

RIDGMONT PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT

Olivia Burrows - Clerk to the Parish Council

Minutes of the Ridgmont Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 10th February 2022 at All Saints Church, Ridgmont starting at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllrs M Spearing – Chairwomen, A Downie, M Dray, P Fewings, H Francis and O Burrows – Clerk.

In attendance: CB Cllr R Morris.

460. To welcome Olivia Burrows as the new Clerk.

The Parish Council welcomed Olivia Burrows as the newly appointed clerk.

461. To Receive apologies for absence:

Apologies were received from: Cllrs P Francis, R Kemeny, CBC Cllrs K Matthews & S Clark

462. Open Forum:

Residents will have the chance to raise anything relevant to Parish Council business but they will not be able to discuss the subject more than once. A maximum of 2 minutes per subject will be allowed.

No residents were present at meeting.

463. Declaration of Members' Interests:

a) Declaration of member's interest of a non-pecuniary nature:

(Having membership of a club, charity etc or a close relationship).

Cllr H Francis: PCC Secretary & Treasurer, Representative on All Saints Church and Trustee on Ridgmont Charity.

Cllr M Spearing: Trustee of The Greensand Trust and PCC and Parish Council representative on Ridgmont Charity.

b) Declaration of members interest of a pecuniary nature:

(Having a financial bearing on a member or their spouse/partner).

Cllr Spearing: Land Owner

464. To Approve Minutes of the previous meeting:

Resolved: Unanimously agreed to accept the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 11th November 2021. Proposed by Peter Fewings and seconded by Mike Dray.

Resolved: Minutes were duly signed as a correct record.

465. To discuss Matters Arising:

Pavements – Cllr M Spearing will contact John Chandler regarding the state of the pavements in certain areas of the village.

ACTION: MS

Rose & Crown – unfortunately Central Bedfordshire are unable to help with the frontage of the pub

Theft – There was a theft on Eversholt road – The police have been contacted regarding this matter.

Playground – The repair work to the playground has been completed. The Parish Council was able to secure a grant contribution of £1,500 from CBC to help cover the costs of the repairs.

466. To Receive Reports:

CB Cllr R Morris - Ward Councillor grant is first come first serve basis. PC will need to apply by March. Some grant money was given to Sir Captain Tom foundation for an art project at the Marston Forest centre.

Cllr M Spearing - Prologis – The CBC Local plan has been adopted.

Ward councillor Sue Clarke was invited to a meeting 10th February with Prologis to find out the latest on the warehousing. Cllr Clarke informed M Spearing that Prologis should be contacting the PC regarding the details of these meetings/consultations.

The village and parish council were successful in getting the size of the site reduced, however this may make room for negotiations with Prologis more difficult going forward.

Advice from the ward councillors is the village should submit over 100 letters to the CBC regarding the Prologis warehousing. Only around 50 letters were submitted to CBC last time, which is down from 90 that were sent the first time.

A planning consultant was previously hired. The parish may need further advice from another consultant going forward, which means the Parish Council may need to consider using PC funds for a consultant and overheads like printing etc.

Ward Cllr Morris mentioned that last time when the planning application came in, the consultation was online, but the PC requested a paper copy, which they will ask for again.

Resolved: To inform the village about the planning application and ask residents to submit objections.

ACTION: MS

Cllr M Spearing – A resident from Husborne Crawley contacted Cllr Spearing about the Rajapack warehousing Cllr Spearing informed the resident that she spoke against the warehouse, and to contact their own Parish Council regarding planning applications.

Councillor Report:

Ridgmont Charity: Cllr H Francis: The charity met a couple weeks ago. The trust holds funds of approximately £230k. It was reported that there are still no viable sites for village hall. The charity is considering adding a clause to the deed to provide some flexibility to spend some of the accrued interest on projects that will benefit the village and will further the objective of providing a village hall. CB Cllr R Morris commented that the capital held in trust will not go very far to fund a village hall, this is also the view of the charity, however there are also grant schemes available to help with funding. The charity is also mindful that low interest rates and a high level of inflation will have a negative impact on the funds.

PCC: Cllr H Francis & Cllr M Spearing:

The Church – There hasn't been any services for a few months. The first service of 2022 will be held Sunday 13th February for the Christdingle Family Service with the Rev Lynda Klimas.

The Church still doesn't have a new vicar appointed. A meeting is scheduled on the 14th February to discuss this matter further, and the outcomes will be reported at the next parish council meeting.

Cllr M Spearing mentioned that there has been a good community building with the Church and people have been coming forward to help. The electrician Michael Childs kindly came to help update, test and rewire some of the plugs in the church which allowed us to plug in some heaters safely. The Christdingle oranges are being provided by Sylvia from the Firs and teas and coffees will be provided by villagers.

However, there is concerns that the lack of funding to the Church will impact the Church's future. The Church was designed by the architect Sir Gilbert Scott and is of historical importance and would be a great shame if it couldn't remain open.

There is currently about £4,000 in the church fund.

100 Club - In the next few weeks, the 100 club will be launching again. This has proven to be a great fundraiser for the Church in the past, but due to covid related reasons fund raising events have been on hold.

The boiler and masonry – The Church boiler needs replacing, it's over 40 years old and parts are unavailable. Church of England cannot provide the funds for the replacement boiler. There is no resolution regarding heating the church and this is an ongoing matter. It has been reported that some of the masonry is crumbling and falling down.

Resolved: Cllr M Spearing will highlight the state of the church in the next village newsletter.

ACTION: MS

Councillor Reports:

Planning Applications: CB/21/04821/FULL Land to the west of Mill Road, Husborne Crawley, Milton Keynes, MK43 OXF - Construction of a new farmyard to include a grain dryer, grain store, general purpose building, new access track and surface water drainage scheme.

This application has been recommended for approval, but the parish council has the opportunity to provide comments or address the committee in person.

The Grain Store lies in the Parish of Husborne Crawley, but also lies adjacent to the Parish of Ridgmont. The Parish Council does not object but has some comments to put forward to the committee.

A new updated plan was put forward with changes to exit/entrance point for a matter of safety and that the grain store won't be lit at night.

Cllr M Dray mentioned that this grain store will be substantial in size and that one side will be covered with solar panels - *Why can't the solar panels be put on the reverse side where they cannot be seen?*

Cllr M Dray – *Can some screening be put in? Fencing or hedges for example.*

Cllr M Spearing has previously addressed the committee and asked if trees can be put in.

Resolved: Cllr M Spearing will request a speaking slot to address the committee with the concerns on Wednesday 16th February.

ACTION: MS

467. To receive correspondence:

No correspondence to report.

468. To accept Payments:

Expenditure:

Npower – December 21 Monthly Energy Charge	-	£191.50	D/D
LynLyman Clerk’s Salary Nov 21	-	£357.55	S/O
LynLyman Clerk’s Salary Dec 21	-	£357.55	S/O
Reids Playground Maintenance LTD Invoice 4695	-	£2328.00	100774
NAB Landscapes Grasscutting Nov 21 Invoice INV2716	-	£530.00	100775
Lyn Lyman Final Invoice Invoice 005	-	£ 280.85	100776

Total: £4045.45

Resolved: Unanimously agreed to pay the above invoices.

Balance as of 31st January 2022: £6,765.70

The Parish council will receive the precept payment of £17k in early April 2022.

469. Administration Issues

Cllr M Spearing & O Burrows Clerk - Banking – The Parish council is updating the banking system and moving to online banking. Cllr Spearing had circulated a Banking Policy. There are 3 official signatories M Spearing, H Francis & O Burrows. Any payments made will need to be signed off by 2 councillors.

Resolved: It was unanimously agreed to adopt the banking policy.

Cllr M Spearing - Proposal for minimum of 4 meetings a year instead of 6, plus additional meetings if needed. Meetings will be held on the 2nd Thursday of the month.

Resolved: Unanimously agreed Proposed by M Dray, Seconded by H Francis

Cllr M Spearing - All councillors are currently using their personal emails for correspondence. M Spearing proposed to have a one generic email for all the councillors and a document sharing system.

Resolved: Everyone preferred to keep using their personal email for parish council correspondence. It was agreed to set up a shared dropbox account.

ACTION: OB

Clerk O Burrows – Olivia will make sure the parish council website is up to date, add updated policies etc. plus make it more visible to local residents using Facebook and newsletter.

ACTION: OB

Cllr M Spearing – As a public body we need to have the Clerk on PAYE, we have now set up O Burrows onto PAYE.

Cllr M Spearing – Suggestion to councillors – any objection that the parish has the accounts/budgets on a separate shared spreadsheet? This was unanimously agreed.

Councillor Questions:

Cllr M Dray: This year is the Queens Jubilee, what has the village done in the past? Are we going to do anything in the village to celebrate?

Cllr M Spearing: Reported that an application for a road closure has been made. At the last Jubilee the road was closed for 5 hours for a street party, which included afternoon tea, a hog roast by John the Farmer, a fancy dress parade and a live band.

It was discussed that there could do another street party if there was enough interest by residents. It was agreed ask via Facebook for volunteers to see if people could help organise the event by offering their time/services etc.?

The Queen's jubilee is spread over 4 days from 4th June and is during a half term break. So, we would need to look into which day would be suitable for a street party. Cllr M Spearing will look into the possibility of applying for partial road closure in the village for up to 5 hours.

RE Funding: The parish council under section 172 can give some money towards a street party but we cannot fund the whole event. So, we would need to find a way to fund this, perhaps make it a ticketed event for families and everyone bring their own food?

ACTION: MS

Cllr R Morris- suggested a small donation would be appropriate.

Cllr M Dray - When will the clock be set correctly?

Cllr M Spearing said that after the church service, a second key will be cut and the person who does the clock will regulate it. A key is kept at The Firs. It will cost the about £120 to get a second key cut.

469. Date of Next Meeting: Thursday May 5th 2022

The Meeting closed at 8.45pm.