Ipstones Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 24th October 2024 at 7.00pm held at Foxt Village Hall

Present: Councillors Linda Malyon (Chair), Leslie Jackson, Mike Birch, Patrick Stimpson, Andrew Stevenson, Heather Morris, Mick Irwin, and Mike Hemsley. Clerk. Mr R Pritchard Chief Officer of Staffordshire Parish Council Association

Apologies: Councillors Peter Hallam

183/24	**Dispensations:** Councillor Hallam
184/24	**Declaration of Interests:** To be taken if/when arise.
185/24	**SPCA Chief Officer** Councillor Malyon welcomed Mr R Pritchard to the meeting who provided the following information. A key focus of the SPCA is in providing support and training to local councils. One particular area of focus is training on planning matters. Some training is provided by the SLCC which is a partner organisation. Training is delivered via online or face to face as required. Number of local councils have vacancies and SPCA is supporting. Support is also given with a variety of day-to-day queries. There are a number of changes to local government impending. Mr Pritchard asked if details of the local parish assembly could be forwarded to him, clerk to pass request on to SMDC Parish Assembly team. SPCA have regular engagement with SLCC, Polic and Fire Commissioner. For police there is a Local Police unit Commander who is a dedicated contact for parish councils Councillor Birch noted that training on Planning is important, also useful would be training on Health and Safety Management, completing risk assessments etc. Councillor Hemsley noted that in regard to planning, grey sites which had previously been used for factories, should be utilised where possible instead of green field sites, especially for such developments as Solar Farms. Mr Pritchard advised that several councils are redoing their Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans.

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	Mr Pritchard advised that the AGM for SPCA is due to be held at the end of December at SP1 Stafford. The AGM is normally held in Stafford, but SPCA would be looking at moving the meeting around the county in future. Executive meetings are normally move around the County. Councillor Malyon thanked Mr Pritchard for attending and providing an insight into the SPCA.
186/24	**Minutes:** The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 25th September were reviewed. Councillor Jackson noted that minute 170/24 should identify the Deputy Chief Commander of Staffordshire Moorlands Division not Deputy Chief Constable. Minutes to be amended and returned to next meeting for approval.
187/24	**Clerks Report:** The clerk's report had been circulated and was noted. **Japanese Knotweed –** Councillor Stevenson had asked local resident how they dealt with Japanese Knotweed; they advised they had continually sprayed the area. **Orchard Fence and Gates –** Quote received for gates and fence of £490, Councillor Jackson proposed accepting this quote, this was seconded by Councillor Birch and carried unanimously. **Crowgutter Wood Footpath –** Correspondence had been received. Councillor Hemsley suggested a site meeting with RSPB would be useful, Clerk to contact RSPB and suggest meeting at Black Lion to walk to site.
188/24	**.gov.uk Domain** Clerk updated meeting with information regarding setting up a .gov.uk domain and follow up with email addresses. Following a discussion Councillor Hemsley proposed utilising the current web provider to set up the necessary domain and website at the quoted price of £150, this was seconded by Councillor Stimpson and carried unanimously.
189/24	**Accounts for payment: -** On a proposal by Councillor Hemsley, seconded by Councillor Irwin the following were unanimously approved for payment and checked as correct by Councillor Birch, –

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Payee and Details	£	£
Lengthsman's Gross Pay for October 2024 plus additional hours for undertaking lengthsman training	[redacted]	
Lengthsman's Expenses September miles 43 @45p £19.35		
JW Clerk's Salary (Gross) plus expenses of £		
Foxt Village Hall meeting use October		£30.00
Staffordshire Farm Supplies - Strimmer and Mower Repais		£259.02
James Perry Grass Cutting X 2 September and X 2 for October		£1,466.00
CHAPs Form for HMRC National Insurance charge		£7.52
Donation for 2 Wreaths for Remembrance Sunday		£50.00
Donation to Ipstones Royal British Region for Poppy Appeal		£300.00

190/24 **Online Banking:**

Clerk provided latest information on the possibility of accessing online banking through NatWest. NatWest had been unable to give a date when this would be available. Clerk had also established that the refund for processing the CHAPs form which had been promised had not materialised until being chased. With HMRC now requiring paying of employer NI contributions by online means Chaps Forms were currently the only way this could be processed with NatWest. Clerk had established that Lloyds could provide a suitable account, with online banking capability with double authorisation. Following a discussion Councillor Hemsley proposed changing the bank account to Lloyds, this was seconded by Councillor Stimpson and Carried unanimously.

191/24 **Financial Review:**

Quarterly review of accounts and reconciliation was presented to meeting by Clerk. Councillor Stevenson checked balances quoted on reconciliation to the actual Bank Statements and signed as correct.

Clerk advised that Chairs allowance for current year, which is used for gifts to residents for notable birthday and wedding anniversaries etc was close to the level previously set. It had not been raised for several years. Councillor Stevenson proposed the chairs allowance be raised to £650, this was seconded by Councillor Jackson and carried unanimously.

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192/24	**Plans** **APPLICATION SMD/2024/0449 (Note outside Ipstones Parish)** **LOCATION Wild Thorn Farm Ashbourne Road, Bottomhouse,** **PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT Proposed Extensions and alterations** Councillors considered this application and decided to make no comment as it fell outside the Ipstones Parish Boundary **APPLICATION DET/2024/0040** **LOCATION ACCESS TO COLLYHOLE WOOD AND GOG WOOD, Church Lane** **PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed alteration of private ways for agricultural or forestry use.** Councillor Hemsley queried whether woodlands trust needed to be consulted., Clerk to ascertain if this was the case and ask if any restriction on use included in the sale of woodland. Councillor Irwin queried how large an area of woodland would be accessed from the area being worked on. Following discussion Councillor Jackson proposed advising SMDC that a full planning application should be required, this was seconded by Councillor Birch and carried unanimously.
193/24	**Correspondence:** Correspondence circulated. **Police and Fire Commissioner –** Clerk to advise date of next Parish Council Meeting to the Commissioner and if this were not convenient date to request dates from the commissioner which would be. **Letter requesting permission to prune tree –** Letter had been received requesting permission to prune a tree, Councillor Irwin proposed giving permission, this was seconded and carried unanimously. **Festival of Lights (Church) –** Correspondence noted, Councillor Malyon asked all to make a decoration out of recycling to place on Christmas Tree on behalf of Parish Council. **Blossom Trees Grant –** Monitoring Form completion acknowledged. **Financial Services Survey** - Clerk to complete. **WMAS Defib –** Correspondence noted. **Funding opportunity –** Noted. **P&F** – Noted

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	Christmas Events – Clerk to advise Sally Hampton of the events taking place in Ipstones. **Open date for County elections –** noted. **Rural housing –** noted Clerk to put on parish Notice board and website. **Foxt Village Hall –** Acknowledgement of grant noted. **Employment rights –** noted. **Duty for councils –** noted. **Devolution information –** noted. **Open water safety –** noted. **ADHD information –** noted. **Stoptober –** noted. **Shakura cherry trees –** noted. Clerk to pursue ordering ten. **Licence application –** noted. Following a discussion Councillor Morris proposed recommended approval of the application, this was seconded by Councillor Stevenson and carried. **National grid -** Request for permission to prune trees around cemetery. Councillor Irwin proposed giving permission, this was seconded by Councillor Hemsley, adding that Steve Massey tree officer for SMDC would also need to provide permission as the trees are protected.
194/24	**Leek Moorlands Hospital** Councillor Jackson explained concerns being raised around potential closure. It was agreed that a letter be sent to Neil Carr with copies to the Health Minister and Local MP. With the following points being outlined • 100,000 people in Leek area and increasing due to continued house building in area. • No Public transport to access Urgent Care if positioned in the city. • Travelling to Stoke can take over an hour even in off peak travel times. • Reduction in local services will lead to increased demand on already stretched ambulance services.
195/24	**Ipstones High Street** Discussion around ongoing problems encountered with congestion due to cars being parked on High Street. Councillor Jackson proposed writing to councillor Deaville, Councillor Flunder and copying in Councillor Heath raising the issue and including dashcam footage of examples if possible.

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196/24	**BKVC Presentation Evening** Councillor Malyon and Clerk had attended the presentation evening and awards won by village were shown to parish councillors, Ipstones had been awarded Best Small Village in North of County and Commended for Community Spirit. Four children had also won prizes as follows: - • Winner and Runner up in Poetry and Prose competition. • First and second runner up in poster competition for under 11 age group. Councillor Stevenson proposed that the parish council should provide a £20 Voucher to each Child in recognition of their achievement, this was seconded by Councillor Hemsley and carried unanimously. Councillor Jackson would approach a resident to see if a suitable wooden mount could be turned to display the plaque. For future years, a consideration of whether local competitions for best garden or Hanging baskets etc could encourage a wider participation and interest.
197/24	**Cemetery - Survey on re-using grave plots.** Survey details had been circulated, following a discussion Councillor Stimpson proposed a small working group of Councillors Malyon, Birch and Hemsley and Clerk complete the survey on behalf of the parish council, this was seconded by Councillor Jackson and carried unanimously. A date to undertake this before the deadline was to be arranged.
198/24	**Cemetery – Quotes** The various quotes received for undertaking pruning work on trees in the cemetery were considered and following a discussion Councillor Stevenson proposed the following course of Action: - • Quote from received from James Perry for trimming epicormic Growth be accepted and instruction be given to complete. • Quote from E Dakin for trimming overhanging trees around cemetery be accepted and instruction given to complete. • Oak Tree to be reviewed by Councillor Birch and Councillor Hemsley This was seconded by Councillor Hemsley and carried, Councillor Birch and Hemsley to liaise. Councillor Stevenson noted that he was aware that the mole catcher was attending the cemetery frequently to resolve the mole issues.
199/24	**Allotment Rent Review** Following a discussion reviewing the rent due for the two allotments Councillor Stevenson proposed that the rent should be kept at its current level of £50 per annum. This was seconded by Councillor Morris and carried unanimously.

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200/24	**Heating Allowance** Councillor Malyon outlined the action taken by SMDC to send a letter to Rachel Reeves objecting to the removal of the Winter Fuel Allowance for all pensioners. Following a discussion the meeting was in full agreement to similarly write a letter to Rachel Reeves stating that: - • A method which targeted those on higher tax brackets be utilised • The removal of the fuel allowance be paused until next year to allow people time to budget. Implementing the removal this year would leave people struggling as they have had not had sufficient time to plan.
201/24	**Blood Kits for Defib Boxes** Following a discussion on whether blood kits could be placed in each defib cabinet it was agreed to contact AEDdonate to ask if this were possible, it was believed they could be provided. Councillor Malyon also asked if the topic could be forwarded to the Parish Assembly for discussion.
202/24	**Noon Sun Common - Grants** MB noted that History of Ipstones book identify Noon Sun and Blakelow as commons.
203/24	**Remembrance Sunday** 8th November service in cemetery, Councillor Hemsley had repaired the box in the cemetery which holds the crosses. 10th November parade from Ipstones Memorial Hall, wreaths to be laid in memorial hall. Clerk to advise Police. Councillor Jackson to lay wreath on behalf of Parish Council in Ipstones Church, Councillor Birch to Lay Wreath on behalf of Parish Council at Foxt Church. Clerk to make centres for wreaths with parish crest. Councillor Malyon would inform Representative from Fire Service. Donation to Leek RBL for Wreath was discussed and a donation to Ipstones RBL, Councillor Irwin proposed £350 in total, £50 for Leek to cover the Wreaths and £300 for Ipstones. This was seconded by Councillor Morris and carried unanimously. The purchase of RB: industries signs with silhouette 'Tommies' was discussed, Councillor Irwin Purchasing 20, this was seconded by Councillor Birch and carried unanimously, Clerk to purchase as soon as possible.
204/24	**VE DAY 80** Community Choir would be in attendance and perform, deposit had been sent to book Baker Street Belles
205/24	**Foxt Play Area - Equipment** Councillor Birch to review equipment and process and come back with options at the next meeting.

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206/24	**Memorial Benches** Benches in memory of Mary Oldfield and Joe Barkes were discussed and it was agreed to position one near the Community Orchard in memory of Mary Oldfield and potentially near the Common Good Trust field for Joe Barks, enquiries to be made as to the land near the School Trustees Car Park
207/24	**Old Files at Fire Station** Deferred until next meeting.
208/24	**Highways and Lengthsman's Report:** **Foxt Bank –** Councillor Birch explained the concerns of residents of Foxt, including theories of how removing trees many years ago had led to issues, Councillor Stevenson doubted removal of trees was the primary cause. Councillors noted concern of road being closed. **Water on Froghall Road –** Councillor Stevenson had raised the issue of copious quantities of water on the road. It was agreed for the clerk to contact Severn Trent to establish if it was a leak, also query if water on road by Hilltop is also a leak. Lengthsman's report reviewed and signed by Chair of Council. The following were also raised as issues to report to Staffs Highways or resolve: - • Hedges in Foxt • Hedge by Common Good Trust
209/24	**Any other business deemed urgent:** **Owl Box –** Councillor Hemsley advised there was one owl box left. **Stoke Air Ambulance –** Councillor Morris advised that Stoke Air Ambulance had been collecting outside Morrisons and asking people to switch direct debits from Midlands Air Ambulance Charity to Stoke Air Ambulance, this was felt to contravene Fundraising Regulations and Clerk to check with regulators. **Funerals –** Councillor Malyon noted that the funeral wakes for some residents had not been accepted by the memorial Hall due to clashes with groups etc, Councillor Morris to take back to Memorial Hall Committee
The date of the next meeting was set for Wednesday 27th November 2024 at 7.00 p.m. at Sunday School Room Ipstones	

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