



Chidham & Hambrook
Parish Council

CHIDHAM & HAMBROOK PARISH COUNCIL BUSINESS PLAN

Approved by the Parish Council 4 March 2021
To be updated March 2022

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1. INTRODUCTION

This Business Plan is designed to help our local community have a better understanding of what the Parish Council does and clarify what it cannot do. There may be occasions when the Parish Council has to make decisions contrary to our stated commitments if budget constraints, new legislation or changes in our policies make that necessary. Any changes will, however, be reflected in an updated Plan.

To ensure this Business Plan is consistent with our residents' wishes we need the help of the community. We will periodically consult on the Plan's contents through our Parish Council website, news briefings through the Village Magazine and at the Annual Parish Meeting normally held in May each year. In this current time of Covid pandemic, public meetings have still been conducted by way of the Zoom platform but advertised and supported by way of the Village Magazine and door-to-door leaflets. We will request and respond to feedback.

The Business Plan is available on our website. Please tell us what you think about it as we welcome your comments.

2. GOVERNANCE

The Parish Council

Chidham & Hambrook Parish Council is the first tier of local government closest to the local community, with an important role to play in promoting the parish by representing the interests of residents. Within its remit, the Council provides and monitors efficient services and amenities to meet local need, influences other decision makers and strives to improve the quality of parish life. The Council represents the views of its community to improve and/or provide cost-effective, innovative local services and amenities. These can range from crime prevention measures, providing litter and dog bins, to providing and maintaining bus shelters, providing recreational facilities and having the right to be notified of, and comment upon, planning applications.

Residents elect ten (10) Parish Councillors every four years. The last election was in 2019; the next will be in 2023. By-elections can be held if a vacancy occurs and a formal request is made. Otherwise, the Council fills such vacancies through co-option. The Council elects a Chairman and Vice-Chairman annually, together with chairs of its committees and working groups, and reports to the electorate at the Annual Parish Meeting in May. Councillors are unpaid and receive no allowance for their duties other than occasional expenses and a small allowance for the Chairman. They commit a time contribution to maintaining and improving the parish as an attractive and sustainable place in which to live, visit and do business. Details of all councillors can be found on the Parish Council website [here](#).

The Council aims to be competent and professional through being open and accountable and ensuring sound financial management of Council resources. To this end, the Council includes within its goals:

- To be well-informed about the needs and opinions of the parish's residents by consulting them on major issues
- To encourage its members and staff to develop their skills through appropriate training
- To ensure councillors have the opportunity to keep abreast of new opportunities and policy changes
- To be a fair employer

- To promote public participation in all Council meetings and initiatives
- To deal with enquiries from members of the public in a professional and efficient manner
- To be an effective custodian of the Council's property and documents

How the Parish Council operates

The Council carries out its statutory duties as required by:

- Aiming to meet a minimum of twelve occasions per annum (usually the first Thursday of every month). In more normal times, these meetings are held in the Village Hall but since the beginning of the Covid pandemic meetings have been held through the internet using the Zoom platform, beginning at 7.30 pm and lasting no more than two hours.
- Access to a meeting held using the Zoom platform will be provided once a request has been made to the Parish Clerk via email to chidhamandhambrookpc@gmail.com.
- All full Council meetings are generally open to the public with a period, towards the beginning of the meeting, set aside for members of the public to address the Council. Members of the public raising an issue or asking a question will receive a written response within two weeks. A verbal response might also be given at the time of a question being raised but this is dependent on the complexity of the matter being raised. Occasionally, for special reasons, part of a Council meeting is held in closed session.
- The Council works to legislative requirements, alongside its Standing Orders and Financial Regulations; these lay down the rules by which we operate and conduct our business
- All Parish Councillors are expected to adhere to the Council's Code of Conduct. Committees and working groups work to terms of reference agreed in Council.
- The Chairman of the Parish Council during the preceding year will hold an Annual Parish Meeting in May each year to review the activities of the previous year and to give residents an opportunity to raise issues of concern.

As part of the statutory planning process, Chichester District Council (CDC) has to consult the Parish Council on planning applications from within the parish. Every year the Council's Planning Committee scrutinises large numbers of applications and provides broad ranging feedback to CDC.

The Council uses committees and working groups where appropriate to discuss and agree action on areas of its work. The Council's standing (or permanent) committees are Finance, Planning, Staffing, and Public Open Space Advisory Committee (POSAC).

The Council has also established a steering group to oversee the revision of the Neighbourhood Plan, an advisory group with a membership of both Parish Councillors and members of the local community. The Neighbourhood Plan and the CDC's Local Plan together constitute a framework for planning and other measures important for the local community.

Certain Parish Councillors are designated as Lead Councillors in certain areas of activity. Currently, Lead Councillors work in the areas of open spaces, bus shelters, benches, roads and transport, travel, school liaison, footways, drainage and sea defence, trees, rights of way, Youth Council, play areas, finance and accounts, staffing and HR issues and assets and insurance. Under the aegis of the Council they maintain a watching brief and report back to the Council as necessary.

The Council has appointed a Parish Ditch Warden, whose task is to inspect ditches in the parish regularly, liaising with the Drainage & Sea Defence Lead Councillor to make recommendations for any necessary actions to the Council.

The Tree Councillor works with voluntary Parish Tree Wardens who maintain a watching brief on the trees in the parish, making recommendations and reporting to the Council as necessary.

In addition, working parties, temporary in nature and with a smaller membership, are set up as required. There is currently a working party dealing with environment matters.

Parish Council Standing Committees

Finance Committee

The Council has a Finance Committee with a minimum of five Parish Councillor members. The Council has appointed a Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) who is a non-voting member of the Finance Committee.

The RFO provides advice to the Committee to ensure its actions comply with all relevant statutory regulations. The primary purpose of the Finance Committee is to recommend the precept for the following fiscal year, with a meeting for this purpose normally held each year in November. At this meeting, sums are provisionally allocated to specific headings of expenditure; the December or January meeting of the Council receives the recommendations of the Finance Committee and votes to accept or amend them.

Planning Committee

To meet the current requirements of Chichester District Council and to improve application response time, the Council's Planning Committee meets every four weeks. The meetings are open to the public and press.

The Planning Committee has six Parish Councillor members. Members of the public may attend and speak on any planning matter especially those applications on the agenda. This is limited to three minutes per person.

Drawings and documents downloaded from the District Council website are displayed by projection or digital screen to help the committee members to assess and comment on planning matters. Site visits are held where necessary. The District Council makes the final decision but the local opinion given by the Parish Council in the final decision is regarded with high importance. Should there be a difference of views, the Council may make representation to CDC's full Planning Committee at the latter's meeting. A process known as 'Red Carding' is available.

Should an applicant be unhappy with the final decision by the District Council, an appeal process is available allowing all parties to make representation to an independent examiner.

The minutes and decisions of the Planning Committee meetings are published on the Council's website.

Staffing Committee

A Staffing Committee has been established to oversee all matters connected with those employed by the Council.

Public Open Space Advisory Committee (POSAC)

The Council is responsible for the new public open spaces in Broad Road together with the Council's play area. There are also some other areas open to the public which the Council keeps a watching brief over. This committee has been set up to advise the Council on what work, expenditure, changes and improvements need to be carried out.

POSAC is made up of Parish Councillors and local residents who will organise the maintenance, repairs, improvements and changes that will be required to ensure that these community assets are funded and safe to use. They will also seek to engage with the community on any changes and improvements in the use of these areas in the future. The committee meets at least twice a year as required.

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

In 2011 the Localism Act reformed the planning system to give local people more say in determining how their local areas are developed. This has enabled the Council to set out a vision for Chidham, Hambrook and Nutbourne East.

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, which engages directly with the community, is currently identifying where new homes, shops leisure facilities or employment opportunities are to be built and what these buildings should look like within the local area. A Neighbourhood Plan is intended to give local people an increased ability to influence planning decisions.

In carrying out its work, Chichester District Council has to follow National Planning Policies contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), together with CDC's Interim Positioning Statement (IPS) and its future, long-delayed, Local Plan. Our Neighbourhood Plan must, in turn, be consistent with the Local Plan.

Representation on outside bodies

The Council sends a representative, who is either a Councillor or another resident chosen by the Council, to the following bodies:

- *Maybush Copse Friends* – the body that works in partnership with Chichester Harbour Conservancy and the Chichester Harbour Trust to manage Maybush Copse in Cot Lane.
- *All-Parishes Meetings* – facilitated by the District Council - a twice-yearly meeting to keep parish councils abreast of current developments within the district.
- *The Bourne Community Forum* – also facilitated by the District Council - the Forum is a quarterly meeting of parish, district and county councillors and other agencies to improve communications and to influence daily life in the Bourne area.
- *Village Hall Management Committee* – the body responsible for managing Chidham Village Hall.
- *Surrey & Sussex Association of Local Councils* – the body that represents the interests of local councils across East and West Sussex and Surrey. *This situation is about to be changed.*

Main Areas of Responsibility

- Management and maintenance of children's play area in Broad Road.
- Maintenance of Calloway's Lane.
- Ditch clearance.
- Provision and maintenance of bus shelters throughout the parish.
- Provision and maintenance of notice boards.

- The provision of small community grants.
- Submitting comments on all planning applications and change of use applications in the parish as a statutory consultee of the local planning authority.
- In cooperation with Chichester District Council, provision and emptying of litter and dog fouling bins.
- Aiming to ensure the health and safety of all residents in the parish in line with the Council's Parish Emergency Plan.

Communication

The Council recognises the role of good communication in building positive relationships with the public and with organisations that provide services in the parish. We strive to be proactive and we will continue to seek to improve established channels of communication and find new ones. The Council will continue to develop and expand the Council's [website](#) and provide:

- clear information about the Council and its activities
- signposting to other services
- regular news of Council initiatives
- the most up to date Parish Council financial information and a Business Plan

Parish community information is now included on the Council's website and on the Council's Facebook page, therefore it has been agreed that the publication of a Parish Newsletter is no longer required, although flyers on important issues have been delivered to homes and this will continue.

At Council meetings and the Annual Parish Meeting, held in May, the Council will:

- provide an opportunity for public participation
- invite representatives of other agencies to address the Council on key matters of interest
- share Council activities during the previous twelve months

3. A VISION FOR CHIDHAM AND HAMBROOK PARISH

Chidham, Hambrook and Nutbourne East will remain a beautiful harbourside parish with the environment and a close, supportive community at its heart. We aim to create a sustainable place to live with housing suited to local needs, whilst preserving the ecology and character of the coastal area, our local economy, our rural and agricultural surroundings while maintaining views of the Harbour and South Downs.

Strategic objectives

Housing

Housing developments should look towards sustainable travel, not creating homes reliant on cars, while adopting a mixed approach of single and two storey dwellings of varying sizes showing a differentiation in style rather than an excessive unity of design. Developments of an 'estate' design must be avoided.

Economy

To encourage the retention of existing employers and attract new employers at appropriate locations in the parish.

Health Facilities

To work in conjunction with NHS Coastal West Sussex Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to bring about the necessary improved facilities to meet the expected population increase in the parish.

Built Environment

To promote high-quality sustainable design, while ensuring our historic, attractive environment is preserved and enhanced.

Natural Environment

To safeguard our natural environment and enhance biodiversity through sensitive development that protects and enriches the landscape, including where necessary the creation of wildlife corridors.

Infrastructure

To seek on-going improvements to transport and parking, to drainage and flood defences and to utility infrastructure. Developers, to meet the needs of the subsequent population growth, should give careful consideration to essential services and the impact upon these of an expanding population resulting from increased housing numbers within the parish. These infrastructure considerations should be reflected in planning applications.

Amenities, Leisure and Well-being

To ensure that residents have excellent local facilities and access to open spaces and recreation, to maintain a strong, active, healthy and vibrant community to help alleviate social isolation. To support this vision, developers should be mindful of the requirement of the Council that applications to build within the parish must, as a condition, create, support or retain spaces for walking, cycling and wildlife. It is an aspiration of the Council to create a centrally located community recreation centre with outdoor facilities, generous parking accommodation and a convenience store.

Community facilities

Children's Play Area in Broad Road

The Council owns the children's play area in Broad Road. The play area was originally established by Hambrook and District Residents Association (HDRA), now Chidham, Hambrook and Nutbourne East Residents' Association (CHANE RA). The Council will keep this play area safe and will maintain the present facilities to current standards. Weekly inspections take place and an annual external inspection from an appropriately qualified play area inspector. The Council will continually monitor and develop a planned programme of repairs and replacement to meet community needs. A recent programme of upgrading has been implemented.

Open Spaces

In 2018 the Council acquired land in Broad Road known as Hawthorne Meadow and is in the process of acquiring Pynham Meadow to the north. Both will have been achieved using S106 legal contracts with the developers. It is intended that these two areas will be fully adapted for community use, with plans now at a good stage of development.

In general, the Council will maintain a watching brief on all open spaces in the parish, not just those owned by the Council, and seek to protect these from inappropriate development.

Bus shelters

The Council has provided and maintains three bus shelters on the A259 in the parish – these are at the corner of Broad Road, Chidham Lane and Drift Lane. The Council will review the condition of these bus shelters annually in Autumn and take any appropriate action.

Seats

The Council maintains the various benches and seats around the parish at current standards, inspecting these annually in Autumn. These benches exclude those in Maybush Copse which are owned by the Harbour Conservancy.

Notice boards

The Council maintains its parish/community notice boards around the parish at current standards, inspecting these annually in Autumn.

Footpaths

The Council reviews highway footpaths within the parish and where appropriate, and working with others, it will consider how it can contribute to their improvement and/or repair.

Public Footpaths and Bridleways

The Council works closely with the County Council to ensure that these public rights of way are protected and, where appropriate, enhanced.

Website

The Council regularly reviews the effectiveness of its website arrangements.

Community Assets

The Council keeps a list of community assets that it believes are important to the parish.

Events

The Council will support individuals and organisations that wish to run public events, providing advice and support where the time and/or financial commitment input is from another organisation or from individual volunteers. Such events are increasingly popular following the Council's recent acquisition of new open spaces.

4. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The Council will monitor the cost effectiveness and environmental sustainability of all major procurement.

Financial information for 2021-2022

Income

The residents of Chidham and Hambrook fund the Council through a 'precept'. The precept is the local tax levied by the Parish Council that Chichester District Council collects on our behalf as part of the Council Tax bill for the district. The Parish Council precept for the financial year 2021-2022 is £49,015.

In addition to the precept, money is available to the Council from developers who have built developments either within the parish or even more widely in the district. These result from either specific grants or legal agreements.

This money includes Section 106 money (S106), New Homes Bonus (NHB) and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

S106 refers to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 which allows a local planning authority, such as Chichester District Council, to enter into a legally-binding agreement or planning obligation with a landowner as part of the granting of planning permission and termed a S106 agreement. This money can be used to support the provision of services and infrastructure, such as highways, recreational facilities, education, health and affordable housing, those living in the community affected by the development. Such money becomes regularly available to the parish with local bids made for suitable application of these funds.

NHB provides additional revenue to a planning authority when it permits certain developments, with the government matching for a defined and limited period the Council Tax raised on each new home built. Again, this can benefit the parish.

Finally, CIL is designed to be used for infrastructure development and must be used within five years of it becoming available. CIL money cannot be used where West Sussex County Council or the District Council have already been granted CIL money for the same purpose.

S106, NHB and CIL funding will be used by the Council on identified projects, either already identified or yet to be identified. Those identified, and likely to be so financed, are listed under the two future project headings (see below).

Expenditure

The Council's precept for the current financial year 2020-2021 is £48,124.

The main items of expenditure using the precept are:

- Office Administration, Salaries, Training and Expenses – 39%
- Street Lighting – 1.7%
- Contracts – 10%
- Repairs and maintenance – 2.9%

Reserves

The Council holds unallocated reserves, equivalent to six months of the precept, to protect against major problems requiring emergency funding that could affect the Council's activities.

On-going financial outlays 2021-22

- Repair of equipment in the children's play area on Broad Road (£1,500)
- Street lighting, repair and maintenance (£1,470)
- Regular and continuing grounds maintenance (£4,500)
- Review of the Council's Neighbourhood Plan (£3,000)

5. KEY PROJECTS

Key Projects for 2021-22

- Bringing into use newly acquired open space land: Hawthorne Meadow and Pynham Meadow.

- Provision of new village entry signage

Future Projects: As Itemised in Chichester District Council's IBP

The purpose of the CDC's Infrastructure Business Plan (IBP) is to ensure that infrastructure is provided at the right time and in the right place to accompany new homes to alleviate any potential problems resulting from developments. Each has been or will be provided with a unique number by the District Council to show that the project is registered for future CIL funding or NHB.

Pre-Eminent Priority

- Development of open spaces on Broad Road [IBP809]
- Ongoing review of the Council's Neighbourhood Plan [IBP number not yet allocated]

High Priority

- Resurface /improve walking and pavement routes and verges in the parish [IBP741]
- Provision of pavement on West side of Broad Road, adjacent to Hawthorne Meadow and Pynham Meadow [IBP602]
- Provision of pedestrian refuges/crossings on A259 and Broad Road [IBP742]

[The above high priority projects may be covered going forward with the Local Transport Improvement Programme where we have £160K of S106 towards sustainable transport. Much has already been achieved i.e. 20mph lights and zig zag road markings].

- Improve residents' parking in the following areas: East side of Chidham Lane from A259 to Hamstead Meadow, both sides of Broad Road by Broad Meadow, outside Mansfield Cottages, north end of Cot Lane [IBP603]. *The Council is currently in discussion with the District Council in connection with a S106 agreement for an area on the east side of Flatt Road to be developed as a car parking space.*
- Provision of dedicated cycle route the whole length of the parish – CHEMROUTE [IBP600]
- Reduce speed on parish roads, including the peninsula and the A259 through the parish [IBP598] *Discussions to be undertaken with the County Council with the possibility of the Parish Council funding some of this work.*
- Traffic calming measures in Broad Road (to accompany the recent installation of Speed Indicator Devices(SIDs) [IBP814]

Discussion is ongoing with West Sussex County Council (WSCC) and other adjoining parish councils under the heading of CHEMROUTE for the purpose of providing a dedicated cycle route. This project is also looking at cycle approach routes to the A259. To further support the use of cycles throughout the parish, the Parish Council will look at supporting mechanisms such as the placing of secure cycle racks at bus stops with shelters and close to the railway station.

- Preparation of allotments [IBP744]
- A community bus or other form of transportation [IBP734]
- Placement of additional litter/dog waste bins in appropriate areas of the parish [IBP746]

Medium Priority

- Improve public footpaths [IBP601]
- Improved street lighting on Broad Road [IBP813]

Lower Priority

- Provision of medical/dentist surgery. *Initial discussions underway with South Coast commissioning GP service, with appropriate building possibly provided by developers or integrated into the Pre-Eminent Priority Community Centre.*
- Replacement/repair of bus shelters in the parish [\[IBP821\]](#)

Progress Underway or Complete

- Refurbishment of the Village Hall [\[IBP611\]](#). *Much work completed including installing a new roof, fitting a new lighting system and ceiling fans and redecoration.*
- St Mary's Church Graveyard, Cot Lane, Chidham. Extension of graveyard. A local farmer has donated land adjacent to the main churchyard and the extension of the graveyard will be financed through money provided from CIL [\[IBP709\]](#) .
- Implementation of a new Parish Council website [\[IBP816\]](#). *This combined village/Parish Council website was completed in 2020.*
- New playground equipment at the children's play area on Broad Road [\[IBP860\]](#). *This new equipment was installed in 2020.*