

PITSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Pitstone Parish Council held on 25 January 2024
at Pitstone Pavilion commencing at 7.30pm

General Matters:

258/23 ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

1. Council present

Cllr Nicholls (Chairman), Cllr Mrs Crutchfield, Cllr Hawkins, Cllr Mitra, Cllr Weber and Cllr Saintey (Vice Chair) plus the Parish Clerk, Mrs Eagling.

2. Apologies & Absence

It was **RESOLVED** to accept apologies for absence from Cllr Blunt (annual leave), Cllr Mrs Nash (annual leave) & Cllr McCarthy (unwell). Cllr Dr Frearson was absent.

3. Others present

Buckinghamshire Councillor Derek Town, Mr G Sandman the Chair of Governors for Brookmead School plus one member of the public re the planning application for Windsor Road.

259/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATION REQUESTS FOR MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE MEETING

- It was noted that all councillors have standing declarations of interest as the council, as a corporate body, is trustee of the Recreation Ground Charity and Pitstone Parish Charity.
- The Clerk expressed the usual pecuniary interest in the overtime, which is approved by the staffing committee, and the clerk never has a vote.
- No other declarations nor dispensations were received.

260/23 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC/PRESS

It was **RESOLVED** to take comments from the member of the public when considering the planning application for 1 Windsor Road. No other questions were tabled from the public gallery.

261/23 PRESENTATION FROM BROOKMEAD CHAIR OF GOVERNORS, GAVIN SANDMAN

- Mr Sandman explained about the seven strategic priorities for the school and the OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning) initiative.
- He provided an update on the fundraising position towards the outdoor sandpit play area and answered questions from the councillors.
- It was **RESOLVED** to increase the previously agreed grant of £1,870 to £2,000 to enable the school to reach their target and progress with the project.
- Mr Sandman thanked the council and departed the meeting.

262/23 QUESTIONS FOR, AND UPDATES FROM, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNCILLORS

Buckinghamshire Councillor Town had circulated his report electronically and it will be reproduced on the website for the benefit of residents.

263/23 MINUTES OF THE MEETING held on 4/1/24

It was **RESOLVED** that the draft minutes of the Pitstone Parish Council Meeting held on 4 January 2024 were a true and accurate record. The Chairman was duly authorised to sign them on behalf of the council.

264/23 CLERK'S REPORT ON MATTERS ARISING

This section provides updates on issues that are ongoing. Resolutions cannot be passed on items in this section of the agenda as insufficient detail will have been provided to councillors to satisfy the legal requirements, therefore minor updates will only be noted. This information is provided to keep members of the public up to date on the various ongoing matters.

1. Where third parties are responsible

- Castlemead Highways Issues:

- BC and TW liaising. Phase V of Castlemead & business park to follow – dates tbc, business park being scoped by TW/BC. Legal issue re parcel of land ownership to be resolved before can progress.
 - Castlemead Lighting: BC Development Management advise that the new member of staff has visited site & surveyed the area. They are now preparing a re-quote of the conversion of all the adopted lanterns to LED, installing the columns that are missing and relocating the columns incorrectly installed on private land instead of public land. Eta for quote and update on approval now early Jan.
 - As of 21/12/23 all streetlights along Westfield Road operational again with the exception of the one on the corner of Warwick Road (this has a cable fault that they are trying to resolve). As of 31/12/23 3 further lights out, all reported to BC. As of 4/1/24 those 3 now operational again but a different 3 out (1 has a further UKPN fault, 1 has now been converted to LED).
- Castlemead Public Open Space Phase III: TW to transfer to BC. Complications arising from legal charge in favour of Sancem Group which have yet to be resolved and classified as exempt disposals by TW/Sancem.
 - Croudace Street Lighting: the parish council has agreed with Croudace to adopt the street lighting and illuminated bollards on provision that the stipulated conditions and contributions are met. BC to adopt highways prior to PPC adopting. BC and Croudace still liaising. Currently with BC legals and they will advise when they are in a position to erect a Section 228 notice that will enable adoption of the highway after a period of 3 weeks.
 - Croudace 'un-specified' S106 – BC advised the process would be reviewed but currently no changes.
 - Croudace/Buckinghamshire Council holding £10k of funds for “Sustainable Community Transport and Dial-a-Ride” arising from Rushendon Furlong development (to be spent by 2027)
 - Bellway Street Lighting: the parish council has resolved that it would be willing to adopt the street lighting within the development. BC to adopt internal highways prior to PPC adopting lighting. Section 38 agreement not currently adopted to enable transfer – BC estimate Jan/Feb.
 - NKH/Buckinghamshire Council highways: £37k contribution to Pitstone Safety Scheme to be defined by BC. Deadline date 30/11/2030.
 - NKH/Buckinghamshire Council holding £74,000 “towards the enhancement of the existing local 61 and 164 bus services” arising from NKH – BC advised “This still remains planned, but at the moment costs as exceptionally high, this being up to 40% higher than previously, and therefore we have not progressed this any further until such time as we can be sure we’ll get the best value for money.” Is due to include review of options to deliver bus to Tring station.
 - NKH replacement car park: Illuminated car park will pass to the parish council along with the MUGA in due course.
 - NKH MUGA: BC liaising with NKH.
 - NKH provided £216,584 of sports and leisure funding to Buckinghamshire Council. Review once information available from Town Lands Charity and Pitstone Memorial Hall Charity etc.
 - NKH community areas / conversion to residential: NKH escalated first planning application to Planning Inspectorate on grounds of non-determination, who subsequently allowed the appeal and granted approval. Now subject of Judicial Review challenge. NKH’s second set of planning applications remain outstanding with BC.
 - NKH open space: Transferring to “Ravensmoor (Pitstone) Management Co Ltd” and not Pitstone Parish Council.
 - NKH to (a) repair the hole in their hedge to the toddler play equipment & arrange for this hedge to be cut (NB: NKH have not yet confirmed they will carry out this work) (b) advise about replanting the hedgerow to the open space (if replanted, the parish council has agreed to protect with a section of green plastic mesh fencing) (c) arrange for Marsworth Road hedge to be cut & vision splays restored by end November (d) to clear and tidy the remaining sites.

- Network Rail now advise that they do not own the land by the balancing pond nor their access track/fence. Taylor Wimpey confirmed that the land did not eventually transfer. TW investigating fence and scrub clearance issues. TW investigating balancing pond transfer issues. TW considering re-opening discussions with Network Rail.
- Land off Westfield Road/'The Mounds': with Taylor Wimpey.
- Buckinghamshire Highways Issues:
 - Reconstruction of Vicarage Road footpath from Tun Furlong towards Church Road added to capital footway program (eta 2024)
 - Collapsed footpath in Queen Street & failed footpath at far end of Glebe Close – on work list but outstanding with no eta.
 - Marsworth Road speed humps – BC hoping to add to capital maintenance program.
 - Cheddington Road repeater signs – awaiting TRO then can install signage, plus installed interim signage from road safety team.
 - Pedestrian safety under Cheddington Road railway bridge – BC arranging to side out under the bridge, repaint the markings down one side (in spring) and install an extra warning sign.
 - Vicarage Road – LAT to confirm result of street light investigation near Church Road & ownership of trees blocking light by Meadow Lane. Terminus signs cleaned. It's 30 for a Reason sign mounted to post. Review mVAS data Oct 23-June 24 with LAT at end of period.
 - Church Road – LAT to confirm if the two turning/parking areas fall within highways land.
 - Signage: replacement sign (excluding canal cruises) for Cooks Wharf turning to be supplied, replacement cul-de-sac sign for Chequers Lane to be supplied; additional cycle path signs for Westfield Road to be supplied; replacement lighting & signage on Westfield Road roundabout following collision to be supplied; repaint 30 roundel in Vicarage Road (in spring).
 - Marsworth Road roundabout planters – continue to seek to find permanent solution with BC. Commercial sponsorship available via MarketingForce should any commercial companies wish to pursue.
 - Replacement of broken fencing along Brook Lane BOAT – on list but no eta.
- Ivinghoe Freight Strategy – trial underway.
- Safety Scheme works by Westfield Road junction: Meeting with Buckinghamshire Highways being arranged for March.
- Safety Scheme works along Marsworth Road: BC advised unable to progress until Ivinghoe Freight Strategy implemented.
- B489 derestriction of B-road and 7.5 tonne limit: BC advised that this could not be considered until the proposed Ivinghoe freight strategy has been implemented.
- Cycle improvements to Tring station (HCC/CRT/BC): HCC advised "we are still working on progressing this with input from the Canal & River Trust and senior colleagues around the developer issues involved. I am sorry that this process seems very slow – it is quite time consuming and complex for what would appear to be a simple matter but we are pursuing it."
- Mapping Rights of Way: Pitstone aspect of project being undertaken by local resident volunteer.
- BC Local Heritage List: BC advised that this project is being concluded at the end of January as there is no further funding available.
- Pitstone Memorial Hall Charity: PMH investigating car park issues with NKH; permission granted to PMH to relay the grass in the enclosed area; PMH submitted to Land Registry re transfer of the strip of land, response awaited.
- Pitstone Hill Agreement – National Trust may review in 2024.
- PAA investigating potential provision of water tap at site & will provide further details in due course so that PPC can apply for approval by National Trust

- Fibre Broadband – in progress by both Trooli and Openreach but neither can provide a date.
 - Luton Airport Expansion proposals – in progress by Planning Inspectorate.
 - Traffic speeds: SID manufacturer will revert to the parish council once resolved technical issues to make the units more mobile.
 - Pitstone Town Lands Charity – working with their charity advisors and will respond to the parish council in due course
 - Business Park –Thames Valley Police has been liaising with some business units who advise that they aren't being adversely impacted by the ASB and are unwilling to contribute to any measures to deter unauthorised access, especially since there have been no subsequent unauthorised large meets. TVP will co-ordinate a police response to deter any issues if Torqen arrange another organised car meet in 2024. TVP are also coordinating with the Anti Social Behaviour Team at Buckinghamshire Council and the BC legal team to determine land ownerships/responsibilities to help both parties know how to properly respond to any issues in the future.
2. Within the scope of the parish council:
- Additional trees on Recreation Ground – long term aspiration.
 - PAA – long term aspiration for additional allotment land within the parish.
 - Hedgehog Highway Surrounds – still plenty of units for sale.
 - Parish council representation on Pitstone Memorial Hall Charity – outstanding.
 - Side out footpath at end Glebe Close – commissioned.
 - Local Wildlife Site – gate signage & advisory note in progress.
 - Please refer to Sport & Leisure Committee minutes for full list of S&L related matters.

265/23 CORRESPONDENCE

- The list of correspondence received was noted.

Committee Matters:

266/23 PLANNING COMMITTEE AND RELATED MATTERS

This agenda item was Chaired by Cllr Weber, Chair of the Planning Committee.

1. Minutes

It was noted that there had been no committee meeting during the month and therefore no draft minutes had been due.

2. Application Consultations

- 1 Windsor Road, 23/04005/APP, householder application for first floor side extension with render finish and roof lights (amendment to approval 23/01572/APP). It was **RESOLVED** to permit the applicant to speak in support of the amended application. It was noted that no objections had been received. It was **RESOLVED** to advise Buckinghamshire Council that the Parish Council wished to tender no objections to the application. The member of the public thanked the parish council and departed the meeting.
- 6 Hever Close, 24/00070/APP, householder application for single storey side extension. It was noted that no objections had been received. It was **RESOLVED** to advise Buckinghamshire Council that the Parish Council wished to tender no objections to the application.
- It was noted that Buckinghamshire Council are consulting on a revised submission for 23/00757/APP, Land to the Rear of 87 Marsworth Road, and this will be considered at a specially convened meeting of the Planning Committee on 8/2/24. Buckinghamshire Council has granted the Parish Council the required extended period to submit comments. Buckinghamshire Council has also reinstated the previous public comments, removed from the portal following an IT error and now visible again.

3. Decisions notified by Buckinghamshire Council

- Little Barley End Stocks Road; 23/03267/APP; Householder application for erection of replacement outbuilding for use as games room and gym with mezzanine floor: Approved by Buckinghamshire Council.

- 34 Tun Furlong; 23/03715/APP; Householder application for single storey rear extension with skylight: Approved by Buckinghamshire Council.
4. Applications outstanding with Buckinghamshire Council
Land to The South of Marsworth Road and The West of Vicarage Way (restaurant/pub site only), Land Adjacent to Allotment Gardens (nursery site only), land to the rear of 12 Marsworth Road (1 dwelling), Land to the rear of 87 Marsworth Road (5 dwellings), Land to the rear of 12 Queen Street (4 dwellings), 89 Crispin Field and 1 Teachers Close.
 5. Appeals outstanding with the Planning Inspectorate
Land To the South of Marsworth Road and The West of Vicarage Way (the first application to turn the 2 x PDA commercial areas into residential). Planning Inspectorate Ref: APP/J0405/W/22/3292202; Appeal Ref: 22/00058/NONDET; original planning application ref: 21/02999/APP; Construction 21 no. dwellings (8 flats and 13 houses), including associated works, car parking and landscaping, Appeal grounds - non determination. Planning Inspectorate Decision: appeal allowed, and planning granted. Subsequently subject to Judicial Review CO/1805/2023 - Buckinghamshire Council -v- (1) SSLUHC & Ors: quashed and referred back to the Planning Inspectorate.

Cllr Nicholls resumed the Chair.

267/23 SPORTS AND LEISURE COMMITTEE AND RELATED MATTERS

This agenda item was Chaired by Cllr Saintey, Chair of the Sports & Leisure Committee.

1. Minutes
It was **RESOLVED** to note receipt of the draft minutes arising from the committee meeting held on 11 January 2024. No matters were referred to full council.
2. Bellway LEAP
It was noted that Bellway had provided the draft TP1 re transfer of the LEAP. The documents have been passed to Horwood & James for legal comment before responding to Bellway.

Bellway advise that they are in the process of arranging an up-to-date playground inspection.
3. Allotment Tap
Cllr Dr Frearson to provide feedback at the next meeting as not present. Should any remedials be required, liaise with PAA and then write to the National Trust.

Cllr Nicholls resumed the Chair.

268/23 STAFFING COMMITTEE AND RELATED MATTERS

1. Minutes
It was noted that no committee meeting had taken place during the month, so no draft minutes were due. Next meeting scheduled for 5/2/2024.
2. Volunteer Thank You Event (18/1/24)
Feedback from those that attended had been positive. Staffing committee to discuss how to proceed in the future.
3. Councillor Vacancy
Buckinghamshire Council to advise if a by-election has been called after 1/2/24 or whether the council can co-opt a new member to serve out the remaining term of office. It was **RESOLVED** not to replace any of the posts previously held by Cllr Heyman at present.
4. Recruitment of Litter Picking Staff
In progress. Liaised with remaining staff and formulating the job description and duties for the new position.

Charity Matters:

269/23 PITSTONE PARISH CHARITY

It was noted that no charity meeting had taken place during the month, so no draft minutes were due.

270/23 PITSTONE RECREATION GROUND CHARITY

It was noted that no charity meeting had taken place during the month, so no draft minutes were due.

Working Group Matters:

271/23 PITSTONE DEVELOPMENT AREA

It was noted that there were no new matters for consideration this month.

The Nicholas King Homes retrospective planning permission for the MUGA as built, remains with Buckinghamshire Council and the Judicial Review proceedings in respect of the Planning Inspectorate decision re residential housing on the remaining two NKH plots in relation to the impact on the SAC Chiltern Beechwoods remains in progress. (Reference: CO/1805/2023 - Buckinghamshire Council -v- (1) SSLUHC & Ors - Land to the south of Marsworth Road and the west of Vicarage Way, Pitstone, Bucks).

Further damage to the MUGA reported to NKH, who carried out remedial works to the one panel that was causing immediate danger, but did not carry out the other general remedials required to other panels to replace missing bolts etc. All details also provided to Buckinghamshire Council.

272/23 YOUTH CAFÉ

Cllr Nicholls provided an update on training, emergency contact details and behaviour policy/contract following a discussion with the Café Manager.

Final feedback regarding the young people involved in the boot scraper incident was noted. It was **RESOLVED** not to request payment from the Café Manager.

Other Matters:

273/23 DEVOLVED SERVICES

- It was noted that Buckinghamshire Council had advised that they would not be providing visibility of any potential budget to support devolved services, nor the draft contract (so we don't know the term), until the end of February (too late for budgeting or tendering purposes).
- It was **RESOLVED** to accept the quotation (£950) from Ross Lawry Agricultural Services re Queen Street BOAT scrub clearance. The overspend against this cost centre, especially vs the level of funding received from Buckinghamshire Council, was noted.
- It was **RESOLVED** to approve the quotations re fulfilment of Devolved Service grass and hedge cutting plus rights of way clearance, council grass cutting and hedge cutting for 2024 (PPC grass cutting £640 per cut; Devolved Service grass cutting £1,195 per cut; Right of Way £685 per cut; hedge cutting £755).
- It was **RESOLVED** not to participate in No Mow May as most of the areas cut under our control are key village centre areas and there are other designated no mow areas within the parish.

274/23 HIGHWAYS AND RIGHTS OF WAY

1. Possible Footpath from Westfield Road to College Lake

Out of scope for community board funding. BC advised that it may fall within the remit of the Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) which will be going out for public consultation in 2024. PPC survey live from end Jan to end Feb. Marsworth PC also got in touch to say that they would be very supportive of a footpath along this section to complete a circular walk from Marsworth so they are also publicising the survey.

2. Pitstone and Ivinghoe Safety Scheme

Feedback regarding the complications in Ivinghoe was noted. Meeting being arranged in March with John Pateman of Bucks Highways Commissioning. Transport Strategy Planning Officers at BC are holding £37k provided by Nicholas King Homes for works in Pitstone defined within the Safety Scheme.

3. Possible Pedestrian Crossings on Westfield Road

Out of scope for community board funding. PPC survey live from end Jan to end Feb.

4. Westfield Road Bus Shelters

Out of scope for community board funding and no funding available from Buckinghamshire Council public transport department. Working with the Public Transport

department to develop plans that they are willing to approve. Contact to be made with Safran in February.

275/23 MK PLAY ASSOCIATION 2024 SCHOOL HOLIDAY EVENTS

It was **RESOLVED** not to book any sessions due to the exceedingly high cost (over £1k per event).

276/23 EVENTS

1. HouseMouse Proposal 18/5/24

It was **RESOLVED** to grant permission for the HouseMouse event on 18/5/24, with a number of specific conditions.

It was **RESOLVED** to charge the standard publicised fees.

2. Party in the Park 13/7/24 Proposal

It was **RESOLVED** to grant permission for the Party in the Park event on 13/7/24, with a number of specific conditions.

It was **RESOLVED** to charge the standard publicised fees.

It was **RESOLVED** to reallocate £2,110.00 from the grant cost centre to enable the council to procure one day's stage hire for this event, on the condition that the Party in the Park committee implement a financial model that ensures that this year's event generates sufficient reserves to make any subsequent events self-funding and therefore they should not require further financial assistance from the parish council.

277/23 POLICIES

- Members to provide feedback on the draft combined Environmental and Biodiversity Policy ahead of the February council meeting.
- It was **RESOLVED** to approve the annual review of the Community Engagement Strategy and the Chair was duly authorised to sign on behalf of the council.

278/23 OTHER MATTERS

- It was **RESOLVED** to approve the quotation from Patrick Stileman to carry out the cyclical tree risk assessment (every 3 years plus 1 season) for the Recreation Ground, Open Space by The Crescent and the Allotment Site (£880).
- It was **RESOLVED** to approve the quotation from Lamps & Tubes to carry out the cyclical (every 6 years) Electrical Safety Inspection reports for all streetlighting columns (£3,474.90). The position vs the budgeted accrual was noted.
- It was **RESOLVED** to schedule the Annual Parish Assembly for 16/5/24 at the Pavilion. It was **RESOLVED** to invite Arif Housain, BC cabinet member for communities, to be the guest speaker. Other presentations to include TLC/Williamson Trust and the newly launched Parish Charity grants.

279/23 ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

It was noted that there were no other outstanding matters raised by residents for consideration or to be tabled on the next agenda at present.

Financial Matters:

280/23 GENERAL FINANCIAL MATTERS

1. Staff Overtime

It was **RESOLVED** to ratify the staff overtime for the month (3 hours of overtime for the Clerk and 8.5 hours for the Parish Assistant), approved by the staffing committee and included in the January payroll.

2. Quarterly Consideration of Grant Applications

- See minute 261/23 re the increase in grant for Brookmead School.
- See minute 276/23 re reallocation from the Grant cost centre to enable the council to hire the stage for the July event at the pavilion.
- No other new applications had been received.

3. VAT Return

It was noted that the monthly VAT return had been submitted. HMRC refunded PPC £450.81 for the 1-31/12/23 period.

4. Financial Summaries and Expenditure

The bank reconciliation, financial summary, confidential salary payments, pavilion & allotment monthly summaries, debtors and creditors were noted.

It was **RESOLVED** to make the payments outlined in the financial summary and two councillors were granted approval to enact the bacs transfers. The Chairman was granted authority to sign the financial papers on behalf of the council.

5. Internal Controls

It was noted that the Internal Controls had been undertaken with no issues or actions arising.

6. Budget and Precept

- It was **RESOLVED** to approve the final budget proposals for 2024/25, with expenditure of £309,651 and receipts of £23,751 (excluding the precept) and £196,181 including the precept).
- It was **RESOLVED** to approve the precept request for submission to Buckinghamshire Council of £172,430. This equates to a 2.86% rise to £122.69 per annum per property (an increase of £3.41 per property per year).

7. Annual Internal Audit and Internal Control Review

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the annual internal control review & audit with no further matters to be noted, the Chairman was duly authorised to sign on behalf of the council.

Reports & Other:

281/23 REPORTS

- The street light issues reported to Bucks Council and Taylor Wimpey were noted.
- Cllr Saintey provided feedback from the BMKALC Parish Liaison meeting held on 24/1/24.
- It was noted that the clerk had been unwell on 23/1/24 so had not attended the BC Clerks Forum. Minutes will be circulated upon receipt.
- It was noted that Cheddington parish had now lost all of its under 5-years provision following the closure of its baby group, toddler group and preschool.
- No other reports were presented.

282/23 OTHER

1. Date and Time of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Parish Council would take place on 29 February 2024 at 7.30pm.

2. The following items were noted for inclusion on the full council agenda:

- Annual review of the Policy on the Reporting of Meetings of the Council.
- Annual review of all car scheme policies.
- PAA to provide copy of their February risk assessment.
- Consideration of the proposals for the redevelopment of RAF Halton.
- No other items were raised for inclusion.

3. Reminders and Forthcoming Events

The following reminders & events were noted:

- Parish Council meetings: 29/2/24, 21/3/24, 25/4/24, 6/6/24, 27/6/24, 25/7/24, 29/8/24, 26/9/24, 7/11/24, 5/12/24, 9/1/25.
- Sports and Leisure Committee meetings: 8/2/24, 14/3/24, 11/4/24, 9/5/24, 13/6/24, 11/7/24, 8/8/24, 12/9/24, 10/10/24, 14/11/24, 12/12/24
- PPP Publication dates: April, July, October, and January.
- BMKALC Parish Liaison Meetings: 24/4/24, 10/7/24.
- BC Clerks Forums: 22/4/24, 16/7/24.
- D Day beacon event in Ivinghoe 6/6/24.

- Last election May 2021, next election therefore 2025.

Buckinghamshire Councillor D Town departed the meeting.

In accordance with the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 (S.I. 2014/...) and The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Meeting and Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012 (S.I. 2012/2089) the public and press were excluded from the following section of the meeting due to the confidential/sensitive nature of the business to be transacted.

283/23 BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNCIL OPEN SPACE

No Heads of Terms had been provided by Buckinghamshire Council, but the update was noted.

284/23 PITSTONE VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

Following consideration of the nominations, the winner of the award for 2024 was determined. It was **RESOLVED** to accept the associated costs to provide £50, a framed certificate and card.

285/23 CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

There being no further business to transact, the Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 21.35.

Signed *D Nicholls*

Date: 3/3/24

Chairman