



Minutes of a meeting of Chidham and Hambrook Parish Council held on Thursday 6 June 2024 at Chidham Village Hall commencing at 7.30pm

Present: Mr P Bolton, Mrs S James, Mr S Johnson, Mr A Sargent,
Mrs J Towers (Chairman), Mrs J Turton (Co-opted)

In attendance: Mrs C Smith (Clerk & RFO), Mr A Kerry-Beddell (WSCC), Mr A Moss (CDC)
Mrs R Bates (CDC)

64/24C Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr Dixon and Cllr Savory.

65/24C Declarations of interest

None made.

66/24C Co-option of a Councillor

An application to join the Parish Council had been received from Mrs Jane Turton and had been circulated to all councillors.

A question was asked about Mrs Turton's experience of working with committees.

On a proposal from Cllr Bolton, it was **RESOLVED** that Mrs Turton be co-opted onto the Parish Council and her Declaration of acceptance of office was duly signed.

Cllr Turton was warmly welcomed to the Parish Council.

67/24C Minutes

On a proposal from Cllr Towers, it was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held on 2 May 2024 be confirmed as a true and correct record of the meeting and they be signed by the Chairman.

68/24C Actions Update

The Actions list from previous meetings was reviewed.

A query was raised about the Tree stump on Chidham Lane. It was reported that at the last meeting it had been agreed that work on the tree stump would not continue for safety reasons. The Clerk reported that the request to have the stump removed had previously been reported online but had not yet taken place.

The issue with the Cala homes lighting was still being followed up.

69/24C Public Session

No members of public present.

70/24C Reports

Chairman's Report

Recognition of the 80th anniversary of D-Day was made.

Thanks were given for the success of the Annual Parish Meeting. It was noted that the after meeting socialising had been very worthwhile.

Cllr Towers reported that there had been concerns and complaints made about her in her role as Chairman of the Parish Council, which put her integrity into question. These needed to be addressed by the Council. Specific Instances of her conduct had been given by Cllr James and Cllr Towers addressed these in turn.

Cllr James spoke about her role in dealing with sea defences and how she felt she should have been included in a communication on the issues with the footpaths along the sea wall with Coastal Partners. Cllr Towers had already apologised for this oversight.

Cllr Johnson suggested that if there are complaints these should be formalised. He expressed every confidence in Cllr Towers in her position as chair. He thought it would be regrettable if there were unresolved issues.

Cllr James stated that she had not made a complaint.
Cllr Bolton had asked her for specific instances to ensure they could be addressed.

And stated that the email struck him as a complaint.
One of the issues raised was that Cllr Towers had had a meeting with the County Councillor before bringing a proposal to full Council. Cllr Bolton considered this was preparatory work which is a necessary part of Council work.

Discussion took place on all aspects of the complaint received.
Cllr James acknowledged that Cllr Towers worked hard but she retained concern And she stood by all the comments she had made.

Cllr James refused to apologise for her comments She stated that her email was not a formal complaint and was not meant to be hurtful.

Councillors were asked if they were content with the actions of the Chairman of the Parish Council. The majority response was yes. It was suggested that where there were strong disagreements, email was not the way to resolve any issues. This needed to be done at a Parish Council meeting or by contact via telephone.

Chichester District Councillor's Report

A report from District Councillors had been circulated. Cllr Johnson commented briefly on a recent Southern Water treatment plant visit. It was reported that the Tangmere site was now struggling to cope, despite the new pipework that had been installed.

The Local Plan has been submitted and an Inspector has now been appointed. The timetable for consideration was still to be worked out.

Mr Bates (CDC) reported that at the recent Southern Water visit those attending were shown everything. One tank was not working, and the tank was very smelly. This situation was due to mix of rainwater and foul sewage. The site was 50% over capacity and the expected costs to ensure local sites could cope was in the region of £60 million. Southern Water stated that Tangmere was at capacity and all new houses were going to struggle. This was due to the of lack of segregation between surface water and sewage. This cannot be fixed using SUDS systems, it needs major infrastructure investment Southern Water are not going to do this.

Cllr James asked if the Planning Inspector would understand the issues with Southern Water. It was reported that the key issues were that there was a legal requirement for Southern Water to connect to any new development. Issues regarding the contamination of sewage from rainwater were explained.

West Sussex County Councillor's Report

The report from the County Councillor has previously been circulated to Councillors.
Cllr James asked why all the DEFRA information relating to 'Hold the Line' had not been included as the information given only included the next twenty years. Mr Kerry-Beddell stated that the information was still the same.

Mr Kerry-Beddell reported that it was down to landowner to get consent from Natural England before WSCC can repair the sea wall.

The question was raised as to whether it was possible to get an estimate of when repairs may take place. It was reiterated that this was down to the landowners as it was their responsibility to arrange the necessary permissions.

Although DEFRA appears to be the head of the chain, Natural England and the Environment Agency were responsible for setting out the criteria for assessment.

Clerk's Report

A request had been received from the District Council to offer any names for the streets within the Chas Wood development. It was noted that the developer had not offered any recommendations. Councillors were asked to let the Clerk know if they had any suggestions.

Mr Moss (CDC) had responded with clarification over the figures for the five year housing land supply in connection with the Local Plan and this had been circulated to Councillors.

To enable all Councillors the opportunity to have matters requested to go on the agenda in an effective manner the Clerk has created an Agenda Item Request Form which had been circulated. Councillors were asked to use this form to request Agenda Items from July onwards.

71/24C Committee Meetings

The Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 16 May 2024 were **NOTED**.
The Minutes of the NPSG Committee meeting held on 20 May 2024 were **NOTED**.

72/24C External Meetings

None reported.

73/24C Website provision

A report on the provision on a new website had been circulated. The Clerk highlighted issues with the current website which meant that updating it was time consuming and the lack of flexibility to make the website easy to use and informative.

It was agreed that Councillors would further review the report and review other parish council websites and give the clerk a list of things they liked or didn't like to enable a decision on this to be approved at the July meeting.

74/24C Footpaths within the Parish

Information relating to the state of the footpaths along the sea wall has been coming forward. It was hoped that there was a better understanding of what is involved. Additionally, Cllr James had written a report including a recommendation.

It was noted that the Parish Council does not have the power to take action. The responsibility lies with the landowner. Difficulties arise in that if the landowner undertakes repairs at their own expense there is no guarantee that any repairs won't fail at a future date. Additionally, landowners could run into objections from Natural England and may have to apply for planning permission.

Cllr James reiterated her suggestion that the Parish Councils should be interested and understand who may be involved and the timeframe for work to be undertaken.

It was suggested that the Parish Council writes to the landowner to find out if there is any way the Parish Council can help with the problems of the damage to the sea wall.

It was also suggested that the Parish Council write to both WSCC and ChaPRon to advise that the Parish Council is aware of the difficulties but requesting a timetable for work to be carried out.

There followed discussion on what action the Parish Council should take to try and speed up the process.

Both the Clerk and Mr Bates (CDC) gave brief updates on other issues around the harbour and the constraints of getting speedy action.

It was agreed to write the following letters.

- To make personal contact with the landowner by phone asking how the Parish Council could support them to get the footpaths reopened.
- To WSCC expressing concern about the length of time it may take to have the footpaths reopened for the enjoyment of local residents.
- To ChaPRon, noting that they have a meeting on 17 June, expressing the concerns of the Parish Council to get the footpaths reopened and requesting an update after the meeting scheduled for 17 June 2024.

75/24C Policy Adoption and review

On a proposal from Cllr Towers, it was **RESOLVED** that the updated Complaints Policy be adopted with immediate effect.

On a proposal from Cllr Towers, it was **RESOLVED** that the current Scheme of Delegation be retained.

76/24C Finance and Governance

Schedule of payments

On a proposal from Cllr Bolton, it was **RESOLVED** that the schedule of payments totalling £2,847.36 be made.

Bank reconciliation

On a proposal from Cllr Towers, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the bank reconciliation.

Budget monitoring statement

On a proposal from Cllr Towers, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the budget monitoring statement.

77/24C Upcoming Meeting Dates

Dates for forthcoming meetings
Planning Committee – 19 June 2024
NPSG Committee – 1 July 2024
Parish Council – 4 July 2024

78/24C Items for referral to the next meeting.

The Parish Council website and Community Orchard.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.28pm

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Chairman