

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Ilton Parish Council held in Merryfield Hall on
Tuesday 8th February 2022 at 6.30 p.m.**

The meeting scheduled for 11th January 2022 was cancelled due to the ongoing Covid situation at the time.

2022/01 Attendance and Apologies

Present	Apologies	In Attendance
Mr I Sherwood (Chair)	Mr A Gordon	10 members of the public
Mrs M Bullock	Mr M Cavill (District Councillor)	
Mrs R Burt	PCSO John Martin	
Mr G Mackenzie-Green		
Mr N Matravers		
Mr A Pidgeon		
Mrs E Simpson		
Mr A Dance (County Councillor)		
Mrs S Morley (Clerk)		
Ms Kim Larsson		

2022/02 Resignation from the Parish Council

Mr Mico has tendered his resignation from the parish council. The clerk confirmed that the new vacancy has been advertised and residents have until 24th February to request an election. If no request is received the council will be able to co-opt to fill the vacancy left by Mr Mico. There are currently three vacancies (see minute 2022/05 below).

2022/03 Declarations of Interest - There were no declarations of interest.

2022/04 Visitors and Public Voice

Dogs on the Field

The Parish Council have been considering their options regarding dogs on the Field because of the constant problem of dog faeces as well as the failure of some people to keep their dog on a lead, which has led to a few unpleasant incidents. Comments have been posted on the village Facebook page and a number of residents have sent in their comments by email. A number of people attended this evening's meeting to put forward their views.

A resident started the discussion by thanking the Parish Council for doing a great job with redeveloping the Field. The speaker went on to say that dog owners appear to be the heaviest users of the Field so there is a great deal of opposition to any proposal to ban dogs completely. Banning all dogs will punish the responsible owners who already pick up after their dog and who keep their dog on a lead. The irresponsible ones who do neither will ignore any ban. The resident asked how will a ban be enforced.

Another resident asked if it is proportionate to ban dogs completely because of the few irresponsible owners. It was also pointed out that there is a footpath which crosses the Field and dogs cannot be excluded from the footpath.

A resident said that the new perimeter footpath is a perfect walking area. It has also been noted that some people who do not pick up are children taking their dog for a walk.

Councillors explained that the proposal to ban dogs is a last resort and is not something the Parish Council wishes to do. The volunteer grass cutting team are constantly having to pick up dog faeces which is extremely unpleasant. The District Council can issue a fine to anyone not picking up after their dog if they have the name of the person responsible.

A resident agreed that it is not acceptable to have to pick up after another person's dog. However it was felt that if anyone is seen not picking up, that they should be politely

reminded of the need to pick up. The way people are engaged with is important and most people will do as they are asked if they are asked politely. However there are always a very small minority of people who, whatever you do, will refuse to behave in a reasonable way. Banning everyone because of a few is not the right way to do things. It would be unfair to the majority and would only upset and alienate people.

The resident went on to say that there is also a very big question of how will a ban be policed. The District Council have confirmed that they cannot enforce a ban and it would be the responsibility of the Parish Council to enforce it. It is not clear how that could be done. A question was asked if someone could be paid to enforce a ban. It was felt that this is not practical because that person would need to be there all the time.

It was suggested that something is put in the next village newsletter (the Clerk pointed out that it goes in every edition of the Newsletter). It was agreed to remind people that they could be prosecuted for not picking up after their dog. Another suggestion was a leaflet to every house in the village. Another suggestion was a new hard hitting poster.

After residents had put their comments forward it was agreed that the Parish Council would not ban dogs but would keep the proposal under review for 6 months. Residents were asked to come forward with names if they know the identity of anyone not picking up after their dog. This is an offence for which the District Council can issue a fine.

A summary of the discussion will be posted on the Facebook page.

Games on the Field - Residents have asked if there will be games played on the Field. The Parish Council is hoping that someone will come forward to set up a team to play on the football pitch. The nets will only be put up if there is a game. The MUGA is well used by local children.

Potholes - A resident reported a number of pot holes along the side of the road. This should be reported direct to SCC via their website. Anyone can do this.

2022/05 Parish Council Vacancies

There are currently three vacancies on the Parish Council, two of which have been advertised. SSDC have confirmed that there have been no requests for an election and the Council can go ahead and co-opt to fill two of the vacancies. There are two nominations for the vacancies: Mr Andrew Gordon who was not able to attend this evening, and Mrs Elaine Simpson.

Mr Matravers proposed Mr Gordon, seconded by Mr Pidgeon. Councillors voted in favour of co-opting Mr Gordon.

Mr Sherwood proposed Mrs Simpson, seconded by Mrs Bullock. Councillors voted 5 in favour and one against in favour of co-opting Mrs Simpson.

Accordingly Mr Gordon and Mrs Simpson were co-opted onto the Parish Council.

2022/06 Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council meeting held on 14/12/21

Councillors approved the minutes which were duly signed by the Chairman.

2022/07 County Councillor Report

Cllr Dance reported that Cllr Malcolm Cavill is still unwell.

Planning is still on hold because of the phosphate issue. This has been ongoing for the past 18 months and Wessex Water are involved. He will send an update to the Clerk for circulation as soon as there is any news.

SSDC have passed a Council Tax hardship scheme and added another £30,000 to it because it is expected that future increases could hit people quite hard.

Covid numbers in South Somerset are still very high and Cllr Dance emphasised the need to get vaccinated. Business support grants are available until the end of February.

Wildflower seeds are available until the 21st February. Somerset West and Taunton Council came top of a UK poll for best environmental council, with South Somerset very close behind.

There are Unitary Authority elections in May, as well as Parish Council elections. The relevant paperwork will be arriving very soon. Where there are fewer or the same number of people standing as seats, candidates will be elected unopposed. Cllr Dance is running for the Unitary Council for South Petherton and Islemoor along with Jo Roundell Greene. Their special interest is planning.

Bus transport in the area is a problem and more community transport is needed. South Petherton have put money into a mini bus for groups and this can be hired locally, not just in the parish of South Petherton. A special licence is not necessary to drive the bus although a ticket will be needed. There is wheel-chair access.

A question was asked if there has been any movement on the planning application for St Peters Close in Ilton. This is still on hold all the time the phosphate issue has not been sorted out.

Cllr Dance and Jo Roundell Greene left the meeting at 7.15 p.m.

2022/08 Planning Applications

App No 21/03519/HOU
Proposal Erection of a single storey extension, one to the front and one to the rear
Location 6 Copse Lane, Ilton TA19 9HQ
Councillors had no objections to the application.

2022/09 Accounts and Financial Information

- (a) Financial Report to the end of January was circulated to all councillors.
- (b) Cheques_ the following cheques were raised for January and February:
- | | | |
|--------|--------------|---|
| 001379 | - £ 1,800.00 | - Ted Tucker, Trees & Fencing Deposit Garden fencing |
| 001380 | - £ 114.00 | - Elite Playground Inspections, monthly inspections |
| 001381 | - £ 186.48 | - SSDC Ranger |
| 001382 | - £ 235.20 | - Broxap Ltd, dog bin |
| 001383 | - £ 77.96 | - reimbursement lunches volunteers on training day |
| 001384 | - £1,177.06 | - Premier Fencing, replace damaged Play Park fence |
| 001385 | - £ 228.00 | - Zac Bessell, Field hedge |
| 001386 | - £ 100.00 | - M Bullock, cost of material for soldier bags |
| 001387 | - £1,119.00 | - Crewkerne Horticultural, lawn mower |
| 001388 | - £ 318.82 | - Salary & admin expenses |
| 001389 | - £ 30.52 | - G Mackenzie-Green, reimbursement petrol |
| 001390 | - £ 559.44 | - SSDC Ranger |
| 001391 | - £ 114.00 | - Elite Playground Inspections |
| 001392 | - £ 15.00 | - J Easterbrook, donation to Young Farmers to remove Christmas Tree |
| 001393 | - £ 3,000.00 | - Ted Tucker, Trees & Fencing - Garden fencing |
| 001394 | - £ 48.20 | - Cad Green Garage, diesel |
| 001395 | - £ 156.53 | - Bradfords, battons for fitting out container |
| 001396 | - £ 343.22 | - Salary & admin expenses |
- (c) A donation of £15 to the Young Farmers for removing the Christmas tree was agreed at the meeting in December. The money was paid by Mrs Easterbrook and a cheque was raised to cover the cost.
- (d) The tax base figures are almost the same this year as last year. Keeping the precept at £22,500 which is the same as last year, will represent a very small decrease of 3p per band D property. The precept was increased last year and the year before without increasing the cost to residents, because the tax base went up after the new houses were built. It was felt that rising costs could mean a squeeze on household incomes and it was agreed not to increase the precept this year.

2022/10 Recreational Development / Playing Field

- (a) Working Group - The new mower has been delivered. The grass has been cut in the Field where it is well drained, but it is too soft at the bottom by the new estate.
- (b) Training - Three training sessions were arranged for volunteers before Christmas: one on mowers, one on strimmers and one on tractor driving.
- (c) Community Gardens fencing - The fencing of the gardens has been completed.
- (d) Storage Container - The new container has now been fitted out. The soldier silhouettes in their bags are now stored in the container.
- (e) Field Levelling - The field is still too wet at the moment.
- (f) Wildflowers - The Clerk to re-circulate the email about free grass seeds from SSDC. An area for wildflowers has been identified and the Ranger will be asked to spray the area as soon as possible so that it can be prepared for planting in two weeks time.

ACTION - Mr Pidgeon / Field Committee

- (g) Trees - Monkton Elm Garden Centre are prepared to donate spare trees to parish councils. A letter from the Parish Council is required. Details will be sent to the Clerk. Guards will be needed for the trees. A councillor said he would like to see some trees dotted around the Field as well as in a group. **ACTION - Mr Pidgeon / The Clerk**
- (h) Larkfleet Ditch - The ditch has been dug although not in the correct place and it dips in the middle. There is a pile of spoil to be cleared away.
- (i) Dead trees - The meeting with the Warren Trust has not yet been arranged.
- (j) Skate Park - Mr Mico was leading on securing funding for the skate park and he has now resigned. The Clerk will make initial contact with the National Lottery and talk to councillors about taking the grant applications forward. **ACTION - The Clerk**

2022/11 Cemetery - There was nothing to report.

2022/12 Churchyard - There was nothing to report.

2022/13 Recreation Ground Play Park

- (a) Colour Fencing - 26 damaged panels were replaced. There are still some left with dents but all the dangerous panels have been replaced.
- (b) CCTV - Signs will be ordered. **ACTION - The Clerk**
- (c) New Gate - The ground is still too wet to install the new gate. The playground inspector will be asked to fit the gate if he is still willing to do the job. Mr Sherwood asked that the gate be moved to the new container.

2022/14 Brook Green

Mr Sherwood walks around the area most days. The area will be strimmed very soon.

ACTION - Mr Mackenzie-Green

2022/15 Footpaths

Mr Matravers has been walking the footpaths and requested a replacement backpack and secateurs. Mrs Bullock proposed that the Council buy a new footpaths' backpack, seconded by Mr Mackenzie-Green. All Councillors voted in favour.

ACTION - Mr Matravers

2022/16 Highways

A358 upgrade - Mr Matravers to register with the A358 group to ensure he receives the emails. The Clerk to email a copy of Ilton's proposal and other relevant emails.

ACTION - Mr Matravers / The Clerk

2022/17 General Maintenance - Ranger Scheme

The Ranger comes every two weeks and does a very good job.

2022/18 Storage bags for soldier silhouettes

Mrs Bullock was thanked for making the storage bags for the soldier silhouettes. They are now all stored in the new container.

2022/19 Copse Lane Overspill car park

It was agreed at the last meeting to value the land.

ACTION - Mr Pidgeon

2022/20 Clerk Recruitment

Interviews for the post of Ilton Parish Clerk were carried out on Friday 4th February. Mrs Simpson is a professional Business Support Provider, experienced in recruitment, and she offered her services in a voluntary capacity to help the Council in the recruitment process. A confidentiality Non-Disclosure Liability Agreement was signed by the Chair, the Clerk and Mrs Simpson.

The interview panel consisted of Mrs Simpson, Mr Sherwood as Chair of the Parish Council, Mr Pidgeon and Mrs Morley the current Clerk.

The interview panel's first choice for the post was Ms Kim Larsson who is attending the meeting this evening to meet the Council and introduce herself. The Council are delighted to welcome her.

2022/21 Councillors' Code of Conduct

All Councillors signed a shortened version of the Code of Conduct.

2022/22 Matters and items to report

It was reported that Ben Harms who made the Memorial Cross very sadly passed away just before Christmas. The Ilton Cross was the last thing he worked on. At the suggestion of the Vicar, it was agreed that Ben's name would be added to the Cross as the craftsman who made it. The Cross is currently in Ben's workshop. A request as been formally submitted to the Diocese for permission to put the Cross in the Church. **ACTION - Mr Mackenzie-Green**

2022/23 Date of next Ordinary Parish Council Meeting

The next ordinary meeting of Ilton Parish Council will be on Tuesday 8th March 2022 at 6.30 p.m. in Merryfield Hall (NOTE STARTING TIME OF 6.30 p.m.)

The meeting finished at 8.00 p.m.

Ian Sherwood, Chairman