

## **INKPEN PARISH COUNCIL**

A meeting of the Inkpen Parish Council Meeting was held on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> August 2023 at 7pm at the Inkpen village hall.

**Those attending the meeting were:** Councillor Bates (Chairman), Councillors Durham, Lester. Corne and Dr Thomas. Also attending were: 12 residents: Mr & Mrs Bampfylde; Claire Jones; Don Honey; Mr & Mrs Moseley; Mr Tanner; Mr Fisher; Martin Savage and Simon Bastable and Kathe Davies from Foxglove Farm.

**1. Apologies:** Councillor Brian Cox was unable to attend the meeting.

**2. Minutes of the previous meeting** – the draft minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> June 2023 were approved as a true record and signed by the chairman.

**3. Declaration of Interest: None recorded**

3.1 The following declaration is made on all minutes for clarification.

Inkpen Parish Council is the Corporate & Custodian Trustee of the Memorial Playing Field Trust and registered with the Charity Commission as the Corporate and Custodian Trustee. Trust meetings and funds are held separately as required by the Charity Commission and confirmed annually by the External Auditors.

**4. Adoption of the Code of Conduct**

4.1 A copy of the Inkpen Code of Conduct was circulated to councillors prior to the meeting to enable them to read and retain a personal copy before the meeting.

**Action recorded:** Unanimous agreement by those Councillors present – the Inkpen Code of Conduct was adopted. For reference: the file is available on the Inkpen website for transparency.

**Standing Orders** were suspended to allow questions from residents.

Mrs Jones, of Craven Rd. Inkpen posed a number of questions to the chair, which are annexed to the draft minutes. The Chairman responded to the individual questions:

- a) Parish Council meetings will be held in different locations in the village eg. The village hall; the Church Parish Room and the Inkpen Pavilion. It is envisaged to rotate the meetings to allow each part of the village to be included.
- b) Notification of Parish Meetings are displayed on Facebook, the Inkpen website, and the village notice boards as a legal requirement for the Clerk to publish the agenda of the meeting. There was a delay on notification to Facebook but the details were already displayed as required, on the village notice boards and on the Inkpen website the previous week.
- c) The alleged Inkpen ‘second’ website displaying village activities was not the responsibility of Inkpen Parish Council and the Chairman was not responsible for the website –the website had been taken down prior to the meeting and was no longer accessible. The ownership of the website is unknown at this stage.

Following discussion Councillors confirmed that they represent all of the village, were focussed on the Parish, regardless of their other activities and membership. The Chairman confirmed that he wanted both the Village Hall and the Inkpen Pavilion to be successful. For that reason, the parish meeting planned for 27<sup>th</sup> July 2023 had not proceeded as only 3 councillors were available for the meeting due to other commitments.

**5. Planning** – Councillor Corne took the chair.

5.1 The draft minutes of the previous planning meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> June were not discussed.

5.2 Planning Application:

23/01707 Willow House, Pottery Lane, Lower Inkpen- part retrospective. First floor bedroom extension.

Following discussion Councillors recorded: 5 votes for ‘No objection’ but raised the following concern:

- a) Councillors were distressed to receive retrospective planning applications, which are in breach of planning regulations, which seek approval in advance of any development work.

22/00141 Foxglove Farm - relaxation of regulations; permitting up to 6 tents on agricultural land.

Noted: the previous Inkpen Parish Council had recorded a formal objection in their submission to the Planning Officer at West Berkshire Council.

Comments at the meeting included concerns raised by residents: increased traffic in the AONB; the volume of waste water, which could enter the stream and pollute the water table; external lighting, which would light up the night sky and impact on the wildlife.

Inaudible discussion took place between the Chairman and the applicant.

New councillors recorded; 1 vote in favour (Lester), 2 abstained and 2 against the application (Councillors and Durham and Thomas).

The Parish Chairman resumed the chair and continued with the Parish Council meeting.

## **6. Matters Arising from the previous meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

a) Grass Maintenance at Lower Green Triangle – Councillor Thomas confirmed that Mr Weeks would continue to mow the grass.

b) Residents had requested permission to erect a seat on the grass triangle in memory of Mr Robert May. Following discussion, it was noted that there was a ‘legal covenant’ on the land that ‘no building or structure whether permanent or temporary be erected or built or placed or suffered to be upon the land hereby transferred’. Possible solution would be to replace the seating already in situ. Encourage the regeneration of wildflowers and work within the legality.

**Action:** Chairman

c) It was noted that an invitation would be extended to the Head of Planning to attend the next Parish Council meeting, to respond to queries and questions on planning applications, depending on their availability.

## **7. Consultations**

7.1 Draft Statement of Licensing Policy – closing date 20.9.23

The Chairman reported that he had read the updated policy and was content as it does not affect the Parish Council.

7.2 Bus Survey – closing date 10<sup>th</sup> September 2023

All attending the meeting were encouraged to complete the survey which is very important to Inkpen to retain the public service for those without private transport; those wishing to attend appointments with doctor dentist and essential services. The size of the bus is not negotiable with transport companies. Inkpen is a hail and stop service.

**Action:** All encouraged to complete the survey

## **8. Parish Council Communication, Accessibility & Visibility within the Parish.**

8.1 The Chairman proposed a policy for communications so that residents would know who to contact and that councillor email addresses should be displayed individually to facilitate communications. Open communication internally between councillors. Councillors to have parish council email addresses. Dr Thomas -Privacy must be maintained with emails. We do not have an IT section to collate the information. Dr Thomas requested IT Policy for communications. Further discussion is required.

**Agreed by:** Councillors Bates, Corne, Durham and Lester.

**Action:** Chair to look at IT Policy.

8.2 The Chairman proposed that councillors should look at a more ‘accessible’ website to pull all the information together as there are separate websites for cricket, village hall, parish council, IMPFT etc. There are individual websites for different groups in the village.

Noted: Over 8000 hits per month on the existing website – contents include permanent display of the Bulletin etc and WBC information. Time to put a website together and updating needs to be considered to reflect the statutory requirements. Further discussion is required at the next meeting – all.

**Proposal Agreed in principle by:** Councillors Bates, Corne, Durham and Lester.

## **9. Parish Plan 2023 and onwards- create and prioritise**

9.1 The Chairman proposed that the previous Parish Plan should be updated and that residents should be asked for their priorities and main issues. A suitable questionnaire could be designed for responses to enable the village to take ownership of the village – Facebook, emails, bulletin etc. involve everyone. Parish Council to look at the proposals put forward by the village.

**Action:** Main issues to be discussed at the next meeting.

## **10. Expenditure & financial Statement 2023.2024**

10.1 The Clerk had circulated the financial statement prior to the meeting to enable councillors to raise queries if required.

A grant of £2800 had been received from the Miss Lawrence Trust for the History Group and conservation project being undertaken under the guidance of Dr Thomas.

Due to the cancellation of the meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> July, the Clerk requested agreement for expenditure during June and July as listed on the financial statement. It was noted that the Defibrillator needs to replace the old battery - Councillor Lester to advise.

**Action:** Councillors agreed the expenditure.

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**11. The Date of the Next Meeting** will be the on **Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2023 at 730pm in the Church Parish Room**, if Councillors are available.

Meeting closed at 20.30 hrs.

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Signed:.....Date: .....

## ANNEX A

1. Why is it necessary to have a Parish Council meeting the night before an election and at the VH when previous PC meeting have been at the pavilion and councillors are away on holiday.
2. Communication:
  - a. Why was the PC meeting not posted on Facebook until Monday and no Agenda was included despite it being on the PC/Village Website last Friday
  - b. When you Google Inkpen Village there is a website about the village. It states 'Welcome to Inkpen Village' but its home page focuses on the VH and all its activities. The webpage shows photos of every facility in the village except the pavilion. And includes only information about the VH – who set up this webpage and who owns its content and why is it necessary when there is a VH website, at cricket website and a village website already. If it is necessary are the playing fields and pavilion not part of the village?
3. Can the PC be considered to be independent?

Hopefully the Chairman will allow these comments to be made as there seems no reason why they cannot be addressed by the Parish Council at a public meeting as they are of interest to the village.

**Claire Jones**  
**Freelance Grant Writer, Fund Raiser & Project Manager**

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