

INKPEN PARISH COUNCIL

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 29th June at 7.30 pm in the Inkpen Sports Club
Those present were: Dr D Thomas, Mr K Evans, Mrs C Jones, Mr R May, Mrs V Tomlinson, Mrs L Wild, and Mrs. G Keene (Clerk). Also attending was: Mr J Bryant, Mrs C Gorman, Councillor Stansfeld and Mr. R Weeks.

1. Apologies were received from: Mr D Wilson and PC Claire Drewitt, who were unable to attend the meeting.

2. Register of Members' Interests:

2.1 The Chairman opened the meeting by asking each Councillor to confirm that they had accurately completed the Register of Members' Interests.

Councillor Evans – completed in full; Councillor Jones – completed in full.

Councillor May – in his opinion it was complete

(the form had been returned to West Berkshire Council and receipt confirmed by Democratic & Electoral Services Manager on 26th June 2015)

Councillor Tomlinson – completed in full; Councillor Wild – completed in full

Councillor Wilson – completed in full; Councillor Thomas – completed in full

All forms, with the exception of Councillor May, had been displayed on the Inkpen Website by the required date to comply with the Code of Conduct and as required by the Transparency Code wef 1st April 2015.

3. Planning Sub Committee – see separate minutes.

4. Minutes of the Parish Council meeting:

The minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 20th May 2015 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record. The Draft minutes had been displayed on the Inkpen website as required. No comments had been received or recorded.

5. Matters Arising:

5.1 *HGV signage & Heads Lane Ditch:* The Clerk confirmed that as agreed at the last meeting a request had been forwarded to WBC, following consultation with local residents.

a) *New HGV signage at Bell Lane and Folly Rd/Weavers Lane* – reconfirmed. The current notices were being ignored by large vehicles.

b) *Width Restriction Orders* were requested for Weavers Lane and Heads Lane – to prevent overly large vehicles from using the rural lanes. Heads Lane is currently used as a 'rat run' to Ball Hill.

c) *Pot holes in Weavers Lane; Loose stones at The Green; and the ditch in Folly Rd.* were included in the request for urgent maintenance.

d) The Chairman had requested that all communication with Highways at WBC was directed via the Clerk - this had also been requested by Highways Dept.

5.2 Mr May was asked to provide a map of Inkpen showing where pot holes and road repairs are needed.

Action: Mr May to provide a map – action point still outstanding and carried forward.

5.3 *Councillor training date:* Only one training date remained if Councillors wished to attend on 9th September. None confirmed.

6. Declarations of Interest: Councillors are the sole Trustees of the Memorial Playing Field Trust and registered with the Charity Commission as the Corporate and Custodian Trustees.

7. To approve The Annual Return 2014/2015 and acknowledge the Independent Examiner.

a) The Annual Return & Governance Statement 2014/15 were signed by the Clerk (RFO) and the Chairman. As required by the Transparency Code 2015 this document will be displayed, with expenditure greater than £100 on the Inkpen Parish Council website wef 1st July 2015. The Council recorded thanks to the Independent Examiner for his work in checking all the financial documentation and cash book, Parish Council minutes and bank statements for the year ended 31st March 2015.

- b) To note the In-Month Expenditure and outstanding invoices for payment:
Grass Maintenance - £294; Stationery - £36.97; HMRC ¼ tax payment £191 and Clearance and disposal of long grass £132. All expenditure was agreed by Councillors.
- c) The Clerk tabled a financial statement to 30th April 2015 and a cash flow statement for 2015/16.

8. Correspondence Received:

8.1 Councillor May’s letter of 22.5.15 confirmed “I am willing to continue as a Parish Councillor” following his verbal resignation at the last meeting – noted. Litter Bins at Combe Hill – this was not a consideration for Inkpen as it falls outside of the Parish boundary.

8.2 The Chairman reported he had received two further letters from Councillor May, the first of which had been copied and emailed to Councillors and the second letter was passed to councillors present. These letters were inappropriate and abusive of the Parish Clerk. Councillor May had personally delivered copies of the letters to the Clerk at her home even though he had been asked by the Chairman not to do so. The Chairman explained that the Clerk was an employee of the Council and must not be victimised in this way. The Chairman asked Councillor May if he had read the Councils “Code of Conduct” and explained that his behaviour was a breach of that code. The Chairman requested a written apology and a retraction of these letters be made by Councillor May to the Parish Clerk. Councillor May refused to apologise or retract the letters – Councillor May was asked on two further occasions but refused both times.

Councillor May accused the Clerk of a bias against him and of fabrication of the minutes, even though Councillor May had previously agreed the draft minutes of the previous meeting as being a true and accurate record prior to the signing by the Chairman. Councillor May further complained that a failed nominee for election, reported in the minutes of 20th May, had received thanks for standing at the election whilst he had not.

Councillor May continued to be abusive of other Councillors. The Chairman reminded Councillor May of the need to treat other elected Councillors with respect but Councillor May did not comply. District Councillor Stansfeld intervened by telling Councillor May that he was not allowed to act in this way – it was unacceptable and that the Police would be called if he continued to be disruptive.

Councillor Keith Evans proposed a *Vote of Confidence for the Clerk*. With the exception of Councillor May, the vote of confidence was carried unanimously.

Councillor May accused Councillor Claire Jones, a local magistrate, of professional misconduct against him at his appearance at Newbury Magistrates Court. Councillor Jones explained that no magistrate is able to be involved in proceedings against someone known to them and whilst she was in Newbury Court when Mr May appeared his case did not come before her so he was wrong to accuse her of misconduct. Unable to reason with Councillor May, Councillor Jones left the meeting.

8.3 The letter from Mr & Mrs Hardy had been circulated prior to the meeting and it was noted that Mr Harris had also written about the grass cutting at The Green, following the request by resident Mr Richard Weeks, at the May meeting, for the area to be tidied.

9. Next Parish Council Meeting is arranged for Monday 10th August 2015 at 7.30pm at Inkpen Sports Club. **Councillors are asked to note that all items for discussion and decision** should be recorded on the Agenda to allow due consideration to be given prior to the meeting and to inform residents. Discussion papers to be circulated before the meeting. Meeting closed at 21.10hrs

Signed:.....Date:
