

**MINUTES of Islip Parish Council Annual General Meeting**  
**Islip Village Hall**  
**Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2018 at 7.30pm**

**112/18 Present:** Mr P Collins (Chairman), Mrs D Chapman, Mrs F Forbes, Mr D Price, Ms N Richardson, Mr N Wiles [co-opted – minute 119/18 I, below], Mr M Wilkinson (Clerk).

**113/18 Apologies:** Mr M Brown.

**114/18 Minutes:** the minutes of the meeting of Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2018 were approved as amended and signed.

**115/18 Matters arising which will not be raised under subsequent agenda items:** none.

**116/18 District and County Council Reports:** Cllrs Hughes (CDC) and Sames (CDC and OCC) reported – in the main on the Oxford/Cambridge expressway. The corridor within which the road might run has yet to be selected, and although action groups are forming, action is necessarily limited before a putative corridor route is identified. Cllr Sames noted that that he is pursuing the village’s reports of potholes, particularly those at the junction of Middle Street and High Street, and that he holds funds available for grants to parish councils. The Council is to follow this up in respect of several upcoming village projects.

**117/18 Changes in Members’ interests and declarations of personal or prejudicial<sup>1</sup> interest:** none.

**118/18 Administrative Matters: 1. Election of officers:** it was proposed, seconded and approved that Mr Nathan Wiles be co-opted onto the Council. **2. Risk Register; Financial Regulations; Standing Orders:** in accordance with regulatory requirements, these documents had been circulated to councillors prior to the meeting, and were accepted at the meeting without change. **3. Date of next meeting:** the Clerk reported that he would be unable to attend the July meeting. It was proposed and agreed that the next meeting would be 14<sup>th</sup> August 2018 rather than 10<sup>th</sup> July.

**119/18 Financial Matters: 1. Accounts ’17-18:** the Clerk reported that Mr Chris Rippon had kindly undertaken the internal audit. This had saved the Council more than £200 in fees and expenses. The Council hopes to recognise Mr Rippon’s contribution in due course. The Council approved the accounts as audited. **2. Annual Governance Statement:** The Clerk read out the *Annual Governance Statement 2017/18*, and this was approved by the Council, and signed by the Chairman. The Clerk noted that because neither the Council’s income nor its expenditure exceeded £25K in 2017-18, a *Certificate of Exemption* from a limited assurance review [i.e., an external audit] is to be submitted. This saves the Council a further £200 in audit fees. The Chairman signed the *Certificate of Exemption*. A condition of the exemption is that a full statement of the Council’s accounts be posted on the website, including the internal audit report. This will be done. **3. Ray Bridge electricity sub-station lease:** the Clerk reported that he had heard nothing further from Scottish & Southern Energy plc about the renewal of the sub-station lease. **4. Clerk’s pay:** the Clerk left the room for this item. The Chairman had asked the Clerk to record his hours for the quarter November ’17 to January ’18, and noted that the Clerk had undertaken the work previously carried out by the finance officer. It was proposed and agreed that the Clerk’s salary be increased to include the equivalent of the costs of the previous finance officer, some £750. The Clerk, informed of this, thanked the Council.

**120/18 Environment: 1. Flood Management Plan:** the Chairman had nothing to report. **2. Dog Fouling:** a villager had complained that visitors from outside the village were now letting their dogs run free on the playing field. The Chairman noted that limited options are available to the village, but that it might be time, anyway, that the Clerk should remind villagers of their duty to each other, and that, as regards visitors to the village, he would arrange for an increase the number of notices at the entrances to the playing field. **3. Best-kept Front Garden competition:** the Chairman had walked the village with Mrs Sue Bedwell, who kindly judges the competition. A shortlist and winner have been selected - to be

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<sup>1</sup>“one in which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the member’s judgement of the public interest”

announced at the Village Fête at 4pm on the 7<sup>th</sup> July, when the prize and the cup will be presented by Mrs Bedwell.

**121/18 Communications: 1. General Data Protection Regulation:** Cllr Forbes reported that the preparation of the revised *Village Directory* to be posted on the website is a slow process, because those likely to be included are not always prompt in replying to her attempts to comply with the new General Data Protection Regulation.

**122/18 Traffic, Highways and Footpaths: 1. Pavements/footpaths:** the Clerk reported that Mr Matthew Scott of Strutt and Parker, the local agents for the Church Commissioners [CC], had telephoned to discuss the putative permissive right of way inside the hedge from the Kidlington road chicane to Mill Lane, on land owned by the CC. He said that the CC would definitely be prepared to consider a permissive right of way within the CC field to the south of the Kidlington Road, as previously specified, but asked whether the option of using the verge had been explored. The Clerk explained that the Parish Council [PC] had approached Oxfordshire County Council [OCC] some ten years ago, and been quoted a prohibitive price of some £43K for the work - to be carried out by OCC contractors. However, the Clerk had recently been in touch again with OCC, as the Highways Authority, to ask whether the PC might lay a French drain in the ditch up to Mill Lane, thus providing a walkway, but continuing to drain both the road and the CC land to the south. OCC replied that the CC as landowners would have to approve. Mr Scott said that the CC would approve, and that an exchange of letters would be sufficient to the purpose.

From the floor, it was suggested by the CC's tenants, Messrs Henman, that the French drain option would almost certainly prove unsatisfactory, but that they would be happy for the first option to be pursued, providing that the privacy of the nearest dwelling be observed, and care be taken to fix the fence such that the hedge might be cut from inside the field as now. They would also need to be allowed to close the footpath should crop-spraying be required. The Council agreed willingly to these conditions, and thanked Messrs Henman for their complaisance. The Clerk is to write again to Mr Scott.

**2. Traffic Group:** Cllr Price reported that the speed gun and ancillary equipment had been delivered. He is to proceed, with the Traffic Group, preparation for its use, including the erection of official signs noting that a speed camera operates in the village. Cllr Price proposed and it was agreed that a general warning be issued to local parish councils, info4islip, and so on, prior to the initial use of the equipment. This was agreed. **3. Structural report on the Ray Bridge:** the Clerk reported that OCC's bridge engineer had contacted him 1<sup>st</sup> June to explain the current position:

ongoing monitoring has not identified any significant further deterioration in the bridge's condition. We have recently concluded that there is probably only one long term structural solution available to us regarding this bridge, and that would involve reducing the width available to traffic down to a single lane along the length of the bridge, and ideally could, as part of this work, incorporate measures that enhance pedestrian safety at the same time.

We are therefore currently looking into the feasibility of permanently signalling the bridge, mainly in technical and traffic flow capacity terms initially, and will be getting in touch when this work has been progressed sufficiently for us to be in a position to meaningfully consult with your Council and any other relevant stakeholders on the viability and acceptability of this option. You may therefore see activities such as traffic surveys being undertaken in due course.

From the floor it was noted that this would be a great relief to local farming, as a thirteen-tonne absolute limit would have been a serious blow to their businesses. It was asked whether the physical barriers would prevent the passage of wider vehicles, such as combine harvesters. The Chairman noted that OCC had promised meaningful consultation once its proposals had hardened, and that discussion could be pursued at this point. It was noted that action will have to be taken by OCC, because the structural weakness of the bridge must on simple engineering grounds be addressed.

**4. Potholes:** see minute 118/16 above. **5. Zebra crossing:** Cllr Forbes noted that Dr South's School was interested in a zebra crossing, but that it had stepped back in view of the putative cost quoted – between £19K and £30K *plus*. Cllr Price noted that once the Council had completed its work on the

speed gun, it might turn its attention to the provision of a zebra crossing by Dr South's School, particularly with a view to any charitable support that might be available.

**123/18 PC Properties: 1. Playing Field:** the Chairman reported that Mr Stewart (who constructed the playground) had visited the playground, and quoted for work. The initial costings were attractive, but regular remedial work would be required. The higher costings of another supplier for a surface similar to that used by the School might be a better option, given a five-year guarantee. Cllr Richardson noted that the school's surfaces had proved very satisfactory. It was agreed that the Chairman should investigate the possibility of grant funding for the more expensive option. **2. Trees:** the Chairman reported that work on the Council's trees had started, and that the dead tree on the Village Green, Lower Street, had been felled. **3. Pavilion:** the Clerk reported that the Sports Association has now applied to the Council for financial help in the repair and upgrade of the pavilion flooring. The Clerk noted that the pavilion had been built by the PC (with grant money assistance), to promote sport on the playing field, and that the pavilion had been gifted to the Village Hall when it was realised that it had been built on VH land. The PC meets half the cost of mowing the playing fields, as this is a village facility not dedicated exclusively to organised sport. The cricket club does receive contributions now from Bletchington cricket club, but ploughs its income back into the maintenance of the pitch, sight-screens, junior coaching, etc. From time to time the PC has helped fund projects in the VH proper (e.g. stage curtains, the projector) and in the pavilion (showers) – again, promoting village interests. The anticipated cost of the work needed is some £3K. The Council agreed to make an initial donation of £1K to the Sports Association, in the hope that this will spur the generosity of other donors, but that the Sports Association might return to the PC once it had realised its fund-raising potential. It was suggested, too, that sources of funding, such as the Village Shop, ought to be approached.

**124/18 Planning: 1. Planning Applications:** Cllr Wiles reported on the planning applications. The Council agreed to offer no objections to the proposals, subject to neighbours' submissions to be taken into account:

Address	Application number/details	Decision
Mr & Mrs Searle 38, Kidlington Road	18/00887/F single storey rear extension and loft conversion	No objection, neighbours' submissions to be taken into account
Ms K Campbell 4, Collice Street	18/00911/F variation of 18/00184/F change material from natural Cotswold slate to reproduction on rear elevations	No objection, neighbours' submissions to be taken into account

It was noted that in respect of 18/00887/F, the loft conversion faces to the north, and in the case of 18/00911/F, that the neighbouring properties had been similarly roofed, and that there was a timing and ecological case for the use of such materials. **2. Strategic Planning:** the Chairman noted that at the Charlton-on-Otmoor meeting on Monday, there was a recognition that the three corridors put forward as potentially carrying routes for the **Oxford/Cambridge expressway** (which, he noted, is a motorway by any other name) were divisive: to support the integrity of Otmoor is likely to disrupt, say, Islip, Hampton Poyle, etc, should an upgrade of the A34, or a road parallel to the A34 be selected. It was agreed that the Chairman write a note to Chris Grayling and others, explaining that the current strategy of looking at three broad corridors without the need of a strategic environmental assessment was perverse, served only to divide and rule the local opposition, and was not transparent government: Islip PC favours a public enquiry into the need for an expressway over and above the rail link already in development between Oxford and Cambridge, and considers that the Public Enquiry could also adjudicate on the corridors and routes should that be required. This would bring some much needed transparency and local voices into the process of evaluation.

**125/18 Network Rail: 1. Mural on the pedestrian bridge:** Cllr Wiles is to ask Network Rail for explicit approval of the murals – which are still subject to a decision by the Council as to whether or not it approves. Once this is received, the views of villagers will be canvassed by various means. Ms Judith Samuel reported that those who visited the art show in the Village Hall were very much in favour, although she agreed that this would have been a self-selecting group. Cllr Wiles noted that he himself,

for example, is not in favour of the decoration of the bridge. **2. Network Rail access and ownership of recreation ground:** the Clerk has written to Manches, solicitors, because he had discovered a reference to the deeds in a note on the involvement of Manches in an earlier village matter.

**126/18 Village Hall:** Cllr Chapman volunteered to represent the PC on the VH management committee. The Council thanked her warmly. The Clerk is to inform the Chairman of the Village Hall Committee.

**127/18 Education:** there was nothing to report.

**128/18 Health: Defibrillator:** it was decided that the multi-purpose (child and adult) defibrillator be chosen, and that on the grounds of safety (prevention of any abuse of the defibrillator), a locked cabinet would be used. The Clerk is to order these in conjunction with an application for the BHF grant. Cllr Forbes noted that a BHF grant is available towards the cost of a designated defibrillator, providing that the applicant can provide £600. The Clerk reported that the Village Hall had agreed in principle that the defibrillator be fixed to the wall of the VH, a precondition of grant application

**129/18 Public Transport:** there was nothing to report.

**130/18 Security:** there was nothing to report.

**131/18 Any Other Business: 1. Bouncy castle and bungee run:** The Clerk reported that a request had been received in relation to a Village Hall booking to erect a bouncy castle and bungee run on the playing field during the afternoon of 23<sup>rd</sup> June, when a cricket fixture is set. The Council agreed that the castle and bungee run might be erected east of the bonfire site – by the hedge on Church Lane – at the users' risk. **2. Weeds growing on pavements:** Cllr Forbes reported a complaint about weeds sprouting on village pavements. Responsibility for keeping the pavements clear is to be investigated.

**132/18 Date of the next meeting:** the Parish Council will next meet on **Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> August 2018** at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

**133/18** The Meeting Closed at 10.00pm.