

**Minutes of the Meeting of Ilton Parish Council held in Merryfield Hall on
Tuesday 16 July 2024 at 6.30p.m.**

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

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

2024/118 Apologies: S Calvert (personal reasons)

2024/119 Declarations of Interest: There were no declarations of interest at this stage of the meeting.

2024/120 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.

2024/121 Public Participation

Public: The pot holes in Frost Lane are terrible

Council: This has been reported to SC Highways.

Public: The footpath bridge in the village is damaged (Footpath CH 15/8)

Council: Repairs are in hand by SC and the Council has received notification of related footpath closures.

Public: The existing directional sign to the Village Hall and Church is loose. Is it possible to have a replacement sign directing people to the Village Hall, Church and school?

Council: This will be looked into.

Public: Speeding traffic is a problem in the village. Is it possible for the village to purchase a SID (Speed Indicator Device)?

Council: This will be an agenda item for the September meeting.

Cllr Pike is liaising with the local PCSO and has submitted an application to set up a Community Speed Watch initiative in the village.

Public: Is the Council aware that someone is living in a caravan behind a property in the village.

Council: A welfare check will be considered.

Public: Is it possible to record the way individual councillors vote in the minutes so that there is a public record?

Clerk: The voting is managed in line with the Council's Standing Orders which require a recorded vote only if a councillor requests it.

Public: The footpath around the Rec Field is getting very overgrown.

Council: The footpath will be cut as part of the grass cutting contract.

Public: If the contractor is going to spray the weeds on the footpath, has he provided a Risk Assessment?

Council: The contractor has provided Method Statements and Risk Assessments to cover the Scope of Works in the contract. This is an agenda item for review at the meeting – see agenda item 11b).

Public: If a councillor fails to declare an interest in a matter under discussion, does it make the decision invalid?

Clerk: Individual councillors are personally responsible for deciding when to declare an interest in a matter. Failure to declare an interest is a Code of Conduct matter.

2024/122 Somerset Council Councillor Report

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

- Cllr Adam Dance is now a Member of Parliament but will be carrying on for a bit longer as a County Councillor.
- SC is working hard to make savings across all service areas in order to address the significant funding gap for 24/25. The waste contract is being renegotiated.
- SC contractors are due to cut the verges before 28 July.
- SC contractors will be carrying out drain/gully clearance in the village. Council noted that the drains had been cleared in Cad Road but not in the village. Cllr Gordon and Cllr Matravers will report any blocked drains to SC and inform Cllr Roundell Greene in order that she can help to ensure that the work is actioned promptly. Cllr Roundell Greene will also highlight the pot holes in Frost Lane.

ACTION: AG/NM

2024/123 Minutes of the 11 June 2024 Parish Council Meeting: to approve the minutes as a true record & consider any matters arising

Council noted that Cllr Gordon has offered to be the Parish Council representative for Remembrance activities (minute ref 2024/108.)

The Clerk raised a point of clarification re minute ref 2024/110. An Addendum to the grass cutting contract has now been approved and all hedge work removed from the contract – in view of this, the contractor will invoice the Council separately for the emergency cutting of the Copse Lane outside hedge.

The Chairman proposed an amendment to the minutes regarding minute ref 2024/111 - that the employment contract was approved "subject to receiving the job description".

COUNCIL RESOLVED TO APPROVE THE AMENDMENT TO MINUTE REF 2024/111 PROPOSED BY JB; SECONDED BY SR. ALL IN FAVOUR.

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

2024/124 Minutes of the 25 June 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 AG; SECONDED BY SR. ALL IN FAVOUR.

Council noted that the Village Hall committee is considering the purchase of a blood kit.

2024/125 Minutes of the 27 June 2024 Finance Committee Meeting: to note the draft minutes and consider the recommendation

- Investment options – see agenda item 10 d) and e)
- Drain clearance – see agenda item 13 d)
- Transfer of IYC hall hire fee from cost code 23: Hall Rental to cost code 14: Grants and donations

COUNCIL RESOLVED TO APPROVE THAT THE HALL HIRE FEE FOR IYC BE PAID OUT OF GRANTS AND DONATIONS

PROPOSED BY JE; SECONDED BY LP. ALL IN FAVOUR

2024/126 Planning Applications: There were no planning applications to consider. Council has been notified of a Prior Approval/Notification application for Hill View, Cad Road, Ilton, which is delegated to SC officers in line with SC Constitution.

2024/127 Accounts and Financial Information 24/25 (documents previously circulated)

- To receive and sign the bank reconciliation to 30/06/2024**
Cllr J Bennett signed the bank reconciliation to 30/06/2024
- To receive the Summary Receipts & Payments report to 30/06/2024 – received**
- To approve the Schedule of Payments for July 2024 – see Appendix to the mins**
COUNCIL RESOLVED TO APPROVE THE PAYMENTS
PROPOSED BY JE; SECONDED BY SR. ALL IN FAVOUR

Initial

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) To consider the transfer of £60K to the Lloyds Business Instant account

This is a recommendation from Fin Com.

COUNCIL RESOLVED TO APPROVE THE TRANSFER TO GET A BETTER RATE OF INTEREST ON COUNCIL FUNDS

PROPOSED BY NM; SECONDED BY IS. ALL IN FAVOUR

e) To consider opening a new instant access deposit account with Unity Trust bank

This is a recommendation from Fin Com.

Council agreed to research other options and defer this matter to the September meeting.

f) To consider for approval quotes for the renewal of the electricity contract – renewal due 30 Sept 2024

A quote has been received from our existing supplier and from other green energy suppliers. Council agreed to approach a local supplier for a further quote for mixed energy supply. This matter will be deferred to the September meeting.

2024/128 Grass cutting contract

a) To note the signing of the Addendum to the grass cutting contract for 2024/25

The Clerk has drawn up an Addendum to the contract for 2024/25 (refer Extraordinary Minutes 25 June 2024) which has been signed by both parties.

b) To receive an update on the grass cutting contractor's RAMS

Method Statements and Risk Assessments have been received to cover the Scope of Works in the contract. Council requested that the Clerk contact the contractor to request a site-specific Risk Assessment for each area included in the contract.

ACTION: CLERK

2024/129 Employment Matters

a) To consider approving a pension scheme for Ilton Parish Council and to approve pensionable earnings and contribution levels

COUNCIL RESOLVED TO APPROVE NEST AS THE PENSION PROVIDER (8% of qualifying earnings with the Parish Council to pay 3%)

PROPOSED BY LP; SECONDED BY AG. ALL IN FAVOUR.

Cllr Pike will liaise with the Clerk to create an online account with NEST.

ACTION: LP

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

The Clerk had previously circulated a time sheet indicating 47.5 additional hours worked in June 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 JUNE

PROPOSED BY JB; SECONDED BY LP. ALL IN FAVOUR

2024/130 Environment Matters

a) To consider for approval the specification for hedge cutting in the parish and to agree to obtain quotes for the work to be carried out in the Autumn

A draft specification for hedge cutting in the parish had been previously circulated, with some areas highlighted for hedge cutting by hand and some by tractor and flail.

COUNCIL RESOLVED TO APPROVE THE SPECIFICATION FOR HEDGE CUTTING AND TO OBTAIN QUOTES (Green Space Maintenance budget/Facilities & Amenities EMR)

PROPOSED BY SR; SECONDED BY AG. ALL IN FAVOUR

The Clerk will approach local contractors to provide the necessary quotes in line with Financial Regulations. To enable this work to be carried out from August onwards, it will be necessary to schedule an Extraordinary Council Meeting in August to review the quotes.

ACTION: CLERK

b) To consider funding to update the contact details on the noticeboards at the Rec Field, the play park, the cemetery and Copse Lane car park

Initial

COUNCIL RESOLVED TO APPROVE FUNDING TO UPDATE THE CONTACT DETAILS ON THE NOTICEBOARDS (Facilities & Amenities EMR)

PROPOSED BY NM; SECONDED BY IS. ALL IN FAVOUR

Some of the existing signage can be amended but the play park will need three new signs. The Clerk will obtain quotes for the September meeting.

ACTION: CLERK

c) To consider maintenance works at Brook Green for 24/25

Council agreed that this work could be carried out by volunteers using the Council tractor as necessary. See agenda item 14.

d) To consider clearing the drains in the parish using specialist contractor

This is a recommendation from Fin Com.

SC contractors are scheduled to clear the drains in the village. However, Council agreed to allocate contingency funding for this in case the work has not been carried out by September (**SC devolution: Highways Steward funding**).

e) To consider replacing the bus shelter roof

COUNCIL RESOLVED TO APPROVE FUNDING TO REPLACE THE BUS SHELTER ROOF AS IT IS LETTING IN WATER (Facilities & Amenities EMR)

PROPOSED BY JB; SECONDED BY AG. MAJORITY IN FAVOUR

Cllr Vance abstained from the vote and expressed concerns about the safety of the roof. Council agreed to erect a tarpaulin over the roof as a temporary measure to prevent any tiles falling from the roof. The Clerk will obtain quotes for this work in line with Financial Regulations and this matter will be considered at the Extraordinary Meeting in August.

ACTION: AG/CLERK

f) To consider disposing of the soil mound at the cemetery and making good the hedge

COUNCIL RESOLVED TO APPROVE FUNDING FOR THE REMOVAL OF THE SOIL MOUND AT THE CEMETERY AND MAKING GOOD THE HEDGE (Cemetery budget/Facilities & Amenities EMR)

PROPOSED BY BV; SECONDED BY AG. MAJORITY IN FAVOUR

Cllr Matravers did not take part in the vote and declared an interest in the matter as a family member will be quoting for the work.

The Clerk will obtain quotes for this work in line with Financial Regulations and this matter will be considered at the Extraordinary Meeting in August.

ACTION: CLERK

g) To consider the removal of the five dead Elm trees at the Rec Field

COUNCIL RESOLVED TO APPROVE FUNDING FOR THE REMOVAL OF THE FIVE DEAD ELMS AT THE REC FIELD (EMR)

PROPOSED BY NM; SECONDED BY SR. ALL IN FAVOUR

The Clerk will obtain quotes for this work in line with Financial Regulations.

ACTION: CLERK

h) To consider post & chain fencing around the Village Green

Council noted that the post & chain fencing would stop people pulling onto the amenity area and would protect Council land. Council agreed to ask local residents for feedback regarding this matter, via Face Book and other means as appropriate. This matter will be deferred to the September meeting.

2024/131 Risk Management

a) To consider for approval the draft Method Statement and Risk Assessment for volunteer activity within the parish

COUNCIL RESOLVED TO APPROVE THE METHOD STATEMENT AND RISK ASSESMENT FOR VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY WITHIN THE VILLAGE

PROPOSED BY NM; SECONDED BY IS. MAJORITY IN FAVOUR. 6 votes for; 2 votes abstaining.

The Clerk advised that volunteers should only be carrying out minor works and not works that should be done by a contractor – this is in line with recommendations from the Council's insurance company. The Clerk also advised that site specific and task specific Risk Assessments should also be carried out in advance of each volunteer activity or working party.

Initial

- b) To consider arrangements for volunteer working parties as necessary for July/August**
Council agreed that volunteer tasks and working parties would be organised as necessary. The Clerk has a list of residents who attended a preliminary Health & Safety briefing session in June 2024 to discuss Risk Assessment procedures. Some volunteers have previously received training in the use of the tractor, pedestrian mower and strimmer and the Council has the training certificates on file. A list of new volunteers will be compiled who will all receive training in the Method Statement and Risk Assessment procedures as outlined above in 2024/131 a). More specific training can be organised as necessary.
Cllr Vance and Cllr Pike expressed concern that they were not aware of the preliminary Health & Safety briefing session which took place in June 2024.

- c) To receive an update regarding the annual review of fixed assets**
The Clerk will circulate Asset Review Forms and a Risk Assessment template 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 or will be considered as part of the annual budget setting process. The fixed asset review of the cemetery has already been carried out and this has highlighted various cemetery management issues – see agenda item 17.

2024/132 Policy review

- a) Complaints procedure & Vexatious Complaints procedure (approved Oct 23) – to review**
As the meeting was likely to over-run, this item was deferred to the September meeting.

b) Employment policies

- i) Grievance & Disciplinary (approved Oct 23) – to review
- ii) Expenses (approved Dec 22) – to review
- iii) Sickness & Absence – to consider adoption

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

c) Volunteer policy – to consider adopting

Cllr Vance proposed that the Council adopts a Volunteer Policy and Cllr Pike seconded the proposal.
**COUNCIL RESOLVED NOT TO ADOPT A VOLUNTEER POLICY
PROPOSED BY BV; SECONDED BY LP. MAJORITY NOT IN FAVOUR. 2 votes for; 5 votes against, 1 vote abstaining**

2024/133 Freedom of Information – to receive an update regarding a recent request

The Clerk reported that a Freedom of Information request had been received and a response will be provided within the statutory 20 days.

2024/134 Cemetery Regulations & Memorial Inspection regime - to review

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

2024/135 Recreational facilities

- a) To receive an update regarding general maintenance items highlighted in the monthly reports for the playpark and MUGA**

Repairs to the timber benches and bins at the playpark are still outstanding. Minor maintenance is required on the MUGA chest press. The annual inspection is due in July.

- b) To consider quotes for i) repairs to timber trail ii) repairs to Multi-play iii) repairs to basket swing**

All quotes are outstanding.

ACTION: CLERK

2024/136 Projects for 24/25

- a) Village signs – to approve the specification**

COUNCIL RESOLVED TO APPROVE THE HAMSTONE SPECIFICATION FOR THE THREE VILLAGE SIGNS SUBJECT TO SOMERSET COUNCIL APPROVAL AND LANDOWNER CONSENT (CIL funding)

PROPOSED BY AG; SECONDED BY IS. MAJORITY IN FAVOUR. 6 votes for; 2 against

Initial

The next step is to apply to SC for consent to erect the village signs on the highway.

ACTION: JE

**b) Bike track at Rec Field – to approve funding for a contractor to draw up a specification
COUNCIL RESOLVED TO APPROVE £250 FOR A LOCAL CONTRACTOR TO DRAW UP A
SPECIFICATION FOR THE BIKE TRACK
PROPOSED BY IS; SECONDED BY NM. ALL IN FAVOUR**

Cllr N Matravers declared an interest in this agenda item due to a family connection. Cllr N Matravers left the meeting for this agenda item and did not take part in the vote.

2024/137 Young Person of the Month – to consider the application received for July
Chloe Matravers has been proposed by a local resident.

**COUNCIL RESOLVED TO AWARD CHLOE MATRAVERS A YOUNG PERSON OF THE MONTH
AWARD**

PROPOSED BY AG; SECONDED BY IS. ALL VOTING IN FAVOUR

The Clerk will organise a certificate and £10 cash.

ACTION: CLERK

Dates of next meetings:

Extraordinary Meeting: Tuesday 13 August at 6.30pm at Merryfield Hall

Parish Council Meeting: Tuesday 10 September at 6.30pm at Merryfield Hall

The meeting closed at 9.15pm

Signed

Date

Initial