

St Helens Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 8th September 2014 at St Helens Community Centre, Guildford Road, St Helens.

In attendance:

Chair: Mrs Carole Parker

Councillors: Cllr Bacon, Mr Campbell, Mr Cleaver, Mr Thomson.

Clerk: Mrs Dyer

Guest Speaker: Mr Oliver Boulter from the IW Council
20 members of the public.

102/2014 Apologies for absence.

Apologies received from Mrs Russell, she would have to leave early as she had childcare issues.
Apologies received from Mr Earnshaw he was travelling back from his holiday and would not make it back in time.

103/2014 Declarations of interests.

None received.

104/2014 To welcome Oliver Boulter from the Isle of Wight Council and to receive advice on formulating a parish plan.

The Chair welcomed Mr Boulter.

Mr Boulter went on to explain the process of having a Community led plan adopted by the IW Council. He explained that once a plan had been approved and adopted then it could be used to inform all planning decisions regarding the village. Planning officers would have to refer to the plan and take it into regard when making any decisions.

He explained that a community led plan would have to demonstrate that it reflected the aspirations of the community, demonstrate how the community would like to evolve and be set within the framework and perimeters of the Island Plan.

Please see attached copy of presentation for details of the presentation.

Mr Boulter invited questions from the public.

Q. Water mains have been put in by the Solar Farm is that being developed.

A. Mr Boulter was unaware of any plans for further development.

Q. The presentation was confusing as there are so many different types of community plans, why are there so many.

A. Mr Boulter replied that he wanted to outline all the options as the current Village design statement is out of date.

Q. What is the time frame for having a community led plan adopted?

A. Anywhere between 6 Months and 2 ½ years. Community led plans generally have a quicker turnaround time than a Neighbourhood plan, apart from a statutory 6 week consultation period the timescale is not fixed.

Q. Why was there community consultation on what sites were included in the SHLAA?

A. The SHLAA is catalogue of potential development sites, not a list of sites for development. Each planning application would be considered on its own merits.

Q. How much weight do the IOW Council give to local views and community led plans?

A. All planning applications are considered against planning policy.

Q. Can more time be given to the public to comment on planning applications?

A. There are national targets for planning decisions, smaller applications should be decided upon within 8 weeks and larger scale developments within 13 weeks.

Q. Is there truth to the rumour that the IW Council are advertising in Inner Cities for people to come and live on the Isle of Wight.

A. Mr Boulter said he was not aware of any such initiatives.

Mrs Parker thanked Mr Boulter for attending.

105/2014 Public Forum

Mrs Parker informed the public that only questions relating to the rest of the agenda would be heard and any other queries can be put to herself or the Clerk after the meeting in writing or at the next meeting.

Q. Mr Williams asked if the plans to Grasscrete the entrance and exit points of the West Green had been advertised?

A. The Clerk responded that these were only initial plans at this stage put forward by the IW Council and that as far as she was aware had not been advertised.

Q. It was raised that a house bordering the Green had had windows broken 4 times this year by footballs.

A. The Clerk noted the concern.

Q. Who painted some of the causeway white?

A. Not known.

Q. Can the public see a copy of the SHLAA?

A. They are available to view on the IW Council website.

Q. The public toilets on the beach were in a poor state over the summer.

A. The IW Council are responsible for the cleanliness of the toilets over the summer.

106/2014 To agree the minutes of the meeting held on:

14th July 2014

Mr Cleaver proposed they be approved as true and correct.

2nd Cllr Bacon.

RESOLVED

28th July 2014

Mr Campbell proposed they be approved as true and correct.

2nd Mr Thomson.

RESOLVED

4th August 2014

Mr Campbell proposed they be approved as true and correct.

2nd Mr Cleaver.

RESOLVED.

107/2014 To discuss the proposals from the IOW Council regarding discretionary services.

The Clerk explained that she had received a letter from Alex Minns at the IOW Council regarding the discretionary services to be affected by the budget cuts at the IOW Council from next March.

Due to a budget shortfall services locally will be a risk, namely:

- Beach Cleaning
- Grounds Maintenance
- Environment Officer Services

The IOW Council are asking local town and parish councils to contribute towards the costs of maintaining these services as they have a significant shortfall in their budget.

The letter outlined options for the parish council to consider (see attached).

The Clerk had asked for a breakdown of all the income generated by the hiring out of the Green this year the Green had generated just over £5000 worth of income.

Mrs Parker reported that she had been to the meeting held by the IOW Council and that the services may not cease as soon as suggested. It was possible that the beach cleaning contract could be extended for another year and the grounds maintenance contract extended another 2 years.

Mr Thomson proposed that the parish council contribute nothing towards providing the services and state that the parish council still expect the services to continue.

2nd Mr Cleaver

RESOLVED

The Clerk will write to the IOW Council and report that the parish council are unwilling to contribute and request that the services are continued as they are at present.

108/2014 To report a Parish Councillor vacancy and agree advert for the co-option of a Councillor.

The Clerk reported that she had sadly received the resignation of Mrs Shaw.

The vacancy had been advertised and no election was necessary therefore the parish council are free to proceed with the co-option process.

Mr Campbell proposed that the co-option notice be approved and advertised.

2nd Mr Cleaver.

RESOLVED.

109/2014 Clerk's report.

The Clerk had heard from the Isle of Wight Council regarding Rural Superfast Broadband - St Helens is currently in phase 4 of the project which will complete in the summer 2015 although the IW

Council are working to see if they can bring forward some of these end dates. All of the connections required by the contract are scheduled for completion by October next year.

Freedom of information requests – The Clerk reported that over the last few months she had received a number of freedom of information requests regarding the proposed dog order on St Helens beach. She had been asked for copies of all of the emails between the parish council and the IW Council regarding the dog order since Jan 2011. As mentioned before she is finding it impossible to access the emails from the hard drive and as they had been deleted from the IMAP server, to free up space and allow messages to continue to be sent and received, the request was proving difficult to fulfil. Messages may be accessible from the back up hard drive with the employment of an IT expert, obviously there will be some costs incurred with this and she reported serious concerns regarding the amount of time it will take to search through all the messages if they are able to be retrieved. She had received over 3000 messages from the 7/05/2014 that are currently accessible and feared the number of messages to be searched through would be huge and the time taken would exceed the £450 limit outlined in the Freedom of Information act. She has been asked to advise the gentleman concerned as to how he can streamline his request to enable it to be met without cost, this is also taking up time. She believed he had requested the same information from the Isle of Wight council, and the act does state that the parish council can refuse if the information is easily available elsewhere. However, the gentleman concerned wishes to compare the two email trails so wants the two requests met. She would like the Council to consider whether a charge is appropriate in this instance and as to whether his request can reasonably be streamlined to avoid charge.

She had obtained quotes for an IT expert which come in at £45 per hour.

The gentleman concerned does not believe that he should cover the costs of retrieving the emails, however, he would be liable for costs if we consider that his request would cost more than the £450 outlined in the FOI guidance. She welcomed Councillors thoughts on the matter.

Councillors suggested that the Clerk fulfil the request as fully as she is able to and if there are any issues trust her discretion as to how to deal with them.

Grasscrete – The Clerk had contacted Alex Minns regarding the parish council’s refusal to pay for grasscreting. Mr Minns reported that the IOW Council are currently in discussions with the Sports Association regarding covering the cost of installation.

It is likely that the Bembridge Harbour Development plans would have to be re-advertised and discussed again as there have had to be some amendments to the original plans.

110/2014 Financial report – To receive report and to approve any payments due.

Balance noted at £32662.14.

Payments due September 2014.

Easycleaners	£606.67	Toilet cleaning
Mr M Rivers	£240	Landscaping/grass cutting
Southern Electric	£81.54	Electricity bill toilets.

Mrs Parker proposed all payments be approved as per report.

2nd Mr Campbell

RESOLVED – all payments approved as per report.

111/2014 Councillors reports and any items to be included on future agenda.

Councillor Bacon reported that the Isle of Wight Council were reviewing their speed limit policy, which may extend the ability to implement 20mph zones.

Cllr Bacon also reported that works to the Duver Road Bridge were due to start in November.

Mr Campbell reported damage to Hilbre Road by Southern Electric workmen.

He also reported that he had been approached by a member of the public wishing to install a memorial bench on the Green. The Clerk said that would have to be approved by the IW Council.

Mr Campbell also reported a cracked manhole on St Michaels Road, a broken stile on Attrills Lane and an over-hanging hedge at the back of Hope Cottages near the Vine Inn.

Mr Thomson reported a broken bench on the Old Church Green.

He also reported that the Isle of Wight has £6 million earmarked from the national Lottery to better the lives of old people. Cllr Bacon reported that he believes a pilot project was already underway run by Age Concern in conjunction with the Doctor's surgery.

Meeting closed at 8.15pm.