

IVER PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the **Annual Meeting of the Local Government Electors for the Parish of Iver** held at Iver Heath Village Hall on Monday 9th March 2009 at 7.10 pm.

Present: Mr J Wilson - Chairman of the Parish Council chaired the meeting
Approximately 60 members of the public including Parish, District and County Councillors
Mrs. G. Collins (Clerk to the Council)

The Chairman opened the Meeting by reading the Statutory Notice.

- 1 **Apologies for absence:** Colin Davenport, Chris Woolley, Reg Gould and Parish Councillor Malcolm Bradford
- 2 **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 17th March 2008 be confirmed and signed.
- 3 **Matters arising from the Minutes:** There were none
- 4 **Police Report** – there was none.
- 5 **Chairman's Report:** The Chairman commented on and detailed the interesting work of the Council during the past year (a copy of which is appended to these Minutes). A summary financial report was circulated (appended to these Minutes).
- 6 **Parish Plan – the way forward?** The chairman said that the previous parish plan had been carried out in 2003 with a detailed questionnaire. This was being updated and residents were being asked to comment on whether the key issues from the previous plan were still relevant today and what new issues had arisen since 2003. He encouraged all residents to take a questionnaire or download one from the parish council web site. www.iverparishcouncil.gov.uk
- 7 **General Discussion and Question Time :** The chairman said that some awards would be given later to volunteers who had given freely of their time to assist the Council in its work.

General Questions were as follows:

With interest rates so low Ms Sanders wondered how the parish council would be able to fund its Christmas lights and hanging baskets. She also made a complaint about the pavement in Thornbridge Road and asked whether anything could be done to improve the surface as people were having to walk in the road in some places because it is so cracked and damaged. The chairman said that he would ask BCC to look at the pavement and comment on whether it could be re-surfaced. Also that the Council would be seeking additional grant funding to aid the Christmas Light and Hanging Basket projects. He also said that the Council had taken a decision to spread its funds around 5 different banks in order to obtain the £50,000 guarantees from as many places as possible.

There was a question about underspend on the budget for Road Safety items and Street Lighting. The clerk (as the RFO) responded that there were still some large sums of money to be spent from these headings for example a contribution towards the zebra crossing in Church Road and some replacement lighting columns. The Council had set aside money to purchase a Vehicle Activated Sign but then had decided to take advantage of the moveable sign offered by BCC instead and this had saved some money.

There was a question about the removal of the island where the new zebra crossing will be in Church Road and it was confirmed by the chairman that the island will not be replaced when the zebra crossing is installed.

The chairman reported that the Thornbridge Road shop parking improvements had been completed except for some parking restrictions that will be consulted on in the near future. Also that enforcement action was being taken against Dromenagh Farm and Seven Hills Farm in Seven Hills Road because of breaches to planning regulations.

Councillor Oxley reported that the District Council will be consulting on its 20 year plan as part of the

Local Development Framework and that he was concerned that there was no mention of the issue of HGVs and a relief road in the Core Strategy as published. On the 18th April there will be an exhibition about the Plan in Iver Village Hall. He thought that residents might wish to inform the District Council or their local councillors whether or not Green Belt land should be given up to provide a relief road for Iver Village.

A resident said that he would be concerned if any relief road on Green Belt would bring with it housing as well. The Chairman reported that Kebbell Homes had already voiced a proposal to build a relief road from Thorney Lane to Wingroves Farm with houses too. There is nothing as concrete as a planning application regarding this as yet.

Another resident felt that this would not assist Richings Park. Wendy Matthews, chairman of Richings Park Residents' Association, said that if the proposed Heathrow Hub was built in Richings Park then this would be on Green Belt anyway and would probably be passed by parliament rather than local planners. She also asked if the Parish Council would consider purchasing its own Temporary Speed Indicator Device.

Parish Councillor Jeanette Watkins proposed that a separate meeting be held regarding Green Belt. This was seconded by Richard Leech and was passed unanimously.

A resident complained about the poor drainage in Love Lane. It was reported that a works order had been given by BCC for the pond to be dredged which would help the situation. It was agreed that drainage everywhere is poor and is not helped by residents who are responsible for the ditches in front of their properties not keeping them clear and sometimes even filling them in.

Cllr Oxley reported that the nursery school that uses Iver Village Hall (a private provider) had given parents 6 weeks notice of its closure and were offering the children places at the Langley nursery. The parents were hoping for some assistance from the Parish Council in their campaign to keep the nursery open by whatever means they could.

The Chairman thanked those persons present for their attendance and closed the meeting at 7.55 pm.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT
ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 9th MARCH 2009

Iver Parish

Iver Parish which comprises the areas of Iver, Richings Park, Iver Heath and Iver West has a population of about 10,000 people which is about one sixth of the population of the district of South Bucks.

The Council

14 councillors, 6 Iver Heath, 1 Iver West, 7 Iver and Richings Park
Full time Clerk and two part time assistants
Maintenance team – two full time maintenance employees
One new part time employee undertaking highways work funded by the County Council
Clerk to Dorney Parish Council also for a fee
New Parish office at 63 Chequers Orchard, Iver
10 full Parish Council meetings
4 Committees covering Policy, Amenities and Highways and Partnerships which meet 6 times a year and Planning which meets every three weeks.
1 sub committee
5 working groups

Budget 2008-09 – performed substantially in line with budget.

Budget 2009-10 £ 400,364 net expenditure (£51,000 less than 08-09)
Precept £352,000 (£336,000 08-09)

The expenditure budgeted for this year covers the one off costs of moving the office due to the police wishing to occupy the whole of the police station; there will also be ongoing costs of occupation of the new office due to having to meet the costs of fuel, cleaning etc not previously incurred.

The Council also aims to improve the appearance of the areas owned by the parish council or looked after by it. It will seek to forge relationships with young people and find out how to work with them to reduce antisocial behaviour and vandalism.

Amongst other costs the expenditure pays for –

PCSO –we pay half the cost of an extra Police Community Support Officer which we consider to be an effective presence on our streets.

Outreach youth worker — we pay Iver Educational Trust the cost of a full time youth worker who has been very effective over the last year in reducing the vandalism we have suffered in the past.

Maintenance team – who look after the recreation grounds, all other property we own or manage and their role helps to improve the parish appearance and also saves on work by contractors as our team undertake nearly all of the work on parish council property.

Amenities

Iver Recreation Ground – now that the development of the old Lea Barton site is substantially complete the residents will benefit from additional and improved parking on the site. The new childrens playground is proving to be very popular with a wide range of activities. Additional playground equipment is to be installed shortly from a grant from the District Council.

The Council agreed a budget of £250,000 to meet a proportion of the costs of a new pavilion and it is hoped that this together with a grant from the Football Foundation will result in this project going ahead.

Iver Heath Recreation Ground – improvements have been made to the CCTV equipment on the site and this should result in better coverage as well as better images which will be helpful to the police if there are incidents on the site.

The concrete bollards around the tennis court fence have at last been provided by Bisons and prevent damage to the fence from vehicles.

The pavilion is used regularly by our youth worker Sally Vigers who meets up with the young people of Iver Heath there every Tuesday evening.

Iver Heath Fields – we remain grateful to the Friends of Iver Heath Fields for their work in looking after these four fields, 41 acres in total. We were sad to hear of the death of Simon Hill who had been a great supporter of the fields and done so much good work there.

Allotments – the allotments at both Iver and Iver Heath are well used and there seems to be a renewed interest in allotment holding – possibly due to the economic situation. There are still allotments available at a modest annual cost.

Millennium Nature Reserve

The work on the Millennium Nature Reserve at Hardings Row (off Swallow Street) continues, being undertaken by the Groundwork Trust under the guidance of the Parish Council which owns the land. Now that the grazing land lease has ended it is intended to put together a plan for the use of the whole area as a nature reserve. This Nature reserve is well worth a visit, preferably on foot, and it will be a useful educational resource to be used by schools and other groups.

Bus Shelters – no new bus shelters have been provided this year but we did solve a problem for residents of Swallow Street by removing the side of the shelter thus deterring youths from congregating in it.

Christmas lights – there was a significantly bigger ceremony this year which was in both Iver Village Hall and the Kings Church hall.

Summer Hanging Baskets

The hanging baskets placed around the parish over the summer have again brightened up the shopping areas.

Carnival

Unfortunately the 2008 Carnival had to be cancelled due to heavy rain in the weeks before the event which left the three main location waterlogged and unusable for the event.

We have rearranged the carnival for September 12th this year.

Planning

Pinewood - Peace Road

The new path through the south of Pinewood Studios land from Pinewood Road into Black Park allowing residents to walk rather than drive to Black Park has proved to be a most popular route into the park and is used by more and more residents on foot or by bike.

Project Pinewood – the proposed plan of Pinewood to use Green Belt Land adjacent to Pinewood Green as a living filming residential site has been one of the most controversial matters of the last year. The Parish Council called a public meeting and the mood of the meeting was almost unanimously against the project. Planning permission has not to date been applied for but is expected to be requested shortly. The Parish Council has made its objections to the plan clear to residents but it awaits the proposal before taking matters further.

Crossrail Plans

Plans for Crossrail have been approved and we will lose dog kennel bridge. Negotiations are to take place to provide an alternative footpath.

3rd Runway at Heathrow – the controversial proposals for a third runway at Heathrow were approved by the Government this year. This development will be devastating to Richings Park in particular and to Iver generally; added to by the possibility of a major rail hub between Richings Park and West Drayton.

Highways and Partnerships

Thornbridge road improvements – the much needed improvement to the parking around the shops in Thornbridge Road has now been completed with the majority of funding coming from the District Council but with contributions from the Parish Council and the County Council. Parking restrictions are expected to come after public consultation.

Richings Park – residents in Richings Park are using a speed indicator device to try to reduce speeding traffic in North Park.

Street lighting – vandalism of whole lights and covers and bulbs has increased this year at significant cost to the Council as the cost of insurance was prohibitive.
A knock down or breaking of a light costs £800 each time.

Church Road – following a petition from residents supported by the Parish Council the County Council are about to install a new crossing in Church Road Iver Heath to allow for people to cross from the Parkway to reach the schools and library.

Devolved Highways work – by agreement with the County Council the Parish is now taking on work on local highways previously the responsibility of the County. This is paid for by the County out of their budget for this work amounting to £15,000 per year. Taking on this devolved responsibility has enabled problems to be dealt with more expeditiously.

Security

Iver Heath Village Hall Site Security

Your Parish Council provided a grant of £5,000 to a project to improve security and lighting at the site of Iver Heath Village Hall where there was a problem of vandalism and disruption to activities in the hall. This project is now complete and appears, after a few immediate problems, to be successful in reducing incidents of vandalism at the site.

Website

The Parish Council website provides much information about the parish and the activities of the council. It also has the facility for organisations to advertise their events on the social calendar.

Thanks

All who have attended tonight
Clerk and Assistants
Maintenance and Highways teams
Youth Worker
Vice Chairman
Chairmen of Committees
Councillors
Partners of Councillors who let them out to attend meetings
Those District Councillors who have attended to give us information
County Councillors who get our voice heard in Aylesbury
Helpers at the office
Working group helpers
Police and PCSOs
Iver Educational Trust

Annual Meeting Financial Report 9th March 2009



