

BISHOP'S ITCHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting 1 July 2024

Present:

Cllr Kettle (Chairman) Cllr Dugmore Cllr Horsman Cllr Lamont
Cllr Tagg-Wilkinson Cllr Tressler (arrived at 19:49)

In Attendance:

Karen Stevens - Clerk to the Council
Val Powell – Cemetery Manager
Cllr Rock – District Councillor (arrived at 20:34)

Public:

5

24/113 Apologies:

Cllr Colton due to annual leave
Cllr Howatson
Cllr Ogden due to work commitments
Cllr Thomas due to annual leave
Cllr Tressler – for lateness
The above apologies were accepted.

24/114 Declarations of Interest:

None

24/115 Dispensations:

None

24/116 Minutes:

It was **RESOLVED**, that with the minutes of the ordinary parish council meeting held 3 June 2024 be accepted as a true and complete record of the meeting. Proposed Cllr Horsman, seconded Cllr Kettle.

24/117 Public Forum:

Karin Young spoke to say “ We can see that you are going to speak later, in items 8, 9 and 10 on the agenda, about our correspondence regarding the actions taken at the cemetery, but would like to make the following comments.

Cliff and I felt that we had no alternative but to make a formal complaint, which we did on 17 June, because we had received no response from the Parish Council to our informal complaint dated 21 May 2024. Neither the Clerk, nor the Chairman had spoken to us directly in order to attempt to resolve our complaint, (as outlined in your informal complaints procedure). Subsequently, we received your reply to our informal complaint at lunchtime on 24 June.

Some of the answers that you have provided to our questions are either inaccurate or incomplete and in some cases have not been answered at all. Neither have you provided the documents that we asked for, in particular the inspection report that

should have been prepared for Scott's headstone from 14 May and any previous inspections carried out.

In fact one document you did provide is related to the Churchyard and is NOT something we requested to see. The Cemetery risk assessment you have supplied is dated 24 June 2024, which we would question, as this is the same day as your reply to our informal complaint.

At last month's meeting we were informed, and it is minuted, that our informal complaint had been forwarded to WALC for an independent review. It was resolved to ask them to review what happened on 14th May but they should also consider the actions taken on 17th May, which is clearly outlined in our complaints email.

WALC are NOT independent as you pay a membership to them and their website states that they are "Formed by Town and Parish Councils – Run for Town and Parish Councils" - they represent, train, and advise Town and Parish Councils."

The response to our informal complaint that we have received from Karen Stevens, on behalf of the Parish Council, has generated further questions which we will address before the formal complaint hearing.

Steve Young then spoke: My name is Steve Young, uncle of Scott Young. As you know Scott's headstones was affected by the recent inspection and subsequent actions by the Parish Council.

I note from the draft minutes for the 3rd June meeting under 24/100 it states that WALC are independent of the parish council. As I pointed out in the previous meeting they are not independent. The minutes also say "it was resolved to invite WALC to carry out a review of what went on on 14th May. My recollection is that it was resolved to carry out a review of the informal complaint sent by email by Cliff and Karin Young. This included what went on on the 17th May.

On the 17th May a working party of councillors and volunteers reinstated onto their foundation, staked then bound all but three of the headstones laid down on the 14th May, The Parish council had already made safe the headstones which they deemed to be unstable, therefore what Authorisation did the council or working party have for their actions on the 17th May which was carried out without prior permission or consent from the grave owners?

In the councils update of 20 May, it states that advice was received from the ICCM saying it was acceptable to reinstate , stake and bind those memorials that could be made stable. Did this advice include the method on how this should be done? The method of staking carried out by the Working party contradicts the ICCM guidance of vertical staking. I note two headstones have subsequently been staked in accordance with the ICCM guidance notes,

With reference to appointing a complaints committee, item 10 of the Agenda, any councillor who attended or carried out the reinstatement, staking and binding of the headstones should declare a conflict of interest and should not put themselves forward or be considered for election to the Complaints Committee as the actions carried out on the 17th May forms an important part of the complaint.

The Parish Councils update of 20th May also states that the council act in accordance with the Ministry of Justice document "Managing the safety of Burial Ground Memorials but It appears that you have not fully complied with the procedures in this document.

I would also like to point out that BS8415 states those responsible for safety and maintenance of a cemetery shall have a "Written process in place" to manage the risks presented from memorialisation. This is also outlined in the BRAMM Blue Book under inspections, assessments and actions. Where is your written process?

It also appears the numbers of headstones made safe seems to change depending

on who you speak to or the document that you read. Please can the parish council confirm the exact numbers of graves affected and the number of grave owners that have been directly contacted since the 14 May.

24/118 Planning Matters:

24/01220/FUL

26,28,30 and 32 Starbold Road, Bishop's Itchington, CV47 2TQ – Demolition of numbers 26, 28, 30 and 32 Starbold Road and redundant garages. Erection of 5 affordable housing units to include 4 maisonettes and 1 bungalow and associated development.

It was **RESOLVED** to support planning application 24/01220/FUL, for the reasons submitted previously when the application was considered (October 2023):

- The parish council believes that solar panel provision should be included on each house to enhance sustainable energy.
- The justification for support of this application is the state of the current properties as residential amenities, provision of better-quality housing, improving climate impact (CS2), sustainable construction (CS3), design (CS9) and is affordable housing (CS18).

In addition:

- The parking arrangements in 24/01220/FUL are a backward step as the original proposal had more on-plot parking whereas this is biased towards allocated parking which has scope for conflict among residents and misuse by non-residents.
- As of 2 April 2024 all applications from developers of small sites have to have a biodiversity net gain statement to confirm they are not exempt and then how they intend to meet the BNG objective, including details of proposed significant on-site enhancements. Will this be included and if planning is granted will a BNG Plan be developed?

Proposed by Cllr Dugmore, seconded Cllr Kettle, all in favour.

Cllr Tressler joined the meeting at 19:49

24/119 County and District Liaison:

Stratford District Council (SDC) – A report had been circulated prior to the meeting and it was accepted as read

Warwickshire County Council (WCC) – Cllr Kettle had circulated his report prior to the meeting and it was accepted as read

24/120 Response to Mr and Mrs Young's Informal Complaint:

Councillors have seen a copy of the response to Mr and Mrs Young's informal complaint.

A detailed discussion ensued in which Cllr Dugmore advised he was quite concerned about the process leading up to the letter being sent to the Young family.

Cllr Tagg-Wilkinson stated that he understood that the motion that we adopted at the last meeting was for the clerk to write a letter, that the letter would then go to a legal representative and once agreed would go out as a matter of urgency. He was unaware that the clerk had gone on holiday delaying the process.

Cllr Tressler questioned the Clerk over the delays in sending out the response.

Cllr Dugmore stated that it is unfair to point the finger at the Clerk.

Cllr Kettle stated that the recommendation to take advice was made in the during the private session of the meeting, and therefore has not been included in the minutes as in accordance with standard procedures. Cllr Dugmore disagreed in that it was a decision and therefore should have been recorded. Cllr Kettle advised that items under confidential items are not recorded in public minutes, and this is standard procedure, county, district and parish councils. Cllr Dugmore then went on I to question the transparency of that behaviour because the closed session referred to did not stick to the points on the agenda listed as it lasted some twenty minutes and we did not have the quotes it was opened up for.

Cllr Kettle summed up that we have received the letter and we all acknowledge that Cllr Tressler and Cllr Tagg-Wilkinson have said there was a keenness to get the letter out as quickly as possible. There were various stages we had to go through which meant we were not in control of the timetable. The letter has gone out. Unfortunately, the Mr and Mrs Young felt it was too late and have issued a formal complaint against the council and that is the current position.

24/121 Freedom of Information Request from Mr and Mrs Young:

The Clerk advised that the parish council had received a Freedom of Information (FOI) request. Additional questions have been raised in a subsequent email Cllr Tagg Wilkinson advised that he was a bit nervous that we might get into some form of conflict of interest if we carry on discussing FOI and therefore this item should be moved into confidential matters.

The deadline for a response is 15 July.

24/122 Formal Complaint from Mr and Mrs Young:

Following discussion, it was agreed that those councillors implicated in the actions carried out in the cemetery on 14 and 17 be ruled out of being part of the complaints committee (Cllrs Kettle, Thomas, Ogden, Tagg-Wilkinson and Lamont).

Cllr Tagg-Wilkinson stated that he believed that Cllr Dugmore should be excluded from the complaints committee as he has been party to doing things which he thinks might give him a bias on that committee i.e. sending out information on Facebook that we all did not agree with but went ahead with it anyway. He agreed that Cllr Dugmore was not involved in the actions at the cemetery but this is also about integrity so he is not comfortable because he is not sure he is playing in the middle field and therefore it seems a bit biased to him and that is his concern. Cllr Dugmore asked if he was accusing him of bias because he specifically posted a simpler version of the statement made on 20 May. Cllr Tagg-Wilkinson advised not at all. He agrees with a lot of the comments Cllr Dugmore makes but they need to be put into context and what he does do is put it into a different context and he is not happy with that, and therefore if you want to have a committee that was unbiased, he does not think it can include Cllr Dugmore. Cllr AD – any more reasons for that or is it just a Facebook post that is not connected to the complaint? Cllr TW – just leave it at that.

It was **RESOLVED** to hold an Extraordinary Meeting of the Parish Council on Monday 8 July to appoint the complaints committee. Proposed Cllr Lamont, seconded Cllr Kettle, all in favour.

23/123 Policies and Review Dates:

Following discussion, it was agreed that each document needs a control page showing version control, reviews, frequency of review, and ownership.

The clerk was asked to produce a list of the policies that we need to review, and we will then review some at each meeting, starting with the Community Emergency Plan.

24/124 Social Media Policy:

Copies of various social media policies from other parish/town councils have been circulated.

It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Lamont would look at the various policies and formulate a social media policy for Bishop's Itchington Parish Council and distribute it by the end of this month for review at the next meeting. Proposed Cllr Lamont, seconded Cllr Tagg-Wilkinson, all in favour.

24/125 Grass Cutting Request – Scowcroft Drive

It was agreed for the clerk to obtain quotes from our ground maintenance contractor to mow this and a small piece of land in Starbold Road and bring the costs back to the next meeting.

24/126 Finance:

1. To receive monthly financial report for May 2024: This was noted (Appendix A)
2. To receive bank reconciliation reports for May 2024: Cllr Kettle has reviewed this and it is correct
3. To approve accounts for payment 1 July 2024:
It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Accounts Payable 3 June 2024 (Appendix B). Proposed Cllr Kettle, seconded Cllr Tagg-Wilkinson. Cllrs Dugmore and Tagg-Wilkinson agreed to authorise the payments.

24/127 Environment and Properties:

Warwickshire Wildlife Trust Land – Disabled Access: Low level restrictions have been put in at the entrance to the path resulting in a local individual being unable to access the land in their wheelchair. It has been confirmed that there is disabled access via a standard accessible lock (Radar Key) into the Yellow Land. The individual concerned is obtaining a radar key and will advise as to whether it works or not.

Cllr Rock joined the meeting at 20:34

Cllr Rock advised that security had been mentioned in his report and unfortunately there have been a number of incidents particularly with tradesmans vans being attacked. Recent attempted burglary in Priors Hardwick.

Draft Local Plan – SDC are working through the plan topic by topic. Class Q applications (conversion of redundant buildings) – the government has changed some of the permitted development rules and a report will be available soon. It will have an effect as it appears to be a relaxation of the rules. Overall development and particularly housing numbers is a complicated area with each political party advocating various things are going to happen instantly with the planning system. Adoption of the plan is likely to take three years.

Paul Reid, Head of Environmental Services at SDC has recently retired.

24/128 Reports and Questions:

- Cricket – The cricket team have held their first away match friendly and although they lost it was still an excellent result 151 runs to 126. There is one team with extras. The parish council passed on its congratulations to the team.
- Carnival – The carnival is being held on Saturday 6 July and all are welcome to attend.
- Pavilion meeting is scheduled for Monday 16 September at 19:30. The community centre committee are support this by providing free room hire for the meeting.
- Trees along Ladbroke Road – Self seeded ash trees are blocking light from houses.
- Biodiversity Stand at Carnival – might have attendance from the Wildlife Trust.
- Met with police officer and spoke about two tends that had been set up in the nature reserve and their answer was they could not do anything as it is on private land. Concerned at this response because when you talk to the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust they say call the police.
- Blue Pool – annual issue of teens swimming in the pool in the hot weather. Appear to be coming off the road and through the tunnel from the end by Bishop Bowl Lakes.

24/129 A motion was passed for the Exclusion of Public and Press under Section 100A of Local Government Act 1972 (5 in favour and one objection from Cllr Dugmore):

- 1. Quotes to undertake work to the cemetery headstones/memorials**
Additional quotes/information needs to be obtained before a decision is made – item to be put on the agenda for the extraordinary meeting to be held on 8 July 2024.
- 2. Freedom of Information Request.**
This was discussed and the clerk was advised as to where she can get advice from on how to respond to a FOI request

24/130 Date of Next Meeting

The next extraordinary meeting of the parish council will take place on Monday 8 July 2024 at 7.30pm at the Community Centre.

The next ordinary meeting of the parish council will take place on Monday 2 September 2024 at 7.30pm at the Community Centre.

Meeting closed at 22:22

Signed.....Chairman Date.....

APPENDIX A:

Financial Budget Comparison

Comparison between 01/04/24 and 31/05/24 inclusive. Includes due and unpaid transactions.

Excludes transactions with an invoice date prior to 01/04/24

	Budget 2024/2025	Reserve Movements	Actual Net	Balance	
INCOME					
Bishops Itchington Parish Council					
10	Precept	£110,000.00	£0.00	£55,000.00	-£55,000.00
20	Council Tax Support Grant	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
30	Burials	£2,500.00	£0.00	£400.00	-£2,100.00
40	Sec 136 & Other Reimbursements	£1,300.00	£0.00	£0.00	-£1,300.00
50	Playing Field	£500.00	£0.00	£189.35	-£310.65
60	Interest - Current	£12,500.00	£0.00	£281.99	-£12,218.01
61	Interest - Pavilion Fund	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
70	Grants	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
80	Misc	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
90	VAT Refund	£0.00	£0.00	£11,331.25	£11,331.25
100	Pavilion Fund	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Total Bishops Itchington Parish Council		£126,800.00	£0.00	£67,202.59	-£59,597.41
Total Income		£126,800.00	£0.00	£67,202.59	-£59,597.41
EXPENDITURE					
Bishops Itchington Parish Council					
200	Salaries & Expenses	£39,943.00	£0.00	£5,634.50	£34,308.50
210	Councillor Allowances	£500.00	£0.00	£0.00	£500.00
220	Administration	£12,565.00	£0.00	£1,962.28	£10,602.72
230	Grounds Maintenance	£28,202.00	£0.00	£2,822.96	£25,379.04
240	Cemetery & Churchyard	£6,445.00	£0.00	£1,022.95	£5,422.05
250	Playing Field	£16,886.00	£0.00	£362.84	£16,523.16
260	Grants	£10,000.00	£0.00	£2,000.00	£8,000.00
270	Neighbourhood Plan	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
280	Other Expenditure	£500.00	£0.00	£0.00	£500.00
290	VAT	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
300	Contingency	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
310	Parish Office	£5,720.00	£0.00	£880.00	£4,840.00
320	Pavilion Project	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Total Bishops Itchington Parish Council		£120,761.00	£0.00	£14,685.53	£106,075.47
Total Expenditure		£120,761.00	£0.00	£14,685.53	£106,075.47
Total Income		£126,800.00	£0.00	£67,202.59	-£59,597.41
Total Expenditure		£120,761.00	£0.00	£14,685.53	£106,075.47
Total Net Balance		£6,039.00		£52,517.06	

APPENDIX B:

Bishop's Itchington Parish Council					
Accounts Payable 1 July 2024					
To Whom Payable	Ref No	Ex Vat	Vat Payable	Totals	
<i>Urgent accounts paid since last meeting requiring the formal approval of the council</i>					
E Biddle (office rent 01/07/24)	s/order	£ 440.00	£ -	£	440.00
Three Business (mobile sim 24/06/24)	d/debit	£ 4.17	£ 0.83	£	5.00
E.ON Next (pavilion electricity 19/06/24)	d/debit	£ 45.35	£ 2.27	£	47.62
OneCom Ltd (Telephone/Broadband 28/06/24)	d/debit	£ 70.87	£ 14.17		85.04
	Sub-total	£ 560.39	£ 23.47	£	577.66
<i>Accounts for payment on 1 July 2024</i>					
Salaries	240701	£ 1,829.84	£ -	£	1,829.84
HMRC (PAYE)	240702	£ 460.32	£ -	£	460.32
WCC Pension Fund (May)	240703	£ 533.98	£ -	£	533.98
Claranet (Corporate Domain Registration (July))	240704	£ 5.05	£ 1.01	£	6.06
K Stevens (Expenses - sim, padlock, batteries & mouse)	240705	£ 36.28	£ 3.31	£	39.59
M Waterman (Expenses - plants & compost for village planters/hanging baskets)	240706	£ 94.88		£	94.88
P Reason (Expenses - cuprinol paint)	240707	£ 13.60		£	13.60
Fosse Contracts Ltd (additional line markings to hardcourts)	240708	£ 300.00	£ 60.00	£	360.00
Light Media (Web site hosting - June to September 2024)	240709	£ 90.00	18.00	£	108.00
Geosphere Ltd (Parish Online Mapping Software 11 June 24 to 11 June 25)	240710	£ 75.60		£	75.60
PWC (Bus Shelter Cleaning - Invoice 215)	240711	£ 165.37	£ 33.07	£	198.44
Thomas Fox Landscaping (Mowing/Strimming)	240712	£ 2,129.17	£ 425.83	£	2,555.00
	Sub-total	£ 5,734.09	£ 541.22	£	6,275.31
	TOTAL	£ 6,294.48	£ 564.69	£	6,852.97