

# PITSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

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

## General Matters:

### 1/24 ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

#### 1. Council present

Cllr Nicholls (Chairman), Cllr Saintey (Vice Chairman), Cllr Mrs Crutchfield, Cllr Mitra, Cllr Dr Frearson, Cllr Mrs Nash, Cllr Weber, Cllr McCarthy and plus the Parish Clerk, Mrs Eagling and the Parish Assistant, Stephen Davies.

#### 2. Apologies & Absence

It was **RESOLVED** to accept apologies for absence from Cllr Blunt and Cllr Hawkins.

#### 3. Others present

Buckinghamshire Councillor Derek Town; Bill Brassington, Treasurer for Pitstone Memorial Hall Charity and Alex Lucas, 1<sup>st</sup> Ivinghoe & Pitstone Scouts.

### 2/24 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.
- Cllr Dr Frearson declared an interest in the grant application from 1<sup>st</sup> Ivinghoe & Pitstone Scouts as he has a child that attends the group. Cllr Frearson will withdraw and not participate in the discussion.
- 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.

### 3/24 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC/PRESS

No questions were tabled from the public gallery.

### 4/24 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 current Buckinghamshire Council Street Trading consultation was discussed, along with Ravensmoor. No other questions were tabled for Cllr Town.

### 5/24 MINUTES OF THE MEETING held on 21/3/24

It was **RESOLVED** that the draft minutes of the Pitstone Parish Council Meeting held on 21 March 2024 were a true and accurate record. The Chairman was duly authorised to sign them on behalf of the council.

### 6/24 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. April 24 - BC still chasing.
  - Castlemead Lighting: April 24 - BC still chasing conversion of all 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 '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 – April 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 – see Westfield Road enhancement of bus service agenda item.
- 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 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.
- TW own the trees blocking the light by Meadow Lane – written to TW requesting remedials and provided the land registry docs.
- 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. 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 roundels 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: see later meeting minute.
  - 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 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 but Land Registry are running late.
  - Pitstone Hill Agreement – National Trust may review in early 2024, no confirmation as of April.
  - 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. No update 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 land – 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.
  - Yardley Avenue Anti-Social Behaviour – Fairhive investigating lighting options and Thames Valley Police increased patrols.
  - Buckinghamshire Council Open Space – with BC legal department, awaiting further information.
  - Substation on Westfield Road/Harlech Road: GTC declined to remove graffiti as not offensive or derogatory. Monitor and provide additional information if required.
  - Footpath 2: Buckinghamshire Council Rights of Way inspected and advised that there were no issues with the ground surface. No further action to be taken.

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 – see later meeting minute.
- 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.
- BMKALC Employee Assistance Program – awaiting welcome information from BMKALC.
- Gas contract for pavilion, 1/9/24 switch to Crown in progress.
- Electricity contract for pavilion, 1/10/24 switch to British Gas in progress.
- Unmetered electricity contract for street lighting, 1/5/24 renewal with NPower in progress.
- Moving to a .gov domain name & inclusion of 2024/25 audit requirements – investigation in progress.
- Website accessibility regulation changes – investigation in progress.
- Patrick Stileman to re-inspect two Ash trees 2/9/24.
- Annual playground inspections scheduled for 15/7/24.
- Please refer to Sport & Leisure Committee minutes for full list of S&L related matters.

7/24

**CORRESPONDENCE**

- The list of correspondence received was noted.
- It was **RESOLVED** that the NALC Sector Snapshot Survey re Committee on Standards in Public Life public bodies accountability consultation was best completed by individual councillors rather than the body as a whole.

8/24

**GRANT APPLICATIONS**

1. It was **RESOLVED** to pull forward the agenda items on grant application considerations from Pitstone Memorial Hall Charity and the 1<sup>st</sup> Ivinghoe and Pitstone Scouts in case the representatives attending the council meeting needed to depart early.

2. 1<sup>st</sup> Ivinghoe and Pitstone Scouts

Due to a declared interest, Cllr Dr Frearson withdrew from the council table and did not participate in the discussion or voting.

Alex Lucas, Trustee Board Member, explained the initiative, the training undertaken by their leaders, and the benefits arising to the young attendees. Alex Lucas provided reassurance about safety and security in relation to their air rifle proposal.

Details were also provided about the wider aspiration to fund the building of a new scout hut.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve a grant of £1,800.00 to 1<sup>st</sup> Ivinghoe and Pitstone Scouts towards their Air Rifle project. Mr Lucas thanked the council for their support.

Cllr Dr Frearson resumed his seat at the table.

3. Pitstone Memorial Hall Charity

Bill Brassington, Treasurer for Pitstone Memorial Hall Charity, explained the initiative and the need for the longer battery life afforded with the selected floor scrubber model which would enable the whole floor to be cleaned without re-charging. It was **RESOLVED** to award a grant of £3,000.00 to Pitstone Memorial Hall Charity for this project, being the sum carried over from the prior financial year. It was stressed that the award of this grant would obviously reduce the contingency fund held by the parish council in case severe emergency work was ever required at the Memorial Hall, to £3,000.00 (that being the sum provisioned within the current financial years budget). This was acknowledged by Mr Brassington, who thanked the council for their support.

## Committee Matters:

### 9/24 PLANNING COMMITTEE AND RELATED MATTERS

This section of the meeting was Chaired by Cllr Kris Weber, Chair of the Planning Committee.

1. Minutes

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

2. Application Consultations

None received from Buckinghamshire Council.

3. Decisions notified by Buckinghamshire Council

None notified 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 87 Marsworth Road (5 dwellings), Land to the rear of 12 Queen Street (4 dwellings), Portland House on Westfield Road (6 industrial starter units) and 1 Treachers Close.

### 10/24 SPORTS AND LEISURE COMMITTEE AND RELATED MATTERS

This section of the meeting was Chaired by Cllr Kris Weber, Vice 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 April 2024.

2. Bellway LEAP

In progress – TP1 working through both legal departments and playground inspection/remedials to be undertaken.

3. Allotment Tap

Pitstone Allotment Association are arranging for a non-return valve to be fitted by the stop cock to cover the whole site and will advise when it is available for inspection. Materials are WRAS approved. They will amend their regulations re tap/security head/hose (if applicable) and commit to the flushing schedule. PAA will send questionnaire to tenants and advise if further taps are still being considered so that the parish council can engage with the National Trust at the same time as advising about the above.

4. Tree Works

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the quotation of £2,350 + VAT from RML Tree & Garden Services to carry out all the works identified in the recent tree risk inspection report, including the felling of the Swedish Whitebeam. It was further **RESOLVED** to check with the contractor if the works had to wait until after the bird nesting season or could be scheduled.

5. Pavilion Rate Relief

It was noted that Buckinghamshire Council has applied 100% small business relief to the annual National Non-Domestic Rate Bill for 2024-25 for pavilion once again (£2,020.95 discounted to zero).

6. Litter Bin

It was noted that one of the wooden box style bins within the play space on the Recreation Ground had broken & it was **RESOLVED** to write this off.

It was **RESOLVED** to replace the above bin with a Topsy Jubilee bin from Glasdon to match the other parish council stock (approx. £313.38 + VAT) and further **RESOLVED** to accept the costs associated with removal of the old item & installation of the new bin.

It was **RESOLVED** to make the above adjustments to the asset register. No adjustments required to the insurance policy.

## 11/24 STAFFING 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. Councillor Vacancy

No new expressions of interest received this month. Promote the vacancy at the Annual Assembly.

### 3. Recruitment of Litter Picking Staff

It was **RESOLVED** to employ two new members of litter picking staff and extend the current remit to cover key permissive paths and rights of way as well as building in greater capacity to cope with staff sickness/absence etc. Both to be employed at £11.44ph, with one working for approx. 7 hours per week (as advertised) and the other an anticipated 5-6 hours per week.

It was further **RESOLVED** to accept the associated costs of purchasing protective clothing and equipment, and to provide both new members of staff with training in both playground asset inspection and tree asset inspection so that they could also provide cover/succession planning for the asset checking members of staff.

The staffing committee propose a review after 3-months of all litter picking carried out by the parish council to take a holistic approach and see if any redistribution of duties is required to ensure the long-term viability of the service.

### 4. Year-end and New Payroll Year

It was noted that: P11s had been checked for all staff, EPS submitted to HMRC, P60s distributed, P9 tax codes implemented for applicable staff, national minimum wage increases implemented for applicable members of staff and the SCP grade increase implemented for the clerk.

## Charity Matters:

### 12/24 PITSTONE PARISH CHARITY

It was **RESOLVED** to note receipt of the draft minutes arising from the Parish Charity meeting that took place on 14 March 2024.

### 13/24 PITSTONE RECREATION GROUND CHARITY

It was noted that no charity meeting had taken place during the month, so no draft minutes were due. The next meeting is scheduled for 2/5/24.

## Working Group Matters:

### 14/24 PITSTONE DEVELOPMENT AREA

It was noted that 3 Ravensmoor residents had written to complain that Nicholas King Homes (NKH) had still not cleared their vacant compounds. The parish council wrote again to NKH who confirmed they would "attend and check fencing to ensure the land was secure, and clear & stack any materials as best we can".

The same residents had enquired about the ongoing problems with the ball court, with the existing non-compliant fencing causing undue noise disturbance. This matter still resides between Buckinghamshire Council and Nicholas King Homes.

### 15/24 YOUTH CAFÉ

- It was **RESOLVED** to approve renewal of the annual membership with Action4Youth (£110).
- It was noted that the new equipment had been well received by attendees.
- Café Manager still to provide draft proposals for year 6 events, any end-of-term events and the condition of the basketball hoops returned by Brookmead school.

## Other Matters:

### 16/24 DEVOLVED SERVICES

- It was **RESOLVED** to note receipt of the countersigned Devolved Services Contract and associated funding from Buckinghamshire Council for the 2024-25 calendar year.
- It was **RESOLVED** to accept the increased quotation from Ross Lawry Agricultural Contractors to fulfil delivery of those services, as BC now included extra areas. Cost increased from £1,195 per cut to £1,345 per cut.

- It was **RESOLVED** to note that council had granted permission for the following event banners permits:
  - Beacon Choir April concerts
  - HouseMouse for the 2-weeks prior to the event
  - A series of events being organised by Pitstone Memorial Hall Charity

## 17/24 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. An analysis of the results would be available in due course.

### 2. Pitstone and Ivinghoe Safety Scheme

- The feedback following the meeting with John Pateman of Bucks Highways Commissioning was noted – namely that the scheme outlined within the BC Feasibility Study was unlikely to be approved for implementation. He will discuss the objectives & aims with the in-house engineers and come back with more deliverable engineering solutions.
- Transport Strategy Planning Officers at BC are holding £37k provided by Nicholas King Homes for works in Pitstone defined within the Safety Scheme. Mr Pateman will check that the funds could still be released for any revised proposals.

### 3. Possible Pedestrian Crossings on Westfield Road

Out of scope for community board funding. Survey response rate had been low. Analysis of the results will be available for the May meeting.

### 4. Westfield Road Bus Shelters

- Following consideration of the quotations, it was **RESOLVED** to appoint GW Shelters as the preferred supplier & installer for the shelters.
- It was **RESOLVED** that for the two units on the residential side of Westfield Road, council would progress with 2m long pitched roof units, half end panels, toughened safety glass top & galvanised bottom, cycle height, perch seat and PPC logo in the apex. Minimal base/ground works as outlined within the supplied drawings. Stop poles to be removed, with new flag bracket and timetable case encompassed within the shelter. Cost of £5,890.00 for Westfield Road stop and £6,240 for Corfe Road stop.
- It was **RESOLVED** to liaise with Safran regarding the options for the bus shelter outside their factory where the verge is not as wide so quarter or half end panel options have been offered. Other configurations would be available if Safran prefer.
- Council has previously **RESOLVED** to accept the Safran unit onto our asset register and insurance and take on responsibility for all ongoing care (e.g. weekly health & safety checks and monthly cleaning) and maintenance (e.g. replacement panels if broken).
- Once their preference is known, all plans need to be submitted to Buckinghamshire Council for approval, prior to placing the order. BC will then liaise with the supplier regarding utility plans and street work licences, before agreeing an installation date.
- It was **RESOLVED** to enquire with the BC LAT if cycle path and footpath decals could be applied to the surface of each carriageway by the shelters as reminders to those that gather to wait for the bus and then step-out without thinking.

### 5. Westfield Road Local Wildlife Site Parking Issues

- It was **RESOLVED** to approve the purchase of signage for the gate (approx. £150 + VAT). Installation at this location has been approved by the farmer, who requires access at all times. Exact wording re the cycle and footpath offence to be clarified. Both messages to carry equal prominence.
- It was **RESOLVED** to purchase A5 'documents enclosed' plastic wallets to house advisory notes to help educate drivers parking on the cycle path / footpath of some of the issues caused. Wording of advisory note to be re-circulated. It was stressed that staff members should NOT place themselves at any risk of abuse when leaving the advisory notes.
- It was noted that the contractor had advised that both the highway verge and the rear verge would need to be mounded to prevent parking as vehicles are using both sides

of the foot/cycle path. Quotation should be available for consideration at the May meeting.

6. National Trust Permissive Paths

It was noted that National Trust had lodged deposits with Buckinghamshire Council under the Highways and Commons Acts, and displayed the associated site notices, to declare that they have no intention of dedicating any new routes as a public right of way, and they will remain as permissive paths only.

**18/24 EVENTS**

1. HouseMouse 18/5/24

The organisational plans for this event are progressing well. All licences in place. Majority of tickets sold. Invoice paid. Plans approved by the groundkeeper.

2. Party in the Park 13/7/24

- It was noted that the committee had advised that this event had been postponed until 2025 to allow more time to recruit new committee members/volunteers, to help deliver the necessary requirements of the full premises licence and SAG.
- It was **RESOLVED** to contact Eclipse, the stage hire company, regarding the deposit options, stand down our staff and cancel the Hallmaster reservation.

3. Brookmead Year 6 Leavers Party

It was **RESOLVED** to grant permission for the above to take place on the Recreation Ground. Date tbc.

**19/24 POLICIES**

- It was **RESOLVED** to approve the annual review of the Community Self Help / Emergency Plan, and the Chair was duly authorised to sign on behalf of the council.
- It was **RESOLVED** to approve the annual review of the Pitstone Parish Post Terms and Conditions. It was further **RESOLVED** not to increase prices this year, as the magazine had only recently returned to a self-funding position. Review again in 12-months.

**20/24 CONSULTATIONS**

Buckinghamshire Council Consultation on 'Street' Trading

Concerns were expressed about the scope of this policy, which will affect many community events that include any element of 'commercial' trade e.g. a local craft stall. It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Nicholls would attend one of the workshops being hosted by Buckinghamshire Council and provide feedback to the May meeting.

**21/24 OTHER MATTERS**

1. Allotments

- It was **RESOLVED** to note receipt of the annual risk assessment carried out by Pitstone Allotment Association.
- It was noted that proposals were already in place to deal with the highlighted car park surface issues and no assistance was required from the parish council in the short term. PAA will revert to the council if/when assistance is required.

2. Buckinghamshire Council CCTV Policy

- It was noted that Thames Valley Police would be supportive of re-deployable CCTV at selected locations within the parish and would provide a letter of support if required.
- It was noted that Rob McAlister would be in touch in due course with information and pricing but **RESOLVED** to request further details in the meantime.

3. Memberships

- It was **RESOLVED** to approve the renewal of membership to SLCC (£238).
- It was **RESOLVED** to approve the renewal of membership to BALC/NALC (£579.60).
- It was **RESOLVED** to trial membership of the Rural Services Network (£50 + VAT).

Buckinghamshire Councillor Town departed the meeting.



4. Insurance

Council is in a 3-year long term agreement. The pre-renewal questionnaire had been supplied. Values had been checked. It was **RESOLVED** to renew with Hiscox, via Arthur J Gallagher brokers, for £7,247.38. It was further **RESOLVED** that no additional cyber cover was required.

5. Noticeboards

Consideration of renovation required this year was carried forward to the May council meeting.

6. Croudace Street Lighting

It was noted that the Section 228 notice was now displayed for a period of one month from 4/4/24, which would enable Buckinghamshire Council to adopt the highways. Once adopted, the parish council can adopt the street lighting and illuminated bollards on provision that the stipulated conditions and contributions are met. It was **RESOLVED** to check that all units were operational and re-confirm the requirements laid out in 2016 to Croudace.

7. Dog Bin Contract

It was **RESOLVED** to renew the dog bin emptying contract with Buckinghamshire Council. 17 dog bins x £148 per annum for 2 empties per week = £2,516.00 per annum.

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

It was noted that this was ongoing by Buckinghamshire Council. Updated survey information from Safran has been supplied to BC, along with the original survey data obtained by the parish council.

**22/24 ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

- It was noted that:
  - problems with parking by (a) the junction of Old Farm/Marsworth Road and (b) the junction of Crispin Field/Cheddington Road, had been referred to Thames Valley Police.
  - a problem with the grass cutting in the balancing pond in Crispin Field had been referred to Buckinghamshire Council.
- 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:**

**23/24 GENERAL FINANCIAL MATTERS**

1. Grant Applications

See minute 8/24.

2. Staff Overtime

It was **RESOLVED** to ratify the staff overtime for the month (37.5 hours of overtime for the Clerk and 3.85 hours for the Parish Assistant), approved by the staffing committee and included in the April payroll.

3. VAT Return

It was noted that the monthly VAT return had been submitted. HMRC refunded PPC £558.01 for the 1-31/3/24 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. Budget Monitor 2024-25

The budget monitor for the new financial year (including the adjustments below) was noted and approved. It was **RESOLVED** to make the following adjustments to the budget, reflecting commitments/accruals from the prior financial year not yet utilised:

- £1,207 donation to car scheme still to carry forward as unspent in 2023/24.

- £3,534 for street lighting ESIs commissioned in 23/24 & due to be fulfilled in May.
- £1,685.87 carried forward from 23/24 accrual towards new street furniture / noticeboards.
- £1,363 accrued to 23/24 towards tree works & risk assessment. Quote obtained but work won't be undertaken until 24/25.
- £1,000 contingency accrual carried forward from 23/24 in case ever need to recruit replacement clerk e.g. sudden sickness.
- £2,000 contingency accrual carried forward from 23/24 in case legionella ever identified at the pavilion & need to commission works.
- £815 accrual carried forward towards bi-annual legionella risk assessment due later in 2024.

#### 6. Internal Controls

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

#### 7. Practitioner's' Guide 2024-25

It was **RESOLVED** to note receipt of the Joint Panel of Accountability and Governance Practitioners Guide for 2024/25 accounts. It was noted that new requirements include:

- A stronger encouragement to move to .gov domain/emails – investigation already in progress.
- A requirement to publish the internal audit accompanying letter/recommendations rather than just the Internal Audit AGAR page – easy to implement.
- Recommendation to publish audit information on the homepage/easily located page of the website – Cllr Nicholls to investigate as part of move to new website.

#### 8. Annual Check of Suppliers Banking Details

It was noted that the annual review of banking details held on Unity account had been undertaken. Deleted all held details for ad-hoc payees (e.g. hall deposit refunds), any suppliers that have not been utilised for over 12-months and any out-of-date payment details (e.g. where suppliers have changed account details). Retained current supplier details (which are checked against details on each invoice), staff details etc.

#### 9. Year-End Transfers Between Accounts

- It was noted that the NatWest S106 account was just holding a nominal amount to keep the account open until further S106 maintenance funds were received. No year-end transfers required.
- It was **RESOLVED** to consider any transfers relating to the NatWest account for accruals and the PSDF account at the May meeting.
- It was **RESOLVED** to approve a transfer of a nominal £5 into the NatWest current account to trigger a bank statement. NatWest would subsequently auto-move this to the NatWest accrual account, as the current account is always maintained at a balance of £10.00. It was further **RESOLVED** to repeat annually, every March.

#### 10. 2023-24 Closing Asset Register

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the 2023-24 closing asset register reflecting the additions and write-offs detailed below:

- Additions:
  - £25,510 double lane cricket practice nets on the recreation ground.
  - £4,161 four information panels at the Local Wildlife Site.
  - £1,395.30 memorial bench on the recreation ground.
  - £985 self-closing pedestrian gate at the Windsor Road playground.
- Write-offs:
  - £765 broken self-closing pedestrian gate at the Windsor Road playground (replacement above).
  - £140 broken table at the Pavilion (not replaced).
  - £526.76 broken youth café equipment (not replaced).
  - £357.03 broken bench on the recreation ground (replacement above).

Closing Asset Register value: £1,613,193.23.

It was further **RESOLVED** to add a regular monthly agenda item for consideration/approval of adjustments to both the asset register and insurance going forwards (rather than just the purchase/write-off itself).

#### 11. IAC Ltd Audit

- Following consideration of the draft documentation it was **RESOLVED** to submit the following to the internal auditor to complete the year-end audit:

AGAR draft account & governance statements, associated explanation of variances, reconciliation between box 7 & 8, signed bank reconciliation, exercise of electors' rights proposals (proposed as 3/6/24-12/7/24 if IAC return the documents prior to the May meeting), year-end debtors & creditors, fixed asset register (see minute 23/24.9), all individual year-end bank statements & reconciliations (NatWest current account to follow, see minute 23/24.8) and working documents to support the above including trial balances and nominal transaction listings.

- It was noted that a schedule of investments, PWLB balance and cashiers' certificates were not applicable to the parish council.

#### 12. External Audit

- It was noted that the latest legal date for submission to the external auditor, PKF Littlejohn, is 1 July so the submission needs to be approved at the May meeting, or the June meeting will need to be pulled forward (currently scheduled for 27 June which would leave insufficient time to produce and include minute references).
- It was noted that as the income during 2023/24 was over £200k that council is automatically required to undergo an intermediate (rather than basic) review and must therefore supply the following additional information to the external auditor:
  - Evidence that council complied with the criteria to use the General Power of Competence including minutes, election results and both clerks' qualification certificates.
  - Copies of year-end bank statements to support the reconciliation.
  - The detailed internal audit report + evidence that demonstrates any recommendations have been addressed.
  - Evidence council considered the independence of the internal auditor.
  - Evidence the authority considered & agreed the scope of internal audit & identified risks.
  - Evidence when appointed council had satisfied itself with regard to the competence of internal auditor & agreed letter of engagement.
- It was **RESOLVED** to submit all the above documentation to the internal auditor for information along with the items documented in minute 23/24.10.

#### 13. Year End Report

The more descriptive year-end report will be drafted for the next meeting.

### **Reports & Other:**

#### **24/24 REPORTS**

- The street light issues reported to Bucks Council (2) & Taylor Wimpey (1) were noted. No issues had needed with the parish council portfolio.
- 1 potentially unsafe tree reported to Taylor Wimpey for remedials.
- Cllrs Saintey & Crutchfield provided feedback from the Community Board meeting held 26/3/24.
- Cllr Saintey provided feedback from the BMKALC Parish Liaison meeting held on 24/4/24.
- Cllr Nash provided feedback on the BC Nature Recovery Strategy meeting held on 8/4/24.
- BC Clerks Forum minutes will be circulated upon receipt.

## 25/24 OTHER

### 1. Date and Time of Next Meeting

- It was noted that the Annual Parish Assembly will take place on 16/5/24 and it was **RESOLVED** to bring forward the May Annual Meeting of the Parish Council to 23/5/24 (Cllr Saintey tendered apologies for 23/5/24).

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

- Consideration of items raised at the Annual Assembly.
- Must appoint new Chairman/Vice Chairman & Committee Members (Chairman must sign Declaration of Acceptance of Office).
- Re-approve dd's/standing order payments and all those which arise on a regular basis as the result of a continuing contract, statutory duty, or obligation (such as but not exclusively, Salaries, PAYE and NI, Superannuation Fund, MS apps, and regular maintenance contracts and the like for which council may authorise payment for the year).
- Annual confirmation to maintain the recreation ground on behalf of charity.
- Annual review of bank mandates & actual banking arrangements plus the same for the credit card (names of signatories to be approved, can be on a separate sheet rather than specified in minutes).
- Annual review of interest paid on investments/deposits etc, review of deposits/investments held in each, and agree any transfers between accounts.
- Re-confirm eligibility for General Power of Competence until after the next election in 2025.
- Annual review of Risk Assessment.
- Check with Williamson Trust/Towns Land Trust if trustees need to step down/re-volunteer for next four years (done 2020, due 2024).
- Re-confirm electronic receipt of council information.
- Annual review of Standing Orders.
- Must minute that the assets have been checked by a councillor and that council accepts the opening asset register as correct.
- Review the policy on use of the recreation ground/village green for regular hall hirers.
- Consideration of Internal Audit report & sign off of all accounts/AGAR if they are ready.
- No other items were raised for inclusion.

### 3. Reminders and Forthcoming Events

The following reminders & events were noted:

- Parish Council meetings: 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: 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 2024 (set date in May).
- Pitstone Annual Assembly: 16/5/24.
- Volunteer Thank You Events: 17/9/24 and 21/1/25.
- Step-up grant application deadlines: end May, end August, end November and end February.
- Step-up grant panel/parish charity meeting dates: 20/6/24, 19/9/24, 19/12/24, 20/3/25.
- PPP Publication dates: April, July, October, and January.
- BMKALC Parish Liaison Meetings: 10/7/24.
- BC Clerks Forums: 16/7/24.
- D Day beacon event in Ivinghoe 6/6/24.
- Last election May 2021, next election therefore 2025.

**26/24 CLOSURE OF THE MEETING**

There being no further business to transact, the Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 21.45.

Signed *D Nicholls*

Date: 25/5/24

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Chairman