

West Ilsley Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting

Monday 12th September, 2011

Present: Cllrs: Sean Ryan, Alan Bloor, Anna Sugden, Dries Hagen, Jo Scriven and Alison Banks (Clerk) plus approximately 11 members of the public.

1. Apologies for Absence

John Mountford.

2. To Receive any changes to Declarations

None

3. To receive and if approved confirm the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held Monday 9th May, 2011

Signed as a true record – July meeting having been cancelled.

4. Matters arising

Would be taken within the minutes.

5. Correspondence received

None

6. Bury Down Car Park

Elaine Cox from West Berks Planning and Countryside Office explained the proposals for the vehicular access going east from the car park along The Ridgeway. The main issues are to prevent 4WDs from entering and damaging the surface and also to prevent rave goers from gaining easy access to their raves, usually in the subway further east towards East Ilsley. Elaine proposed a plan whereby the car park is surrounded by a ditch and the spoil used to make a mound the far side. Along the nearside would be a low fence. There would be 2 gates and a Kent Carriage Gap. This allows carriages and bikes to pass, but not cars. Emergency services would also need access (Elaine would check that the Emergency vehicles could get through). There followed discussions on whether to lock the gates, where the string of racehorses would pass and how high the fence would be. Compromises were suggested and a further site meeting agreed with all interested parties. The Carlisle family kindly offered to repair any 4WD damage to The Ridgeway Trail in return for the gates being left open with all gates locked if Police intelligence suggested a rave was planned. The cost of the project was approximately £10k and it would commence as soon as all were agreed. The west side of the car park may follow should this first phase be deemed successful.

7. Parish Plan

The Parish Plan Committee now have the draft of the questionnaire ready to print, for launch as soon as possible.

8. Cricket Club

Dick Beech was delighted to announce the news that the Cricket Club have secured an ECB grant of £70k to put towards their pavilion extension costing about £90K. The shortfall would be met by the club itself. David Gardhouse was the selected contractor who was himself local and would be employing local tradesmen. They hope to start at the end of October and complete in time for the new season next summer. There would be some disruption and villagers would be notified via WIN.

Mr Beech asked if the Parish Council and specifically the owners of Whiteways Cottage were happy with their approach to stray cricket balls entering their property. Cllr Sugden replied positively that she was very happy with the current arrangements. They had had very little disruption and damage from cricket balls this season.

9. Village Hall

Philip Knight, the new Chairman presented his thoughts for the Hall. He proposed that his committee were prepared to manage the hall and organise all maintenance etc but were unable to fund raise to pay for any spend. They plan to present a 5 year plan detailing what they believed would be the future costs. The Chairman and several others thanked Mr Knight and his colleagues for stepping into their committee roles but emphasised that the village precept could not finance the Hall bills and that grants or funds could be sought, similar to those obtained by the Tennis Management Committee, the Church, the Play Area and most recently the Cricket Club. The PC offered their support and await the 5 year maintenance plan.

10. Transport and Safety

Discussions have taken place regarding the position of the bus stop sign opposite the church. Currently it is concreted into the entrance steps of no 31 Main Street. This is now very awkward for the residents and they have asked for it to be moved. The proposal is to put in a new post 50cm to the right away from the entrance to their property. The neighbor in Downs House has also been consulted and her concerns that the new post does not get in the way or damage her wall have been voiced to West Berks Council. The Clerk will update Clive Tombs of West Berks Council.

The Clerk announced that Cllr Mountford was following up with West Berks a suggestion that the VAS sign is calibrated too high (at about 35mph). This should be checked. Dist. Cllr Chandler said that after the meeting our case regarding moving the 30mph sign further up the hill to East Ilsley has not been accepted. Apparently the new proposal is to add a second white gate and improve the road markings.

11. Environmental

West Ilsley Stables had contacted the Clerk to say that the muck heap would still continue to burn as the Police and Environmental Agency had asked them to flatten the heap so that it burnt out quicker. The stables wanted to offer their apologies should excessive smoke head into the village.

12. Play Area

Nothing to report

13. Tennis Court Committee

The Chairman of the Tennis Committee had asked the Clerk to gauge opinion on the remaining trees around the court. Cllr Sugden commented that these questions were to be put into the Parish Plan questionnaire so that the whole village could pass comment.

14. Accounts for Payment/receipts received.

The VAT from various expenses (especially the Tennis Court spend) had been claimed back and was in the bank account.

15. West Ilsley Trust

No request for donations.

16. Planning Applications

None to report

AOB

PAYE and The Clerk

The Clerk explained that new legislation required all Parish Councils to register as an employer with HMRC and operate a PAYE on the income the Clerk earns. Checks will be made and this new system must commence during this tax year. The general consensus amongst many Clerks and Councils is to contract this out to a company like Douglas Tonks who already represent 120 Councils. Cost would be £15 + VAT per quarter. This was agreed in principal but Cllr Hagen offered to check over the documentation.

Unresolved from previous meeting:

Mr Gore reported on the recent poor verge cutting. This would be taken up with WBC by DCllr Chandler.

The British Legion had contacted Cllr Hagen regarding the condition of the War Memorial and the difficulty in reading the names inscribed. Cllr Hagen will contact Ian Fewtrell-Smith to see if the names on the war memorial could be cleaned.

Cllr Mountford offered to look into the progress of the village defibrillator as discussed previously.

Potential salt bin – would be discussed at the next meeting. Cllr Sugden also reported that to acquire a salt bin for The Maltings would cost £185 to buy. If funded the Council would put into position.

The next PC meeting is Monday 14th November, 2011 at 7.30pm in The Village Hall.

Alison Banks, Clerk to The Parish Council