

IWADE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Wednesday 13th February, 2013

Present: Cllr. S. Plumb - Chair
Cllr. J. Hunt
Cllr. M. Gale
Cllr. J. White
Cllr. R. Rook
Cllr. D. Wastall
Cllr. L. Mitchell
Cllr. P. Hyde

County Cllr. M. Whiting
Borough Cllr. B. Stokes
Nick Mayatt, Community Warden
18 Parishioners
Lynda Fisher, Clerk

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed Parishioners to the meeting. Apologies were received from County Cllr. Willicombe and the PCSO.

2. New Housing Proposals for the South East Sector of the Village

The Chairman stated that in March 2011 Swale Borough Council started a consultation process called 'Bearing Fruits' which was to help it form a Core Strategy for Development of housing, transportation and industry in Swale for next 20 years.

The consultation offered 4 options with regards to land development for housing, employment and industry. Three of these options contained varying degrees of future development in Iwade. The Parish Council preferred option 1 which had no development for Iwade, and this view was put forward to Swale Borough Council

As other parish councils had various concerns about the four options Iwade Parish Council hosted a meeting at which nine representatives from these other Councils attended, including Brian Lloyd of CPRE (Council for the Protection of Rural England), who informed the meeting of the proposals and possible consequences. Following that meeting a pressure group, RAHM (Residents against Housing Madness), was formed to bring these corporate concerns to the Borough Council.

In May 2012 the Parish Council received assurances from County and Borough Councillors that land to the south of Iwade (known as site SW/123) had been excluded from the Core Strategy and that no other development was proposed apart from that already granted planning permission.

In March 2012 Borough Councillor Gerry Lewin stated in the local press that no more homes were proposed for Iwade; this was followed by an article written by the Parish Council's Chairman which appeared in the May 2012 edition of the Iwade Observer entitled "No more houses in Iwade"

Deputy Leader of Swale Borough Council, Councillor Gerry Lewin has written to the Parish Council explaining that the National Policy Framework has been changed, that Central Government are asking local councils to look again at their initial figures, as building targets will not be reached. The Borough Council proposed to submit a figure of 13,000 new home builds across the borough dating back to 2006 (meaning a good proportion of these have already been built), but they now have to reassess this figure to accommodate more house building. Furthermore, the inspector will not sign off any plan that excludes some of those areas that have previously been discounted, and will simply send it back to be revised.

In December 2012 Iwade Parish Council was approached by a housing developer, Ward Homes, concerning their intentions to consult with the Borough Council regarding a proposal to build more houses in the village, on the parcel of land know as SW/123 which is to the south east of Iwade between Cormorant Road, the new Kings Ferry roads and the A249. The initial figure is in the region of 400 homes.

3. Visitors/Public Time

1. **Parishioners** – Parishioners expressed their anger that despite promises to the contrary further development is proposed in Iwade; the village has grown substantially over the past 15 years, from 350 to well over 1550 homes. They were concerned at the strain the proposed 400 additional homes would put on infrastructure, including the school and the medical centre. There are insufficient secondary school places in Sittingbourne and all this extra housing will only make the situation worse. Iwade is a village – it won't be if there is further housing; others were angry at the threatened erosion of the green buffer zone between Iwade and Sittingbourne. A Parish Councillor pointed out that if this goes ahead it will prevent the A249 from being extended in the future to open up employment and housing prospects on the Isle of Sheppey. One parishioner pointed out that 'Localism' is on tonight's Agenda; if people don't want the extra housing then where does Localism come into it?

County Cllr. Mike Whiting fully supports Iwade in its fight against this extra housing and will bring the matter up at this week's Council and Local Development Forum (LDF) meetings at Swale Borough Council; he has laid down a question to the Leader of the Council, Cllr. Andrew Bowles, urging the Borough Council to say enough is enough. Borough Councillor Ben Stokes commented that he was unable to put forward any views as it will jeopardise his vote on the Committee, but he stressed he will continue to work on behalf of Iwade.

The Chairman expressed his thanks to everyone, and in particular County Cllr. Mike Whiting. He asked residents to lobby individual Members of the LDF and to include our M.P. Gordon Henderson and Eric Pickles, M.P., the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. The Parish Council has placed a template letter on the Village Website which residents can use and add extra details to it if they so wish. The Clerk has already received numerous copies of letters/e-mails sent to Borough Councillors by residents.

2. **County Councillor and Borough Councillors** – County Cllr. Whiting mentioned School Lane Playing Field and is trying to get Persimmon to arrange a meeting to discuss this. He has got funds for a School Crossing Person but needs to get the Highways people to agree to this; KCC Engineers visited the School today.
3. **Community Warden (Nick Mayatt)/PCSO** – Nick's report has been circulated to Members and its contents were noted. He added that the Animal Welfare Officer is aware of the 'hot spots' in the village. He referred to tickets being given for parking on the pavement; this is where drivers are not leaving a metre gap for pedestrians with buggies or wheelchair users; he commented as yet no-one has been issued with actual tickets, only warnings.

4. Parish Councillor Vacancy

There were two candidates, one attended tonight's meeting and addressed the Members. A paper ballot was held, following which Andrew Jennings was co-opted onto the Council. He duly signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and was invited to join the meeting.

5. Appointment to Committees

Members volunteered to sit on the following Committees/act as representatives on the following bodies:

Finance Committee: Cllrs. White, Plumb, Gale, Mitchell, plus the Clerk.

Planning:	Cllrs. Rook, Mitchell, Hunt, Jennings, Wastall, Gale, Plumb and the Clerk
Park and Open Areas:	Cllrs. Hyde, Hunt, Wastall and Rook
Village Hall:	Cllrs. Rook and Jennings
KALC:	Cllrs. Plumb and Mitchell

The resignation of the previous Vice-Chair has left a vacancy. It was proposed by Cllr. White and seconded by Cllr. Gale that Cllr. James Hunt be appointed to this position; all agreed.

6. **Declarations of Interest** – Cllr. Hunt declared an interest in Item 9.2 and Item 15.2.

7. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The Minutes of the Monthly Parish Council meeting held on the 9th January, 2013, were proposed by Cllr. Rook and seconded by Cllr. Mitchell; agreed by all and signed as a true transcript.

The Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on the 16th January, 2013, were proposed by Cllr. Mitchell and seconded by Cllr. Plumb; agreed and signed as a true transcript.

8. **Matters Arising from the Minutes**

1. **Lorries in Iwade** – Cllr. Hunt has been asked to let the PCSO know each month what Lorries are coming into the village. Evans Jones has informed him that an additional sign will be placed on the Ridham Dock/Old Ferry Road; others have been declined and Cllr. Hunt asked County Cllr. Whiting to add some weight to the request and push for these signs.

2. **Village Centre** – Cllrs. expressed concern that the former Budgens unit is still closed with no mention of it being re-opened.

3. **School Lane Playing Field** – The School has not responded to the offer of play equipment. Cllr. Hunt and the Clerk have a meeting with Persimmon and the use of the field will be raised. At the present time the Village Handyman is still carrying out a weekly inspection of the items and the equipment is still covered by the Parish Council's insurance.

Having looked at all options which resulted in the Council having to pay out substantial sums of money, the Clerk was instructed to further explore the possibility of Swale Borough Council removing the equipment. It should be pointed out that all the items on the field have been purchased through grant funding, not from the Parish Precept.

9. **Finance**

1. **Broadband Cabinets** – Cllr. Wastall has spoken to BT Openreach and they have confirmed that all the new housing areas are having fibre to premises, so there will be no need to use some of the KCC grant money for installing a new cabinet. Clerk to now contact Lyndon Gurr at KCC regarding the remaining grant money. **Action: Clerk**

2. **Donation, Iwade Nature and Conservation Group** – A request has been received from the group for a donation of £60 to enable them to hire a venue for their Great Crested Newt training with K.R.A.G. It was proposed by Cllr. White and seconded by Cllr. Jennings; all agreed that the sum of £60 be donated to this group.

3. **New Accountants** – Proposed by Cllr. Gale and seconded by Cllr. Hunt; agreed to use Accountants McCabe Ford Williams to undertake the preparation of payroll at an annual fee of £130, which shows a saving on the current Accountants' fees.

4. **Cheque Signatories** – Agreed to include all Members as cheque signatories on the current account; Clerk to prepare the necessary forms and bring to the March meeting. **Action: Clerk**

5. **Financial Regulations** - Members approved the circulated Financial Regulations, which were adopted by the Council at this meeting.
6. **Half Yearly Internal Audit** – The Half yearly audit prepared by the Parish Council’s Internal Auditor, Davie Buckett, was circulated, noted and accepted by Members.
7. **Cheques signed at this meeting:**

Date	Chq.	Details		Amount
13.02.13	1592	L. Fisher – Expenses	Telephone/Broadband for Jan, Use of Home as office, Refreshments re Jubilee Trees Ceremony	£45.27p
13.02.13	1593	Swale B. Council	Printing Iwade Observer for Feb 2013	£269.27p
13.02.13	1594	Stiddard Kent Ltd.	Payroll Preparation January 2013	£15.00p
13.02.13	1595	David Buckett	Half Yearly Audit 2012/13	£189.90p
13.02.13	1596	Steve Wakeling	Handyman duties January 2013	£287.51p
13.02.13	1597	Stiddard Kent Ltd	Payroll Preparation January 2013	£15.00p
6 cheques in total				

Payments made by Direct Debit: Eon: Energy Supply, Street Lighting - £58.59p; L. Fisher: January Wages - £601.19p

It was proposed by Cllr. Mitchell and seconded by Cllr. Hunt, all agreed, that the above cheques be signed and the accounts presented accepted.

10. Correspondence

1. **Notes on Neighbourhood Planning** - noted.
2. **Sustainable Communities Act 2007 – Call for Evidence** – Members felt this was not working; the aim of the 2007 Act was to promote sustainability of local communities by recognizing that local people know best what needs to be done but this is not always supported at district Council level.
3. **Increase in Parish Councillors** – Clerk has approached Swale Borough Council with this request and has been advised that they are planning to carry out a community governance review. There will be a need to provide evidence regarding workload and they will also need to look at electorate size/number of Parish Councillors across other Parish/Town Councils in the Borough as a comparison. Swale Borough Council will contact the Parish Council in due course.

11. Iwade Localism Project (Swale Borough Council)

1. **10 Point Plan** – Members agreed to circulate a form to every household in Iwade asking residents for their needs and aspirations for Iwade; Clerk to draw up the necessary form and Councillors to deliver the document. Clerk to liaise with Cllr. Hunt regarding placing the document on ‘Iwade Does Facebook; to send a copy to the village website and to seek approval from village businesses for siting collection boxes on their premises. ***Action: All Councillors/Clerk***
2. **The Barn** – The Chairman advised that the Church is looking to have some building work done, but it would be cheaper to get the barn up to scratch, possibly with the assistance of the Parish Council, and then both bodies could utilise the building for meetings and it could be used by others in the community; Councillors agreed this was a good idea. The Clerk has already contacted Swale Borough Council and hopefully a meeting will be arranged to look at this matter further.

12. Secondary School Transport – Bullying Issues

About a month ago there was a serious bullying incident on a school bus; as a result of this other parents have come forward whose children have also been bullied on the school bus to and from Westlands and

other schools. These parents are concerned about the lack of 'policing' now buses are operated by a driver only; in the past there used to be a conductor who could monitor behaviour. It was suggested that the PCSO be approached to see if it is possible for the officer to travel on the buses on an ad hoc basis because the driver is unable to monitor behaviour. It was agreed that the Council approaches the bus company and PCSO to try and get something done to stop bullying, and it was suggested that any offending child's bus pass be taken away for two weeks as an additional deterrent. *Action: Clerk*

13. 20 m.p.h. Speed Limit in Iwade

Cllr. Hunt referred to the informal survey on 'Iwade Does Facebook' when 118 residents wanted a 20 m.p.h. speed limit in the village and 88 did not. County Cllr. Whiting, who has been supporting the initiative for reducing the existing speed limit, will bring further information to the next meeting of the Parish Council.

14. Social Media – Guidance for Councillors

The guidance has been issued to all Members so that when using the social media they are aware of implications and are careful to point out whether they are using their personal, Councillor, or other hat when commenting on issues.

15. Planning

1. **SW/11/503/R3:** – Request for prior approval of siting, design, specification and external appearance of additional portacabin buildings pursuant to the terms of condition (3) of planning permission SW/11/503 – Unit 15A Ridham Dock Industrial Estate, Ridham Dock, Iwade, ME9 8SR – Members raised no objection to this application.
2. **SW/12/1612:** Removal of conservatory and erection of single storey rear extension – 18 Monins Road, Iwade, ME9 8TY – Members raised no objection to this application.
3. **SW/13/0038:** Single storey side and rear extension and extension and conversion of garage to provide habitable room and store/shed – 2 Stangate Drive, Iwade, ME9 8UH – Members raised no objection to this application.

16. Other Matters Arising - none

17. Next Meeting

The next Monthly Meeting will be on Wednesday 13th March, 2013, commencing at 7.30 p.m. in the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 10.35 p.m.