

ICKFORD PARISH MEETING APRIL 2005

Finance – This time last year, I expressed regret and surprise that for another year the Parish Council accounts have not been passed by our auditors due to the shop loan. This situation continues and my only comment is that the issue is highly unusual rather than serious. Again I should stress that there is no suggestion that the accounts are wrong or misleading.

The Parish Council set a precept for this financial year of £10,000 which increases the funds raised over the previous couple of years. Our costs are rising, for example, our public liability insurance rose 10% this year for the same coverage. The increase in precept is mainly to fund improvements to the Playing Area, in particular, the access from Sheldon Road and the play equipment.

Highways – Personally, I have noticed an improved responsiveness of BCC to maintenance requests, perhaps because the launch of the Highways On Call telephone service allows a quick and direct reporting process.

Our persistence with requests for pavement improvements have finally produced dropped curbs at the entrance to Turnfields. Flushed with this success, we shall continue to seek further such improvements.

Speed Limit Review: a recent review of speed limits across the county have left Ickford's limits unchanged, but there are small changes in Worminghall.

Footpaths: 2 issues. The behaviour of some dog owners letting their dogs foul the footpath and the surrounding land caused considerable debate and irritation. Such dog owners are breaking the law and are urged to behave more responsible. At the same time, the PC reminds landowners that AVDC offer free stile and gate upgrades as an investment in our leisure facilities.

The second footpath issue is the long-standing (effective) closure of footpath No:12 along the top of Golders Close. Legally and practically, creating an alternate route is difficult and is a matter of continued attention but slow progress. It is uncommon to find landowners who are generous enough to agree to new footpath across their land so we may end up with a partial closure and/or re-route.

Planning Applications Online – BCC are now putting planning applications online via their website.

Playing Area – Development and improvements of the playing area have been the focus of much attention, fund raising and, indeed, grant applications over the last few years.

First, we are well advanced through the legal process to purchase some additional land from Mr. Caswell. The land along the northern edge, beyond the trees, will create enough space for the new Youth Zone. The Land Registry application has been submitted and, barring any odd issues, should complete very soon.

The relatively poor state (in both quality and quantity) of the play equipment is recognised and the good news is that, led by the Ickford Play Equipment Group (IPEG), considerable funding has been secured, around £10,000. Together with equal funds already raised or promised, this shall permit the replacement and upgrade of the facilities, creating safe, age-related zones around the football pitch. We have also submitted an Awards For All application which might be worth up to £5,000.

Lastly, the works associated with the School Sports Hall construction have been negotiated to leave an improved, hardcore area. We want to expand this into a permanent, vehicle capable surface from Sheldon Road to the Pavilion. The Pavilion end will be fenced and gated to properly separate vehicles and people.

Digital Ickford. – The village website continues to be updated with local information and events. There is also recently launched e-mail notifications for short e-mails about local events. To join the list, follow the link on the website.

Affordable Housing – It is a long-standing action item by the Parish Council to seek a partner for the provision of entry-level rental accommodation in Ickford. This is necessary to retain youngsters within the community. We have been working with the Guinness Housing Trust for a few years now.

Current status is that GHT have contacted landowners of possible sites and have had substantial discussions with one: the Church Commissioners who own the land opposite the entrance to Turnfields. At the moment, the CC have said they will submit their own application to test whether the site is really an exception, which we require to avoid the high cost of normal development land.

Additionally, BCC have now insisted that we liaise with Bucks Community Action (BCA) who have experience with such schemes and whose endorsement will ease any full planning review. BCA have in turn insisted we update the community needs survey (despite a Village appraisal and at least 1 other full survey). This latest survey (hopefully the last) will be posted out to all homes in the next few weeks.

Nigel Bruin

Chairman

Cllr David Smith of AVDC thanked the Chairman for his chairmanship and informed the audience that he was on the economic committee at AVDC.

There were some contentious issues at present namely, planning and development and affordable housing. Kingsbury Square in Aylesbury is to be revamped. The Civic Centre is to be pulled down sometime in the future. He also felt that policing was an issue due to lack of manpower. It is vital to tackle the Government over this issue as he felt that more policing was needed and more funding would help. It was also vital that all incidences of crime be reported to the police, however small.

Reports received from the following organisations

Ickford After School Club, Darby and Joan, Festival, Informer, PCC, Play Equipment, PTA and the Village Hall. These reports were published in the June edition of the Ickford Informer and delivered to all the residents in Ickford.

It was felt from the audience that the Parish Council should allocate more funds towards the Playground Equipment Group to enable this project to get started.

Allotments should generate an income as should the pavilion and that the Parish Council is taking too long over the issue of affordable housing.

MEETING CLOSED: 9.13PM

Ickford Parish Council Accounts
31st March 2005

INCOME

| | | |
|---------------------|-----------|------------------|
| Precept | £7,500.00 | |
| Other Income | £ 169.10 | |
| Total Income | | £7,669.00 |

EXPENDITURE

| | | |
|--------------------------|-----------|------------------|
| Audit | £ 100.00 | |
| Commercial Insurance | £ 904.12 | |
| Electricity | £ 323.66 | |
| Hall Rent | £ 108.00 | |
| Parish Administration | £1,588.00 | |
| Clerks Training | £ 61.00 | |
| Clerks Expenses | £ 100.00 | |
| Dog Bins | £ 456.30 | |
| Churchyard | £ 50.00 | |
| Membership | £ 154.47 | |
| Street Lighting/Repairs | £ 304.67 | |
| Playground Equipment | £ 53.00 | |
| Solicitors Fees | £ 180.00 | |
| Roads | £1,516.08 | |
| Sundry | £ 61.19 | |
| Total Expenditure | | £5,960.49 |

RESERVES

| | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|------------------|
| Solicitor | £ 500.00 | |
| Play Ground Equipment Group | £1,000.00 | |
| Playing Field Maintenance | £5,000.00 | |
| Audit Fees | £1,200.00 | |
| Balance available for use | | £2,013.52 |

Audited Accounts can be view by prior appointment to the Clerk of the Council by writing.