

INKPEN PARISH COUNCIL

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 25th May 2016 at 7 .30 pm at Inkpen Sports Club.

Those present were: Dr D Thomas, Mrs C Jones, Mr R May, Mrs V Tomlinson, Mrs L Wild, Mr D Wilson and Mrs. G Keene (Clerk). Also attending the meeting were: Mr J Bryant, Mr R Weeks and Mrs J Wilson.

1. Apologies were received from: Mr K Evans who was unable to attend the meeting.

2. Hungerford Neighbourhood Police Report: None available.

3. Election of Officers:

The Clerk to the Council reported that the following names had been nominated and seconded for the following posts and were unopposed:

Parish Council Chairman:	Mrs Vanessa Tomlinson
Parish Council Vice Chairman:	Mrs Claire Jones
Planning Chairman:	Mr Keith Evans
Planning Vice Chairman:	Mrs Lin Wild

Appointed by acclamation. All elected nem con.

It was noted that Mr Robert May had volunteered to take on the post of Parish Chairman but had failed to secure the required nomination and seconded. He was thanked for his assistance and interest. It was explained to Mr May that the annual election of Parish Council posts was internal election and there was no need to seek an external nomination.

3.1 Thanks were expressed and recorded to Dr David Thomas, who stood down at the election, for his help and support over many years. Dr Thomas will continue to update Parish Council business and documents on the Inkpen website and continue to act as the representative with Gigaclear during the phase 2 roll out of *Superfast Broadband* for Inkpen.

Action: Clerk to contact WBC.

4. Planning – see separate draft minutes.

5. Minutes of the Parish Council meeting:

The minutes of the previous meeting held on Monday 21st March 2016 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record. The Draft minutes had been displayed on the Inkpen website.

6. Matters Arising:

6.1 *Review of the AGM* held on Friday 22nd April at the Inkpen Sports Pavilion: A change of venue had resulted in the meeting being held at the Inkpen Sports Pavilion, which was well attended by residents from the village and attended by both of the Ward Members. It was noted that in future a Friday meeting should be avoided as many of the village representatives had not been available to speak but had however sent in a report, which was read out by the chairman.

6.2 As requested, the Parish Council filing cabinet has now been removed from the village hall following the APM.

6.3 The Clerk updated the meeting on the Inkpen Bus Service, which will continue as a two hourly service; and the Library Service has been given a six month extended period by WBC to see if the current level of service can be retained. This news follows the direct submission by the Clerk to WBC objecting to the proposed budget cuts.

7. Declarations of Interest:

7.1 Councillors are the sole Trustees of the Memorial Playing Field Trust and registered with the Charity Commission as the Corporate and Custodian Trustees. Trust meetings and funds are held separately as required by the Charity Commission and as confirmed annually to the External Auditors.

7.2 *As confirmed by the Charity Commission:* “The Charity is simply managed and administered by the Council and is not a public sector organisation and not subject to the Freedom of Information Act.” All information about the Charity can be viewed on the Charity Commission website.

8. Devolution

8.1 The Chief Executive of WBC had written to all Parish Council Chairmen to offer the opportunity to take on and operate some of the Public Services, which are or may be affected by funding cuts e.g libraries and bus subsidies. The Ward Member had confirmed that no funding would be allocated to run these services and if Parish Councils wished to operate a ‘public service’ they would need to raise the funding via the Precept i.e from the village residents. Following a brief discussion no action was recorded – at this stage, no Parish will be forced to run services.

9. Financial Update 2016/2017

9.1 *In Month Expenditure and Financial Statement 2016/2017*

The Clerk reported on the In-Month Expenditure and outstanding invoices for payment. Expenditure was agreed.

9.2 *The clerk gave a financial report* to the 12th May 2016 and tabled a financial statement showing receipts, payments and reconciliation with the bank statements; the committed ring fenced funding which includes the unspent grant funding.

9.3 *Cost of the May Elections 2015* had still not been invoiced by WBC – £1,500 will be ringfenced for the payment.

9.4 *A copy of the Annual Accounts 2015/2016* was distributed to Councillors at the meeting and a copy of the Annual Return 2015/2016. A copy of the Return will be on the website at the end of June.

The Independent (independent of the Parish Council) Examiner had examined the Annual Return and made no observations.

9.5 *A copy of the Asset Register* will be displayed on the website and include two new items as requested: the Red Telephone Box at Lower Green purchased from BT, and the Projector, Screen and Sound system, purchased from a community grant to the Parish Council "to enhance the leisure and social activities in the village especially for the mature residents, the elderly and those with disabilities".

Noted: The book value of fixed assets stays constant – commercial concepts of depreciation are not appropriate for local councils.

9.6 *The Annual Return*, governance statement and accounting statement for the year ended 31st March 2016 was signed by the Chairman.

Action: Clerk

10. Other issues:

10.1 Councillor May raised a query re the grass cutting at Lower Green: Mr May was informed the Parish Council position is unchanged “as an amenity area Parish Councils have a ‘duty of care’ and it is normal practice for the height of the grass to be cut to 25mm throughout the year. This enables them to comply with the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and to remain within the law. The amenity area is accessible to children and there is a duty to provide them with safe access. Long grass and planting obscures litter, including broken glass and other sharp objects, and obscures animal feces. These are potentially hazardous for children. Short grass helps make such hazards visible and avoidable. The area has been mowed for the last 20 years at least, at first by volunteers and then by paid contractors carrying a public liability insurance against accidents”. To some villagers long grass is an eyesore. Safety is required for the Queen’s Birthday celebration held at the Lower Green Triangle on 12th June.

10.2 The Chairman and Vice Chairman agreed they would meet with the Village Hall committee and report back to the meeting.

11. Next Parish Council Meeting is arranged for: 27th June 2016 at Inkpen Sports Pavilion – date to be confirmed by councillors.

Meeting closed 21hrs

Councillors are asked to note that all items for discussion and decision should be recorded on the Agenda to allow due consideration to be given prior to the meeting and to inform residents.

Meeting closed at 21.10 hrs.

Residents attending the Council meeting are requested to limit comments or questions to the public question time interval when Standing Orders are suspended.

Signed:.....Date:

DRAFT