



NORTHCHAPEL PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of a Parish Council Meeting

held at Northchapel Village Hall

On Thursday 18th July 2024 at 8pm

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

In attendance: Mrs Helen Cruikshank, Parish Clerk
District Councillor Mr Charles Toddhunter
County Councillor Janet Duncton

There were no members of the public present.

PARISH COUNCIL BUSINESS

Public Question time

There were no questions.

42/24 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from District Councillor Gareth Evans and Parish Councillor Daphne Trussler.

43/24 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Green declared an interest in agenda item 45/24: Working Party Reports: MUGA as secretary of the Sports Club. Councillor Holden declared an interest in agenda item 49/24 Finance: Organiser of the Northchapel Flower & Vegetable Show.

44/24 Minutes

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 16th May 2024 were approved as a correct record and signed.

45/24 Reports from the Chichester District and West Sussex County Councillors

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

It's been a busy time at both West Sussex County Council and the South Downs National Park but the strange thing is that there isn't a lot to report to all the residents.

First of all, I would like to mention the 6th June and the 80th anniversary of D-day. We go over nearly every year because as some will know Petworth is twinned with Ranville the first village to be liberated on the 6th June 1944. It is a long time ago but we should never forget as so many gave their lives for our freedom and as difficult as life gets for us individually every now and again these armed forces of World War 2 sacrificed their lives in hundreds and thousands for our and others freedom and I take pride in acknowledging that annually. This year the County Council provided me with a wreath and the Mayor of Ranville always allows me to join in placing my wreaths on the memorial in the town when he does and a few others, usually relatives of past Veterans. We will remember them.

As ever a lot of my time is taken reporting issues with the highways and many will say it doesn't show but I would have to disagree. Nothing is perfect yet and probably never will be but I know from our records of jobs completed that we are making rapid progress into the backlog of, in particular, potholes but believe me there are many other issues that have to be sorted and among these are drain clearance and often jetting, fallen trees, slipped banks and other issues that can be a danger on the highway and it is our duty to try and keep the highways safe for the user.

We are in the middle of an election and although I am saying nothing about that I do want to assure residents that in these times all our other duties are going on as normal, nothing stops.

Recently I have said about the good reports we are getting now for our Children's Services. It has taken about 5 years but we are honestly getting there. A children's home in Crawley has recently been inspected by OFSTED and has been awarded outstanding by them. This is a very happy outcome and we do aim to give all the children in our care the sort of life that any child could expect in a family. Not an easy task but we really are making a difference now even with the ever-rising numbers.

Our Trading Standards have again been busy and successful in prosecuting retailers who are still selling illegal products. We don't mention them much but they are constantly working trying to keep us all safe not just in retail but trying to educate people in recognising and not falling for Scams. Not only that but we still get rogue building workers who charge way over the top for work and indeed very rarely do the job the householder thought they were getting. Recently one that has been doing just that has recently received a prison sentence. A quick word on the South Downs National Park Authority. I sit on the planning committee with 4 other members and among other items we are now in the process of selecting for the position of Chief Executive. We hope to have a new CEO in August and as you may imagine a large number of applicants are expected. Watch this space.

Be assured that I continue to work for my parishes and although it isn't easy I still do report all road issues that either I come across or residents inform me of.

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

County Councillor Dunton left the meeting at 8.05pm

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

Local Updates:

Hawthorn Cottage (Loxwood) – An application has now been submitted and is awaiting validation. Charles and I are keeping close contact with officers and will update as and when it is validated. The developer has also been in contact and is keen to work with the community to ensure it is a development in keeping with the village. Until full plans are seen we cannot comment further but will work in the interests of the whole community.

Loxwood Shop Development – The shop development has now begun and as previously is under offer. We hope that this delivers a much-needed shop to the community in Loxwood soon.

Northchapel Shop – Great news that the local shop in Northchapel opened back up on Saturday 29th June. Residents are delighted with this news, and it appears the new owner has worked closely with the community to provide the type of shop it needs. There was a great local turnout for this at the grand re-opening. Charles and I visited in early July and saw the great work that has gone into providing a shop for the local community. We wish the new owners much luck and happiness on their new venture in Northchapel.

Valentines Lea (Northchapel)- On Thursday 4th July Charles and I were contacted by a resident who informed us that a bin storage unit had gone up outside of their property in Valentines Lea with allegedly no prior consultation to residents from Hyde Housing. This was reported to enforcement at the time who said that it was considered as 'permitted development' i.e. that it was considered to be development which does not require permission. However, on visiting Valentines Lea on Sunday 7th July and measuring the bin storage unit we believed that at two meters in height it did require planning. We also discovered that there were another two similar units being developed on Valentines Lea. These were all reported to enforcement who have changed their stance and confirmed that planning permission was required. Since reporting this enforcement has confirmed that all three bin storage units will be removed as they don't have the required planning permission.

Crouchlands Development – As anticipated an appeal has gone in for the refusal on the two housing developments and non-determination on the farm regeneration application. We are currently awaiting further information on this appeal which officers are hoping to hold locally and is likely to take up to two weeks for the hearing. The key issue is finding a venue which can hold the number of residents that will rightly want to

attend. We both campaigned against this development which we did not feel was right for the community and will continue to fight this development. At the Planning meeting on 10th July 2024 the planning committee voted unanimously to contest all 18 grounds at appeal.

CDC Wide Updates:

Planning

On 12th July the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) came to Chichester District Council to interview councillors regarding their ongoing review of how the planning service can be improved.

General Election

There was a general election on Thursday 4th July. Loxwood Ward falls under the newly formed Arun and South Downs Constituency and Andrew Griffiths (Conservative Party) was duly elected. Labour won the general election with 412 seats, Conservatives gained 122 seats, The Liberal Democrats gained 72 seats, SNP gained 9 seats, Reform gained 5 seats, Greens and Plaid Cymru gained 4 seats each and some 23 seats were won by other parties, all in Northern Ireland, and independent candidates.

Climate Change Consultation

CDC have been working with a developer to create a brand-new consultation platform that will meet the council's needs. CDC are really pleased that this has been developed in time for the council's climate change consultation. The new platform is much easier for respondents to use, and allows CDC the ability to include videos, images and maps to help explain things and consult with people. The survey will go live on 1 July at:

<https://letstalk@chichester.gov.uk/climatechange/participate>

You can also find out more information about the consultation at:

<https://letstalk@chichester.gov.uk/climatechange>

CDC are keen for you to complete the consultation and let them know your thoughts. They are running a prize draw that people can enter at the end of the survey to win a £500 sustainable prize.

MOTs

CDC are pleased to tell you that people will be able to book MOTs on their website from 2 July. This is something that they have been able to introduce and develop thanks to the fact that they moved the website into the Cloud. This is going to make it even easier for customers to book their MOT and access services. Once this project is complete, they will then look at enabling people to book Taxi Knowledge tests online. They keep you posted!

Arun and Chichester Citizens' Advice (ACCA) new drop-in service on Thursday mornings in Midhurst

People needing advice and information can now see the local Citizens' Advice service in Midhurst. They have started offering a drop-in service at the Grange Centre (GU29 9HD) on Thursdays between 9.30am - 12.30pm (except Thursday 18 July). It is offered on a first come first serve basis, so there may be a short wait if arriving after the first client of the day.

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 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>

46/24 Working Party Reports

- **Allotments:** There are still some vacant plots at the allotments. Councillor Jones to advertise these on social media once again. Maintenance has been carried out on the empty plots to keep on top of them.
- **Village Green:** The noticeboard has been refurbished and due to be erected back at the top of the Green imminently. There is a group of travellers who have made an encampment locally; please ensure all sites are protected as practically possible and to be alert. CDC has issued a revised protocol for dealing with unauthorised encampments.
- **Highways including parking issues:** Now it is the school holidays, the parking on the main road will not be an issue. Councillor Fraser had spoken with the bus driver during term time requesting whether the bus could collect students from Pipers Lane rather than the main road. He had been very helpful and listened but it is very difficult due to this route also being a public bus service. Once term commences in September, this situation needs to be kept an eye on.
- **Village Road Safety Project including speed reduction proposals and Speedwatch:** Councillor Green reported that the Speedwatch training by Sussex Police did not happen earlier in the week due to the instructor having a family emergency. This would be rearranged for August. Councillors Green and Sochovsky to look at potential locations to put forward to the Police assessor. Clerk to purchase equipment once location has been agreed. The traffic consultant has sent in his report and Councillor Green will go through this and report back at the next meeting. Clerk to submit the 20mph proposal for outside the school by 31st July.
- **Play Area:** Councillors had all seen the quote from Playsafe Playgrounds for the play area repairs including the issues identified in this year's inspection report plus the quote for a replacement slide. Councillor Green to look through the quote prioritising work which needs to be done by the contractors and those jobs which can be done by volunteers. Clerk to let her know how much money the Parish Council has currently allocated in the playground reserve.
- **Footpaths, Hedges and Rights of Way:** Following a complaint about the state of the footpath between Luffs meadow and the main road being overgrown, WSCC has cut it back. Awaiting the summer clearance for further works to be carried out in the parish.
- **Planning:** Councillor Baker said there were no outstanding planning applications to be discussed tonight. The following planning applications had been discussed since May's meeting:

SDNP/24/01761/HOUS

Peacocks Farm, Pipers Lane, Northchapel GU28 9JB

Partial conversion of existing outbuilding into office and accommodation, replacement entrance doors and gate to the house.

SDNP/24/01927/TCA

Tollgate Cottage, Northchapel GU28 9HX

Notification of intention to crown reduce 1 no Ash tree

SDNP/24/01680/HOUS and SDNP/24/01681/LIS

Gastons Farm, Shillinglee Road, Northchapel GU8 4SX

Proposed rear extension

SDNP/24/01762/LIS

Peacocks Farm, Pipers Lane, Northchapel GU28 9JB

Partial conversion of existing outbuilding to ancillary accommodation

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

SDNP/24/01927/TCA

Tollgate Cottage, Northchapel GU28 9HX

Notification of intention to crown reduce 1 no Ash tree

Decision: Raise no objection

SDNP/24/01730/LIS

2 Vine Cottage A283 Pipers Lane to Valentines Lea Valentines Hill Northchapel West Sussex GU28 9HU

Proposed extensions and alterations

Decision: Approved

SDNP/24/01680/HOUS and SDNP/24/01681/LIS

Gastons Farm, Shillinglee Road, Northchapel GU8 4SX

Proposed rear extension

Decision: Refused

- **Village Hall:** Councillor Holden said the Village Hall has received £615 from the fete proceeds which the VHMC is incredibly grateful for. There is a new dog training booking which is great news.
- **Housing:** Councillor Holden reported there are two empty properties in Luffs Meadow which she would liaise with Hyde over. She had received numerous complaints about the new bin storage being installed by Hyde at Valentines Lea and was pleased to see that these were now being removed following swift action by our District Councillors and planning enforcement.
- **Winter Plan:** The grit bin audit deadline is 31st July.
- **Northchapel Youth Club:** The Youth Club has finished for the summer. The last session saw an inflatable obstacle course and bouncy castle which was great fun with 23 children. Need parents of those attending to volunteer once a term to spread out the work.
- **Multi-use Games Arena (MUGA) project:** Councillor Green is hoping to meet with two local people to help with contributions to the project. She is planning some fundraising events in mid-September to try and raise £20,000. The grant money pledged by CDC runs out in April 2025 so it is imperative that more money is raised this year.

47/28 Horse Chestnut tree carving and replacement

All agreed the tree carving looks good. There have been some lovely positive comments from parishioners. Nathan Blatherwick came to the village fair which was great and it is hoped he will return next year with a larger demonstration and more sales. There are sprouting bits on the trunk. Clerk to contact Nathan. The replacement tree will be planted in November. Apples & Pears has suggested a Copper Beech.

48/24 Village Shop update

Councillor Holden stated it is wonderful to see the Village Shop back open and full of goods. Vish and his family have certainly worked extremely hard to get this opened as promised by the end of June. The Post Office will be returning at a later date but please keep supporting the shop in the meantime. Please only park in the lay-by if you are visiting the shop as the shop needs the passing trade. Concern was raised with regard the overgrown nature of the layby. It is hoped this will be cleared by WSCC and their summer clearance works. It was agreed to keep the noticeboard by the shop and update its contents as needed.

49/24 Financial Matters

- The Council's current financial position @ £40,059 was noted.
- The Bank reconciliation as at 11th July 2024 (Appendix 4) was noted.

- The schedule of accounts submitted for payment at Appendix 5 was noted. Payments for WSCC (Clerk’s June Salary) @ £597 and Northchapel Flower & Veg Show (Annual donation) @ £250 were approved.
- The Budget Monitoring sheet as at 11th July 2024 (Appendix 6) was noted.

50/24 Reports back from meetings attended by Councillors

Councillors had not recently attended any external meetings.

51/24 Clerks Report including correspondence

The Clerk reported that Seaford College’s Community Action Day had been very successful with work carried out at the school, pavilion and church.

The South Downs Local Plan review is currently underway until 16th September.

www.sdnpalocalplanreview.commonplace.is

52/24 Items to be included on the next agenda

Please inform the Clerk of any items to go on the agenda by Thursday 29th August 2024

53/24 Date of next meeting

Thursday 5th September 2024 at 8pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.45pm

Signed

Date