



NORTHCHAPEL PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting

held at Northchapel Village Hall

On Thursday 16th May 2024 at 8pm

Present: Councillors Mr Alex Baker, Mrs Jules Fraser, Miss Laura Green, Mr Melvin Greet, Mrs Sharon Holden (Chairman), Mr John Sochovsky and Mr Ed Warren

In attendance: Mrs Helen Cruikshank, Parish Clerk

There were four members of the public present.

ANNUAL MEETING BUSINESS AGENDA

- 1. Election of Chairman:** Nominations for Chairman were invited for the ensuing year. Councillor Sharon Holden was proposed and duly seconded. There being no other nominations, it was **RESOLVED** that **Councillor Holden** be elected Chairman of Northchapel Parish Council for 2024/25
- 2. Election of Vice-Chairman:** The Chairman invited nominations for Vice Chairman and Councillor Laura Green was proposed and duly seconded. There being no other nominations it was **RESOLVED** that **Councillor Green** be elected Vice Chairman for the ensuing year.

3. Election of Lead Members of Working Parties and Committees:

Village Green – Miss Laura Green
Play Area – Miss Laura Green
Planning – Mr Alex Baker
Highways – Mr John Sochovsky
Footpaths and Rights of Way – Mrs Daphne Trussler
Housing – Mrs Sharon Holden
Village Hall – Mrs Sharon Holden
Northchapel Youth Club – Mr Ed Warren
Website – Parish Clerk
Winter Plan – Mr Robert Moss (non-Councillor)
Allotments – Mr Willie Poste (non-Councillor)

Planning Committee: Mr Alex Baker (Chairman), Mrs Sharon Holden, Mr John Sochovsky, Mrs Daphne Trussler and Mr Ed Warren

Finance Committee: Miss Laura Green, Mrs Sharon Holden (need one more)

Housing Working Party: Mrs Sharon Holden, Miss Laura Green and Mrs Daphne Trussler

4. To fix the dates of future meetings 2024/25

Thursday 18th July 2024
Thursday 5th September 2024
Thursday 7th November 2024
Thursday 5th December 2024 (precept/finance only meeting)
Thursday 16th January 2025
Thursday 6th March 2025
Thursday 1st May 2025 (Annual meeting)

All meetings are held at 8pm at Northchapel Village Hall. Planning meetings are held as and when necessary, on Saturdays at 9.30am at the Church or discussed by email.

PARISH COUNCIL BUSINESS

The Allotment Manager said there are now 6 vacant plots and these need to be trimmed and weed-killed. The Chair said she had spoken to a resident who would be able to help with the maintenance. She would get him to liaise with Mr Poste and further thanked him for his work managing the allotments.

30/24 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from District Councillors Gareth Evans and Charles Toddhunter, County Councillor Janet Duncton and Parish Councillor Daphne Trussler. Apologies were also received from Robin Walter, Virginia Morgan and Lynda & Clifford Bell.

31/24 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Green declared an interest in agenda item 35/24: Working Party Reports: MUGA as secretary of the Sports Club.

32/24 Co-option of Councillor

Samantha Jones was co-opted as a Councillor. The Clerk to email her all the relevant documentation.

33/24 Minutes

The Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 7th March 2024 were approved as a correct record and signed.

34/24 Reports from the Chichester District and West Sussex County Councillors

District Councillors Evans and Toddhunter had sent through a written report as follows:

Local Updates:

Crouchlands – We have been made aware that the developer intends to appeal all live applications on grounds of non-determination. Charles and I are in close contact with the Planning Team who will be working on this. They will update us as soon as there is further information.

Shop Development Loxwood – The latest update received on this is that the shop development is still going ahead as planned, will be built at the same time as the rest of the development and will begin in the next few weeks.

Potholes – Continuing to have residents approaching me about Potholes in the community. Advised that this is a WSCC issue but Charles and I report them as we become aware of them. The emergency number for Potholes which are a safety risk can be reported via the emergency number 01243 642105

Speed awareness – Charles and I have been out in recent weeks volunteering with other local residents in Loxwood, helping to gather important data to get a picture of the speeding issues in the village. Speeding is also a number 1 concern within the community.

Supporting Community Events – There are a number of community events coming up across May and June which I will be supporting. On May 6th (Bank Holiday) I will be the mc at the Plaistow Preschool Maypole, Saturday 18th May sees me competing in the 5km Northchapel run raising funds for their local school and on Sunday 9th June I will once again be taking part in Runwisborough.

CDC Wide Updates:

Local Plan – The Chichester District Council Local Plan for 2021-2039 was submitted on Friday 3rd May to the Secretary of State for Examination. We now await their response to this and will update once further information is available.

Evening Meetings – next Full Council meeting on Tuesday 21st May will see us moving to evening meetings. The long-term aim is that this extends to more meetings and there can be a mix of daytime and evening meetings, opening the democratic process to many more people.

District Councillor Surgeries:

Cllr. Gareth Evans is available to meet residents face to face via one of his regular surgeries. Gareth will be available at the advertised venues from 12pm-2pm:

Saturday 18th May 2024 – Old Mill Café, Wisborough Green

Saturday 15th June 2024 - The Onslow Arms, Loxwood

Saturday 22nd June 2024 - Northchapel Club, Northchapel

Saturday 13th July 2024 - Plaistow Stores, Plaistow

Saturday 24th August 2024 - The Stag Inn, Balls Cross

Saturday 7th September 2024- Kirdford Stores, Kirdford

Saturday 21st September 2024 - Old Mill Café, Wisborough Green

Should the suggested dates not be suitable for you or there are any other reasons preventing you from attending then it is possible to arrange home visits, telephone calls or zoom meetings.

Contact details are:

Cllr. Gareth Evans, email gbevans@chichester.gov.uk or telephone 07958918056

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/GarethEvansLoxwood>

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

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Charles4Loxwood>

County Councillor Duncton had sent through a written report as follows:

A lot of County work involves the whole of the County but I am sure you don't want or need details of say a roundabout in Crawley or similar. On the other hand, there are overall County issues that involve everyone and I do try and keep you informed especially through your Parish/Town Council or by meeting up at events like lunch Clubs and Coffee mornings that I can manage to attend. These are really good ways of speaking to those who live in their Parish. I also report and see things like of course the Potholes which from whatever source I get them or those I come across when driving around I do report as of course others can report on the web if they would like to do so. It doesn't matter if they have been reported by me or others it is just good to get them reported.

I am afraid the old timescale of 21 days from when they prove to be deep enough and have the white line around them has now gone out of the window with the dreadful weather we have had since last October which has made an enormous increase in our highways work load. Not only Potholes but slipped Banks and fallen Trees and of course blocked drains. We are gradually getting around to do the work but it's a slow process. When in the rural areas our marvellous Patching machines can be used, they do a great job and can do large areas at a time. We now have 3 of these machines but not sure we can get more. Unfortunately, they do a great job but can't be used much in the Urban areas but in rural areas they are great.

Fostering is an on-going concern. Despite our fostering recruitment and retention being the strongest it has been for 10 years the number of young people we care for has also increased and continues to grow at over 900 at the time of writing. If you know of anyone who is interest in looking into fostering, please check the website. There are ample training opportunities and how wonderful to be able to help some who have had a difficult time so far in their lives. It is of course a commitment and like all commitments has its up and downs but what a great thing to do.

We are already working on our budget for 25/26 but at the time of writing we have not had the first of our members workshops. I can only warn at the moment that things financially do not get any easier and this year we managed to balance the budget without cutting our Services and when we get closer to setting our budget, we will have a better idea of how we can manage the 25/26 budget. Of course, we have statutory duties which

we have to fulfil but as I've said before it's not always a case of cutting Services but often as last year doing some of them differently.

The County Council has a new Chief executive coming. His name is Leigh Whitehouse and he comes from the position of deputy CEO at Surrey County Council. Until such times as he arrives Becky Shaw that was working with us and East Sussex will remain until Leigh arrives and then she goes back full time to East Sussex.

For those parishes within the National Park, we are also in the process of recruiting a new Chief Executive and although a small committee of us have been working on this for some time we are now at the stage of another company going out to the market for prospective candidates to apply. We are expecting a very large postbag of interested parties for this post so I will update when I can. I think and hope a new Chief Executive will be in situ August/September. In the meantime, of course Tim Slaney who was Director of Planning is holding the fort as interim Chief Executive.

As I write we have had some really good weather and long may it last so I hope all have a good June. There are lots of open Gardens in our area and they are always a joy to see. Such a beautiful part of the World.

Contact details: janet.dunton@westsussex.gov.uk or mobile 07979 152898

35/24 Working Party Reports

- **Allotments:** The Clerk reported all rents had been paid. The school do not have the capacity to manage an allotment plot at this time. A message would be sent out via the village WhatsApp group regarding the vacancies. If you anyone is interested in taking on a plot, please contact Willie Poste on 707295.
- **Village Green:** The Village Green is looking nice when it is cut. The ditch at the bottom still keeps filling up when the weather is bad. The D-day 80 flag will be going up at 9am on 6th June and stay up for a week. The noticeboard is currently being refurbished and it was agreed that the Clerk should order a replacement defibrillator cabinet.
- **Highways including parking issues:** The parking in the mornings on the main road seems to have improved. The Clerk is still waiting a response on the request that the Stagecoach bus collect students from Pipers Lane instead of the main road.
- **Village Road Safety Project including speed reduction proposals and Speedwatch:** Councillor Green had previously distributed the email regarding the meeting she had had with the traffic consultant where they discussed reducing speed limits on all roads leading into the village. It was agreed to go ahead with employing him to carry out an initial feasibility exercise (£1,715) of what can be achieved in Northchapel within the scope of the WSCC Speed Limit Policy whilst also considering complementary measures such as enhanced gateway features, road marking and giving consideration to improvements to pedestrians and cyclists where possible.
The Clerk is waiting to get costs back from Plaistow & Ifold re: 20mph speed limit reduction application.
- **Play Area:** Councillor Green is still waiting for Playsafe Playgrounds to quote for the repairs although the annual ROSPA inspection is due in June so there will be some additional bits to add by then anyway.
- **Footpaths, Hedges and Rights of Way:** The inspection will be happening next month by the WSCC local rangers. Any issues will be recorded and logged and the required work will then be prioritised and carried out by their contractor over the summer. The Clerk to report the overgrown nature of the Footpath which runs behind Oaklea on Hillgrove Lane.
- **Planning:** Councillor Baker said there were no outstanding planning applications to be discussed tonight. The following planning applications had been discussed since March's meeting:

SDNP/24/00380/TCA

Notification of intention to reduce height by up to 3.5m and reduce widths by up to 2m on 1 no. Cherry tree
2 The Square House A283 Luffs Meadow to Pipers Lane Northchapel West Sussex GU28 9HS

Decision: Raise no objection

SDNP/24/00359/TCA

Notification of intention to crown reduce by up to 3m and remove lower stem on south sector (over driveway) on 1 no. Eucalyptus tree (quoted as 1) and crown reduce by up to 3m on 1 no. Hazel tree (quoted as 2)
Oaklands A283 Luffs Meadow to Pipers Lane Northchapel West Sussex GU28 9HW
Decision: Raise no objection

SDNP/23/03262/HOUS

Extension and alterations and side porch
2 Vine Cottage A283 Pipers Lane to Valentines Lea Valentines Hill Northchapel Petworth West Sussex GU28 9HU
Decision: Approved

SDNP/22/01851/FUL

Temporary siting of 1 no. mobile home, for equestrian manager, (retrospective)
Diddlesfold Dressage, Manor Farm Lot 1, Diddlesfold Lane Northchapel West Sussex GU28 9EN
Case withdrawn

SDNP/23/04205/HOUS

Demolition of existing single storey rear and side extensions and erection of replacement 2 storey rear extension and single storey side extension, internal alterations and replacement of existing oil tank with air source heat pump, replace existing windows and doors and associated landscaping
Peacocks Farm Cottage Pipers Lane Northchapel West Sussex GU28 9JB
Decision: Approved

SDNP/24/00490/CND

Alteration to existing single-story extension with provision for bedroom with en-suite facilities (Variation of condition 2 from planning permission SDNP/21/00213/LIS - Revised floor plan and elevation which includes the removal of wood burner flue and amendments to the internal floor layout)
Parkgate Shillinglee Road Shillinglee Northchapel West Sussex GU8 4SX
Decision: Approved

SDNP/24/00406/LIS

Partial conversion of outbuildings into office and ancillary accommodation. Remedial works to barn and farmhouse, replacement fenestration and new porch
Peacocks Farm Pipers Lane Northchapel West Sussex GU28 9JB
Case withdrawn

- **Village Hall:** Councillor Holden said there was nothing more to report that wasn't said earlier at the APM. The Village Hall is struggling and needs to be used more. It is hoped to have a presence at the Village Fete to make people aware. The Lottery does bring in some extra money.
- **Housing:** Councillor Holden reported there had been a very good meeting with Hyde, Home and Chichester District Council in April. Lots of information was received and provided both ways with some good contacts now in place.
- **Winter Plan:** There was nothing to report.
- **Northchapel Youth Club:** See the APM minutes for an update.
- **Multi-use Games Arena (MUGA) project:** See APM minutes for an update.

36/24 Village Shop

Councillor Holden stated that there is finally progress with the Village Shop. The lease has been sold on and it is hoped the new refurbished shop will open in the middle of June. The Post Office will return but this may take 3 months. The new lessors are wanting to put extra security on the building by installing shutters as well as a complete refit with better use of the internal space. The shop will have fresh bread, fruit and vegetables and they are reapplying for the Lottery and newspapers. It is imperative the village is kept informed in order to

get everyone back shopping in there. It seems they are very on the ball and want to provide a community asset for the whole village. However, in the meantime, if there is anyone who needs anything, please contact the Clerk.

One member of the public left the meeting at 8.55pm.

37/24 Financial Matters

- The Council's current financial position @ £43,824 was noted.
- The Bank reconciliation as at 8th May 2024 (Appendix 3) was noted.
- The schedule of accounts submitted for payment at Appendix 4 was noted.
- The Budget Monitoring sheet as at 8th May 2024 (Appendix 5) was noted.
- The Parish Council's 2023/24 financial year started with an opening balance of £27,351. During the year, the Parish Council received an income of £35,753. This consisted of the precept at £30,000, allotment rents, grants, the VAT return and the Showtime Amusement Fair location fee. The Parish Council spent £30,609 during the past financial year. This consisted of costs to maintain the Village Green plus tree works around the village. Grass cutting at the Churchyard, hedge cutting at the Allotments, bin emptying around the village, Clerk's Salary, General Admin plus grants and donations of £5,080 for the year. This leaves a closing balance as at 31st March 2024 of £32,495 which shows the Parish Council accounts are in a healthy but not excessive state at year end which should keep both the internal and external auditors happy. The internal audit has been carried out by Mrs Jean Huggett and she agreed that all internal control objectives have been carried out throughout the year raising no concerns.
- Appendix 6 contains:
 1. Income & Expenditure sheet 2023/24
 2. Bank Reconciliation as at 31st March 2024
 3. Internal Audit report
 4. Section 1: Annual Governance Statement 2023/24
 5. Section 2: Accounting Statements 2023/24
 6. Explanation of Variances: Details the differences on Section 2 and is required by the External Auditor

All these documents will be uploaded onto the website with the notice of the period for the exercise of public rights. All legal information will be displayed on the notice board.

The Income and Expenditure sheet and Bank reconciliation as at 31st March 2024, Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Return 2023/24 and Explanation of Variances 2023/24 were considered by the Councillors. The Annual Return statements and figures were duly proposed and seconded. Section 1 was approved and then Section 2 approved, both by Full Council and signed by the Chairman.

38/24 Reports back from meetings attended by Councillors

There had been no recent external meetings apart from the housing meeting which had already been reported on under Working Parties.

39/24 Clerks Report including correspondence

The Clerk to discuss the replacement of the felled Horse Chestnut tree as per the planning condition stipulated by CDC with Apples & Pears.

All the work parties for Seaford College's Community Action Day have been allocated but Northchapel is on the waiting list for this year and will be included with any planning in 2025.

40/24 Items to be included on the next agenda

Please inform the Clerk of any items to go on the agenda by Thursday 11th July 2024

41/24 Date of next meeting

Thursday 18th July 2024 at 8pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.10pm

Signed

Date