



NORTHCHAPEL PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of a meeting held at the Village Hall on Thursday 7th March 2024 at 8pm

Present: Councillors Miss Laura Green, Mrs Sharon Holden (Chair), Mr Melvin Greet and Mr John Sochovsky.

In attendance: District Councillor Gareth Evans
Mrs Helen Cruikshank, Parish Clerk

There were two members of the public in attendance. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

One member of the public wanted to clarify that both Northchapel Transport and Brookland Transport are very much caring local businesses, whose drivers are careful and stick to 20mph whilst driving along Pipers Lane. They are a 24-hour business who support the local area. The Clerk confirmed she had received no direct complaints.

The member of public added concern about the dangerous nature of the school coaches in the morning picking up on the main road. The Parish Council concurred and has been trying to get some improvements to the situation before an accident happens.

The Clerk has been in contact with WSCC Highways, Seaford College and WSCC School Transport. WSCC Highways have said no to reinstating the wording BUS STOP in the layby as say it is extremely tricky due to residents parking there. Any improvement is likely to receive substantial objections and who is going to police it. However, they may consider a change in location. Clerk to enquire whether the Stagecoach bus could pick up MRC students on Pipers Lane so it is safer. However, as this is also a public bus, it will need to have an official bus stop on the main road too. There have been reports of bollards being knocked over whilst the bus turns on Pipers Lane, Clerk has reported this. Seaford College's transport manager went along last week to the main road and there were two coaches; Portsmouth Coaches and Stagecoach both picking up in the centre of the village on opposite sides of the road. He spoke to drivers and they usually depart by 7.42/7.43. By the time the Seaford College coach arrives they had gone and there was no issue or blocking of the road.

Update: The Seaford College coach has agreed to park further down the main road to pick up its students so it does not block the junction at Pipers Lane.

PARISH COUNCIL BUSINESS

16/24 Apologies for absence: Apologies were received and accepted from Parish Councillors Alex Baker, Daphne Trussler and Ed Warren. Apologies also received from District Councillor Charles Toddhunter and belated apologies from County Councillor Janet Duncton.

17/24 Declarations of Interest: Councillor Green declared an interest in agenda item 22/24 Working Party Reports: MUGA as secretary of the Sports Club.

18/24 Co-option of Councillor: Ms Jules Fraser was co-opted as a Parish Councillor. The Clerk to email her all the relevant documentation. This now leaves only one vacancy.

19/24 Minutes: The Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 4th January 2024 were approved as a correct record and signed.

20/24 Reports from the Chichester District and West Sussex County Councillors

In her absence, County Councillor sent through the following notes.

- At last, the budget is done for 2024/25 and what a task it's been. We've had 3 workshops during the year for us bank benchers to have our input and although some will be disappointed, I am sure we now have a balanced budget and no cuts to our Services. As I have said before this is not only achieved by making cuts it is much about doing some things differently and most of the time, we have found ways to perform our responsibilities without making cuts but doing things in a different way and this year we had a new Director of Finance who looked at every issue and did just that. One of the good things is that although we don't like using our reserves, we had put in the budget that we would be using some very limited reserves that we knew could be replaced. However, good news. Just days before making budget decisions and of course after releasing the original papers the Government came up with another £16 million plus and the upshot was that we did not have to touch the reserves.

Just some headlines

An additional £31.2m for vulnerable children and young people

£18.3 million more for adult social care

An extra 4 million to maintain the county's 4000km of roads

An extra £27.8m to manage increased costs, as inflation levels remain high and the increase in minimum wages.

All very well received and put to good use for the residents.

You will be aware that this has kept us pretty busy for the last few months and at the end of the day it is a 4.99% increase in County Council Tax which equates to £1.57 per week on a Band D property.

- It has also been a very busy period at South Downs National Park. I have said before but both South Downs and County are looking to get new Chief Executives. In County's case the current excellent Chief Executive is returning to East Sussex full time and will remain at West Sussex until we have replaced her. In the case of South Downs National Park, the Chief Executive officer left on the 1st of January and we are in the middle of a long process to get a new Chief Exec. Judging by the experience of other National Parks who have also needed new CEOs there are large amounts of people applying for these positions so we expect many applicants which will have to be sifted through and a short list obtained. It is probably unlikely to have a new CEO until at least July/August. On top of this both organisations have also had to replace key Directors and in the case of SDNP this has already been achieved but at County Council we have only recently been appraised of our great Finance Director obtaining a new position in a London Borough. She really has been an asset to County and we are sorry to lose her. She has been great with this budget programme.
- Highways have had a very difficult time with the weather conditions as you can imagine and some of the hot spots I have in my division. That said I am in competition with 69 other Councillors so need to keep working at it.

Please contact Janet if you have any County issue either on janet.dunton@westsussex.gov.uk or 07979152898

District Councillor Gareth Evans reported on the following:

Local Updates

Lagoon 3 – The applicant has appealed the court decision back in January. This led to the cancellation of the meeting between CDC, EA, Parish Councillors and District Councillors in February. We are awaiting an update as to next steps from the legal team at CDC. We can report though that there was a multi-agency meeting in February between CDC and EA. We also wrote to the EA to raise concerns regarding finding out about information regarding leaks at the lagoon second hand.

EA responded to us and said:

- There was a leak, and they are grateful to the member of the public that reported it.
- Minimal impact on environment

- Elevated levels of ammonia in nearby water course. Said to be low risk to water environment and they continue to monitor.
- Lagoon owner present when EA visited at their request. He commenced works to stop the leak adopting similar method to that done in 2022
- They admit whilst the lagoon is in situ it poses a risk to the environment which is why they want the lagoon removed.
- They will continue to work in coordination with CDC continually reviewing the multi-agency emergency plan.
- The emergency number if members of public notice leak or anything of concern is 0800 807060
- Remind members of the public to stay on open public rights of way in the vicinity of the lagoon

Crouchlands Farm Planning Application – All Crouchland applications are to be reconsulted on. We are awaiting the return of the planning officer who is on sick leave for clarification.

CDC Wide Updates

Budget Meeting Held on Tuesday 27th February:

- Community Focused funding – investing in community centre projects including the Selsey Sea Wall, Think Family Worker in the Bournes and Supporting You Services
- £586,000 invested into Council Reserves for future community projects
- Boosting events strategy including Markets, Cultural Events and Night Time experiences across Chichester District
- Protecting the environment – Supporting the Chichester Harbour and Adaption Strategy and focusing on sustainable growth and bio-diversity

Meeting your District Councillors:

Gareth has the following surgery dates scheduled from 12pm-2pm:

Saturday 2nd March Loxwood (Onslow)

Saturday 16th March Northchapel (Mens Club)

Saturday 6th April Ifold (Shop)

Saturday 20th April Ebernoe (The Stag Inn)

Saturday 4th May Kirdford (Shop)

Saturday 18th May Wisborough Green (Old Mill Café)

Should the dates suggested not be suitable for you or there are any other reasons preventing you from seeing us we are also happy to do home visits, telephone calls or zoom calls.

Contact details:

Cllr. Gareth Evans, email: gbevans@chichester.gov.uk or telephone 07958 918056

Cllr. Charles Todhunter, email: ctodhunter@chichester.gov.uk or telephone 07500 577 777

21/24 Police report: There was no Police report.

22/24 Working Party Reports

- **Allotments:** The Clerk is to liaise with the allotment manager to send out the new season's invoices.
- **Village Green:** The Parish Council agreed to purchase a D-day 80 flag to be raised on 6th June. Councillors accepted the quote @ £995 plus VAT for repairs and refurbishment to the notice board. Councillor Warren had asked whether some small patches of the green could be allotted for wild flowers and some bulbs planted around the benches too. Councillors agreed this was a good idea but further thought and consideration should be given to the location and type of flowers. With regard new football goals, this would be at the discretion of the Sports Club.
- **Highways including parking issues:** Two quotes had been received for the works to improving the parking on the Manorial Waste land alongside the main road for £4,800 and £5,520. Councillors Sochovsky and Green agreed to look more closely at the area to ascertain what the

benefit would be and to talk to residents if required. The morning bus/coach issue was discussed in public question time.

The overgrown hedgerows on Hillgrove Road have been cut. The Clerk to report the potholes outside of the Working Men's Club. Councillor Green to report the one by the Village shop. There has been a couple of reports of blocked drains in the village and both have been reported and jetting jobs have been raised.

- **Village Road Safety Project and Speedwatch:** Councillor Green is due to meet with the consultant to get some advice and help with the Road Safety project at the end of the month. The Clerk is waiting on County Councillor Duncton to get costing from Highways in order for her to finalise the application for the 20mph zone outside the school on Pipers Lane. The initial training for Speedwatch is on Friday 22nd March at 11.30am. Any volunteers who have done their online training but can't make this, will need to be trained by either Laura or Martine as co-ordinators. Once trained, sites will be proposed, risk assessed and then approved by the Police. Councillor Green said that the signs in the village could do with cleaning.
- **Play Area:** Councillor Green said she was still waiting to hear from Playsafe with regard a quote for the repair works.
- **Footpaths, Hedges and Rights of Ways:** There had been no reported footpath issues.
- **Planning:** There is an outstanding planning application for Peacocks Farm (SDNP/24/00406/LIS) which would be looked at in due course. The following applications had been discussed by the Parish Council since the last meeting:

SDNP/24/00490/CND and SDNP/24/00081/CND

Parkgate, Shillinglee Road, Northchapel GU8 4SX

Alteration to existing single storey extension (various condition variations)

SDNP/24/00380/TCA

The Square House, Northchapel GU28 9HS

Notification of intention to height reduce by up to 3.5m and width reduce 1no. Cherry tree

SDNP/24/00359/TCA

Oaklands, Northchapel GU28 9HW

Notification of intention to crown reduce by up to 3m 1 no. Eucalyptus tree and crown reduce 1 no Hazel tree

SDNP/23/04852/HOUS/ SDNP/23/04853/LIS

Gastons Farm, Shillinglee Road, Northchapel GU8 4SX

Proposed side and rear extension following demolition of existing extension

Since the last meeting, Chichester District Council/South Downs National Park has made the following decisions on/given advice on:

SDNP/23/04991/LIS

Frith Hill Court Pipers Lane Northchapel West Sussex GU28 9JE

Addition of 1 no. chimney and fireplace within kitchen area

Decision: Approved

SDNP/23/04991/LIS

Frith Hill Court Pipers Lane Northchapel West Sussex GU28 9JE

Addition of 1 no. chimney and fireplace within kitchen area

Decision: Approved

SDNP/23/04852/HOUS SDNP/23/04853/LIS

Gastons Farm Shillinglee Road Shillinglee Northchapel West Sussex GU8 4SX

Proposed side and rear extension following demolition of existing extension. Insertion of 4no. rooflights and replacement windows

Case Withdrawn

SDNP/24/00380/TCA

The Square House, Northchapel GU28 9HS

Notification of intention to height reduce by up to 3.5m and width reduce 1no. Cherry tree

Decision: Raise no objection

SDNP/24/00359/TCA

Oaklands, Northchapel GU28 9HW

Notification of intention to crown reduce by up to 3m 1 no. Eucalyptus tree and crown reduce 1 no Hazel tree

Decision: Raise no objection

- **Village Hall:** Councillor Holden to get an update on the possible installation of generator electrics at the hall.
- **Housing:** A meeting has finally been arranged with CDC, Hyde and HOME group for Thursday 18th April. AIRS will be appointing a new Rural Housing Enabler from 1st April.
- **Winter Plan:** WSCC refused to replace the destroyed grit bin following a traffic accident at Fisher Street so the Parish Council has purchased a new one. This is due to be delivered to the village and Rob Moss has kindly offered to fill it with grit and put in situ this weekend.
- **Northchapel Youth Club:** Councillor Green said the Youth Club is good, chaotic with 16-20 children. More regular volunteers are required. Looking forward to the lighter evenings when they can get outside.
- **Multi Use Games Arena (MUGA):** Councillor Green reported that she has recently completed a grant application with CDC who have been very helpful and she finally has a volunteer to help her with the grant applications which is a positive step forward.

23/24 Village Shop

Councillor Green reported that the Village Shop is to be revamped as a Londis but it currently is not very clean nor enticing for those who rely on it. She would go in and ask for an update.

24/24 Annual Parish Meeting (APM)

It was agreed to have the APM (written reports only) on Thursday 16th May 2024 before the Annual Parish Council meeting.

25/24 Financial Matters

- The Council's current financial position @ £34,465 was noted.
- The Bank reconciliation as at 29th February 2024 (Appendix 2) was noted.
- The schedule of accounts submitted for payment at Appendix 3 was noted and a payment was approved for WSCC (Clerk's February Salary) @ £597
- The Budget Monitoring sheet as at 29th February 2024 (Appendix 4) was noted.

26/24 Reports back from meetings attended by Councillors

There had been no external meetings since the last meeting.

27/24 Clerks Report including correspondence

The tree carving on the stump outside Barns Close has been delayed due to the wet weather. It is hoped to start next week, weather permitting. The Clerk attended the All-Parishes meeting which was interesting with various speakers including Hyde Housing. There is a SDNP meeting on Wednesday 13th March at 6.30pm. The Official Portrait of His Majesty King Charles III has been ordered for the Village Hall.

28/24 Items to be included on the next agenda

Please inform the Clerk of any items to go on the agenda by Thursday 9th May 2024

29/24 Date of next meeting

Thursday 16th May 2024 at 8pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.15pm

Signed

Date