

**ILTON PARISH COUNCIL**  
website – [iltonparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://iltonparishcouncil.gov.uk)

**Minutes of the Meeting of Ilton Parish Council held in Merryfield Hall on  
Tuesday 10 September 2024 at 6.30p.m.**

**Present:** Cllrs: J Bennett (Chair), N Matravers, L Pike, S Ripley, I Sherwood, B Vance

**In attendance:** Mrs A Dallaway (Clerk/RFO), Cllr J Roundell Greene (Somerset Council) and three members of the public

**2024/148 Apologies:** J Easterbrook (personal reasons received in writing); S Calvert (personal reasons); A Gordon (work commitments); Cllr A Dance (Somerset Council)

**2024/149 Declarations of Interest:** There were no declarations of interest at this stage of the meeting.

**2024/150 Items to be dealt with after the public, including the press have been excluded:** There were no items identified at this stage of the meeting.

**2024/151 Public Participation**

**Public: The two picnic benches at Brook Green are missing. Will they be replaced?**

*Council: It is hoped that one good bench can be made out of the two and installed back at Brook Green.*

**Public: A number of military officials will be attending the Remembrance Service at Ilton to lay wreaths. The Sea Cadets will also be attending. Will there be a Remembrance Service Breakfast available?**

*Council: Yes, arrangements for the breakfast are in hand and it will be advertised nearer the date.*

**Public: Village volunteers carried out some maintenance in Frost Lane recently and were subjected to some verbal abuse from a local resident who requested that they get off her land**

*Council: This regrettable incident was noted.*

**Public: Somerset Council contractors cut the verge opposite Church Green but left it in an untidy state. Please record my thanks to Cllr N Matravers and Cllr I Sherwood for stepping in to tidy up the area.**

*Council: This matter was raised with the SC Highways Officer.*

**2024/152 Somerset Council Councillor Report**

Cllr Jo Roundell Greene was in attendance and highlighted the following matters:

- Proposed changes to planning laws and a National Scheme of Delegation to encourage the building of new houses. The target for building new homes in Somerset has risen from 2669 to 3891.
- SC has launched the 2024 Resident Survey – local residents are encouraged to complete the survey by the deadline of 21 October. The survey is available online or hard copy versions are available in the local libraries.
- SC is also undertaking consultation regarding the Council Tax Reduction Scheme – this survey is available online with a deadline of 1 October. The link is available on the Parish Council Face Book page.
- SC will be progressing a new Somerset Local Plan.
- The Enhanced Highways Maintenance Pilot scheme has now been launched by SC. (see minute ref 2024/159/h)

**2024/153 Minutes of the 16 July 2024 Parish Council Meeting: to approve the minutes as a true record & consider any matters arising**

In 2024/122 Cad Lane should read Cad Road.

**COUNCIL RESOLVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS AN ACCURATE RECORD  
PROPOSED BY JB; SECONDED BY SR. ALL IN FAVOUR.**

Initial .....

**2024/154 Minutes of the 13 August 2024 Parish Council Extraordinary Meeting: to approve the minutes as a true record & consider any matters arising**

**COUNCIL RESOLVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS AN ACCURATE RECORD PROPOSED BY JB; SECONDED BY BV. ALL IN FAVOUR.**

Re 2024/143 Council noted that the cost of the removal of the dead elm trees at the Rec Field will be taken out of the Rec Field Development EMR.

**024/155 Planning Applications:** There were no planning applications to consider.

**2024/156 Accounts and Financial Information 24/25 (documents previously circulated)**

**a) Bank reconciliation to 31/08/2024 – to receive and sign**

Cllr J Bennett signed the bank reconciliation to 31/08/2024

**b) Summary Receipts & Payments report to 31/08/2024 – received**

**c) Schedule of Payments for September 2024 – to consider for approval (see Appendix to the mins)**

**COUNCIL RESOLVED TO APPROVE THE PAYMENTS PROPOSED BY BV; SECONDED BY IS. ALL IN FAVOUR**

The Clerk will schedule the bank payments online and Cllr Bennett will authorise as the second signatory in line with the Council's bank mandate.

**d) Banking – to consider options to provide FCSC protection**

Council considered a report presented by the Clerk/RFO detailing short-term investment options. In view of the need to provide easy access to funds for planned project expenditure over the next 6 – 12 months, Council agreed not to pursue alternative investment options at the moment. This matter will be reviewed as part of the budget setting process. Review January 2025.

**e) Renewal of the electricity contract for the supply for the MUGA lights – to consider quotes for renewal due 30 Sept 2024**

Quotes have been received from our existing supplier and from other green and mixed energy suppliers. Council agreed to accept a fixed price quote from Valda energy for a 24-month period. The Clerk will liaise with Valda to facilitate the new contract from 1 October 2024 and to organise the installation of a new Smart Meter.

**COUNCIL RESOLVED TO APPROVE THE QUOTE FROM VALDA ENERGY FOR THE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY FROM 1 OCTOBER 24**

**PROPOSED BY BV; SECONDED BY IS. ALL IN FAVOUR**

**ACTION: CLERK**

**f) External Audit 23/24 – to receive an update**

The Clerk reported that the Final External Audit Report had now been received from PKF Littlejohn and the report has been published on the Council's website. The Notice of Conclusion of Audit has also been published.

**2024/157 Grass cutting contract – to receive an update on the Schedule of Works completed to date**

Council noted that there are still a lot of remaining cuts to be carried out as part of the contract for 24/25 and suggested that some cuts should be saved for April/March 25. The Clerk will ask the contractor to clarify the spread of work over the remaining months of the contract

**ACTION: CLERK**

**2024/158 Employment Matters**

**a) Pension update –** Council noted that the Council is now registered with Nest and that the Clerk has opted out of the pension scheme.

**b) To consider whether the Clerk/RFO additional hours worked in July to be paid or taken as TOIL**

The Clerk had previously circulated a time sheet indicating 30 additional hours worked in July due to the additional work created by extra meetings and ensuring good governance arrangements are in place.

**COUNCIL RESOLVED TO PAY THE CLERK FOR THE ADDITIONAL HOURS WORKED IN JULY**

Initial .....

**PROPOSED BV; SECONDED BY LP. ALL IN FAVOUR**

**2024/159 Environment Matters**

- a) **Repairs to bench in Merryfield Lane – to consider quotes for the groundworks**  
Council noted that the bench is currently not in a good state of repair and requires maintenance to encourage better use of this amenity which sits in a prominent position at the entrance to the village. Only two quotes were received and Council agreed to defer this matter to the October meeting to enable more quotes to be obtained in line with Fin Regs. Cllr N Matravers will also confirm the additional costings for associated timber repairs and ironworks.  
**ACTION: CLERK/CLLR N MATRAVERS**
- b) **Cemetery gatepost – to consider repairs**  
**COUNCIL RESOLVED TO APPROVE £340 FUNDING (written quote received) TO REPLACE THE CEMETERY GATEPOST (Facilities & Amenities EMR)**  
**PROPOSED BY JB; SECONDED BY NM. ALL IN FAVOUR**
- c) **Village Green – to consider post and chain fencing around the Village Green**  
**COUNCIL RESOLVED NOT TO INSTALL POST AND CHAIN FENCING AROUND THE VILLAGE GREEN**  
**PROPOSED BY LP; SECONDED BY BV. MAJORITY IN FAVOUR. 75 votes for; 1 vote abstaining.**
- d) **Village signage – to consider new directional signage for Church, Village Hall etc**  
Council noted that the current directional signage has now been repaired.
- e) **SID – to consider purchase**  
Cllr A Gordon is currently looking into costings.  
**ACTION: CLLR A GORDON**  
Council noted that the application for the Community Speed Watch Initiative is on hold as the Rules and Regulations for the CSW are currently being updated. No new applications will be considered until after November.
- f) **Resilience meeting – to receive an update from Cllr B Vance**  
Cllr B Vance is happy to act as the Parish Council representative for this emergency planning initiative (organised by Ilminster Town Council) and to highlight the need for Chapter 8 Training and access to Flood Warning signs.
- g) **LCN Highways Working Group meeting – to receive an update from Cllr B Vance**  
The Clerk had attended the latest meeting [last meeting with Cllr B Vance](#) and expressed concern that SC Highways Officers were not routinely in attendance at the meetings, in order to provide up to date information and support to the town and parish representatives in attendance.  
Cllr J Bennett will contact the Asst Highways Service Manager to request a site visit in Ilton in order to clarify which areas of maintenance are the responsibility of SC and also to request a Schedule of Works for the year.  
**ACTION: CLLR J BENNETT**
- h) **SC Enhanced Highway Maintenance EHM Pilot and Volunteer training launch – to discuss**  
Council acknowledged receipt of the letter outlining the EHM pilot and the launch of the Volunteer training initiative. Further information will be available at the forthcoming LCN meetings.

**2024/160 Risk Management**

- a) **Draft Volunteer Induction Brief – to consider for approval**  
The Clerk had previously circulated a draft Volunteer Induction Brief for completion prior to the commencement of any volunteer activity. The document aims to record specific details of the activity or task and includes a dynamic risk assessment. The Clerk agreed to condense the document to a single side of A4 and to produce laminated Health & Safety guidance sheets for display in the containers at the Rec Field.  
**COUNCIL RESOLVED TO APPROVE THE VOLUNTEER INDUCTION BRIEF SUBJECT TO THE ABOVE AMENDMENTS**

**PROPOSED BY BV; SECONDED BY LP. ALL IN FAVOUR**

**b) Annual Review of Fixed Assets – to receive an update**

The Clerk circulated Asset Review Forms for councillors to complete as part of the annual review of fixed assets. Any maintenance items with cost implications will be brought to the attention of the Full Council in line with Fin Regs and will be considered as part of the annual budget setting process.

**2024/161 Policy review**

**a) Complaints procedure & Vexatious Complaints procedure (approved Oct 23) – to review**

i) **Complaints procedure** - Council agreed that the Clerk and Chairman should would aim to resolve any complaints informally in the first instance but that any formal complaints would be referred to the Full Council.

ii) **Vexatious Complaints procedure** – Council agreed that it would be the responsibility of the Full Council to decide if a complainant is becoming vexatious and to impose any restrictions in line with the approved procedure.

**COUNCIL RESOLVED TO APPROVE THE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE AND VEXATIOUS COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE SUBJECT TO THE ABOVE AMENDMENTS**

**PROPOSED BY BV; SECONDED BY NVNM. ALL IN FAVOUR**

The Clerk will amend the documents and circulate to all councillors. The updated versions will be put on the website.

**ACTION: CLERK**

**b) Employment policies**

**i) Grievance & Disciplinary (approved Oct 23) – to review**

Council approved the existing policies but noted that there would be insufficient members of the Staffing Committee to provide an Appeal Panel and that the latter would comprise three members of the Council who had not previously been involved (in line with the existing policy).

**COUNCIL RESOLVED TO APPROVE THE GRIEVANCE AND DISCIPLINARY POLICIES**

Council approved the existing policies but noted that there would be insufficient members of the Staffing Committee to provide an Appeal Panel and that the latter would comprise three members of the Full Council who had not previously been involved (in line with the existing policy).

**COUNCIL RESOLVED TO APPROVE THE GRIEVANCE AND DISCIPLINARY POLICIES.**

**PROPOSED BY BV; SECONDED BY JB. ALL IN FAVOUR**

**ii) Expenses (approved Dec 22) – to review**

The Clerk will check that the mileage rate is consistent with that detailed in the employment contract. Cllr S Ripley proposed that the reference to the Monthly Allowance be removed from the Expenses policy and that an Expenses Form be included as an appendix to the policy. This item was deferred to the October meeting.

**iii) Sickness & Absence – to consider adoption**

As the meeting was likely to over-run, this item was deferred to the October meeting.

**c) Volunteer Terms of Reference – to consider adopting**

As the meeting was likely to over-run, this item was deferred to the October meeting.

**d) Social Media policy – to consider adopting**

The Clerk had previously circulated two policy templates for consideration. Council agreed to adopt the shorter, more concise policy template.

**COUNCIL RESOLVED TO ADOPT A SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

**PROPOSED BY SR; SECONDED BY BV. ALL IN FAVOUR**

**2024/162 Cemetery Regulations & Memorial Inspection regime - to review**

As the meeting was likely to over-run, this item was deferred to the October meeting.

**2024/163 Recreational facilities**

**a) General maintenance items highlighted in the monthly/annual reports for the playpark and MUGA – to receive an update**

Initial .....

A local contractor will carry out minor maintenance to the timber bins and picnic benches at the playpark (written quote received for £250). This work has already been approved by Council. The Clerk will ask the grass cutting contractor to trim back some of the overhanging tree branches in the park and to strim back nettles as necessary.

**b) To consider quotes for**

**i) repairs to timber trail** – one quote has been received to date. The Clerk will seek to obtain further quotes in line with Fin Regs.

**ii) repairs to Multi-play** – one quote has been received to date. As this item is identified as Low Risk in the Annual Inspection, it will be deferred to the next financial year.

**iii) play park signage** – two quotes were received for best value purposes

**COUNCIL RESOLVED TO APPROVE £183 PLUS VAT FOR THREE REPLACEMENT METAL SIGNS FOR THE PLAYPARK (AND MINOR SIGN UPDATES IN THE VILLAGE) PROPOSED BY BV; SECONDED BY NM. ALL IN FAVOUR**

A new safety sign will also be installed for the bike track in the playpark

A quote was also received for repairs to the timber frame of the Zip Wire. As this item is identified as Low Risk in the Annual Inspection, it will be deferred to the next financial year.

**c) MUGA hire – to confirm existing hire arrangements and advertising**

This item was deferred to the October meeting.

**d) Rec Field Working Party – to receive an update and consider tree planting**

This item was deferred to the October meeting.

**e) Football goals/nets – to consider purchase of age-appropriate nets**

This item was deferred to the October meeting

**2024/164 Projects for 24/25**

**a) Village signs – to receive an update**

Discussion is on-going with SC for consent to erect the proposed Hamstone Standing Signs on the highway. A further update will be provided at the October meeting.

**b) Bike track at Rec Field – to consider further consultation with the village children**

This item was deferred to the October meeting.

**c) Shelter at Rec Field – to agree the specification**

This item was deferred to the October meeting.

**d) Memorial Cross at the Church – to receive an update**

This item was deferred to the October meeting pending confirmation from the church of the proposal to install the Memorial Cross on the church wall.

**Date of next meeting:**

**Parish Council Meeting: Tuesday 8 October at 6.30pm at Merryfield Hall**

The meeting closed at 9.10pm

Signed .....

Date .....

Initial .....