

# July - Instow Parish Council Meeting Minutes (Draft)

Held at Instow Village Hall on Thursday 20th July 2023 7.30pm

**Attendees** – Cllr Scott (Chair), Cllr McCrum (Vice-Chair) Cllrs Hackett, Arthur, Edwards, Hopkins and Foster. Parish Clerk, new Parish Clerk and three members of the public.

- Min 52 23/24 – The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting
- Min 53 23/24 – Apologies – Councillor Allen and District Councillor Renshaw
- Min 54 23/24 – Public Session –
  - S. Moores on behalf of the Instow Village Hall wanted to express disappointment at the handling of the request to grant permission to the IVH for use of the beach on the 13th of August for their Community on Show event. The Chairman explained that the request had to be put before the full Council, therefore the decision had been delayed until the July meeting, where the matter came up under correspondence.
  - P. Cattle inquired as to why the doors to the Marine Parade toilets were left open and asked if they could be closed as they are an eyesore to the people living opposite them. The Chairman stated that this issue had been raised before and that the Council would look into the matter. P. Cattle also asked for an update on the damaged garages in the car park. Cllr Arthur reminded her that they belong to NDDC, and informed the Council that NDDC were still waiting on the report from the structural engineer.
  - P. Cattle also asked if the litter bin outside the car park could be mended and moved slightly. Cllr Hackett replied that the bin belongs to NDDC and informed the council that NDDC have allocated six new bins for Instow.
  - P. Cattle also mentioned the broken light in the car park. The Chairman said that DCC had reported to be sending someone to fix it. Clerk to chase.
  - P. Cattle wanted clarification on the trading on the quay and mentioned a letter she had received from NDC in December 2022 reporting that they had no staff available to enforce or inspect. Cllr Arthur stated that this would probably still be the case.
  - P. Cattle informed the Council that the Library van service would be ending which would be a great loss to the parish and asked whether IPC could support the van. The Chairman mentioned that IPC had offered the library services a grant for the Instow Van which had been refused. The Chairman also mentioned that there was an online petition to keep the Library Van in service and she would share the link to the survey with the Parish News.

- S. Moores asked if the businesses trading in the car park of the Commodore had planning permission. The Council responded that they were not aware of any permission. Cllr Edwards suggested sending all enquiries or complaints to DC Renshaw.
- Min 55 23/24 – Councillors Declarations of Interest. – None.
- Min 56 23/24 – County & District Ward reports. – District Councillor Renshaw informed the Council of the Whitecross Offshore Windfarm meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup> of August, on Teams at 11am, facilitated by NDC. IPC are negotiating with Whitecross to set up a meeting in the Instow Village Hall on the same day in the evening, to present the project to the parishioners. Clerk to confirm shortly.
- Min 57 23/24 – To confirm as a true record the minutes of the meeting held on **15<sup>th</sup> June 2023**. – It was resolved, with no votes to the contrary to approve the minutes of the meeting.
- Min 58 23/24 – Any matters arising from item 6 – Nothing arising.
- Min 59 23/24 – Tracker update – see appendix 1
- Min 60 23/24 – Correspondence & Communications – see appendix 2
- Min 61 23/24 – Finance – a summary of the Council finances, and to approve any payments. See appendix 3. All payments approved by all.
- Min 62 23/24 – Audit Report – The Chairman confirmed that all members of the Council has received and noted the internal audit report.
- Min 63 23/24 – Clerk’s Pension – The Chairman informed the Council that due to several payroll related issues, the Clerk had not been receiving a pension from IPC. The Chairman asked the Council to approve paying the Clerk the amount that IPC would have paid into the NEST pension scheme which was 10% of the monthly amount for a total of eleven salaries. The total amount was £727.27. This request was agreed by all.
- Min 64 23/24 – Rural Police Report – The Chairman reported to the Council about a phone call from PC Julian Fry from the Rural Police Division, offering advice to IPC on issues in the village such as bikes on the beach and speeding along Anstey Way. PC Fry suggest the implementation of speed checks to determine whether vehicles were actually exceeding speed limits. He also clarified that if bikes are spotted on the beach, concerned parties should contact the local police.

- Min 65 23/24 – IPC Beach Committee Meeting with Christie Estates – See Appendix 4.
- Min 66 23/24 – Planning –  
Reference: **76314** - proposed two storey side extension, together with a single storey extension to the rear to the existing barn conversion. (Amended Description) at Ashcott Barn Instow, Bideford Devon EX39 4LU. Grid Ref:248139; 131042. – No objections.
- Min 67 23/24 – Any other business as raised by Chair – Nothing raised.
- Min 68 23/24 Next meeting – **21st September 2023.**

Meeting closed at: **8.48pm**

# **Appendix 1 - Instow Parish Council 'Tracker' – updated for July 2023**

## **Tracker - Decisions taken where implementation has yet to be completed**

### **Car Park**

The barrier to entrance has been slightly damaged. R. Floyd to assess damage in due course. IPC planned to take care of the final lines, but the Chairman informed the Council that Mr Crabb has been in touch and is chasing the contractor to get on with the painting. Clerk to chase up.

### **The Sands**

Cllr Arthur has been in touch with Ken Miles at NDC who is monitoring the situation and will meet again with Cllr Arthur in September to give update.

### **Parking and congestion in Instow**

On-going analysis of parking surveys. Cllrs Arthur, Hopkins and Edwards to collaborate on creating a scheme that would suit the needs of all affected in the village.

### **Hillsleigh**

The Chairman has managed to contact Mr Jones at NDC regarding TPOs in garden, and Mr Jones has informed her that a blanket TPO will be put on the whole garden. This item will remain on the tracker until the planning application goes through.

### **Boats on Beach**

Clerk has tried to contact P. Short to check on mooring fees, but has had no response. IPC has discussed the matter with Christie Estates and would like a policy in place to prevent boat owners putting boats on the beach and not paying fees.

### **Website**

The Chairman has received an email from WesternWeb stating that the new website is now finalised, and they are awaiting the domain transfer. The Chairman informed the Council that the Website will be going live on Monday but will be in transition for seven days to correct any errors/changes needed. The Chairman asked all Cllrs to provide an IPC email address to publish on the new website.

### **Metric Vs Flowbird**

The Car Park has two car park machines, one from a company called Metric and one from a company called Flowbird. The Metric machine was installed because the Flowbird machine did not (at that time) have a contactless facility. Since last summer, the Flowbird now also has contactless payments.

METRIC- The Chairman proposed that IPC do not renew the Metric maintenance contract and cancel the PSP monthly contract allowing the Metric machine to be used for cash only. Clerk has contacted Metric and have received a response to confirm ending the contract at the end of July.

FLOWBIRD- The Chairman asked for permission from the Council to allow Flowbird to take direct debit payments for the PSP charges. Permission was granted by all. Chairman and Clerk signed the new Merchant Processing Agreement. Processing charges should now be reduced from 0.25p per transaction to 0.06p.

### **Appointment of new Parish Clerk**

Permission granted to allow an overlap on timings, so that the new appointee can shadow the existing Clerk for an agreed period of time, following their start date. – The Chairman informed the Council that Celia Merrill had been appointed to the role and will begin working with the current Clerk from the 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2023.

### **Noticeboards**

NDC have contacted the Clerk regarding an error on the Car Park Tariffs' noticeboard. The discrepancy is with the price for a day's parking on the sign, which says £8 but on the Machines it is actually £6. The Clerk has contacted DX signs to get a quote for a new sign and has made a temporary alteration to the current sign. The new Clerk's number is being added to the sign which will then be printed.

### **S106 Monies**

Planning obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), commonly known as s106 agreements, are a mechanism which make a development proposal acceptable in planning terms, that would not otherwise be acceptable. – Nothing heard.

### **Grants**

Instow Parish Council seeks to support projects or services run by local community groups and voluntary organisations within the Instow Parish. Currently no applications. – No applications.

## **Appendix 2 - Correspondence and Outcomes – July 2023**

1. Email from Selaine Saxby MP regarding the Whitecross windfarm. – Discussed at meeting.
2. North Devon eScooters Experimental order 6077- An email from Ian Roberts (DCC) informing that the Department for Transport have made changes to the national regulations to give E-Scooters being used in a trial the same access as cycles. As North Devon is a trial area, the traffic regulation orders in this area need to be amended to formally introduce an exemption where cycles are permitted. – Clerk to draft letter to NDC incorporating Councillors views.
3. An email from Zita Costello inviting parishioners to a Summer Wellbeing Event at Kingsley School, Bideford on the 20th August from 10-4. The free event is aimed at nurturing the mind and body, and offers a wide range of exhibitors, taster sessions, and delectable food stalls, all dedicated to promoting holistic wellness. – Noted
4. An email From Jo Holman asking for the Instow Village Hall (IVH) to use the beach for their Community on Show event on the 13<sup>th</sup> August 2023. Ms Holman requested permission for IPC's part of the beach for some of the activities (sandcastle competition/dog show). The Village Hall insurance would cover the events away from the hall. Christie Estates have granted the IVH use of their area of the beach. – Permission granted.
5. An email from Christie Estates in collaboration with Plastic Free North Devon regarding rubbish on the local beaches. Local schools have been contacted by the partnership to promote discussion of school leavers' parties on the beaches and the problem of rubbish and debris being left behind. A community beach clean-up has also been organised for the 23<sup>rd</sup> of July at Instow beach. – Noted

6. An email from Selaine Saxby regarding two local schemes. The first is Devon County Council's Road Warden Scheme to help with our pothole challenges [Road Warden Scheme - Communities \(devon.gov.uk\)](https://www.devon.gov.uk). The second scheme is the Automated External Defibrillator (AED) fund; The Department of Health and Social Care is inviting interested organisations to register expressions of interest for its £1 million Community Automated External Defibrillators (AED) Fund, aimed at increasing the number of AEDs in public places where they are most needed and help save lives. – The two schemes could be very helpful for the village. The first being a scheme to encourage volunteers to sign up with their parish Council to receive free training to be able to check signage and stop traffic. This would also allow them to complete work on potholes in the village, as long as there is a volunteer road warden who has completed Chapter 8 training provide free by DCC. The scheme mentions that Councils would be able to claim back 25% of costs for materials etc. It was decided to put an advertisement in the parish news asking if anyone was interested in becoming a Road Warden for Instow. The second scheme is to install defibrators in key places in the village. – The Clerk was asked to check with Christie Estates whether there is a power supply to the quay and to check with the owners of the Roundhouse on the quay whether they would support putting a defibrillator on their outside wall.
7. An email from S. Moores asking if the IPC could replace the noticeboards in the bus stops as some are in a poor state and contain posters from events prior to Covid. It was decided to replace the ones that are not functional, try and get duplicate keys cut, and one set would be kept by the Village Hall in addition to the ones at All Saints. Jule Braddick in her position as bus shelter cleaner would have a set so she can clean and take down old notices.

### Appendix 3 - Financial Information – July 2023

<b>Number</b>	<b>Payee</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Amount</b>
1	Julie Braddick	Toilet Block	£520
2	Julie Braddick	Extra Cleaning/ Road Signs	£215.34
3	Julie Braddick	June – Extra Cleaning	£195.80 (Paid in June)
4	NDC	Clerk's Salary	£801.11
5	Emily Edwards	Monthly amount + phone	£45
6	Emily Edwards	Parking Ticket – Bank	£1.40
7	Emily Edwards	Printer Ink – Colour and Black	£44.99
8	Emily Edwards	Printing paper	£4.99
9	Emily Edwards	Reimburse of audit fee	£78.75
10	Metric	Ticket Roll	£118.49
11	Metric	Sim Charge	£72
12	Metric	MiOffice	£100.80
13	Metric	PSP Charges – June 2023	£150
14	Paul Fletcher	Pavement cleaning	£312.60
15	Joanne Bell	Beach cleaning	£260
16	Flowbird	Smartfolio July	£12
17	D. Prouse	Plumber	£80.88
18	DX Signs	Dog sign	£90
19	NDC	Dog Bin Collection	£351
20	R. Allen	Job Advert – Reimburse	£286
21	WesternWeb	Website Construction	£696
<b>Total expenditure:</b>			<b>£4241.35</b>

**Treasurer's Account:** £ 54,346.32

**Business Account:** £ 42,225.64

## Appendix 4 – Reports – July 2023

### I. Beach Committee meeting with Christie Estates

The Wayfarer, Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2023 4pm

**Attendees:** Cllr Scott (IPC Chair), Cllrs Arthur and Hackett, A. Woollacott (Christie Estates Manager), Parish Clerk (IPC) and New Parish Clerk (IPC)

- **Beach Cleaning**

IPC have a contractor to clean the main beach during the summer months. That contract will have to go to tender next year. Cllr Scott asked A. Woollacott (A.W) if Christie Estates would be happy to raise the amount they donate to IPC to contribute to the beach cleaning. A. W confirmed that the Estate would be happy to raise the amount from £500 to £800 this year, and in future would consider a third of the cost. He informed us that Christie Estates are sponsoring beach cleans on the Puttermouth Sandhills.

- **Weddings and blessings on Beach**

IPC are concerned that with new legislation coming in in the next year there may be commercial pressure to hold weddings on the beach, and asked that IPC and Christies should have a co-ordinated response to this. A. W responded that Christie Estates already allow blessings on Saunton Beach (for a fee) and as part of Instow is also privately owned by them they will wait and see what happens with requests. A.W noted that he would speak to N. Maun; Christie Estates' Wedding and Events Coordinator about the potential issue.

- **Businesses on the beach**

IPC have been approached by various businesses with interest to use the beach for their ventures. A. W mentioned that Hockings have an agreement with Christie Estates to use the beach/road to sell ice-creams, and are licenced. Cllr Scott noted that IPC had not been informed of this arrangement and that the lease from the Crown states that the beach is not to be used for any commercial enterprises. A.W mentioned that Christie Estates had been approached by different organisations but had declined their applications to use the beach. IPC requested that Christie Estates



inform them of any such requests and that there should be a co-ordinated approach on this. A.W would not agree to this.

- **Boats on the beach**

IPC have been concerned for a while about the discarded boat opposite the Boathouse, which is Christie land. P. Short had attempted to deal with the owner but the boat appears to be now completely abandoned. IPC would like a policy in place to prevent boat owners putting boats on the beach and not paying fees.

- **Moorings – Peter Short**

P. Short currently collects any mooring fees but will be potentially retiring soon. IPC would need to look for someone else to fill the role.

A.W suggested contacting the Instow Yacht Club who also make use of P. Short's services, and that he would contact someone to see if they were prepared to help.

- **Sand clearance by the Boathouse/ Flood plans**

The issue of flooding opposite the Boathouse is still unresolved and a concern. IPC would like to have confirmation from DCC about the proposed project in collaboration with DCC, F. Biederman, Christie Estates and IPC (see December meeting minutes). Christie Estates recommend writing to F. Biederman and Highways to inquire on any progress. A.W added that Highways (DCC) need a civil engineering solution that is long term.

- **Vehicles on the beach**

IPC informed A.W that there had been motorbikes riding in the sand hills. All agreed that it was difficult to stop motorbikes accessing the sandhills.

IPC informed A. W that there have been reports of dangerous driving on the beach. The cars get on to the beach via the slipway which is owned by the Environment Agency. The barrier that was in place to limit cars driving on the beach was removed as it was claimed to be a trip hazard. A.W asks IPC to write to the EA suggesting that they would be held accountable for any injuries from cars on the beach, if they have no barrier in place on the Slipway. Christie Estates were also asked to write such a letter.

- **Additional Issues**

- i. Christie Estates informed IPC that they had been approached by North Devon District Council with regard to building more houses in Instow, and were in discussions regarding development of the land below Rectory Lane.

- ii. Christie Estates informed us that no land had been sold for a Hydrogen plant.

## II. Internal Audit Report 22/23

Bar Beacon, Anstey Way,

Instow, Bideford,

Devon, EX39 4JG.

Tel: 01271 860420

Email: [michaelgreeninstow@gmail.com](mailto:michaelgreeninstow@gmail.com)

Instow Parish Council,

1 Shepherds Way

Instow

Bideford

EX39 4FQ

13 July 2023

Dear Councillors,

### **Internal Audit 2022/23**

#### **Overview**

The information provided to me for the audit was comprehensive and the Parish Council's accounting records and financial control procedures were found to be satisfactory in all important respects, but I wish to draw the Council's attention to the following:

#### **Car Park Income**

This is by far the Council's largest source of income. It arises from a large number of small transactions, and 47% of the car park receipts in the year were in cash. For these reasons there is a significant chance of errors arising, and the audit included detailed checks of the accuracy of the reported totals. Apart from a small discrepancy in the VAT, the figures were found to be correct.

The car park income is collected through two parking meters, which are of different makes, and payments for card receipts are made to the Council in different ways. With the Metric meter, payments are made to the Council as gross receipts and Metric charges for its processing costs separately. With the Flowbird meter, payments are made to the Council after deducting processing costs, although a statement is provided with each monthly payment showing the amount of the costs. Only one element of the costs is subject to VAT, and in future the costs should be separated out so as to record the costs and the VAT correctly. The Council should obtain invoices from Metric so as to know whether their costs include VAT.

It is good accounting practice that receipts and payments should not be off-set against each other, and the draft Receipts and Payments schedule has been amended to show the car park receipts as the gross amount (net of VAT) and the parking meter costs as payments.

The processing costs charged for the Metric and Flowbird meters are 5.1% and 10.9% of income respectively. This implies that, from the perspective of processing costs, if one meter is to be disposed of, it would be better to lose the Flowbird meter. However, I understand that the Flowbird meter is more reliable, which is an important factor since, if there were only one meter, having the meter out of action for a day or more would cause a considerable loss of income.

The Flowbird meter was up-graded during the year. Before the up-grade, Flowbird said in an email that the processing charge of 25p per transaction would be approximately halved following the up-grade, but this did not happen. I recommend that Flowbird is challenged to comply with their undertaking.

### **Car Park Refurbishment**

The car park was resurfaced during the year at a cost of £65,724, which was paid from the Maintenance Fund established for that purpose. 5% of the contract value has been retained. The Fund is being topped up each year as a reserve for future maintenance work.

### **Risk Management**

Risk management is an important element of financial management. I recommend that the Finance Committee should have responsibility for:

- a) Reviewing the adequacy of the insurance policy in conjunction with the insurance broker when the policy is due for renewal.
- b) Each year, reviewing the adequacy of the written risk assessments and considering whether the risk assessment requirements have been met.
- c) Reviewing the quarterly transaction reports and monitoring receipts and payments in relation to the budget

In each case, the conclusions should be reported to the Council and recorded in the minutes.

### **Website**

The Government places great emphasis on transparency. Every Local Authority is required to have a website, which is the primary means of informing parishioners and other members of the public about the Council's members, meetings, decisions, finances and policies. It is obviously important that the website provides information that is comprehensive and up-to-date. The Transparency Code sets deadlines for the publication of certain items of information.

There are a number of omissions on the Council's website. In particular, the list of Councillors is not up-to-date, and the membership of committees and working groups, and representation on external local public bodies, need to be shown. It is the responsibility of all Councillors to check that website content is adequate and accurate.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Green FCMA

Internal Auditor

**III. Instow Village Hall Accounts 22/23**

**Instow Village Hall  
Quay Lane  
Instow, Bideford  
Devon**

Registered Charity No. 300873

Accounts for year ended  
31 March 2023

Correspondence address:  
5 Lighthouse View, Anstey Way,  
Instow, Bideford, Devon, EX39 4FY

Instow Village Hall

Accounts for year ended 31 March 2023

## Cash Book Balance

	<b>31/03/2023</b>	31/03/2022
	£	£
<b>Santander Bank – Current Account</b>	<b>16,057</b>	19,350
<b>Lloyds Bank – Community on Show Account</b>	<b><u>1,169</u></b>	<u>1,219</u>
<b>Total Cash at Bank</b>	<b>17,226</b>	20,569
<b>Less – Key Deposits</b>	<b><u>(95)</u></b>	<u>(95)</u>
<b>Total Cash attributable to the Charity</b>	<b><u>17,131</u></b>	<u>20,474</u>

## Movement in Fund Balances

	<b>2023</b>	2022
	£	£
<b><u>Restricted funds</u></b>		
<b>Community on Show</b> at 1 April 2022	<b>968</b>	918
received in year	<b>0</b>	50
expenditure in year	<b>(50)</b>	0
transferred from Instow Village People	<b>251</b>	0
at 31 March 2023	<b>1,169</b>	968
<b>Instow Village People</b> at April 2022	<b>251</b>	251
transferred to Community on Show	<b>(251)</b>	0
at 31 March 2023	<b>0</b>	251
<b>Save our Hall Fund</b> at 1 April 2022	<b>0</b>	
contribution from fundraising event	450	
at 31 March 2023	<b>450</b>	
<b><u>Designated Fund</u></b>		
<b>Maintenance Reserve</b> at 1 April 2022	<b>2,053</b>	1,594
transferred from General Fund	<b>1,000</b>	4,000
expenditure on refurbishment in year	<b>(2,716)</b>	(3,541)
at 31 March 2023	<b>337</b>	2,053
<b><u>Unrestricted Fund</u></b>		
<b>General Fund</b> at 1 April 2022	<b>17,202</b>	15,278
surplus in year	<b>(1,027)</b>	5,924
transfer to Maintenance Reserve	<b>(1,000)</b>	(4,000)
at 31 March 2023	<b>15,175</b>	17,202
<b>Total of All Funds at 31 March 2023</b>	<b>17,131</b>	20,474

## Receipts and Payments

	Note	2023	2022
		£	£
<b>Receipts</b>			
<b>Community on Show</b>		<b>0</b>	50
<b>Save our Hall Fund</b>			
Contribution from fundraising event	7	<b>450</b>	0
<b>Maintenance Reserve</b>		<b>0</b>	0
<b>General Fund</b>			
Grants – Instow Parish Council		<b>350</b>	350
Coronavirus support		<b>0</b>	8,000
Hire of Hall – Pre-school		<b>0</b>	468
Table tennis		<b>342</b>	156
Keep Fit		<b>615</b>	426
Pilates		<b>154</b>	40
Women’s Institute		<b>150</b>	270
NIPS	6	<b>41</b>	439
Other		<b>1,072</b>	832
Fundraising event		<b>1,800</b>	0
Electricity		<b>333</b>	48
Sundry receipts		<b>10</b>	0
<b>Total Receipts in General Fund</b>		<b><u>4,867</u></b>	<u>11,029</u>
<b>Total Receipts in All Funds</b>		<b><u>5,317</u></b>	<u>11,079</u>
<b>Payments</b>			
<b>Community on Show</b>			
Storage		<b>50</b>	0
<b>Maintenance Reserve Fund</b>			
Refurbishment Project		<b>2,716</b>	3,541
<b>General Fund</b>			
Utilities		<b>1,146</b>	1,191
Cleaning labour and materials		<b>1,303</b>	1,766
Administration, subscriptions & advertising		<b>99</b>	132
Licences		<b>164</b>	256
Insurance		<b>904</b>	900
Repairs and maintenance		<b>1,294</b>	695
Storage & sundries		<b>25</b>	165
Cost of fundraising event		<b>959</b>	0
<b>Total Payments from General Fund</b>		<b><u>5,894</u></b>	<u>5,105</u>
<b>Total Payments from All Funds</b>		<b><u>8,660</u></b>	<u>8,646</u>

<b>Excess of Payments over Receipts</b>		<b>(3,343)</b>	<b>2,433</b>

## Notes to the Accounts for year ended 31 March 2023

1. The accounts have been prepared by the Receipts and Payments method. Comparative figures are shown for the preceding year.
2. The Village Hall property is held in the books of Instow Parish Council, which is designated Custodian Trustee.
3. Other fixed assets are written off in the year of purchase.
4. There was no Community on Show event in 2021/22 or 2022/23.
5. The group known as Instow Village People was disbanded during 2022/23, and funds held by the group were transferred to the Community on Show.
6. An amount of £439 was received from NIPS for the hire of the Hall for a drama performance in February 2022, which was cancelled. The sum has been retained as payment for a future performance.
7. A series of events has been planned to raise money for the Hall, the first event being held in March 2023. Money raised specifically for the purpose of securing the financial position of the Hall is paid into a restricted fund called the Save our Hall Fund.

Accounts approved by the Trustees on 13 July 2023