

MINUTES of the Meeting of Islip Parish Council
Islip Village Hall
Tuesday 10th March 2009

32/09 Present: Mr J Colebrooke, Mrs E Henebery, Mr K Milner, Dr J Sargent, Mrs J Stephenson, Mr R Venables, Mr M Wilkinson (Clerk)

33/09 Apologies: Mr M Coleman

34/09 The minutes of the meeting of Tuesday 10th February 2009 had been circulated and were approved and signed.

35/09 Matters arising from the minutes: there were none.

36/09 Changes in Members' interests and declarations of personal or prejudicial¹ interest: Mrs Henebery declared an interest in the item on the Mill Lane sign .

37/09 District and County Council Report: Mr Hallchurch was not present. The Chairman reported that Mr Hallchurch had attended a meeting with the Housing Minister: any housing at Weston Otmoor or North West Bicester would form part of the South East Housing requirement, and would not be in addition to it.

38/09 Internal Audit '08-9: the arrangements for internal audit were reviewed. It was agreed to continue with the arrangement whereby a councillor without a finance role would take up the duty. This had the advantage that an individual with an intimate knowledge of the Council's affairs would carry out the internal audit, hence maintaining the Council's preference for an "internal" internal audit rather than "external" internal audit. The Council was reminded that the accounts are reported to and substantiated for the external auditor, and that the internal audit covers the Council's activity from individual transactions through to the financial return. The internal audit also covers non-financial aspects of the Council's governance. It was agreed *nem con* to appoint Mr Coleman as internal auditor for '08-9. **2. Interest on deposit account:** The Clerk reported that interest on the Council's deposits is now 0.8% *per annum*.

39/09 Administrative Matters: 1. PC Website: Mr Coleman was not present, but had sought the views of the Council on the price for advertising on the website. It was agreed that the rates charged by the Newsletter must be taken into account. **2. Clerk's PC:** the Clerk apologised for the inconvenience caused to the Council because of because of computing difficulties. **3. Risk Register:** Mr Milner reported that he had consulted with the Clerk, and recommended that the Risk Register as it stood be endorsed by the Council. This was agreed *nem con*. The Clerk was instructed to cost n increase in the fidelity insurance held by the Council from £2K to £25K.

40/09 Highways and footpaths: 1. New lay-by Bletchingdon Road: the Chairman reported that the lay-by had been constructed at no cost to the Council, to CDC, or to the Highways Authority. **2. Chiltern Railways:** representatives of Chiltern Railways gave a presentation about the proposals for the railway. CR had replied that its aims are

- restore the Oxford to Bicester line to dual track including new safety systems
- rebuild Islip station with two platforms
- more convenient travel to London from north Oxon
- fast and frequent commuter services Oxford/Islip/Bicester

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"one in which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the member's judgement of the public interest"

- link Oxford to High Wycombe
- improve Bicester Town station
- additional track and platforms at Oxford station
- multi-modal interchange station at Water Eaton
- supplement existing Bicester North/Marylebone services
- trains every half-hour London/Oxford; all trains to call at Bicester Town, Water Eaton Parkway; some will also call at Islip

Chiltern Railways stressed that consultation would be necessary and a priority. They wished to know what preliminary response there might be to the proposals. Villagers and the Council reported that the general view of the village is that the station is integral to the village, had been fought for, and must be retained. CR confirmed that although Water Eaton would be less than three miles away, Islip station will be retained, rebuilt to modern standards (including “no-step” access). As regards the Mill Lane crossing, Villagers and the Council reported that the general view of the village is that a pedestrian crossing is essential as the route forms part of a circular walk of the village enjoyed by all villagers; however, the dangers and intrusion of a level crossing with an automatic half-barrier on a single-track road, and with trains travelling at 100 m.p.h. would not be welcomed. CR confirmed that the emergency services must be consulted should it be decided in the end to pursue closure of the crossing to vehicles. Safety in the car park was raised, and CR confirmed that CCTV would likely be used on the station and probably extended to the car park.

4. Mill Lane sign: the sign “gates closed” had been taken down by persons unknown.

41/09 PC Properties:

1. Play area: Mr Venables reported that the final tidying up is to take place in the next few days, when the final invoice can be paid. The Clerk was instructed to price insurance of the play area equipment. It was agreed that the Sports Association be asked to make firm proposals about the siting of additional facilities on the Playing Field; the cost of these to the Council might amount to some £5K, but the Council had spent on the Playground less than half of the budgeted £10K. It was agreed *nem con* that £5K be allocated to the purpose.

2. New Burial Ground: Mr Colebrooke reported that some ten trees had been collected from Mr Brian Henman, and that these would be planted shortly. The Clerk is to write thanking Mr Henman.

3. Bare licences to Collice Street properties: Mr Venables and the Clerk are to confer before the next meeting.

42/09 Planning:

1. Planning Applications: Mrs Henebery reported on the applications tabulated:

| Address | Decision |
|---|-----------------------|
| River Willows – convert existing offices and stores to residential dwelling 08/02560/LB | Application withdrawn |
| River Willows – convert existing offices and stores to residential dwelling 08/02517/F | Application withdrawn |

2. Greystones - Appeal to the Secretary of state for Communities and Local Government: the Chairman reported that Mr Peter Davis of Greystones had emailed him and complained that he had not been notified that matters concerning him were to be discussed at the February meeting. Mrs Henebery reported that CDC's letter had been received two days before the last meeting, and that she normally discusses ordinary planning applications with the applicants whenever possible. The Chairman pointed out that the current matter boils down to matters of fact and a legal process. The Council had agreed not to make a submission on the matter as it felt that it was not competent to judge, and that the legal process would take its course. The Chairman had emailed Mr Davis explaining the Council's limited role in planning applications, and pointing out that Council meetings are open as noted in the monthly Council Report and minutes. Mr Davis had responded that he considered this poor response, and asked that minutes of any discussion concerning him be sent to him and to his lawyer. The Clerk was instructed to write to Mr Davis with a copy of the

approved minute, and to note that the minutes once approved can be read on the Council's website.

3. River Willows application: Ms Doreen Thomson had written about the application now withdrawn. Mrs Thomson objected that a photograph of her property had been submitted by the Council as part of its objection to the proposal. The Clerk reported that the photographs of Mill Street floods 1998 and 2007 did not isolate Ms Thomson's property. The drawings forming part of the application included within the River Willows site (designated by a blue pencil line) that part of the site on which a tent is pitched, and of which a third photograph was submitted. The Council had merely interpreted the drawings before it. The Clerk was instructed to reply to Ms Thomson explaining this.

43/09 Environment:

- 1. Dog fouling:** a villager had written to the Council with various questions and proposals regarding dog-fouling. The Clerk was instructed to discover the current cost of more dog bins and collection of the refuse for the next meeting. What most distressed the Council was that the Playing Field is used by the Dr South's School for games, and that dog faeces are a risk to the activity and to the health of the children. The Clerk was asked to remind villagers that dogs on the Playing field must be on a lead, and that poop-scoop bags are available at no cost at the Village Hall Shop. The Council considered that to ban dogs from the Playing Field using a bye-law would be draconian, but might in the end have to be considered.
- 2. Swan Car park:** The Chairman noted that the Swan car park needed tidying up. Mr Venables volunteered to have a word with the landlady, and this was approved.
- 3. Street Lighting:** the Highways Authority had proposed to switch off the street lights at 12.30 p.m. to save money and on environmental grounds. It was agreed that light pollution was a necessary evil because of the proven deterrent to crime which street lighting provides. It was agreed to recommend that the lights be kept on.

44/09 Health and Education: Mr Coleman was not present to report.

45/09 Village Hall: Mr Milner had nothing to report.

46/09 Any other business:

- 1. Post Office:** the Chairman reported that there is now no prospect of any arrangement for a weekly post office service. However, the Village Shop is to provide a limited service for which the Council is grateful.
- 2. Fire Service:** Mr Milner reported that he again left his details with the fire service expressing an interest in a visit to speak to the village on fire alarms; he still awaits a response.
- 3. Community Police Award:** it was agreed not to submit a recommendation.

47/09 Date next meeting: the next meeting is on **Tuesday 14th April 2009**