Ilmington Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL held in Ilmington Community Shop on 31 July 2025 at 7:30pm

Present: Cllrs Karen Peachey (Chairman), Lara Lowe, Malcolm Lowe and Chris Plyming

In attendance: Pauline Rigby (Clerk), County Cllr David Curtis, two members of the public

1. **Apologies for Absence**

   Apologies received from Cllr Martin Underwood.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

   Cllr Peachey declared an interest in item 14, as she was the recipient of a payment.

3. **County and District Council Reports**

   Cllr Curtis reported on behalf of both district and county councils although said he had officially stepped back from his role as district ward councillor. He reported:

   - He has spoken with the case officer about development at The Red Lion; it is not considered a high enforcement priority.
   - Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are visiting Ellen Badger Hospital on 27 August, with South Warwickshire Foundation NHS Trust, to discuss future use of the site. Manuela Perteghella MP has asked the Secretary of State to review the decision not to allocate inpatient beds to Shipston.
   - The District Council meets on 14 July to discuss local government reorganisation; the preferred option is for South Warwickshire to form a unitary authority, with other areas forming a North Warwickshire unitary. Rugby Borough Council is hesitant, and Warwickshire County Council's position is undecided.
   - The Reform UK Leader of the county council had resigned; his deputy Cllr George Finch had been appointed as the Leader and would choose his Cabinet tomorrow.
   - The County Councillors grant fund is open. His delegated Highways budget is £35,000 per year, with £16,700 carried over from last year.
   - Free summer activities, including family swimming sessions, will be available for children at leisure centres in Stratford and Alcester, with free lunches provided.

   Cllr Skinner was not present, but had sent a written report.

4. **Public Forum**

   A resident asked about developer contributions for Cross Leys Farm development.

5. **Confirmation of Minutes**

   It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting on 3rd July 2025 be confirmed as an accurate record and signed.

6. **Planning Applications:** To agree responses to planning applications.

   6.1 To report planning decisions at variance with the views of the Council.

   Hedgerow removal notification 25/01446/HRN: A protection order had been placed on one of the hedges, requiring replanting of the 3m section to be removed.

25/00319/FUL: Cross Leys Farm. The application had been permitted. Council was disappointed that Neighbourhood Plan policies were not covered in the conditions.

6.2 25/01643/TPO: 7 Manor Barns Middle Street Ilmington Shipston CV36 4LS -T1 & T2 Limes - Crown reduction by 30% overall resulting in an estimated height reduction of 10 metres and crown spread reduction of 6 metres.

Comment: NO OBJECTION

6.3 25/01519/LDE: Blackwell Bushes Blackwell Shipston-on-Stour CV36 4JE - Use of land as domestic garden (Use Class C3)

Comment: NO REPRESENTATION

6.4 25/01499/TREE: Baytree Barn Front Street Ilmington Shipston-on-Stour CV36 4LN - T2, cherry x 4no. - Fell. -T3 fir - Remove deadwood. -T4 Scots pine - Fell (dead). - T5, Leyland cypress x 5no. - Reduce by 5metres. -T6 horse chestnut - Thin the crown by 20% and reduce branch length by a maximum of 1.5 metres. -T7 yew - reduce overall crown by 0.6 metres to re-shape.

Comment: NO OBJECTION

6.5 To consider any applications notified since publication of the agenda. None.

7. Padel Court Proposal

To receive an update from Ilmington Tennis Club on the Padel Court proposal

The Chairman reported that the Tennis Club's feasibility study on the new Padel Court had been put on hold until September due to difficulties obtaining a clear estimate for planning costs, and the resignation of two subcommittee members. It was also noted that previous discussions with the Parish Council about sharing the external hire fees had not been finalised and agreed the matter would be added to the next agenda.

8. Mobile Mast

To consider the interim results of the consultation on a new mobile mast in Ilmington.

It was RESOLVED that a meeting be held with Altas Tower to find out more.

Action: Clerk to circulate potential meeting dates to all councillors.

9. Ilmington Playing Fields

9.1 To note that the council's application for a Community Orchard of up to 20 fruit trees at Ilmington Playing Fields has been successful and agree next steps.

Councillors expressed a preference for native heritage varieties of, for example, plums or apples, and would give consideration to varieties suitable for a warming climate. The WCC ecologist's offer to visit to help plan the orchard was accepted.

9.2 To approve a grant application to SDC's Climate Nature Recovery Fund for 'Bringing life back to our pond'.

It was noted that the application had already been submitted, to ensure it was received before the deadline.

It was RESOLVED that the grant application be approved.

9.3 To consider quotations for cutting the perimeter hedge on Mickleton Road.

One quote had been received; however, further quotes would be required.

10. Grace's Playground

To receive the routine inspection report(s) and consider any actions arising.

It was noted that:

- Remedial work on the edge of the steps on the mound has deteriorated but further work was unlikely to be effective during hot weather.
- The weeping willow has been trimmed by persons unknown which was a shame because children had enjoyed playing under its weeping branches.
- A quote has been received from Playdale, and it was agreed to keep a watching brief on the climber.
- No additional quotes have been obtained for the fencing.
- Councillors would meet on-site at the playground to agree the location of the sign.
- The annual inspection by ROSPA Playsafety had been booked for September.

11. **Biodiversity Action Plan** / Ilmington Wildlife Group

11.1 To consider Ilmington Wildlife Group evaluation report for wildflower planting, and consider any actions arising.

The main action required was for the wildflower areas to be cut and the cuttings collected in the autumn. It was agreed that the Wildlife Group would be encouraged to carry out the cutting, with the council offering financial support if needed.

Cllr Peachey was tasked with contacting the group to discuss arrangements. Also, a letter of thanks would be sent to the Wildlife Group in recognition of their efforts.

11.2 To consider the Wildlife Group proposal "Towards a Biodiversity Action Plan for Ilmington" and agree the way forward.

It was RESOLVED to ask the Wildlife Group for suggestions for the Action Plan.

12. Civility & Respect Pledge

12.1 To adopt a Dignity at Work Policy.

A draft policy had been circulated.

It was RESOLVED that the Dignity at Work Policy be adopted.

12.2 To pass a resolution to sign up to the Civility and Respect Pledge.

The Chairman read out the pledge statements and 'yes' responses were confirmed.

It was RESOLVED to sign up to the Civility and Respect Pledge.

13. Conclusion of Audit 2024-25

To receive and consider the external auditor's report.

It was RESOLVED that the council felt that the 'other matters' opinion was misleading and did not believe that supporting financial information about the Clerk's salary could be provided with the initial submission and also comply with data protection law.

Clerk was asked to send copies of correspondence with the auditor to Cllr Lara Lowe who was authorised to send a follow-up response if she considered it appropriate.

14. Finance & Admin

14.1 To note payment received of £125 (insurance excess) and £27.39 (wayleaves).

This was duly noted.

14.2 To approve the bank reconciliation to 30 June 2025.

It was RESOLVED that that bank reconciliation be approved.

14.3 To receive the budget monitoring report for the year to date.

It was RESOLVED that the report was received.

14.4 To note payment of the data protection fee to ICO. A payment of £47 was noted.

14.5 To note the Local Government Services Pay Agreement effective April 2025.

It was noted that the pay agreement had been finalised and applied.

14.6 To approve payments as per the schedule below.

Cllr Peachey had declared an interest in the payment to herself for soap, and requested that it was considered separately from the other payments.

The Clerk requested that an invoice from Simon Healey be added to the list.

It was RESOLVED that an invoice from Simon Healey of £864 be added to the payments list and payments, except the payment to Cllr Peachey, be approved.

Date	Payee	In respect of	Amount	
04-Jul	Rob Hawkins *	Mowing village greens	£	925.00
06-Jul	Jane Wileman *	Cleaning	£	71.75
09-Jul	WaterPlus *	Water charges	£	357.36
11-Jul	Red Horse Vale ‡	Wood mulch	£	82.50
12-Jul	Microsoft Ireland ‡	Exchange Online (Plan 1) Annual	£	88.51
14-Jul	Asda Mobile ‡	SIM only bundle	£	5.00
16-Jul	Moore	External auditor's review	£	409.50
18-Jul	ICO *	Data protection fee	£	47.00
28-Jul	Simon Healey	Mowing cuts 8 and 9	£	864.00
31-Jul	Unity Trust Bank *	Account fee	£	6.00
31-Jul	Staff costs *	July payroll inc. backpay	£	1,077.11
* Already paid ‡ Paid with card		TOTAL	**£**	**3,933.73**

14.7 Cllr Peachey had declared an interest and did not participate in the following item.

Vice Chair Cllr Plyming presided.

It was RESOLVED that the payment of £7.90 to Cllr Peachey be approved. (reimbursement for soap at the Pavilion)

Cllr Peachey resumed the chair.

15. **Correspondence:** To consider actions arising:

15.1 Concerns regarding development of the Red Lion pub. This had been addressed during the ward councillor’s report.

15.2 Severn Trent offer of voluntary time. It was agreed to discuss volunteer opportunities with the Wildlife Group.

16. Member Reports (for information only)

Report(s) by any members who attended any meeting on behalf of Council.

Nothing to report.

17. Future Agenda Items

To receive information about future items of business (for information only).

Already noted: Risk Register, Pavilion caretaker.

To be added: Highways walkabout, Neighbourhood Plan review, Tennis Club agreement.

18. Closed Session

To exclude press and public in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 owing to the confidential nature of the business.

To discuss Clerk's working hours and overtime.

It was RESOLVED that the Clerk's working hours be increased to 10 hours per week, to be reviewed in six months (when budget setting in December/January.)

To appoint a councillor to carry out the Clerk's annual appraisal.

It was RESOLVED that Cllr Martin Underwood be appointed to carry out the Clerk's annual appraisal.

19. Next Meeting

Thursday 28 August 2025, 7:30pm in Ilmington Community Shop Café.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9:35pm.

Signature of Chairman on approval of the minutes: ______________________________