

PITSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Pitstone Parish Council held on 21 March 2024
at Pitstone Pavilion commencing at 7.30pm

General Matters:

310/23 ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

1. Council present

Cllr Nicholls (Chairman), Cllr Blunt, Cllr Mrs Crutchfield, Cllr Mitra, Cllr Dr Frearson, Cllr Mrs Nash, Cllr Hawkins and plus the Parish Clerk, Mrs Eagling.

2. Apologies & Absence

It was **RESOLVED** to accept apologies for absence from Cllr Saintey (Vice Chair), Cllr Weber and Cllr R McCarthy.

3. Others present

Buckinghamshire Councillor Derek Town.

311/23 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.

312/23 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC/PRESS

No members of the public were present, so no questions were tabled.

313/23 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. The Clerk requested that Cllr Town follow up with Buckinghamshire Highways about the repair of the Westfield Road verges following the incident with the broken-down road sweeper as no response had been received. It was noted that closure signs had been erected by the Cheddington Road railway bridge but no planned works seem to be visible via the BC portal.

314/23 MINUTES OF THE MEETING held on 29/2/24

It was **RESOLVED** that the draft minutes of the Pitstone Parish Council Meeting held on 29 February 2024 were a true and accurate record. The Chairman was duly authorised to sign them on behalf of the council.

315/23 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. Feb 24 - BC still chasing.
 - Castlemead Lighting: Feb 24 - BC now progressing with proposal to convert the adopted lanterns to LED, installing the columns that are missing and relocating the columns incorrectly installed on private land instead of public land. May be done in phases.
- 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. Feb 24 - All remedials now complete and BC drafting the Section 228. Will advise once issued.
- 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 – Feb 24 BC advise still working through legals.
- 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 following refusal of NKH retrospective planning application for the as-built MUGA.
- NKH lighting: internal lighting will transfer to their management company. PPC will adopt the replacement column on Vicarage Road once BC agree that the site remedials have been completed.
- 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'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) to clear and tidy the remaining sites.
- TW investigating balancing pond transfer issues, along with fence remedials. TW considering re-opening discussions with Network Rail re transfer of main parcel of land.
- 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 (no ETA yet) 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 – TW own the trees blocking the light by Meadow Lane – written to TW and provided the land registry docs. Review mVAS data Oct 23-June 24 with LAT at end of period.
 - 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.
 - Tree works in Old Farm.
- Ivinghoe Freight Strategy – trial underway.
 - Safety Scheme works by Westfield Road junction: Meeting with Buckinghamshire Highways being arranged.
 - 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 that they are still negotiating with BC and TW. Reviewing works required to surface along route, as well as the cycle ramps by steps. Still aiming for agreement before the June 2024 deadline.
 - Mapping Rights of Way: Pitstone aspect of project being undertaken by local resident volunteer.
 - 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 early 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 –Trooli has commenced offering fibre-to-property to some Pitstone postcodes and are rolling out to the remainder of the village. No updates from Openreach.
 - Luton Airport Expansion proposals – Planning Inspectorate completed its examination. Will submit their recommendations to the Secretary of State for Transport no later than 10/5/24.
 - 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 –TVP 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 future issues.
 - Buckinghamshire Council Open Space – with BC legal department, awaiting further information.
 - ASB in Yardley Avenue – TVP and Fairhive liaising.
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.

- Local Wildlife Site – gate signage & advisory note in progress.
- ESI for all streetlight columns scheduled for 6/5/24.
- Volunteer of the Year 2024 – to be presented at the annual assembly on 16/5/24.
- Implement increase in National Living Wage and Clerk’s SCP grade 1/4/24.
- BMKALC Employee Assistance Program – awaiting full details from BMKALC.
- Gas contract for pavilion, 1/9/24 switch to Crown in progress.
- Unmetered electricity contract for street lighting, 1/5/24 renewal with NPower in progress.
- HMRC VAT application re extended supplies of sporting services – in progress.
- Moving to a .gov domain name – investigation in progress.
- Please refer to Sport & Leisure Committee minutes for full list of S&L related matters.

316/23 CORRESPONDENCE

The list of correspondence received was noted.

Committee Matters:

317/23 PLANNING COMMITTEE AND RELATED MATTERS

1. Minutes

It was noted that no committee meeting had been held during the month so no minutes were due.

2. Application Consultations

- 1 Treachers Close: 24/00651/APP: Householder application for loft conversion with pitched dormer extension to rear roofslope and rooflights to front roofslope. No objections were received as a result of the neighbour notification program. It was **RESOLVED** to advise Buckinghamshire Council that the Parish Council had no objections to this application.

3. Decisions notified by Buckinghamshire Council

None.

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 87 Marsworth Road (5 dwellings), Land to the rear of 12 Queen Street (4 dwellings) and Portland House on Westfield Road (6 industrial starter units).

5. Other

- 1 Treachers Close; 23/03927/APP; Householder application for loft conversion with dormer extension to rear roofslope and rooflights to front roofslope: withdrawn by applicant.
- Land to the rear of 12 Marsworth Road; 24/00651/APP; Demolition of detached garage and erection of a dwelling: withdrawn by applicant.

318/23 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 14 March 2024. The pitch strategy had been deferred to full council, see below.

2. Bellway LEAP

In progress – TP1 to be finalised and playground inspection/remedials to be undertaken.

3. Allotment Tap

Awaiting response from Pitstone Allotment Association.

4. Tree Risk Assessment

The report submitted by Patrick Stileman following the recent tree risk assessment survey was considered.

- It was **RESOLVED** to obtain quotations for the recommended tree works, including the felling of one tree with a rotten base.
- It was **RESOLVED** to approve the re-inspection of two Ash trees once they were in full leaf to fully assess the level of ash die-back (£700 + VAT).

5. PRS/PPL

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the annual renewal of the PRS/PPL music licence for the pavilion (£548.04).

6. Football and Cricket Pitch Strategy for Both Sites

It was **RESOLVED** to continue with the existing pitch strategy:

- Pavilion Senior pitch – maximum of 4 teams in any one season (2 adult and 2 junior), maximum of 2 games on any one day, no training/warm up in goal mouths/centre circle etc, no external hire capacity
- Pavilion junior pitches – capacity determined by JFC ability to schedule, no training/warm up in goal mouths/centre circle etc, no external hire capacity
- Recreation Ground football pitches – capacity determined by JFC ability to schedule, no training/warm up in goal mouths/centre circle etc, no external hire capacity
- cricket pitch – no external hire capacity, schedule to be determined by I&PUCC

319/23 STAFFING COMMITTEE AND RELATED MATTERS

This section of the meeting was Chaired by Cllr Blunt, Chair of the Staffing Committee.

1. Minutes

It was noted that no committee meeting had been held during the month, so no minutes were due.

2. Councillor Vacancy

It was noted that the individuals that had expressed an initial interest, had not submitted an application. Further advertising to be undertaken.

3. Recruitment of Litter Picking Staff

It was noted that a high number of applications have been received for this vacancy. Interviews are being held over the next two weeks.

4. Duke of Edinburgh

It was noted that one young person was undertaking volunteer litter picking in public open spaces/rights of way as part of his Duke of Edinburgh volunteering. Health and safety advice and equipment has been provided by the council.

5. Year-end Payroll

Final payroll of 2023/24 submitted. EPS, P60s and P9s to be completed 5/4/24.

Charity Matters:

320/23 PITSTONE PARISH CHARITY

It was noted that a Parish Charity meeting had taken place on 14 March 2024. Draft minutes will be received in due course.

321/23 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:

322/23 PITSTONE DEVELOPMENT AREA

No matters for discussion this month.

323/23 YOUTH CAFÉ

- It was noted that some young people had expressed an interest in badminton and details for the club in Cheddington had been provided in case the Café Manager wished to liaise and ask them to attend café to promote their club/hold a session.
- It was noted that the annual fire evacuation drill had been undertaken 6/3/24.

- It was noted that the following old equipment needed to be written off: 1 folding table tennis table and 3 snooker tables. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the updated Asset Register.
- It was **RESOLVED** to purchase a replacement padlock for the pedestrian gate.

Other Matters:

324/23 DEVOLVED SERVICES

- It was **RESOLVED** to enter into the one-year devolved services agreement offered by Buckinghamshire Council, with an associated financial contribution of £3,988.15, for the 2024/25 financial year. The Chairman and Cllr Mrs Crutchfield were duly authorised to sign on behalf of the council.
- It was noted that the new agreement included pockets of land that had not previously fallen under the agreement with the parish council. Ross Lawry Agricultural Services were scoping and providing a quotation. It was **RESOLVED** to accept the first cut cost, as this is likely to fall before the next full council meeting in April when the full quotation can be considered.

325/23 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 (promoted to Pitstone and Marsworth) was live from end Jan to end Feb. It was noted that response rate had been good and an analysis of the results would be available in due course.

2. Pitstone and Ivinghoe Safety Scheme

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 was live from end Jan to end Feb. It was noted that the response rate had been low and analysis of the results would be available in due course.

4. Westfield Road Bus Shelters

It was noted that work was ongoing with Buckinghamshire Council and Safran, and final quotations would be available for consideration in due course.

5. Westfield Road Frequency of Service/S106 funding contribution towards bus to Tring Station

It was noted that this was ongoing by Buckinghamshire Council, and Safran were now liaising with BC.

6. mVAS reports

The mVAS reports for Marsworth Road and Westfield Road/Warwick Road end were noted, both average speed and 85th percentile results showed decreases. Reports had been published on the website.

326/23 EVENTS

It was noted that no new queries/updates had been received from either HouseMouse or Party in the Park.

It was noted that the council litter picker had indicated they would be available if the Party in the Park committee wished to engage their services. The Parish Council has advised their committee and awaits a response.

327/23 POLICIES

- It was **RESOLVED** to approve the annual review of the Treasury and Investment Policy, and the Chair was duly authorised to sign on behalf of the council.
- It was **RESOLVED** to approve the annual review of the Officer Member Protocol, and the Chair was duly authorised to sign on behalf of the council.
- It was **RESOLVED** to approve the annual review of the Grant Policy, and the Chair was duly authorised to sign on behalf of the council.

- It was **RESOLVED** to approve the annual review of the Schedule of Charges, and the Chair was duly authorised to sign on behalf of the council.
- It was **RESOLVED** to approve the annual review of the Guide to Information Available, and the Chair was duly authorised to sign on behalf of the council.

328/23 OTHER MATTERS

1. Pitstone Parish Post

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the council submission for the next edition of Pitstone Parish Post, along with the additional items discussed. It was **RESOLVED** to include the launch of the Parish Charity step-up grants and to ask the volunteers to also deliver a single sheet with the Annual Assembly agenda.

2. Annual Assembly 16/5/24

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the final agenda, which was signed by Cllr Nicholls. To be printed and then delivered with the PPP magazines.

3. Buckinghamshire Council CCTV Policy

It was noted that Rob McAlister would be in touch in due course with information and pricing.

4. Microsoft Apps

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the renewal of the subscription to Microsoft Business Apps.

5. Electricity Contract for Pavilion

After comparison of the quotations, it was **RESOLVED** to instruct Utility Aid to place the business with a 2-year British Gas contract.

6. Children's Competition

It was **RESOLVED** not to run a children's competition this summer. Review again next year.

7. Best Kept Village

It was **RESOLVED** not to enter the Best Kept Village competition.

329/23 ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

- It was noted that assistance had been provided to a resident with a brown bin collection contract query.
- It was noted that a further query re staffing at the Aston Clinton Household Recycling Centre would be passed to Councillor Derek Town.
- 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:

330/23 GENERAL FINANCIAL MATTERS

1. Grant Applications

Following consideration of the application from Pitstone Memorial Hall Charity, it was **RESOLVED** to enquire if their Chair/Treasurer might be able to attend the next council meeting to provide some additional information. It was further **RESOLVED** to carry forward the current provision to ensure that it remains available in the next financial year to facilitate this request.

Cllr A Mitra departed the meeting.

2. Chairman's Year-End Expenses

It was noted that the Chairman did not wish to submit any expenses for the 2023/24 financial year.

3. Staff Overtime

It was **RESOLVED** to ratify the staff overtime for the month (21 hours of overtime for the Clerk and 8.5 hours for the Parish Assistant), approved by the staffing committee and included in the March payroll.

4. VAT Return

It was noted that the monthly VAT return had been submitted. HMRC to refund PPC £1,136.64 for the 1-29/2/24 period.

3. 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.

4. Internal Controls

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

5. IAC Ltd Audit

It was noted that IAC had undertaken the on-site audit on 20/3/24. Initial feedback was discussed and will be added to the next agenda once council is in receipt of the formal observations issued by the auditor.

Buckinghamshire Councillor D Town departed the meeting.

Reports & Other:

331/23 REPORTS

- The street light issues reported to Bucks Council (17) were noted. No issues had needed to be reported to Taylor Wimpey. 1 lamp post owned by the parish council had required repair (at the entrance to Pitstone Memorial Hall Charity). 1 broken street name plate had been reported to Buckinghamshire Council.
- No feedback available at the moment from the informal clerks forum held on 20/3/24.
- It was noted that the damage to verges on Westfield Road caused by the broken down road-sweeper had been reported to Buckinghamshire Council for remedials. The contact details for the road sweeper operator had been provided so the cost could be recouped. Buckinghamshire Councillor D Town to follow up with the Local Area Technician.

332/23 OTHER

1. Date and Time of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Parish Council would take place on 25 April 2024 at 7.30pm.

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

- Year End reconciliation S106 account and reserve account
- Draft Annual Return, Year End Accounts and Year End Report for submission to the Internal Auditor
- Make end-of-year returns for National Insurance and PAYE
- Quarterly grant consideration agenda item
- Annual check of all electronic banking payment details held for suppliers etc.
- Annual review of community self-help plan
- Consider noticeboard renovation required this year
- Consider year 6 youth café events for last half term
- Annual review of CCTV policy on s&I agenda
- Request annual copy of allotment risk assessment from PAA if they haven't supplied (they do each March)
- Start of new payroll year tasks
- Annual renewal of SLCC membership
- Annual insurance renewal
- Discussion with Pitstone Memorial Hall Charity regarding grant request
- No other items were raised for inclusion.

3. Reminders and Forthcoming Events

The following reminders & events were noted:

- Parish Council meetings: 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: 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.
- Staffing Committee: next meeting June 24 (set date in May).
- Pitstone Annual Assembly: 16/5/24.
- Volunteer Thank You Events: 17/9/24 and 21/1/25.
- Internal audit: submit year-end reports by 29/4/24.
- 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.
- Community Board meeting 26/3/24
- D Day beacon event in Ivinghoe 6/6/24.
- Last election May 2021, next election therefore 2025.
- BMKALC Nature Recovery Strategy workshop 8/4/24 – Cllr Mrs Nash attending.

333/23 CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

There being no further business to transact, the Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 21.15.

Signed *D Nicholls*

Date: 25/4/24

Chairman