

IWADE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Tuesday 8 December 2021

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|------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <u>Present:</u> | Cllr. A. Dollimore – Chair | Lynda Fisher, Clerk |
| | Cllr. S. Lancashire | Borough Cllr. C. Woodford |
| | Cllr. B. Whiting | Helen Binning, Community Warden |
| | Cllr. R. Langham | PCSO Lee Fennell |
| | Cllr. S. Waters | PCSO Kirsty Linge |
| | Cllr. S. Cheeseman | 1 Member of the Public |
| | Cllr. R. Langham | |

1. **Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair formally welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies received and accepted from Parish Cllr. Hyde and County Cllr. Baldock.

2. **Declarations of Interest and Dispensations** – None.

3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Proposed by Cllr. Lancashire and seconded by Cllr. Whiting, the Minutes of the Parish meeting held on the 10 November 2021 were agreed and signed by the Chair as a true transcript.

4. **Visitors/Public Time**

1. **Visitors** – No comments.

2. **County and Borough Councillors** – Cllr. Woodford advised that Swale Borough Council are installing cameras to deal with fly tipping; she is putting forward Raspberry Hill, School Lane and Ferry Road. Persimmon Homes have now started to carry out some of their outstanding work.

3. **Community Warden/PCSO** – Community Warden – The previous Community Warden has put in for a grant for a Games bus for the village for next year. This will operate during the school half-term.

PCSO – Crimes of note: A stolen moped was found in a ditch near the Sheppey crossing, owner traced, he recovered it himself. Two youths were reported to have shoplifted from the Nisa store; is currently being investigated. Reports of youths smoking cannabis in the 'bird' estate. Some outdoor Christmas decorations were also damaged. Anti-social behaviour and other incidents of note: There was a spate of 'knock and run' incidents, which culminated in an altercation between residents and some parents of suspected children. Everyone concerned was spoken to by police, no reported incidents since. Reports of nuisance vehicles along the private road at Ridham Dock. Patrols attend and warnings are given. Various reports of a moped being driven recklessly through the village. After some investigation, the vehicle has recently been seized by police. Police attended a report of a suspicious male possibly looking into vehicles along School Lane; no-one was found.

Lee Fennell advised that as from 1 January he will be moving to the Queenborough area; PCSO Kirsty Linge will be assigned to Iwade and Lower Halstow.

5. **Matters Arising from the Minutes**

1. **20 MPH Zones** – This is a work in progress, keep on the agenda.

Action: Cllr. Dollimore

2. **Planters, The Street/Mansfield Drive** – Still awaiting information from Assessor and further input from Kent County Council despite chasing. Keep on the agenda.

Action: Clerk

3. **Local Plan Consultation Response** – The following response was submitted to Swale Borough Council:

According to Swale’s figures 65% of commuters use cars or vans to travel to work, Iwade probably has a higher percentage. Swale Borough Council’s document praises existing links, but residents in this area are all aware how congested the A249, the A2 and Sittingbourne itself are at busy times. Hopefully the improvement to junction 5 will ease some of the congestion on the A249 but the other problem areas will remain.

The Parish Council has concerns that with developments in Bobbing and in Iwade (Pond Farm and Featherbed Fruit Stall) the important Countryside Gap is getting narrower and narrower.

The village flood risk is increasing every time a new development is approved. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment doesn't appear to be working, people living near to the stream and those at the lower end of the village are always at risk during heavy rain.

We disagree with the comments contained in the document, our local landscapes are not being protected, our orchards and most of our farmland have already been built upon and more of our green areas are soon to be used for housing. Future generations will lay the blame on decision makers when there is no arable land left to grow food.

The adjacent parishes of Bobbing, Newington and Borden have also seen significant residential developments. The combined developments in these four parishes and other developments close to the A249 and the Isle of Sheppey has placed considerable pressure on the quality of life for the residents, who complain about:

- Lack of school places for Sittingbourne and Sheppey.
- Lack of medical and doctor facilities; we have one of the highest doctor/patient ratios in England. Iwade Medical Centre is a prime example, there have been major difficulties in recruiting Doctors.
- Pollution from volumes of traffic and the impact this has on health. Daily queues impact on businesses.
- The loss of good quality farmland which should be used for food production and not bricks and mortar; Kent is fast becoming the ‘Garden of Concrete’.
- The loss of countryside for recreational walks, something that has been found to be important during the pandemic.
- There needs to be a countryside gap between villages and the Medway Towns. Communities are fast merging, becoming an urban sprawl rather than rural communities.

It appears the current proposal indicates that any small pieces of land that become available can be used as windfall sites to add to the already high numbers of proposed new homes. Given the amount of development in recent years and the lack of a “grand plan” for the whole of Sittingbourne which has resulted in the area being subjected to piecemeal ad hoc planning producing, resulted in the poor infrastructure the town has today. The whole western area of Sittingbourne needs a sustainability appraisal with no more ad hoc development based on an outdated road network which is not fit for purpose now or future years.

Iwade has now suffered constant development for the past 26 years, it is time for other parts of the Borough to share this burden; that is the main urban areas and the eastern end of the Borough.

6. **Planning** None

7. **Correspondence**

1. **Lighting Grant Withdrawal by Swale Borough Council** – Letter sent to Swale Borough Council’s Leader outlining the strain the removal of this grant will place on the Parish Council’s budget, stressing that Iwade Councillors do not want to raise the Precept due to the current financial climate. Will await the outcome of Swale Borough Council’s Cabinet meeting tonight. **Action: Clerk**

2. **KALC Community Awards** place on January Agenda. *Action: Clerk*
3. **Clerk's Resignation/Responsible Financial Officer** – Noted the Clerk has tendered her resignation with effect from the 1 December, her last working day being 28 February 2022. She will, however, carry on as the Responsible Financial Officer. Agreed to jointly advertise the Post with Bobbing Parish Council, whose Clerk has also resigned, with the desire to appoint one person to cover both vacancies. *Action: Clerk*
4. **Grovehurst Road Gateway Entrance** – Cllr. Whiting has been approached by a resident regarding near misses (car accidents) at this entrance, where there is no give way either side of the entrance. Clerk to check with Kent County Council to see if something can be done. *Action: Clerk*

8. Finance

1. **Trees and Plaque costs** – No response from Swale regarding suitable plaques. The Nursery has advised as to the 2021 costs. Agreed to look at planting 8 Hornbeam trees and to include sufficient funds in the 2022/23 budget. *Action: Clerk*
2. **Highway Improvement Plans/Yellow Lines** – keep on Agenda. *Action: Cllr. Dollimore*
3. **Budget/Precept 2022/23 – suggestions for Projects for the year ahead** – Agreed to plant a further 8 Hornbeam Trees in the Meadow side of Woodpecker Park. Also, to look at something to commemorate The Henge found on the park area adjacent to the Medical Centre, perhaps seating, a history board. Considering the current financial climate, with Swale Borough Council and KCC intimating that they will be raising Council Tax, Members agreed that the Precept should not be raised for 2022/23. The Budget will be discussed at the Finance Committee Meeting, which follows at the end of this meeting. Cllr. Lancashire was appointed a Member of the Finance Committee.
4. **Queen's Platinum Jubilee Beacon** – 5 quotes received, a local company has submitted the lowest quote, but as with most it is for the Brazier only and will need a post. Agreed Cllr. Lancashire to contact the firm to see what is possible as regards the post. Clerk to contact KCC querying whether 'Telly Tubby Hill' or the green adjacent to the Woodpecker Park bus shelter can be used as a possible site for the Beacon. Clerk also to post on the Village Facebook, seeking a Piper to play the bagpipes at the event. *Action: Cllr. Lancashire/Clerk*
5. **Unmetered Supply of Electricity** – Advised by Eon (current supplier), the unmetered supply accounts have been moved from this company to Npower Business Solutions - noted.
6. **Accounts and Cheques raised at this meeting** – Proposed by Cllr. Lancashire and seconded by Cllr. Whiting, Members noted the budget figures, agreed the accounts to the 30 November 2021 and the following payments were agreed. Cllrs Whiting and Lancashire to log in and authorize payments. *Action: Cllrs. Whiting/Lancashire*

| EXPENDITURE | | | | |
|--------------------|------------|--------------------------|--|-----------|
| Pay Date | Pay Method | Payable to | Reason | Amount |
| 08.12.21 | BACs | L. Fisher | Expenses – Telephone, use of home as Office – November | £23.00p |
| 08.12.21 | BACs | H.M. Revenue and Customs | Tax October | £353.45p |
| 08.12.21 | BACs | Steve Wakeling | Handyman Fee and Materials November | £476.00p |
| 08.12.21 | BACs | South-East 4X4 Response | S.137 Donation – assisting with Xmas Lights Event | £150.00p |
| 01.12.21 | SO | Staff Salary | November | £1322.52p |
| 01.12.21 | SO | Invicta IT Solutions | 12 Microsoft 365 Mailboxes | £54.72p |
| 01.12.21 | DD | HugoFox | Website monthly fee | £29.99p |

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| 22.11.21 | DD | Eon | Electricity Supply, monthly | £85.94p |
| 30.11.21 | DD | Countrystyle | Supply of Waste Wheelie Bin, monthly | £51.41p |
| INCOME | | | | |
| Pay Date | Pay Method | Received from | Reason | Amount |
| | | | | |

9. Projects – Updates on Current and New

1. **Xmas Lights Event 2021** – Really successful event. Heightened Christmas tree looked good. The dance group were wonderful, as was the Lantern Parade and the visit by Father Christmas and Mrs. Christmas.

10. Village Hall – No updates.

11. Reports from Representatives

1. **Hall** – Village Hall - the Christmas Grotto will take place on 23rd December with a ballot for entry tickets. The Christmas Fayre will take place this Sunday. Still short of trustees so no weekend hirers for the time being. Receiving a grant from KCC for wipeable chairs to replace the fabric covered ones. Currently looking for a company to take over the cleaning. There will be a small rise in hire fees from the end of March next year. Also planning some redecorating next year.

2. **KALC** – Attended the General Purposes Committee meeting via Zoom on Tuesday; discussed suggestions for speakers at forthcoming General meetings the first of which is on 11th January 2022. Various suggestions included loneliness and 20 mph limits.

3. **Swale Western Area Committee** - Next meeting 14 December. *Action: Cllr. Cheeseman*

12. Any Other Matters Arising

Cllr. Langham advised that Persimmon are replacing the dead trees and bulbs are being planted on the green area adjacent to the Medical Centre, which is good to see.

13. Next Meeting(s)

Next meeting Wednesday 12 January 2022, 7.30 p.m., Iwade Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 08.33 p.m.