

**Minutes of the Meeting of Ilton Parish Council held in Merryfield Hall on  
Tuesday 11 March 2025 at 6.30pm.**

**Present:** Cllrs: J Bennett (Chair), J Easterbrook, A Pidgeon, I Sherwood, B Vance

**In attendance:** Mrs A Dallaway (Clerk/RFO), Cllr J Roundell Greene (Somerset Council)

**2025/37 Apologies and reasons for absence:** A Gordon (prior engagement), N Matravers (prior engagement), L Pike (personal reasons), S Ripley (personal reasons)

**2025/38 Declarations of Interest:** There were no declarations of interest at this stage of the meeting.

**2025/39 Items to be dealt with after the public, including the press have been excluded:** Agenda item 16/minute ref: 2025/52 will be held in closed session as the Council will be discussing a confidential staffing matter. The Council may also need to go into closed session for agenda item 15/minute ref: 2025/51 which relates to a commercial contract.

**2025/40 Public Participation**

There were no members of the public in attendance

**2025/41 Somerset Council Councillor Report**

Cllr Jo Roundell Greene reported as follows:

- Council Tax - Central government has given SC permission to raise the Council Tax by 7.5% in 2025/6 and to continue its capitalisation programme to raise additional revenue.
- Highways Safety Awareness Training – Cllr Roundell Greene is liaising with SC officers in order to help to clarify the procedure for Parish Councils to use volunteers to carry out work on SC land and assets.

**2025/42 Parish Council Minutes**

- a) **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 11 February 2025: to approve the minutes as a true record & consider any matters arising**

**COUNCIL RESOLVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS AN ACCURATE RECORD**

**PROPOSED BY JB; SECONDED BY JE. ALL VOTING IN FAVOUR.** Cllr Vance did not take part in the vote as he was not present at the meeting.

Minute ref 2025/28 a) – Cllr Pidgeon reported that Lee Hart had been asked to update the generic Risk Assessment and Method Statement to include use of the roller and the trailer.

Minute ref 2025/28 c) – the Clerk will clarify purchase of Chapter 8 signage.

- b) **Minutes of the Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting of 3 March 2025: to approve the minutes as a true record & consider any matters arising**

**COUNCIL RESOLVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS AN ACCURATE RECORD**

**PROPOSED BY AP; SECONDED BY JB. ALL VOTING IN FAVOUR.** Cllr Vance did not take part in the vote as he was not present at the meeting.

**2025/43 Planning Applications – to receive any planning applications since the last meeting**

There were none received.

**2025/44 Accounts and Financial Information 24/25 (documents previously circulated)**

- a) **Bank reconciliation to 28/02/2025 – to receive and sign**

Cllr J Bennett signed the bank reconciliation to 28/02/2025

- b) **Summary Receipts & Payments report to 28/02/2025 – received**
- c) **Schedule of Payments for March 2025 – to consider for approval (see Appendix to the mins)**  
**COUNCIL RESOLVED TO APPROVE THE PAYMENTS FOR MARCH 2025**  
**PROPOSED BY IS; SECONDED BY BV. ALL IN FAVOUR**  
 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.

#### 2025/45 Meeting arrangements

- a) **Meeting schedule April 2025 – March 2026 – to approve**  
 Council approved the draft meeting schedule which will be made available on the website. The date for the Annual Parish Meeting was confirmed as Tuesday 20 May, 6.30pm.
- b) **Annual Parish Meeting – to approve format/speaker**  
 Council agreed to invite reports from local community groups.

#### 2025/46 Cemetery

- a) **Scribe cemetery software – to receive an update and consider allocation of cemetery resources to input data and produce map**  
 The software has been purchased and installed and the Clerk has begun the process of entering historic data. The Clerk proposed that additional hours be allocated to build the database and produce the digital map – this will be discussed as part of agenda item 16/minute ref 2025/52. Councillors can also help with data input.
- b) **Interment form – to approve new form**  
**COUNCIL RESOLVED TO APPROVE THE NEW INTERMENT FORM WHICH WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE ON THE WEBSITE**  
**PROPOSED BY JB; SECONDED BY IS. ALL IN FAVOUR**
- c) **Resident access to the Cemetery via perimeter hedge – to review access arrangements**  
 A local resident currently has access to the Cemetery via a rear garden gate in the perimeter hedge to enable the filling of the oil tank in the resident's garden. The Clerk will write to the local resident confirming that Council gave historic permission for this access expressly for the filling of the oil tank and for no other purpose.

**ACTION: CLERK**

#### 2025/47 Health & Safety

- a) **Asset Review process – to review maintenance actions from annual Asset Review forms**  
 Council reviewed outstanding maintenance actions from the Asset Review forms completed Autumn 2024:  
**Cemetery** – removal of soil heap (contractor scheduled pending suitable ground conditions); refurbish noticeboard (Clerk to action)  
**Copse Lane car park** – replace gate post (scheduled as volunteer works)  
**Brook Green** – repair railings and mesh on bridge (see minute ref 2025/48b)  
**Play Park** – remove overhanging tree branches (grass contractor to action), fill holes in BMX track (contractor scheduled April), refurbish Multi-play (scheduled for review 2025/26)  
**Rec Field** – install new *Dogs on Lead* sign (Clerk to action); commission drainage survey (quotes pending)  
**MUGA/Multi-gym** – electrical works (see minute ref 2025/49b&c)  
**Bus shelter** – repair crack in wall (Clerk to obtain update from Cllr Gordon)  
**Bins & benches** - repair Rod Lane dog bin (Clerk to action); refurbish bench at Merryfield Lane site (see minute ref 2025/48a))
- b) **Risk Assessments – to review Risk Assessments for amenity areas**  
 The Clerk will circulate Risk Assessment templates for all amenity areas for completion by the relevant asset holders. Once in place these can be reviewed annually.

#### 2025/48 Environment Matters

- a) **Merryfield Lane bench site – to receive an update regarding bench repairs, relocation of planter and removal of slabs**

Initial .....

The slabs have been removed by volunteers for health and safety reasons. The bench has been removed from site and repairs are in hand by volunteers. The relocation of the planter by a contractor is currently on hold as an alternative location has not been agreed.

**a) Spray pavements – to receive an update**

Kier has provided a quote of £3205 for spraying all of the pavements in the village (three day's work). A more competitive comparison quote has been obtained for less than £500 and the Clerk has provisionally scheduled the works for April, weather permitting. The Clerk has advised SC that an independent contractor has been appointed for this task and the Council awaits clarification of procedure and permissions as necessary.

**b) Brook Green – to receive an update regarding maintenance issues and signage**

The wooden railings have been damaged and the wire mesh on the bridge needs to be reattached. These tasks will be assessed to see if they are suitable for the volunteers to carry out. There is no bridleway through Brook Green but the area is being used by horse riders and this is churning up the ground. The Clerk will purchase a *No Access for Horses* sign for installation at Brook Green.

**ACTION: CLLR PIDGEON / CLERK**

**c) Soil mounds at Rec Field – to consider quotes for removal**

Two quotes have been obtained but there is a large price difference. Council agreed that a third quote was necessary. This matter will be deferred to the April meeting.

**d) Volunteer works – to agree volunteer works for March**

Cllr Pidgeon stated that it was not practical to agree volunteer works in advance due to the uncertainty of weather and ground conditions. The Clerk explained that this agenda item was introduced in October 2024 to ensure that the Parish Council gave prior approval for all volunteer works and that this was an insurance requirement. Cllr Pidgeon asked to see evidence that this was an insurance requirement and stated that if this was the case all he would do each month was list all potential volunteer tasks in all amenity areas.

**2025/49 Recreational facilities**

**a) Tree planting at Rec Field – to receive an update**

In the absence of a lead councillor for this project, local residents will be asked if they wish to take on the project. Cllr Ripley will help out and the SC Woodland Creation Officer has also offered to help. Council acknowledged that tree planting should ideally take place between November and March.

**b) MUGA electrical supply – to review recommendations from Electrical Safety Inspection and consider quotes for outstanding works**

The **safety inspection** of the electrical installation has been carried out and the certificate received with a number of recommendations. The Clerk will ask the contractor to price the recommended works and this will be an agenda item at the April meeting.

Four contractors have been approached for quotes for the outstanding **electrical works** at the MUGA and two quotes received. Council agreed to appoint Powersafe Electrical SW Ltd to replace the timer and the contactor modules for the digital or mechanical versions and to defer the upgrade of the floodlights to an LED equivalent.

**COUNCIL RESOLVED TO APPROVE POWERSAFE ELECTRICAL SW LTD TO CARRY OUT THE WORKS AS DETAILED ABOVE**

**PROPOSED BY JE; SECONDED BY AP. ALL IN FAVOUR**

**c) Rec Field light – to consider quotes for the light at the entrance to the field**

Two quotes have been received but the Council decided to defer this item pending feedback from the forthcoming Working Group meeting at the Rec Field.

**d) Bike track at Copse Lane play park – to receive an update**

A quote for less than £500 has been received to flatten the earth mounds and Fern Garden & Tree Services will carry out this work in April.

**e) Play area inspection contract – to consider for approval**

Initial .....

**COUNCIL RESOLVED TO APPROVE THE PLAY AREA INSPECTION CONTRACT FROM ELITE PLAYGROUND INSPECTIONS FOR 2025/6 (QUARTERLY INSPECTIONS: SEPT, DEC, MARCH) PROPOSED BY IS; SECONDED BY JB. ALL IN FAVOUR**

**f) Union Jack on Village Green – to consider flying flag year round**

Council noted that there are designated days when the Union Jack must be flown on government buildings. For 2025, there are 13 designated days. Council agreed to reflect this practice on Ilton Village Green dependent on volunteer availability to organise.

**COUNCIL RESOLVED TO APPROVE THE FLYING OF THE UNION JACK ON THE DESIGNATED DAYS IN 2025 (as listed on [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) website) PROPOSED BY BV; SECONDED BY IS. ALL IN FAVOUR**

**2025/50 Projects for 24/25**

**a) Village signs – to receive an update**

No further update was available.

**COUNCIL RESOLVED TO GO INTO CLOSED SESSION FOR AGENDA ITEM 15/MINUTE REF: 2025/51 AS THE ITEM RELATES TO CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS AND ITEM 16/MINUTE REF 2025/52 AS THE ITEM RELATES TO A CONFIDENTIAL STAFFING MATTER PROPOSED BY JB; SECONDED BY IS. ALL IN FAVOUR**

**2025/51 Grass cutting contract – to finalise contract price for 2025/26 and to review any correspondence received**

**COUNCIL RESOLVED TO APPROVE 3% INCREASE IN THE CONTRACT PRICE FOR 2025/26 PROPOSED BY JB; SECONDED BY IS. MAJORITY VOTE IN FAVOUR. 4 VOTES FOR; AP AGAINST**

A site meeting was held with the contractor and an agreement was made between the two parties to ensure year one of the contract was completed, 2024/25.

Email correspondence has been received from the contractor and the Clerk will respond to confirm the price increase for the 2025/26 contract year and to reiterate that the original contract will remain in force for the remainder of the contract term April 2025 - March 2027.

**2025/52 Clerk holiday/TOIL – to receive an update and approve arrangements for 24/25**

The Clerk has 23 hours of TOIL. Council agreed that the Clerk take 15 hours TOIL before the end of April and the remaining 8 hours would be paid.

The Clerk has 21 hours of holiday remaining for the year ending 31 March 2025. Council agreed that the Clerk could carry over the holiday and should take 15 hours holiday before the end of April and the remaining 6 hours would be paid.

**COUNCIL RESOLVED TO APPROVE THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR CLERK TOIL AND HOLIDAY AS DETAILED ABOVE**

**PROPOSED BY JB; SECONDED BY JE. ALL IN FAVOUR**

Council agreed in principle for additional Clerk hours to build the Cemetery database on Scribe and create the digital map. This matter will be an agenda item at the April meeting.

Meeting ended at 8.55pm.

**Date of next meeting:**

**Parish Council Meeting: Tuesday 22 April 2025 at 6.30pm at Merryfield Hall**

The meeting closed at 8.55pm

Signed .....

Date .....

Initial .....