



NORTHCHAPEL PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of a meeting held virtually

On Thursday 2nd July 2020 at 8pm

Present: Councillors Mrs Lynda Bell, Miss Laura Green, Mrs Sharon Holden (Chairman), Mrs Gaye Jordan, Mrs Daphne Trussler and Mr Stephen Wordsworth

In attendance: Mrs Helen Cruikshank, Parish Clerk
District Councillor Gareth Evans
There were no members of the public in attendance.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

PARISH COUNCIL AGENDA

41/20 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Parish Councillors Alex Baker, Chris Bryant, Robert Moss and County Councillor Janet Duncton.

42/20 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Green declared an interest in agenda item 46/20 as secretary of the Sports Club.

43/20 Minutes

The Minutes of the Parish Council Annual Meeting held on Monday 18th May 2020 were approved as a correct record and signed.

44/20 Reports from the Chichester District and West Sussex County Councillors

District Councillor Gareth Evans reported on the following:

- I continue to support the Covid-19 hubs. Fortunately I am hearing reports that the number of volunteers outweighs those in need but it is great we have so many volunteers encase things do change. As we emerge from lockdown we should still encourage residents to exercise caution encase of a second spike given what we are seeing in Leicester for example. At present the Covid-19 District Councillor hotline remains open should residents report any concerns in the community to the Parish Council.
- The resident in Ifold who has supported local medical practices and carers making scrubs during the pandemic has now moved onto to making face coverings. She has been donating to local schools and other keyworkers. Do let me know if you would like to be put in touch or know any organisations that might need face coverings.
- **Support Local:** Chichester District Council has launched a campaign in association with the Chichester and the Midhurst and Petworth Observer to encourage residents to support local businesses. The council is encouraging residents to download a special poster to display in their window to show their support. This can be found at www.chichester.gov.uk/supportlocal. I would like to use this occasion to personally thank the local business in the Northchapel for its excellent support of the community and hope when this is over they will continue to be supported.

- **Chichester District Recovery Plan.** CDC officers have been working extremely hard in very challenging circumstances. We applaud that with immense gratitude. Officers are already working on a plan to assess the council's business and community priorities going forward, with a report expected in July. Chichester is expected to lose some £8m of income in 2020/21, having to draw on its reserves to balance the budget. Economic recovery is high on everybody's priorities.
- At the last Council meeting, and in support of the Recovery Plan efforts, my group and I presented a motion to create an All Parties Task Force with experts from the business community, retail, hospitality, horticulture, tourism, culture, and education, as well as the city, town and parish councils. The task force would also focus on the long-term environmental impact of any plans made by the council. Our vision was to make sure that the community and the best independent professional experts in each field were involved at the heart of the Recovery Plan from the start rather than at later stages. Our Task Force proposal was rejected by the majority on the Council as it was deemed unnecessary and premature. However, there was an agreement at Council on the principles of this motion so we do hope that this community involvement, and early engagement with local businesses and local experts, is contemplated in the final draft of the Council's Recovery Plan.
- Further to this I attended the Overview and Scrutiny meeting which analysed the recovery plan. I personally raised the question about the Health section of the recovery plan making no references to overcoming the impact on Mental Health of the community as we emerge from lockdown. My feeling is that any economic recovery is dependent on the community having good mental health provision. I was assured by Monitoring Officer – Nicholas Bennett that Health included Mental Health so I will be following this with interest.
- **Dangerous driving & Speed and Noise issues:** A Task Group has been set up to bring together Parish & Town Councils and Cllrs of villages on the A272 affected by anti-social motorcycling across the South Downs. I am part of this group to help make sure that concerns on this issue from residents in the ward that I represent, and who have been contacting me about this, are taken into account. We have had various meetings already and have secured support from our local MPs. I have facilitated meetings between the local campaign group and local parish councillors and our police representative. At the Task Group meeting I was actioned with putting together a meeting with representatives from all the Parishes in Loxwood Ward to explore coordinated Traffic Awareness action days. The meeting (which took place on Saturday 27th July) demonstrated that the Parishes are in different places in terms of setting up speed awareness groups but it was clear that there is a desire to work together and the group are willing to support each other. Actions were circulated to the Parish representatives in attendance but I can forward these to the Clerk if you need them.
- A reminder that the Draft Interim Policy Statement (IPS) for Housing has been published for public consultation for a period of 4 weeks until 10 July 2020. The Planning Policy Team are seeking views on the IPS and the criteria contained within with regard to its use as a decision-making tool in the determination of planning applications for new residential development. You can view it here: <https://www.chichester.gov.uk/interimpolicystatement>.
- Next Online Chichester Full Council Meeting is 21st July. Where to watch: <http://chichester.nucast.live/>. To speak at a public meeting contact democraticservices@chichester.gov.uk – for planning committees register at www.chichester.gov.uk/speakerform
- Online Surgeries – I continue to conduct meetings with residents via Zoom, Google Hangout, Skype, Video Call or WhatsApp. Contact me at gbevans@chichester.gov.uk / 07958 918 056

In her absence, County Councillor Janet Duncton sent through a written report as follows:

1. The Rights of Way Rangers are starting back at work.

2. I am holding a full Council meeting on the 17th July which will be web cast, is truncated a little and will have reports from Cabinet members on how things are and especially Children's Services and the Fire and Rescue Service. We may try and get a September full Council as the next one in the diary isn't until October. We are keeping our options open on this but in the meantime all other committees are working as normal as possible with virtual meetings.
3. The South Downs National Park has some changes. 3 members that have been there from the beginning have finished their time and we are now waiting on the Secretary of State to announce who will replace them. One of those departing is Margaret Paren our excellent Chairman. During her time as Chairman she also chaired National Parks England and has worked tirelessly to make sure the National Park makes the right impression and does what it is supposed to do.
4. I have actually been very busy. I find that virtual meetings take longer and also as Chairman WSCC I have had to fit in some extra meetings. The new High Sheriff as from April this year Dr Tim Foukes has been busy since he started his duties and told me that he has so far had 95 virtual meetings. He also went back to work in his old Practice in Pulborough at the start of the pandemic so it looks as though he is in for a busy year.
5. New contracts have been signed for Highway's separate contracts for different issues instead of one block Highways Contract. On that theme we now have some 15million which is specifically for Pothole and Highway maintenance. With over 2.1/2 thousand miles of road this doesn't go as far as you hope but we will certainly be using it to the best advantage.
6. As with CDC, finance is going to be tight and everything we try and do for the County will have to be looked at and like CDC and every other Council we are all working on plans to go forward. County is looking at a shortfall at the moment of at least £85 million so you can see everything will be under scrutiny.

Any issues of a County nature then please do not hesitate to contact Janet Duncton on janet.duncton@westsussex.gov.uk or 01798 342528.

45/20 Working Party Reports

- **Allotments:** There was nothing to report
- **Village Green:** Councillor Bell stated it had been agreed to put the contractor works to the track on hold to see if the recent repairs carried out by the residents of 2 Vine Cottages during lockdown would hold once bad weather and normal usage of the track returns. Thanks were given to the residents for their hard work. Councillor Bell had met with the contractors, Allfreys to discuss future improvements to the track. It was agreed to re-visit this next spring.
- **Play Area:** Councillor Green stated the ROSPA annual inspection report had been received and there were lots of pieces of equipment which had been identified now as medium risk so repairs need to be done. There is extensive strimmer damage to the wooden posts. The Parish Council needs to decide how much money there is in the budget to cover these repairs. Councillor Green was sure she could get volunteers to help with maintenance to both the pavilion and playground. She said the treehouse needs to come down along with the wooden picnic bench removed and this would hopefully be replaced at a later date with a maintenance free equivalent. She would speak to John Stemp with regard the overgrown vegetation and any tree-work needed. There had been two incidents of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) at the playground recently; one in the afternoon and then again in the evening. Both had been reported to the Police, youths spoken to and new signage erected to help prevent any further incidents. There had also been some ASB and suspected drug use at the empty shack at the radar station reported to Police and Chichester District Council (CDC). CDC have been out and contacted The Leconfield Estates who own the shack and they are planning to block the site up to prevent any further ASB occurring. With regard to re-opening the play area, it was agreed that the benefits of opening it out-weighs the risk of catching Co-vid. The old wooden bench would be removed before opening and a full risk assessment carried out and advisory signage erected. It was hoped the playground would be open by the start of the school summer holidays.
- **Footpaths, Hedges and Rights of Ways:** The tree which had fallen on FP566 had been cleared.

- **Planning:** Councillor Wordsworth said there was one outstanding planning application which would be dealt with by email next week. Since the last meeting, the following application had been discussed by the Parish Council:

SDNP/20/02371/HOUS and SDNP/20/02372/LIS

Location: Hillside, Valentines Hill, Northchapel GU28 9HX

Proposal: Single storey rear extension

Since the last meeting, Chichester District Council/South Downs National Park has made no decisions on any planning applications in Northchapel.

- **Village Hall:** Councillor Holden reported that the Village Hall Management Committee is meeting tomorrow to discuss whether to re-open.
- **Housing:** Councillor Holden said there was nothing to report. St Michaels Close is nearly full again.
- **Winter Plan:** The Clerk reported that the Parish Council needs to complete the salt/grit bin audit for this forthcoming winter. Councillor Moss has had a quick look and as last year was so mild, not much has been used, so he can use the stock of grit he has at the farm to refill any bins. Therefore there is no need for WSCC to do it this year.
- **Northchapel Youth:** Councillor Bell reported that the Purple Bus has returned to the Village Hall Car Park on Monday evenings 7-9pm for three weeks from 29th June and then 3-5pm over the summer holidays. Social distancing rules apply. SCYP had been running a virtual group via Facebook during lockdown.
- **Village Road Safety Project:** Councillors Green and Bell had attended the virtual meeting with other Councillors from the Loxwood Ward organised by District Councillor Gareth Evans on the subject of dangerous driving and the speed and noise of the traffic in the area. All expressed a concern about the traffic speed driving through Northchapel (not just in the village itself but from the County boundary out to the Lurgashall turning) and talked about how to move forward with a solution. Other parts of the ward have set up groups to develop support. Both Councillors felt that there was real interest now in Northchapel as everyone moans about the speed and volume of traffic but nothing is done. Nothing has improved since the Parish Plan in 2009. The School is also a big factor. Its travel plan needs to link with the community, encouraging children to be able to walk safely to and from School. Councillor Green said she would set up a WhatsApp group and hopefully there would be someone who would like to take the lead and run it. Communication and sharing information is key. It takes a long time to get things done but we need to start somewhere to get improvements for Northchapel. Councillors Green and Bell are willing to take this forward but cannot commit to taking the lead. Councillors Wordsworth and Jordan said they are happy to help but it is hoped that there would be two or three people from the parish who are enthusiastic and keen to take the initiative on with both Parish Council and community support. The Chairman thanked both Councillors Green and Bell.
- **Northchapel Co-vid 19 Community Action Plan:** The Clerk reported that only one request had been received recently however it was agreed to keep the system in place as people are willing to help others and those being helped are very grateful for such a service. Clerk to email all the volunteers to thank them for their continued support. The Parish Council praised Nigel and his team at the shop for their brilliant service throughout the pandemic, Clerk to write giving thanks.

46/20 MUGA update

Councillor Green said there was no update. She wants to raise money but can't do much. The virtually 5K however had made £500 and it was hoped to produce a 2021 calendar based on the success of last year's. There is 2 more years to fundraise!

47/20 Financial Matters

- The Council's current financial position @ £32,260 was noted.
- The Bank reconciliation as at 25th June 2020 at Appendix 2 was noted.
- The schedule of accounts submitted for payment at Appendix 3 was noted and approved –WSCC (Clerk's June Salary & Payroll Admin Charges) @ £543, Function 28 Ltd (Website 3 monthly hosting fee) @ £36 and CCP Ltd (June's Grass Cutting) @ £1026. Councillor Bell confirmed the defibrillator had recently been used so the pads had been replaced and an additional spare set of pads ordered.

48/20 Clerks Report including Correspondence

Clerk said the next All Parishes Meeting will be held on the evening of Thursday 15th October 2020 (re-arranged from 3rd September).

There has been a couple of incidents of metal detecting on the Village Green. The Parish Council does not allow metal detecting on its Green. The Village Green has a byelaw which clearly states no digging is allowed. The Police clarified that permission is required to metal detect from the land owner and even if permission is given any items found must be surrendered and any damage repaired. The local PCSO is happy to talk to individuals if the problem continues.

49/20 Items to be included on the next agenda

Please inform the Clerk of any items to go on the agenda by Thursday 27th August 2020

40/20 Date of next meeting

Thursday 3rd September 2020 at 8pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.20pm

Signed

Date