

MINUTES of Islip Parish Council

The Council met remotely [by Zoom] Tuesday 9th March at 7.30 pm

I certify that these minutes are a true reflection
of the events that took place

date: signed

39/21 Present [by Zoom]: Parish Councillors: Nathan Wiles (Chair), Fiona Forbes, Dennis Price, Anneka Streule, Sophie Miller, Nicola Richardson, Dan Sames [Councillor OCC], Michael Wilkinson [MJW] (outgoing Clerk), and Emma Kearney [EK] (Clerk).

40/21 Members of the public: Three

41/21 Apologies: None

42/21 Minutes: The minutes of the meeting Tuesday 9th February 2021 were approved and signed.

43/21 Matters arising which will not be raised under subsequent agenda items: None.

44/21 Declaration of dispensation: None

45/21 Public Participation:

1. Flooding - New Burial Ground (NBG): Mrs. Johanna Stephenson contacted the farmer of the adjacent land and enquired whether he would kindly form ditches to the west and south of the NBG, running into the ditches on the Kidlington Road and on Mill Lane. The conclusion was the farmer is to put mole drains into the field which it is hoped will drain the NBG and improve the situation. Another contributing factor to the flooding is a burst water main, this has been reported to Thames Water. Also, some of the graves have sunk as topsoil has been removed, this has caused a dip and when there is a lot of water it sits in the dip.

It is considered a combination of the mole drains, repair to the burst water main and the purchasing of topsoil and grass seed will remedy the flooding. However, should this not a further option to have drains dug around the perimeter can be considered, but at this stage does not seem necessary. A proposal to purchase topsoil and grass seed has been requested to the Parish Council.

2. - New Burial Ground Management Plan: Mrs. Jocelyn Bangham provided the following update - there are four main areas of management addressed by the NBG Management Plan – **1. Trees:** need maintenance and pruning, some new trees have been donated and will need to be planted, this work will be carried out by a voluntary work party. **2. Hedgerows:** Require internal trimming and were recently trimmed externally by Mr Anthony Henman; a voluntary work party has been organised to trim the hedge inside the NBG, and any gaps will be filled in by donated plants. **3. Paths:** The southern end is cleared at present, but the north-south path requires work urgently; manual raking and weeding are required and a voluntary work party is currently being formed. **4. Meadow:** Brambles and blackthorn must be dug out; a work party is being organised to do this. The proposal from the 2006 plan was to manage the meadow as a spring meadow, this would require two cuts to 5cm per year, in June and September, the cuttings to be removed. The removal is essential, and can be complete by a voluntary workgroup, but the cutting would need to be completed by a contractor. If left uncut the brambles and blackthorn take over and the meadow cannot be a spring meadow with wildflowers. The cost of the bi-annual cutting has been proposed to the Parish Council for payment. The Parish Council was pleased with the report and have requested a quotation of the grass cutting to be obtained and to be added to next month's agenda.

A concern was raised that one of the four oak trees had been damaged; it was advised that there was a fourth replacement oak tree that had been donated. It was further commented that the trees need to be tagged to advise the cutter the oak tree is separate from the hedge to avoid further damage.

3. Village Celebration – Mrs. Johanna Stephenson proposed an idea to host a village celebration after the lockdown, that could include a picnic, music, and exhibition of things people have been doing during the lockdown, as a way of bringing everyone back together. There were offers of support and assistance in various capacities.

It was commented that this event could be incorporated with the fete. It was further commented that it may be good to have celebration as well as the fete due to social distancing.

4. ‘Working Together for Wildlife’ – Mrs. Emily Cohen a representative from the ‘Islip Wildlife Conservation Group’ [IWCG] provided an overview of the ‘Working Together for Nature’ seminar, which was organised in response to the new environment bill soon to become law. The bill will require all public authorities to conserve and enhance biodiversity. It was proposed that all groups involving the environment could work together for nature, and a communication link between them be established. The next webinar is Wednesday 24th March, should any Councillor be able to attend. There was a discussion to set-up a subcommittee to address issues like hedge cutting Cllr Miller offered to attend the next webinar and be the link between the groups. Cllr Streule also offered to be the link, as she has previously proposed to help in tree planting. It was proposed that the NBG could be mowed twice a year, and the verge cutting could be reduced, but the Chairman noted that some in the village might prefer a more regular cut. It was noted that Dr South’s charity had been unable to accept the donation of a piece of land by the river to be used as a village amenity, partly orchard. The Council is now to consider alternative means of donation. Cllr Miller is to set-up a subcommittee to consider possible collaboration with the IWCG; the Parish Council might then present a plan to the village.

46/21 District and County Council Reports:

1. Mill Street, Ray Bridge - Cllr Sames reported that since the last meeting the OCC cabinet decision had been reached to consult with the village regarding the Ray Bridge proposal. The next stage would be to arrange the date for this to include himself, the officers involved, the Parish Council Chairman, and as many residents as possible. Cllr Sames commented he believed the correct decision had been reached, and it would be good to move forward with a meaningful public consultation where everyone is brought up to speed with the proposals. The Chairman commented he is in the process of arranging the date and would like to consolidate and submit questions from the village in advance, so the answers can be ready. As soon as the date has been clarified notice will be sent to the village to make all aware the meeting is happening. It was suggested that all contractors involved be present for the consultation, it was advised that this was possible concerns were raised by a resident due to the impact of traffic lights around 15 -20 years ago, and that they had to be removed after 3 months due to the tailbacks along the Wheatley Road. It was hoped this would have been minuted. It was commented that the tailbacks were to do with the works of the A40. It was further commented the reason for the lights was not the issue, it demonstrated the impact of putting lights in, and traffic had backed up to Water Eaton in the evening. There were further conversations regarding different views, including that the bridge does need repairs, and action needs to be taken or it will be lost. It was also commented that the reports are conclusive of all the concerns. There was a final comment that the traffic needs to be managed - certainly the weight of traffic using the bridge, as the weight restriction is flouted every day. Investigations into number plate recognition have taken place as it can help manage oversized lorries.

2. Hero’s Project – It was advised the award from the Councillor Priority Fund of £100 should have been received for the banner.

3. Community Resilient – Cllr Sames asked the Parish Council if there had been any further consideration to becoming ‘Community Resilient’ in terms of flooding. It was commented the Parish Council was awaiting a reply from the MP, as they would like to see the Thames Water plan to which Mr Howell had referred in his interview with the BBC. Cllr Sames advised he will follow this up.

47/21 Replacement Top Soil for Burial Ground

It was **AGREED** by unanimous vote for topsoil and grass seed to be purchased at an approximate cost of £100.

48/21 Bike Racks

Discussions were held regarding the offer of bike racks for the village, as the Village Hall had declined to site bike racks outside the Village Hall. It was commented it would be a good idea to support the use of bikes rather than cars.

It was **AGREED** by unanimous vote for the Parish Council to accept four bike racks in total, two free and two chargeable at an additional rate of £30 each.

Cllr Streule agreed to propose suitable locations for the racks on Parish Council property, the Clerk to send a map of the playing field to aid this, as a site close to the playing field and the playground seemed desirable.

49/21 Posts and car-park barrier

The clerk provided an update regarding the delay in the contractor completing these works and advised they are scheduled to be completed as soon as possible.

50/21 Clerk laptop

The new clerk requires a laptop to complete her duties.

It was **AGREED** by unanimous vote for the clerk to purchase a laptop to the value of £350.

51/21 Administrative Matters

1. Training – Cllr Richardson and Cllr Miller will attend the ‘Roles and Responsibilities’ training hosted by the O.A.L.C on Thursday 25th November 2021. The clerk will let the councillors know when more training is available.

2. Vacancy – Cllr Brown's resignation has been received and accepted. The Chair thanked Mr. Brown for all of the work he has completed on behalf of the village, there is now a vacancy. Cllr Richardson offered to take on the planning part of the portfolio.

3. Census 2021 – the clerk advised there was material to circulate regarding the census. It was commented that posters could be posted to Cllr Forbes to be displayed on the noticeboard and also circulated via Info4Islip and the parish newsletter.

4. Deed of transfer – due to a resignation the forms need to be re-issued by the solicitor; they will be in contact soon to arrange signatures.

52/21 Financial Matters

The outgoing clerk has provided a process for the new clerk to use while internet banking is being set-up. The new clerk is attending training via the O.A.L.C introducing a recommended bank for Parish Councils to use, the information will be reported back to the Parish Council.

53/21 Environment:

1. Flood Management Plan: Cllr Miller is to pursue the possibility of flood mitigation measures.

2. Raw sewage: Cllr Miller reported that there is a private member's bill currently going through parliament to hold water companies accountable for the disposal of raw sewage, although the bill is moving slowly. John Howell, MP, is to be asked to support this on behalf of the constituents.

54/21 Communications:

1. Website – Cllr Forbes reported that quotations for a new Parish Council website have been circulated to the parish councillors; an agenda item can be added to next month for a decision to be reached. The new clerk's partner has submitted a quotation, in respect of which she declared an interest.

It was noted that the current website is down at the moment, but the *Parish News*, village noticeboards, and the 'Info4Islip' email were distributing the necessary information.

2. 'Info4Islip' - An apology was given from Cllr Forbes for not blind copying the addressees for one of the emails sent out; discussions were held on more efficient ways to manage this moving forward. It was queried how new people to the village would be made aware of the service and

how they could be added to the mailing list. Cllr Forbes advised this could be advertised on the noticeboards, it was suggested a footer could be added to the bottom of the meeting minutes.

55/21 Traffic, Highways, and Footpaths:

1. Speed Watch: Cllr Price advised Thames Valley Police have appointed a permanent full-time police officer dealing with Speed Watch, and that there are 150 Speed Watch groups active in the Thames Valley area. There are new regulations for Speed Watch however such that there is proper training, signs that say there are 'Speed checks', and a solidly mounted camera being used; the Islip operation is compliant. The speed checks will be reinstated as soon as they can.

2. Wheatley Road, Speed Limit: It was confirmed the 20 MPH speed restriction had been approved, this will please those on the south side of the bridge that signed the petition; Cllr Price noted that it had taken three years to implement

3. Railway: There is now a communication system for villages; after reading the information it has now been noted that there will be no trains stopping in Islip on the new Oxford–Milton Keynes line; this is not what had originally been offered. Cllr Price confirmed a comment highlighting this change has been sent, and the website will be monitored. Cllr Price advised although this is not part of his portfolio, he would be happy to take this on; Cllr Forbes offered support if required.

56/21 PC Properties:

1. Play area: Cllr Streule has purchased new signs for the playground, and they have been displayed. The latch on the gate has also been fixed.

2. Playground refurbishment: Cllr Streule had spoken to Trevor Stewart, who confirms he has received the materials to fix the zip wire. Cllr Streule is awaiting a date for the repairs and is mindful that it does not clash with the vaccinations. The surface matting won't be arriving until a later date, so it is expected the zip wire would be functional in April. It was advised the seat piece to the zip wire is in the care of an ex-member of the Council.

3. Tree Planting: It was requested that this be added to next month's agenda, and incorporate the proposed environmental sub-committee.

57/21 Planning applications and other planning matters:

1. Neighbourhood Plan Cllr Richardson circulated a letter regarding the Neighbourhood Plan designation area; once approved this can be sent. It was commented that the designation of the village boundary is the key starting point for the Neighbourhood Plan. If anyone is interested in joining the Neighbourhood Plan group, please contact the Clerk or Cllr Nicola Richardson.

2. No Expressway: Cllr Richardson has reviewed the government's Arc Spatial Plan, which was meant to set out specifics such as numbers of houses, new roads, and infrastructure. The condensed version doesn't have any numbers but confirms they want to reduce car usage, double nature, and achieving net-zero carbon by 2050, whilst increasing the population of the county by around 2,000,000. In terms of the village, it needs to be kept an eye on, as there is a possibility the Expressway could carry freight very near to Islip. The next consultation date is scheduled for 2022 due to Covid.

58/21 Education: No comments made.

59/21 Health: No comments made.

60/21 Security:

1. Neighbourhood Watch: Cllr Forbes is intending to send out requests for people to join the Neighbourhood Watch via info4Islip and the parish report. It was commented that there is already a Neighbourhood Watch group in the village; Cllr Forbes advised they had been contacted but would contact again.

61/21 Any other business:

1. Memorial Benches – the Chairman received a request from the Reverend Lucy Thirtle as some members of the village had asked to put a memorial bench into the churchyard, but they

are out of space. The chairman advised for the request to be sent to the clerk then it could be added to the next agenda.

2. Litter-Picking Cllr Price noted that on the Wheatley Road, and the Bletchington Road vast amounts of rubbish has been collected, and wanted the Parish Council to send a note to say it had been noted and to thank those responsible on the part of the village.

3. Solar Farm at Noke: A request for comments on the solar farm may come before the Council, but has not to date.

4. A Heart Felt Thank You to Michael Wilkinson for all of his hard work over the years, and especially the past few as the clerk, going above and beyond for the village.

62/21 Date of next meeting: the next meeting of the Parish Council will be held remotely [by Zoom] on **Tuesday 13th April 2021 at 7.30 pm.**

The agenda will be published seven days prior to the meeting.

Residents wishing to raise an issue pertaining to an agenda item are invited to send it in writing to the Clerk at clerkislippc@hotmail.co.uk

Residents wishing to address the Council meeting [remotely by Zoom] on any matter, or to attend the meeting as an observer, are asked to pass their email details to the Clerk at clerkislippc@hotmail.co.uk in good time prior to the meeting.

To subscribe to 'Info4Islip', the village information service operated by the Parish Council, please email info4islip@gmail.com