

**MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY  
HELD ON THURSDAY 20<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2023  
AT 7.15pm  
AT THE MILLENNIUM CENTRE**

**In attendance:** Coun.Palethorpe (Chairman)  
Coun.Carnell (Vice-Chair)  
Coun.Mrs.Calland  
Coun.Burnham  
Coun.Smith

**The Clerk:** Miss.Cat.Freston

**District & County Councillor:** Coun.Dewhirst not present.

**Two Members of the Public were in attendance**

**Apologies:** Coun.Farrow, Coun.Rattlidge, Coun.Jerwood, Coun.Ranjit

**Chair:** Coun.Palethorpe

**Minutes:** The Minutes of the last Assembly held on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2022, were taken as read and approved.

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – Coun.Palethorpe**

It has been a privilege to be the Chairman in what has been interesting and in many ways a historic and certainly a full year for the Parish Council and Village with the Beating the Bounds and Platinum Jubilee back in June 2022 followed later in the year by the death of Queen Elizabeth II and the accession to the throne of King Charles III and the planned Coronation Event on 6th May this year

Needless to say Ipplepen remains a brilliant place to live and alongside these notable events the Parish Council has continued to work to deliver increased and improved facilities whilst also ensuring value for money.

We owe much as a village to Simon for his work on maintaining our green spaces and Clare for her tireless commitment to keeping our Public Toilets clean. Thank you.

On the down side throughout the year there have been some ongoing issues not the least of which is that of people (not I should add always by Ipplepen residents) parking without consideration for others which resulted in the 177 Bus Service being withdrawn for a period.

I am pleased that the Parish Council managed to reach an agreement with Country Bus to restore the service. We have also seen an increase in vandalism especially around the Recreation Ground.

I would wish to record on behalf of the Parish Council our thanks to all of the individuals and organisations for their immense contributions to events throughout the year and their support of the Parish Council.

I would like to say thank you to all of the Parish Councillors both current and past who have freely volunteered their time and continue to work and demonstrate their commitment (much of which goes unheralded) to Ipplepen and also thanks to Alistair Dewhirst our District and County Councillor (and of course Judy) for their support.

A special thanks to Cat Freston our Parish Clerk for keeping us in check and making sure we didn't fall foul of the legal requirements of being Parish Councillors.

Finally I would be remiss in not addressing the rumours and speculation that are circulating around the issue of the Ipplepen Neighbourhood Development Plan (2020 - 2033) which will go to a referendum vote on May 4th. I cannot stress strongly enough that the Neighbourhood

Development Plan **IS NOT A PLANNING APPLICATION** and would encourage everyone to read the document that is available on the Parish Council website ([ipplepenparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://ipplepenparishcouncil.gov.uk)) so they can make a fully informed decision when voting.

### **Well Worth a Visit.**

[ipplepenparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://ipplepenparishcouncil.gov.uk)

The reports from the Chairs of Committees along with this report will be available on the Parish Council website along with all of the minutes of Parish Council meetings which show the work carried out across Ipplepen.

### **COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – Coun.Dewhirst**

No report received.

### **FINANCE REPORT - Coun.Smith**

The balance at the end of the financial year 2022/2023 stands at **£ 20,178.62** in the working account which includes outstanding VAT of **£ 5,018.77** The allocated reserve account currently holds **£165,700.47** and therefore our total financial assets stand at **£ 185,879.09** including outstanding VAT.

Expenditure for 2022/2023 includes the footpath now in place between Parkhill and Tozer's Barn at a cost of £20,000. Play equipment repairs and playground maintenance costs at £9,450 is another strain on finances but nevertheless very worthwhile when you see the amount of use the equipment and the park itself gets. A further £6,000 went towards general amenities repairs and our liability insurances are running at £3,250 per annum. Maintenance of the public toilets is running at £8,000 per year to cover both buildings and General Administration comes in at around £30,000. Grass cutting in the two parks and on the green spaces comes in at approx. £3,500 of which we get some £1,400 back from Devon County Council for the highway verge cutting. On top of all that we had the Platinum Jubilee which came in just under budget at £8,500.

The wheeled sports area is still an issue, having been flagged up as high risk in the recent inspection report, and your council are already looking at ways to finance its replacement, at present monies that are not spent are being ring fenced towards the project.

The Precept for 2023/24 is set at **£72,342** paid to us by Teignbridge District Council in two instalments at the end of April and September 2023.

Finally, I should like to record my thanks to Cat, our Clerk, and Cllr Mrs Olding who has chaired our finance committee until leaving the council in December for all their hard work in helping to keep our finances in good shape and to the committee for their work in setting the precept.

### **PLANS REPORT – Coun.Mrs.Calland on behalf of Coun.Farrow**

The Planning Committee have, this year, commented upon fifty-four planning applications, a slight decrease on the previous year; to the majority we have recommended approval, others we have not. We have, again this year, seen an increase in applications for extensions and the like for private dwellings, and a decline in applications for equestrian facilities, agricultural buildings and the provision of dwellings in association with established developments. We are now seeing a steady stream of applications for Certificates of Lawful Development. The Parish Council have been asked to comment on some, but not all of these applications; it would appear that Teignbridge District Council is not required to consult on these applications as they are point of law and not planning, which has been frustrating. Although Ipplepen Parish Council is only a consultee we like to think that our opinions and recommendations are listened to by Teignbridge District Council and form part of their final decision.

Recommendations for these and all other applications are not given without full discussion, either at the monthly Planning Committee meeting or a Full Parish Council and if the need arises a site visit. To this end, when a particular recommendation is made at a Planning Committee meeting or a Full Parish Council and to have it overturned by Teignbridge District Council later, you could think 'why do we bother'. Your Planning Committee do 'bother' because we want what is right for Ipplepen; we love our village and will continue to fight to maintain its character and unique nature.

We are still having to review Retrospective Planning Applications. We are concerned that the attitude of 'you can build anything anywhere and get away with it' is still prevalent. In view of this the Planning Committee together with the Full Parish Council are becoming increasingly concerned at the lack of Planning Enforcement being taken by Teignbridge District Council; this has been noted by other Town and Parish Councils, to this end a Group Planning Forum has been formed to engage Teignbridge District Council in a discussion about the planning process.

Town and Parish Councils are now able to 'call-in' planning applications which they consider need to be decided upon by Committee and not on the recommendation of the Planning Officer. Ipplepen Parish Council will use this power only if agreed necessary by the full Parish Council.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow councillors who have served on the Planning Committee for their time and effort over the past year and would like to reassure the Parish that we will continue to look after their interests, as far as we are able, in respect of planning matters.

### **RE-APPROVAL OF PLANNING GUIDELINES**

There were no changes to the present Planning Guidelines for Ipplepen.

### **HIGHWAYS – Coun.Smith**

The Highways Advisory group have been meeting on an ad-hoc basis both, to pursue projects and to endeavour to keep on top of issues that, from time to time arise, and minutes are publicised and available from the clerk.

Parishioners will not fail to have noticed the extensive utility works that have been affecting the whole village. The current and immediate future works relate to improvements to broadband speeds and enablement of competition in the market.

In the past year there have also been a number of works conducted by all three of the major utility suppliers but with the exception of the effect on our bus service most of the works have been carried out expediently without too much disruption. Whilst talking about buses I should stress that it is not helpful that proposed alternative routes become impassable due to inconsiderate parking. We almost lost the service into the village due to the difficulties with parking in Fore Street, so I do not think it is sensible to test the patience of the bus operator too often.

One issue that has been a thorn in our sides has been the excessively strong downpours we have been having, which have been causing flash flooding and damage to the surface of the highways. The persistent flooding at Bilver is becoming a perennial issue. Devon County Highways have been made aware constantly of the issues that are most concerning and hopefully, some of it will be rectified when the drier weather comes. I understand that a maintenance crew was due at Bilver on the 19<sup>th</sup> of April.

As always there are a number of issues with potholes and blocked buddle holes, and I would like to urge parishioners to report any that they come across on the County Council website just type 'report it' into google and you will be directed to DCCs site. You can even do it on your smart phone and send a photo image.

Last year I reported that we were working on regularising an existing unofficial footpath between Parkhill and Tozer's barn, on the east side of the A381, and I'm pleased to report

that agreement was reached with Devon County Council to carry out the works and that section was completed in November 2022. We now need to look at the possibility of continuing the path on the west side but that will be subject to discussion with the landowner Blue Diamond. We are also in email dialogue with the owner of land in Foredown Road with a view to having a permissive agreement to run a footpath behind the wall.

Finger posts and urban speed limiters are still on our agenda, but we still need to establish both the need and the correct places to position them. Alistair Dewhirst, our County and District Councillor has been advocating a Speed watch initiative within Ipplepen, and I am sure he would welcome anyone willing to take part. This initiative would go a long way to obtaining the evidence that we need.

Despite the sometimes extremely unpleasant weather during the November to February Inspection period all the public rights of way were inspected by Cllr Rattlidge and I and the reports sent to DCC by the due date. Issues reported were fallen trees blocking Footpath 4/bridleway 5 (Miltor Mator to Bickley Mill) and one of the sleeper bridges in footpath 2 (Moor Road to A381 Fermoys). Both issues have been dealt with.

In closing, I should like to thank the members of the advisory group, Cllrs Mrs Calland, Cllr Mrs Olding and Cllr Rattlidge for their commitment and, as we are now into the growing season, gently remind residents, whose garden hedges and shrubs encroach onto footways, that they should keep them trimmed back to prevent pedestrians being forced into the carriageway.

### **AMENITIES REPORT – Coun.Carnell**

I am pleased to say, winter 2022 has passed with very little need of the grit spreader and little or no other major amenity issues to report.

This year in particular a lot of the Parish Council amenity group's time and efforts have revolved around the Village recreational areas, which are thankfully well used and therefore always in need of maintenance and general repair work.

A contract has now been agreed for the redecoration of the main toilet block in the park and this will be soon completed.

A new exterior CCTV system has also been installed to the block this year.

The Clampitt Road toilet block has suffered badly this winter with frozen pipes and water damage, so work is now under way to remedy this.

Concerns over the condition of the skate park and the spiralling cost of its regular repair work need to be addressed, so with this in mind every effort is to be made during the coming year to raise the finance and arrange for a suitable replacement.

Earlier in the year the typhoon suffered damage to the main supporting ropes these have now been replaced.

Two new benches have been placed on the green space in the middle of the Village.

The main water supply to the allotments has now been extended to the lower part of the site, this will avoid the need to carry water long distances in future.

As part of its many duties the Amenities Sub Committee with the aid of the Parish Council has also inspected Parish Properties, overseen work contracts within the Parish and carried out various other general maintenance tasks, with many of the smaller repairs being undertaken by the Parish Councillors themselves to keep costs to a minimum.

I would therefore on behalf of the Parish wish to thank all members of the Amenities Group for the time that they give freely to the Community, often behind the scenes and un-noticed.

Finally, I would also like to thank all other members of the Parish Council for their support throughout the year, and in particular our Clerk Cat Freston for her help and assistance.

### **OPEN FORUM**

No comments or questions.

**The meeting closed at 19.40pm.**