

ILTON PARISH COUNCIL
website – iltonparishcouncil.gov.uk

**Minutes of the ANNUAL PARISH MEETING held in Merryfield Hall on
Tuesday 21 May 2024 at 6.30pm**

Present: 12 members of the public; Parish Cllrs: J Bennett, J Easterbrook, A Gordon, L Pike, I Sherwood

In attendance: Mrs A Dallaway (Parish Clerk/RFO)

Apologies: Cllr A Dance (Somerset Council), Cllr J Roundell Greene (Somerset Council), Paul Adams (Community Plots), Parish Cllrs: S Calvert, N Matravers, S Ripley, B Vance

1. Welcome by the Chair of the Council

Cllr J Bennett, Chair of the Council opened the Annual Parish Meeting and welcomed those present.

2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting on 9 May 2023

There are no minutes on record for the meeting.

3. Parish Council Chairman's Annual Report

Cllr J Bennett provided a brief report for 23/24 which will be available on the Parish Council website.

4. Somerset Councillors' reports

Cllrs A Dance and J Roundell Greene had given their apologies but had provided an annual report which is available on the website.

5. Reports from local organisations

Merryfield Hall – Marie Stratton-Baldwin, Treasurer provided a report on behalf of the Merryfield Hall Trustees (available on website)

St Peter's Church - Sonya Clarke, Treasurer and Reverend Philip provided reports on behalf of St Peter's Church (available on website)

Community Plots - the Parish Clerk read out a short report on behalf of Paul Adams
We have an area of the recreation field which was given for use as community plots, we are a friendly group of mixed ages and abilities and operate under a memorandum agreed with the Parish Council. There is currently a waiting list for a plot.

Ilton Youth Club - the Parish Clerk read out a short report on behalf of Jemma Harris (available on website)

6. Public Forum

PUBLIC: Public consultation took place in 2023 regarding future community projects. What happened to the funding allocated for these projects?

COUNCIL: *The funding is ring-fenced in the Council accounts. Future community projects will be an agenda item for the June Full Council meeting for Council to review and prioritise*

projects. The Council has had a change in officer and members in the last few months and this has delayed project progress.

PUBLIC: The precept for 24/25 was raised. What is happening with this additional money?

COUNCIL: The precept for 24/25 was raised to meet the anticipated extra costs in maintaining the open spaces, verges and hedgerows within the village. In 2023, Somerset Council declared a financial crisis and the Parish Council set the budget and precept request for 24/25 in the expectation that many SC services would be withdrawn or reduced. This money is ring-fenced in the Council accounts. Furthermore, much of the grass cutting in the village had previously been carried out by volunteers but due to a reduction in the availability of volunteers, the Parish Council made the decision to allocate funding in the 24/25 budget for an external contractor to do the grass cutting. The contractor has been appointed and has commenced work.

PUBLIC: Is the proposed new path in the churchyard a PROW?

COUNCIL: The PROW goes behind the church.

PUBLIC: The new contractor has done a great job in the Copse Lane car park.

PUBLIC: Will the Council keep the grass cutting equipment previously used by the volunteers? If the Council charges for the hire of the football pitch, will the revenue raised be sufficient to justify the expense of keeping and maintaining the equipment?

COUNCIL: Council is currently reviewing the use of the tractor and grass cutting equipment and taking advice from the insurance company.

Council is currently negotiating the hire of the football pitch with a local club.

PUBLIC: Speeding is a major concern in the village. What is the Parish Council going to do about it?

COUNCIL: Local residents are encouraged to report incidents of speeding to the local police. Cllr L Pike will contact the PCSO and invite them to a meeting to provide information about possible additional signage and Community Speed Watch initiatives.

PUBLIC: The two verges opposite Ilton Green need regular maintenance to prevent visibility being compromised on the highway. SC will only cut this area once a year and it is currently being maintained by a local resident. Could the Council's grass cutting contractor help to look after this area?

COUNCIL: The contractor is already very busy fulfilling the requirements of the existing contract. It may be that volunteers can help out with some maintenance in the village.

The meeting closed at 7.15pm