

ILTON PARISH COUNCIL

COVID - 19 EMERGENCY

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Ilton Parish Council held by remote connection using Zoom on

Tuesday 9th March 2021 at 7.30 p.m.

Members of the public were invited to attend the remote meeting using Zoom and to contact the Clerk prior to the meeting with any questions or comments they wished to make. Due to time constraints members of the public were advised that they would not be able to speak at the meeting.

2021/42 Attendance and Apologies

Those present by video link:	Apologies	In Attendance
Mr I Sherwood (Chair)	Mr M Cavill (District Councillor)	2 members of the public
Mrs J Bennett		
Mrs M Bullock		
Mr Guy Danvers		
Mrs J Easterbrook		
Mrs S Hill		
Mr G Mackenzie-Green		
Mr D Mico		
Mr A Dance (County Councillor)		
Mrs S Morley (Clerk)		

Those present by phone:

Mrs R Burt (Vice Chair)

2021/43 Declarations of Interest - There were no declarations of interest.

2021/44 Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held by Zoom on Tuesday 9/02/21.

An amendment to section 29(g) of the minutes of the meeting of 9/02/2021 were agreed. Mr Mackenzie-Green has not taken over responsibility for the skate park but has agreed to liaise with Maverick, the company chosen to deliver the skate park, because it is difficult for Mr Mico due to work commitments. The rest of the minutes were agreed and will be signed when it is possible to do so.

2021/45 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising not on the agenda.

2021/46 County Councillor Report

Councillor Dance's report was circulated to all Councillors. County Council elections have been deferred until next year due to the ongoing consideration of the unitary proposals. Devon and Dorset Councils are both consultees but Parish Councils in Somerset are not. There is a public consultation and Councillor Dance urged people to respond. The Stronger Somerset bid supported by the District Councils, would see two unitaries created, one for South Somerset and Mendip, and one for Somerset West and Taunton and Sedgemoor. The One Somerset model would see one unitary authority.

2021/47 Planning Applications

Planning Applications - there were no new planning applications this month.

Application: 19/03505/FUL
Proposal: Erection of 15 dwellings, formation of new access and associated works
Location: Land OS 3875 Part St Peters Close, Ilton

This application is due to be considered by the Area North Committee but has been postponed. We do not have a new date at the moment. A member of the public commented that a new planning officer has been allocated to this application.

2021/48 Accounts Payments and Receipts

(a) Cheques - the following cheques were raised this month:

001265 - £ 58.50 - The Wider View, printing Merryfield Messenger
001266 - £ 692.64 - SSDC Ranger December and January
001267 - £ 37.87 - Drainage pipe
001268 - £ 113.60 - Macs Printing, skate park survey questionnaires
001269 - £ 114.00 - Elite Playgrounds, Inspections
001270 - £ 325.29 - Salary and admin expenses
001271 - £ 71.00 - HMRC, Paye

2021/49 Recreational Development / Playing Field

- (a) Perimeter Footpath - This is still outstanding and will be done when the weather improves.
- (b) Larkfleet Compound - The fencing has been removed but the area is still not cleared.
- (c) Pond - A ditch has been dug to drain water into the pond.
- (d) Drainage by the pond - Channels have been dug to the pond which has cleared a lot of the water from that part of the field although it is still very wet.
- (e) Ditch by the MUGA - A drainage pipe has been run through into the adjoining ditch and on into the stream. This has reduced the water level in the ditch by about three-quarters.
- (f) Skate Park - Mr Mackenzie-Green said the consultation went very well with special thanks to Mrs Bennett, without her it would not have been possible, and to all the other councillors and volunteers who delivered questionnaires to all houses. 415 forms were delivered and 258 received back. 217 were in favour of the skate park, 24 against and 17 were left blank. This represents a very large majority in favour. The consultation has been very worthwhile and the results have been sent to Maverick who will look at the data and draw up a design for the skate park based on the comments received. A copy of the results will be kept until the skate park is completed. Mr Mackenzie-Green confirmed that there are no personal details or names on them.
- (g) Skate Park Finance - Mr Mackenzie-Green said the skate park will be the last major project on the Field. He proposed making a commitment of £75,000 towards the skate park which will leave approximately £50,000 of the Field money for smaller projects or maintenance. Maintenance of the Field should be less now that grass cutting will be done in-house by a team of volunteers using parish council equipment. A councillor asked what the final budget will be for the skate park. This is not clear until Maverick draw up the design for approval by the parish council. However the parish council needs to commit an amount of seed money before the final design stage and before grants can be applied for. The suggested final cost of the skate park is £150,000 which is what Maverick are working towards. Once there is approval for the design, a planning application will be made and grants can be applied for. Unless the parish council makes a commitment of a specific sum of money, the project cannot move forward. Also the more the parish council can commit, the quicker the skate park can be built.

Mrs Hill seconded the proposal to commit £75,000. After discussion councillors voted 7 - 2 in favour of committing £75,000 towards the final cost of the skate park. The motion was carried and Maverick will be informed.

Mrs Bennett wished it to be known that although she voted against committing £75,000 she is not voting against building a skate park but is concerned about the large amount of money being committed.

- (h) Grass Cutting and equipment - This is going well and all areas have been cut and are looking very nice.
- (i) Community Gardens - There has been no progress on putting up the new fencing. The ground by the bund has been dug out and levelled. It should be possible to borrow a post knocker to do the large corner posts. Mr Danvers will liaise with the Garden Group co-ordinator. **ACTION - Mr Danvers**
- (j) Plants - A Councillor asked about the budget for plants in the Field. Mrs Hill is keen to put in more plants. Most of the trees supplied free of charge from the Woodland Trust and planted last year have died and Councillors felt that it would be better to put in fewer larger trees which will survive. The Clerk confirmed that the application for another batch of trees from the Woodland Trust has been cancelled.

Councillors asked whether we can buy plants and trees from SSDC at a reduced rate or from their suppliers. The Clerk will check this. **ACTION - The Clerk**

Mrs Hill will draw up a list of plants, shrubs and trees. Once a list has been drawn up Councillors can decide on the budget, including items such as tree guards and stakes. etc.

2021/50 Cemetery - There was nothing to report in connection with the Cemetery.

2021/51 Churchyard

The very large mature Wellingtonia tree in the churchyard has caused concern and Andrew Glide of ArborTech was asked to give advice. He reported that the tree has an extensive historic wound running up its southern trunk flank (possible lightning strike, or fire) which probably occurred some 30-50 years ago. This old wound and associated decay accounts for approx. 25% of the base circumference and extends to a taper at about 8m high. It is not straightforward to ascertain the extent of the internal decay in the centre of the trunk, though a resistograph reading may be able to measure more accurately. It would likely show some 30-50% of internal decay as a cross section. The main structural strength is performed by the outer trunk and not the internal wood. The new trunk growth to both sides of the wound area has continued to grow. The tree foliage and growth appears good, and the crown is well shaped, though does extend further towards the north.

Mr Glide recommended reduction of the outer crown weight on the north side of the tree where it extends furthest, back to suitable growing points and some pruning to shape to both sides of this area to blend with the retained crown. This work, along with the removal of any significant deadwood, rubbing branches, some crown thinning etc. will help reduce the potential risk of storm damage. This work would take a 3 man day (£700 + VAT) including chipping into a pile by the fence. It would remove approximately two tons of material (wood and chip) from the tree.

This work will help, and will improve the longevity of the tree. It is not possible to predict the future / storms etc. but in the worst case scenario, should the tree blow over it is most likely to fall to the north, beside / behind the church, away from the area of basal decay. Height reduction is an option, but will spoil the shape of the tree, and could be considered at a later date. The very act of climbing the tree and carrying out the proposed work will also help to 'get a feel' for the general structural integrity of the tree, and any further recommendations.

The Clerk ascertained from SSDC that there is no preservation order on the tree and furthermore that the Churchyard is not in a Conservation Area and none of the trees have a preservation order on them.

Mr Sherwood proposed that ArborTech's quote is accepted, seconded by Mrs Bullock. All councillors voted in favour of accepting the quote and going ahead with the work as soon as possible.

2021/52 Recreation Ground Play Park

- (a) Inspections - Elite Playground Inspections have been coming for a year now and councillors were asked if they wish to carry on with their services. The reports have been done well and regularly plus the gym equipment has been lubricated each month and small repairs done. Councillors agreed to continue with the service.
- (b) Gate - Mrs Bullock proposed that a new gate should be installed at the third entrance to the Play Park to stop children potentially running into the road at the other end. Mrs Easterbrook seconded the proposal. The gate should preferably be the same design as the existing gates by Easy Gate. Councillors voted 7 - 2 in favour of the proposal with one vote against and one abstention. The Clerk to get prices.

ACTION - The Clerk

2021/53 Brook Green

There has been no 4 x 4 activity in the last month.

2021/54 Footpaths

There is no safe footpath to walk to Ilminster. At the moment the footpath to Ilminster is officially closed because of work being done at the point it crosses the A303 by-pass. However it is unsafe to cross the A303 by-pass and people cannot be encouraged to use it. Action needs to be taken before 2026 to ensure it is registered. A bridge or underpass is needed to cross the A303 which is a matter for Highways. Currently there is no footpath on the A358.

2021/55 Highways

- (a) Old A358 Road to Ilminster from Ashill - This comes out at Monks Yard. To reach this along Cad Road is dangerous because there is no footpath. There will also need to be a crossing for the A358 which is proposed to become a dual carriageway.
- (b) Mud and manure on roads - Farmers are not clearing the roads after work in the fields. Highways were called to clear the road.
- (c) Rubbish in the Field - Highways have been asked to visit to see the amount of rubbish being deposited in fields along Cad Road.
- (d) Speeding - The Police have been asked to attend because of speeding drivers.

2021/56 General Maintenance - Ranger Scheme

The Ranger is still working in the Churchyard and will move on to the Cemetery. The flytipping has been removed.

2021/57 Parish Plan

Rather than a new Parish Plan, Mrs Bennett would like to produce a small booklet to let people know the facilities there are in the village because not everyone knows what is already available. The booklet will include footpaths and a list of small traders. A competition could be run to name the Play Park and the Playing Field. Councillors agreed with this suggestion.

ACTION - Mrs Bennett

2021/58 War Memorial

The quote should be received next week.

2021/59 Website

Mrs Bennett has already set up a website to use for the history of the area. It costs £100 a year which Mrs Bennett is paying personally. Mrs Bennett has agreed that the Parish Council can have its own tab and the Clerk can be an administrator. Some training is required and this is difficult to arrange at the moment because the person who set the site up is on furlough and cannot do any training. The situation should hopefully be resolved by the end of May when Ilton Talking will close.

ACTION - Mrs Bennett / The Clerk

2021/60 Issues raised by residents by email

Provision of a recycling bin for glass and/or plastic in Ilton - This has been suggested and would need to be sited in the car park by the Playing Field. Councillors commented that extra collections are about to start for recyclables. Councillors were opposed to a large recycling bin because of the mess it creates. Ilton was deemed too small for a clothes bin in the car park.

2021/61 Issues councillors wish to raise or to report

- (a) Flower Trough - This is looking untidy and Councillors were asked for volunteers to take over the maintenance of the trough from Mrs Burt. Mrs Simpson who was present at the meeting volunteered to take on the job as a volunteer. Councillors agreed and thanked her for the offer.
- (b) Dog mess in the Field - This is an ongoing problem. It is possible to enforce the regulations that people pick up after their dog but without knowing who is causing the problem it cannot be done. The Clerk to look at the costs of setting up a CCTV camera.

ACTION - The Clerk

2021/62 Date of next Ordinary Parish Council Meeting

The next ordinary meeting of Ilton Parish Council will be on Tuesday 13th April 2021 by Zoom

The meeting finished at 10.00 p.m.

Ian Sherwood, Chairman