will do all they can to advertise and inform villagers about the revised date. The importance of attending this session was heavily stressed by the Councillors and we will do all we can to energise people to attend. The impact this proposal could have on East Ilsley is something we all must have our say on. The Clerk will monitor websites and emails and publish the revised date as soon as it is definitive.

East Ilsley – Historically, East Ilsley has been quite anti housing in terms of new developments. A parish plan was last done in 2001 so a new one should be commissioned to survey the thoughts and needs of the village. These documents cost a lot of money but once they are done, any future developers need to make consideration of them. We do not have the expansion capabilities as Compton do in terms of

Swimbrels, Newbury Hill, Hampstead Norreys, Berkshire, RG18 OTR

07912 565665 clerk@eastilsley-pc.gov.uk

areas for development. The village will need to decide if we want to pay for a plan and there are grants available to help us pay for it. SM will speak with Compton to find out who they used and set up a meeting with them to explore.

8 Resurrection of the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme in East Ilsley

After a website and social media small campaign we have sadly not received any interested volunteers in setting up a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme in East Ilsley. The general consensus was that the villagers tend to look out for each other automatically and the Facebook page was used frequently to update people about any suspicious activity spotted in the village. The councillors agreed that it was a good initiative to have in place but without willing volunteers we cannot get this off the ground. It was proposed to invite someone from the scheme to present at our Annual Meeting next May to give more information about what was actually required of the volunteers. The Clerk will make a note to add this to the agenda and source an appropriate presenter.

9 Playground Update

The 'working group' have met 4 times now and they have a target of £60,000 to raise by April 2020. They are in the process of looking at who they can go to get different pots of money and they are reaching out to these groups. Current plan is to have the playground ready for the start of the summer holidays next year. If we raise £60,000 the Parish Council can fund £15,000 to total £75,000. We do need to budget the maintenance aspect of looking after the new equipment when we plan the new budget. A survey was done in the school on what is wanted and now have a shopping list and the group are looking into the guarantees of the equipment. A new playground could increase our grass cutting requirements which will again need to be budgeted for. One idea presented was that we could look at a rota scheme for grass cutting by villagers. They are also looking into the purchase of 'Adult Exercise' equipment as well as we can target other companies for funding (i.e. Diabetes UK). The Council will call a meeting to ask who can provide services to the village so grass cutting and hanging baskets can be maintained.

Insurance Claim for the damaged train is currently in progress. The Clerk has submitted a report and is waiting to hear back from the Insurance company.

10 Pond Update

AS and Clerk had a walk and meeting with the WBC engineer in October. The drainage system is no longer working and we know we need to sort this out. The channels and gullies need to be clear so it runs efficiently. AS is meeting with engineer again to talk about the pond and to look at the flow from Maxted Farm to Fidlers Lane and other water flows that run through the village. The way the fields are ploughed links to run off – up and down the hill causes problems but when they plough side to side it is not so bad. We need to identify all the running channels of water around the village to address all these needs. Other councillors are welcome to join AS at this meeting.

We can also keep an eye on the Pang Valley Well Heights (ridgeway well) – as a month after we get the same results. The Clerk can do this via the internet. This is our highest priority and it gives a real vision into what is going on.

Matt McNeil knows someone who can take the reeds out and the Parish Council need to find somewhere for the reeds – pit meadow was proposed as an option. Due to the Christmas decorations we can't do this until January 2020. SM will speak with Matt and his team about when they are free in January and we will publish the date of when this will happen. We will need quote from Matt for budgeting purposes.

We will ask Stuart @ WBC for the name of a company who can test the pond water for us and get that actioned so we know what we can do with the silt.

Riparian Rights – homeowners in the village with these rights need to ensure they are maintaining all the gullies and channels on their land.

Dyson have offered to help and the Clerk will email them to find out when they can do this. We will run this past the landowners prior to work being carried out.

11 Speed Awareness Update

The team have been making some slow progress, but Graham Markham from WBC has been in to do the risk assessment in the village and we have identified black spots. 4 locations have been identified in the 20 mph zone and 4 in the 30mph zone. The Clerk will publish the map on the website and our social media, so people are aware of the plans. Data will be gathered and analysed and sent to WBC with recommendations of changes to junctions / speed limits / traffic calming measures.

This will be the starting point and it will progress from there. The main challenge at the moment is the availability of trained volunteers and we can arrange to get more people trained up – check with WBC for when the next course is. Thank you to Mike and the Team for all their hard work so far.

Cow Lane Update – They will not amend the speed limit as per our numerous requests. We now have another 3 year wait before we can put in another request.

12 Disaster Recovery Equipment

Originally the Parish Council were going to store the new equipment once purchased in the container by the allotments. However, after careful consideration of the current village equipment stored in there it has been agreed to purchase a smaller container just for the disaster equipment. This will be a quarter sized container and will sit next to the existing one. We have until September 2020 to purchase the equipment before the funding is cancelled. As soon as we source a suitable container and know the lead time, we can plan the purchase of all the equipment. We will need to consider marking the equipment for security and think about how we can lock this away securely.

13 Clerk Update

- 1) It was agreed by the Council to provide a £30 donation to the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal. A cheque was signed and will be delivered to Kay Sanderson. Thank you to Kay for organising this for us.
- 2) The Good Exchange Direct Debit Mandate was signed by 2 Councillors and will be posted to them to hold on file should we use them for assistance in the future.
- 3) Financial Accounts – September, October and November (to date of meeting) were ratified.
- 4) EIC Printing – we have recently been sent 4 x invoices from the Print Room @ WBC for the cost of 4 issues of EIC printing. Initially it was agreed they would cost no more than £150 per issue but we have received invoices ranging from £100 to £226. This has taken us over our budget so the Clerk will amend this. In the future it has been proposed that we limit the pages per issue and consider a black and white front cover to reduce print costs. The Clerk will email Matthew the editor to start discussing ways of cost saving. Also discussed was our involvement with Compton's Compilations magazine and the pros and cons of donating towards that. We will discuss this at the next meeting when we plan the budget for next year as we may pull out of that magazine and just have a copy at the Church, Pub and School instead of every household.
- 5) Communication over email between the Clerk and the Councillors is not as smooth and efficient as it could be. It has been decided that we set up a 'WhatsApp' group and communicate via that for items that need a fast response. Email will continue to be in full use, but WhatsApp will allow some lighter decisions to be made faster.
- 6) A Courtesy Light at Long Cottage has been reported as 'flickering'. The Council suggested that Graham Murray could go and have a look at it and make any repairs.
- 7) The Clerk had a 'shopping list' of items that are needed to run successfully. They are:
 - a. The Clerk's Manual printed by the Society for Local Council Clerks @ £59.38 (no VAT)
 - b. 4 Drawer Lockable Metal Filing Cabinet @ £185.00 inc. VAT
 - c. 100 Suspension Files to put all the filing in the cabinet @ £44.73 inc. VATThe Councillors all agreed in these purchases and the Clerk will order the items. VAT will be reclaimed where possible.

14 Matters Arising and Correspondence received

- 1) We have received notification from The Pensions Regulator that we need to re-enrol for pension for the Clerk. On appointment the Clerk opted out of the NEST pension as she has her own private pension. The Clerk will monitor and complete any necessary paperwork to ensure the opt out is still in place.
- 2) Renewal of CCB Membership (Connecting Communities in Berkshire) – a cost of £32 per annum. The Councillors agreed to renew their membership but were at a loss as to what this entitles us to. The Clerk will find out more about what it entails.

- 3) West Berkshire Libraries Voluntary Contribution – we have been asked to contribute £1 per resident of the village to support the local libraries. It was raised that we were unable to do this last time acting upon advice from BALC. The Clerk has received nothing from them this year so will find out if this directive has changed.
- 4) We have been informed by WBC that no CIL funds were received from our Parish in the period 1st April 2019 to 30th September 2019.
- 5) Grazing Agreement on Common Land – The Clerk received a request from a villager asking for the 'forms' to apply for grazing a horse on the Common Land. After a thorough search of the laptop files and the 6 boxes received when taking over the position it was clear that absolutely no paperwork in relation to these 'agreements' were in the possession of the Parish Council. With nothing to go on and no historical documents the Clerk made a couple of enquiry phone calls to help with a starting point. It has come to light that ex-councillors still in the village have the information needed and this was brought to the meeting and shared with the Council (thank you). There are 18 homes in the village who have Common Land Grazing Rights with their properties (these rights are attached to the properties not the people). These rights can be granted to other people via an agreement. A copy of the existing agreement was handed to the clerk. It has been agreed that moving forward the Clerk will take on the responsibility of managing these agreements from an administrative perspective and will work with the existing agreements to get everything on file and properly recorded. The Clerk will work with the Councillors to get new agreements drawn up and signed and these will be renewed every 2 years to ensure no tenancy rights are claimed. Thank you to Jacqui for providing the missing documents.

15 Reports of Meetings attended

See Pond Update (item 10) regarding the Pond Meeting. Cllr. Culver has provided a written report on her latest work as District Councillor and this can be viewed on our website here: <https://www.eastilsley-pc.gov.uk/councillors/>

16 To receive further questions or comments from the Public

- 1) Community Orchard – do we need to get the soil tested? Agreed no as allotments were OK.
- 2) Pirbright Institute Housing Development – The Clerk will advertise the date of the new meeting and Councillors urge villagers to attend to have a say on the impact the development will have.

The meeting closed at 21:32 and the Chairman would like to thank everyone who joined us this evening.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 14th January 2020, 7.30pm at The Ilsleys Primary School.

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Chairman

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Date