

## ILTON PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Ilton Parish Council held in Merryfield Hall on Tuesday 10th March 2020

#### 2020/39 Attendance and Apologies

##### Those present:

Mr I Sherwood (Chair)  
Mrs R Burt (Vice Chair)  
Mrs J Easterbrook  
Mrs S Hill  
Mr D Mico  
Mr A Dance (County Councillor)  
Mr M Cavill (District Councillor)  
Mrs S Morley (Clerk)

##### Apologies

Mrs M Bullock  
Mr G Mackenzie-Green  
Mrs P Matravers

##### In Attendance

4 members of the public

#### 2020/40 Visitors and Public Voice

##### (a) Church Lead

A number of local churches have had their lead stolen including Ilton, Kingsbury and South Petherton. The Police are warning communities to be vigilant. Ilton is fully insured and is looking to replace the lead with an alternative material.

##### (b) Heavy goods vehicles

Heavy good vehicles are ignoring the 'unsuitable for heavy vehicles' sign at the end of Frost Lane and as a result are getting stuck and having to back out onto Cad Road. They appear to be following the directions of their sat navs. Mrs Burt will contact Highways.

**ACTION - Mrs Burt**

##### (c) Good Neighbour's Scheme

It was reported that the Good Neighbour's Scheme is going very well and is starting to be taken up by people in the village. The most popular request is for transport to hospital for example, and guided walks.

##### (d) Suspicious Van

10 days ago a resident followed an unknown white van very early in the morning which appeared to be cruising around the village. When the driver realised they were being followed they sped up and left.

##### (e) Neighbourhood Watch

This could be resurrected if there are enough people interested in becoming involved.

##### (f) Playing Field

A resident asked what is being planned for the playing field. The Chairman said that the playing field is discussed every month and that everything being considered has been minuted. Residents are also very welcome to attend the monthly Playing Field Development Meetings.

Another resident suggested that it might be a good idea to hold another public consultation to find out what people would like to see on the playing field, and to do this before there is any commitment to spend money on a skate park in case residents do not want a skate park.

#### 2020/41 Parish Council Vacancy

There was no request for an election and the parish council were free to co-opt. Mrs Jacqueline Bennett would like to come onto the council. Mr Sherwood proposed Mrs Bennett be co-opted, seconded by Mrs Easterbrook. All councillors were in favour and Mrs Bennett was duly co-opted and signed the Register of Interest form.

#### 2020/42 County Councillor Report

Councillor Dance spoke about the thefts of church lead in the area. The proposals regarding changes to local government are still in discussion.

**2020/43 District Councillor Report**

Councillor Cavill said he has nothing to add to Cllr Dance's report.

**2020/44 Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Tuesday 11th February 2020**

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed and signed.

**2020/45 Matters arising from the minutes and any subsequent action taken**

There were no matters arising not on the agenda.

**2020/46 Highways**

- (a) Village Hall Sign at corner of Copse Lane - The Clerk has reminded Highways that this sign has still not been replaced.
- (b) Water Level Sign at the Ford - Reported to Highways but not replaced yet.
- (c) Ditch in Podgers Lane - A resident rang about the ditch which is by her house. Apparently this ditch is part of a flood alleviation scheme and is maintained by Somerset County Council. Recently a large lump of concrete has been found blocking the ditch. Also the new Larkfleet development in Ilton just off Church Road have connected drainage to this ditch working with Wessex Water. She is worried about the possible flooding which may occur if the ditch is not kept free of obstruction. Highways have been informed.
- (d) Potholes - Some of the potholes are very bad and because they are full of water they are not seen. A driver had her wheels wrecked in local potholes.

**2020/47 Brook Green**

- (a) Western Power - are about to carry out tree trimming work and sought permission to cut back trees and shrubs which may interfere with the wires.
- (b) Damage - a land rover is driving at Brook Green at the weekends and making a mess. This has been reported.

**2020/48 Footpaths**

- (a) Field gate along Cad Road being left open - a resident sent an email to say that this gate is very difficult to close and for that reason is probably being left open. The Clerk contacted Drakes Farm who own the field who replied that they have purchased a couple of self closing pedestrian gates which need installing and that they also intend to make the footpath along Cadbrook more walker friendly at the same time as keeping it safe for the horses. They would also like to put in more user friendly gates at Frost Lane, midway and at Cad Bridge.
- (b) Footbridge at the Ford - this is a footpath and the bridge has been repaired.

**2020/49 Cemetery / Churchyard**

- (a) Councillors have regularly walked around the Cemetery and Churchyard and no problems had been recorded.
- (b) Cemetery Hedge - The farmer has not been able to cut the hedge on his side because it is too wet at the moment.

**2020/50 Recreation Ground Play Park**

- (a) Weekly Inspection Reports - there is nothing new or urgent.

- (b) New weekly inspections - notice has been given to SSDC and from April Elite Playground Inspections will be inspecting both the Play Park and the Gym Equipment. They will also oil the gym equipment monthly and carry out minor repairs.

## 2020/51 Recreational Development / Playing Field

- (a) Playing Field Development meeting report - notes of the meeting held on 3rd March were circulated to all in attendance.
- (b) Skate Park - no further developments. Mr Mico and Mrs Bullock are working on sourcing quotes and grants. **ACTION - Mr Mico / Mrs Bullock**
- (c) Outdoor Gym Equipment - Elite Playground Inspections will carry out weekly inspections and monthly oiling from April.
- (d) Tree Planting - Mrs Hill collected a pack of 50 free trees from SSDC complete with protective sleeves. There are no names on the trees. Mrs Hill will arrange planting and liaise with councillors for location.
- (e) Tree Planting in January - Ms Wakeford confirmed that the following trees were planted in January near the Cricket Club fence - 1 row of Hazel, 1 row of Blackthorn, 1 row of Crab Apple, 1 row of Elder and 1 row of Rowan. All have edible berries. She has advised to mow in between the rows and let the grass grow long between the trees.
- (f) Hedges - cutting has been arranged as soon as it is dry enough to access the field. The strip of land in front of the hedges will also be cut where blackthorn and other shrubs are beginning to take over.
- (g) Grass Cutting - SSDC have sent a new quote. By removing Brook Green from the grass cutting contract and adding the whole field to be cut 8 times a year, there will be a saving of £99.00. The Clerk has accepted the quote so that cutting can go ahead as soon as it is dry enough but she has requested some more clarification of the quote. The grass cutting team will also strim the banks. We have the names of the team doing the work and should be able to contact them directly if there is a problem.
- (h) Ditch - concern was expressed at the development meeting about the ditch which remains full of water throughout the winter and does not dry out until the summer. Previously it had been established that the culvert in the adjoining field is higher than the Ilton field and therefore the ditch cannot be pushed through the hedge because it will not drain. Warning signs were put up two years ago. Several options were discussed: fill in the ditch with hardcore (the football pitch is drained to the ditch so it cannot be filled in with soil); fence the ditch; do nothing except replace the signs as necessary. Councillors and residents were concerned about the dangers to a child wandering over to the ditch. Although fencing does not prevent a child climbing over, it does create a barrier and with signs on the fence it is clear that there is a danger. Fencing will not prevent the hedge being cut because the flail can rise over the fence. It was agreed at the development meeting to request quotes for post and two rail fencing. The Clerk has arranged for a number of contractors to quote. Once the cost of fencing is known the council can make a decision.
- The Ranger will be asked to do a formal risk assessment. Cllr Dance and Cllr Cavill will look at the situation before the next meeting. **ACTION - Cllr Dance / Cllr Cavill**
- (i) Attenuation pond - the Clerk has asked Larkfleet if their attenuation pond will be fenced when the company leaves the site. **ACTION - The Clerk**
- (j) Perimeter Path - Play UK cannot do the path because they do not have a qualified digger operator. The Clerk to send out tenders to other companies. A councillor asked if gravel is a false economy. The proposed surface is not actually gravel but a sandy material which becomes compacted after it rains. It is not slippery but will probably need spraying from time to time to prevent the grass growing from the sides.

**ACTION - The Clerk**

- (k) Football pitch - Parsons have said that they are all ready to seed when spring and drier weather arrives.
- (l) Larkfleet stone - a pile of stone has been left in the former compound. Mr Mico will inspect it to make sure it is clean and usable. **ACTION - Mr Mico**

**2020/52 General Maintenance - Ranger Scheme**

- (a) It was noted that the Churchyard has improved a lot since the Ranger started working in the village.
- (b) Risk Assessment - Mr Sherwood to ask the Ranger to do a formal risk assessment of the ditch in the playing field.
- (c) Increase in costs - SSDC have sent out information about the range of jobs the Ranger can undertake. The current rate is £19 per hour. This will rise to £19.50 per hour from April 2020 to March 2021. From April 2021 to April 2022 the cost will be £21 per hour. The minimum is 1 day per month. One day equates to 7.4 hours.

**2020/53 Planning Applications** - There were no planning applications.

**2020/54 Correspondence**

- (a) Thank you letter from Citizens Advice South Somerset for donation.
- (b) Clerks and Councils Direct.

**2020/55 Accounts payments and receipts**

- (a) At the Development meeting the Clerk asked Councillors to approve opening a new savings account for the money for the playing field which was given to the Parish Council. The Government's compensation scheme only guarantees £85,000 deposited in one bank or building society. The money for the playing field will take the Parish Council's deposits in Lloyds over this amount. The best interest rates are paid for internet accounts. Councillors were unwilling to authorise internet banking. Another option is the CCLA which is an investment management company for charities and local authorities. Councillors were concerned that investments can go down as well as up and did not wish to deposit money in a fund which may not be safe.

It was agreed to keep the money in a bank or building society, preferably in Ilminster which is convenient if internet banking is not used. The Clerk brought details of the Bath Building Society which is available through insurance brokers in Ilminster. Mr Sherwood proposed that the Parish Council apply for an account with the Bath Building Society, seconded by Mr Mico. All councillors were in favour.

**ACTION - The Clerk**

- (b) The signatories on Lloyds Bank accounts need to be amended. Two former councillors need to be removed and two councillors need to be added. It was agreed to add Mrs Easterbrook and Mrs Hill. The forms were filled in. **ACTION - The Clerk**
- (c) Balances @ 29/02/2020 - Treasurers Account = £46,673.09 / Business Instant = £37,803.38
- (d) Received - HMRC VAT refund - £2,315.15
- (e) The following cheques were raised:
  - 001173 - CANCELLED
  - 001174 - £ 423.38 - SSDC Playground Inspections
  - 001175 - £ 337.44 - SSDC Ranger Labour January
  - 001176 - £ 204.00 - Merryfield Hall Hire
  - 001177 - £ 207.60 - HMRC Paye

001178 - £ 329.62 - Salary and admin expenses.

**2020/56 Matters and items to report**

- (a) Copse Lane Overspill Car Park - A reply has been received from the Cricket Club with a number of queries. This was discussed. It was agreed to leave things as they are and not to ask the Cricket Club to help. **ACTION - The Clerk**
- (b) Playday 2020 - Stuart has suggested Monday 17th August 1 p.m. - 4 p.m. Councillors agreed with this date. The Clerk to get an up to date list of extra activities. **ACTION - The Clerk**

**2020/57 Next Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council**

The next ordinary meeting of the Parish Council will be on Tuesday 14th April 2020 at 7.30 p.m. at Merryfield Hall

The next Playing Field Development meeting will be on Tuesday 7th April 2020 at 7.15 p.m. at Merryfield Hall.

The meeting finished at 9.00 p.m.

**NOTE: DUE TO THE CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK AND THE LOCK DOWN WHICH IS NOW IN FORCE, ALL MEETINGS ARE POSTPONED FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE.**

Ian Sherwood - Chairman