



# **NORTHCHAPEL PARISH COUNCIL**

## **APPROVED Minutes of a Parish Council Meeting**

**held at Northchapel Village Hall**

**On Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> November 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 Mrs Daphne Trussler.

**In attendance:** Mrs Helen Cruikshank, Parish Clerk (via phone due to family bereavement)  
District Councillor Mr Gareth Evans  
PCSO Matt Isles

There were no members of the public present.

### **PARISH COUNCIL BUSINESS**

#### **Public Question time**

PCSO Matt Isles stated that he and PCSO Nathan Ford covered the parish under the Plaistow and Wisborough Green area. They are aware of the vehicle thefts that occurred overnight into 5<sup>th</sup> November and PCSO Isles stated it is dreadful that rural areas are being targeted. It seems the perpetrators moved from Northchapel to Hampers Green, Midhurst and then down to Boxgrove and Tangmere. The enquiries are on-going to establish those responsible and they will try and be in the area more to deter criminals.

It is imperative that everyone reports EVERY incident or crime by phoning 101 or online [www.sussex.police.uk/ro/report/](http://www.sussex.police.uk/ro/report/). Please phone 999 if it is an emergency. The Police need reports otherwise rural villages such as Northchapel will be seen as a low crime area and not get visible policing units allocated.

*PCSO Matt Isles left the meeting at 8.15pm*

#### **66/24 Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Parish Councillor Ed Warren and County Councillor Janet Duncton.

#### **67/24 Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Green declared an interest in agenda item 70/24: Working Party Reports: MUGA as secretary of the Sports Club.

#### **68/24 Minutes**

The Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> September were approved as a correct record and signed.

#### **69/24 Reports from the Chichester District and West Sussex County Councillors**

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

- Budget for 25/26. We have had another workshop on the 25<sup>th</sup> October not so much to put our ideas forward but to listen and hopefully learn from the heads of departments and the Cabinet member for Finance and the Council Leader. These are informative sessions for Councillors and on the whole very little that is for passing to the residents at the moment. I've said it before and it's even more relevant at the moment it does not get any easier trying to make a balanced budget and keep the Services going many of which you know are statutory and we have to produce in one way and another. Well at the end of the session it does seem that the coming year we have or will have succeeded in balancing the books

and not cutting Services but and it's a big but as yet we as back benchers don't know the cost of the new Employers NI contributions and what we do know is that it will cost us millions and we await to hear if Government money will come along to cover the extra expense. As ever we are all kept in suspense until, usually just before the Christmas break. We shall see.

- On happier notes if I haven't said before I will now, our Children's Services go from strength to strength and when we have the final OFSTED, I will let you know but it will probably be in the press before I write. It's looking good and as all Councillors are Corporate Parents it's very important to us that we succeed in looking after the young people of West Sussex as best we can.
- I think I told you last month that our Fire Service had a very good HMI report where one of the only things we are behind on is recruiting our retained Fire & Rescue Staff. If you know any young(ish) people who would be interested of any diverse range of people women as well as men please point them in the direction of the Fire & Rescue website.
- Trading Standards have been as busy as ever and in past reports I have told you how well they are doing with illicit products including illegal cigarettes and bringing the cases to Court. Also of course some who have been taking money for work that they should have done especially on people's houses and not done the work or in some cases done it badly and taken large amounts of money. Trading Standards do catch up with them eventually.
- Most parishes now have a Winter Plan in place should we get adverse weather conditions which you never know so I am hoping that if bad weather including snow and ice occurs, we are as prepared as we can be. You just cannot predict what may come along but where as ready as can be.
- SEND education has been a major issue in recent years and we are doing all we can including building new premises to cope with the numbers. There is another piece of fear that may or may not happen and that is if parents whose children were going into Private education and now with the VAT feel they can't do it and want places in State School we could, if this happens find ourselves with a shortage of places and this could especially affect SEND children. However, that's jumping the gun somewhat as it hasn't happened as yet so it's watch this space.
- At the other end of the age range West Sussex has one of the larger sections of self-paying residents in care homes. Of course, this concern is that when their money runs short, they will then have to turn to County for their care. In the meantime, we are helping all we can to enable what the majority want and that is to stay in their own homes.
- You know from previous comments that the Fire & Rescue Service do a great many visits to peoples home giving advice on how to keep safe in their homes etc. There is more that can help to keep people in their own homes and it is best to contact the Adults Service department at County to see what help they can get.

As ever if you need to contact me it's [janet.dunton@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:janet.dunton@westsussex.gov.uk) or my mobile 07979152898.

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

#### **Local Updates**

**Crouchlands Development** – The appeal hearing has concluded. Thank you to all parish councillors and residents that spoke up for their community. We now await the planning inspectorate's decision and will update as soon as we have any indication as to when this is likely to be.

**Lagoon 3** – We have written to the Director of Planning and Environment making note that it has been some time since we had an update on safety visits conducted at Lagoon 3. It was pointed out that this was managed by the Monitoring Officer and since they had left CDCs employment that responsibility had not been redistributed. We have been told that the Divisional Manager for Development and the Divisional Manager for Environment would be in touch shortly with an update.

**Local Plan** – The hearing will resume on the 13<sup>th</sup> November. Officers have commented that good progress has been made so far. After the hearings conclude, inspectors will write to the council in a post hearings letter. It will then be for council to consider any recommendations made by the inspectors at DPIP on 18<sup>th</sup> December.

It was noted by several parish councillors how impressed they had been with the interventions of members of Wisborough Green, Kirdford and Loxwood. Thank you from Charles and I for standing up for your communities.

### **CDC Wide Updates**

**Interim Monitoring Officer** – With Nick Bennett moving to another Local Authority CDC have appointed an interim monitoring officer called Mark Watkins whilst CDC recruit for this specialist role. Mark works Monday – Wednesday.

**Full Council Meeting** – The next full council meeting takes place on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> November from 6pm. This is live streamed and residents are also invited to attend in person.

**National Lifelong Legend award** – We are delighted that the current CDC Chair Clare Apel has been nominated for this award. Clare has spent nearly 40 years supporting her local communities as both a District and City Councillor. She is also a founder of the Chichester Holocaust Memorial Day.

### **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:

Sat 2nd Nov - Northchapel Club

Sat 16 Nov - The Onslow Arms Loxwood

Sat 18th Jan - Kirdford stores

Sat 1st Feb - Plaistow Stores

Sat 15th Feb - The Stag Inn, Balls across

Saturday 1st Mar - Old Mill Cafe, 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.

Our contact details are:

Cllr. Gareth Evans, email [gbevans@chichester.gov.uk](mailto:gbevans@chichester.gov.uk) or telephone 07958918056

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

Cllr. Charles Todhunter, email [ctodhunter@chichester.gov.uk](mailto:ctodhunter@chichester.gov.uk) or telephone 07500 577 777

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

### **70/24 Working Party Reports**

- **Allotments:** The Clerk has instructed Apples & Pears to contact Willie directly to organise the hedge cutting.
- **Village Green:** Thanks to Councillor Baker, the new defibrillator cabinet is in place. As the guidance from SECAMB is that cabinets are now left unlocked at all times to enable quick access, he will take out the lock entirely. A large sticker will be put on the cabinet saying this with instructions on to simply turn handle to the right to open. The Clerk will update the information in the Parish News.
- **Highways including parking issues:** A member of public had carried out a review of the fingerposts in the County. In summary, there are 3 fingerposts in Northchapel parish. Happily, they have been restored and are in good condition. However, all the signs would benefit from being cleaned and minor repainting as necessary. Councillor Fraser kindly offered to do this. The Clerk to email the member of public and thank him for his hard work with the review.
- **Village Road Safety Project including speed reduction proposals and Speedwatch:** Councillor Green reported that the first session of Speedwatch had gone well, the second session will be at the weekend. Others now need to be trained so sessions can be carried out frequently.

Following the submission of the TRO application for a reduced speed limit on Pipers Lane at the end of July, it has now been assessed against the Speed Limit Policy. WSCC is happy the average speeds align with the proposal for a 20mph limit. It has progressed and passed the detailed assessment stage and the scheme is now being presented at a TRO Moderation, where the progression and design will be discussed. A 30mph buffer zone has been proposed on the approach to the 20mph which will extend the length of the speed limit and help improve forward visibility alongside vehicle speeds. The Parish Council agreed this was a welcome addition. The Clerk to put an update in the Parish News.

- **Play Area:** Councillor Green reported that Playsafe Playgrounds had been given the go ahead to do the repairs. Councillors accepted the replacement slide quote of £7,941 which included taking away the old one. It was agreed to transfer £250 from the Youth Club money to the Play area reserve fund. A further £250 would be transferred to the Village Event Fund. A replacement bollard is required outside of the play area.
- **Footpaths, Hedges and Rights of Way:** The Clerk said nothing had been reported to her. Councillor Trussler said there was a stile, west of Cylinders Lane which needed repairing.
- **Planning:** Councillor Baker said there was one outstanding planning application to be discussed tonight:

SDNP/24/02196/FUL

Telecommunications Installation, Valentines Hill, Northchapel

Installation of 35m slim lattice tower on concrete foundation, 6 no antennas, 4 no equipment cabinets and 3 no 600mmm transmission dish

The following planning applications had been discussed since September's meeting:

SDNP/24/03589/TCA

Land adjacent to Ivy Cottage, Valentines Hill, Northchapel GU28 9HX

Notification of intention to fell 1 no. Eucalyptus tree

SDNP/24/03460/HOUS

Mole End, Hillgrove Lane, Northchapel GU28 9EN

Renovation of house including of cladding to all elevations, new roof, 3 rooflights and other alterations

SDNP/24/03776/TCA

Ivy Cottage, Valentines Hill, Northchapel GU28 9HX

Notification of intention to fell 1 no. Cherry tree, 1 no. Willow tree plus other pruning

SDNP/24/03483/CND

Fisher Hill Flat, Fisher Street, Northchapel GU28 9EJ

Demolition of existing flat and garage and replace with 3 bed ancillary annexe

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

SDNP/24/03589/TCA

Land adjacent to Ivy Cottage, Valentines Hill, Northchapel GU28 9HX

Notification of intention to fell 1 no. Eucalyptus tree

Decision: Raise no objection

SDNP/24/03460/HOUS

Mole End, Hillgrove Lane, Northchapel GU28 9EN

Renovation of house including of cladding to all elevations, new roof, 3 rooflights and other alterations

Decision: Approved

- **Village Hall:** Councillor Holden said bookings were increasing including a potential weekly all day hire for a quilting class. The Village Hall Committee now has a Sum Up machine which will be useful for village events such as the Quiz and also for bookings.
- **Housing:** Councillor Holden had been in contact with Hyde Housing with regard abandoned properties in Valentines Lea and Luffs Meadow. The Clerk reported some suspicious activity in the block of flats in Luffs Meadow to Hyde and to the PCSO who has said they will provide some hi-viz patrols around the area to deter the behaviour. Keep watching and reporting please.
- **Winter Plan:** The Clerk reported that the grit bins have been replenished. Rob Moss has kindly put the replacement grit bin at Cylinders Lane and filled. The Clerk+ will send his PLI certificate along with the gritting route map to WSCC Active Communities team.
- **Northchapel Youth Club:** Councillor Green reported that Youth Club starts next week. It is a quieter time of year but a nice bunch who are enjoying it. Still need helpers (2 over 18's per session).
- **Multi-use Games Arena (MUGA) project:** Councillor Green stated that the SDNP CIL application for funding @£20,000 had been successful. A surveyor had been instructed, groundworks quotes are being obtained and there is a supplier for the court. Three quotes are required for best practice. There is enough money now for the groundwork and court with further fundraising for the landscaping and lighting. Councillor Green will start to approach local businesses and residents for help with funding too. She will put an update monthly in the Parish News with a picture of the proposed MUGA to remind villagers what the project entails.

### **71/24 Councillors Responsibilities**

The Clerk suggested balancing out the responsibilities to give the opportunity for newer Councillors to become more involved. Councillor Fraser kindly offered to take over the playground from Councillor Green, carrying out weekly checks and looking for grants for new equipment. Councillor Sochovsky will take on the Village Green so Councillor Green can concentrate on MUGA fundraising and the Road Safety Project.

It was agreed to change one of the two village WhatsApp groups to "Northchapel Notices" to enable Councillors Green, Jones and Warren plus the Clerk to put up more official and important notices regarding road closures, roadworks, scams, break-ins and events to keep parishioners more informed.

### **72/24 Manorial Waste Area Clearance plus Horse Chestnut Tree Replacement**

Councillor Greet said he would organise the clearance of the overgrown flower bed. There are more people willing to help so it was suggested that a note be put in the parish magazine in January.

Henry Whitby at CDC has approved the replacement tree suggestion of a Copper Beech and the location on the Village Green. The Clerk has asked Apples & Pears to source and plant the tree.

### **73/24 Post Village Firework and Bonfire Event**

Councillor Green reported the event was very successful. Great fireworks, they sold out of torches and food and more volunteers are definitely required next year both for holding buckets for donations and general help. It raised a good amount of money for the community and a wonderful small village event for everyone to enjoy. Councillor Warren is due to clear the bonfire waste from the Village Green on Sunday.

### **74/24 Village Christmas tree**

Councillor Baker will kindly donate a Christmas tree for the village at the beginning of December to be erected at the top of the Village Green. Councillors will look into sourcing some lights which can be run off a car battery.

#### **75/24 SDNP Local Plan Review**

The Clerk had circulated the SDNP draft site allocation email which included a potential site in Northchapel. Not all the sites will be proposed by SDNP. The allocations go to SDNP planning committee on 14<sup>th</sup> November then to full SDNP committee on 10<sup>th</sup> December. Public Consultation then will follow January – March 2025 when the PC can comment if the potential site in Northchapel is proposed.

#### **76/24 Financial Matters**

- The Council's current financial position @ £44,325 was noted. The second instalment of the precept has been received at £15,000
- The Bank reconciliation as at 31<sup>st</sup> October 2024 (Appendix 2) was noted.
- The schedule of accounts submitted for payment at Appendix 3 was noted. Payments for WSCC (Clerks October Salary) @ £597, Business Stream (Allotment water) @ £27 and WSCC (Payroll admin charges) @ £57 were approved.
- The Budget Monitoring sheet as at 31<sup>st</sup> October 2024 (Appendix 4) was noted.

#### **77/24 Reports back from meetings attended by Councillors**

There have been no recent external meetings.

#### **78/24 Clerks Report including correspondence**

The Clerk had nothing to report apart from those things already commented on tonight. The next All Parishes meeting is via Zoom on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2025 at 5pm.

#### **79/24 Items to be included on the next agenda**

Please inform the Clerk of any items to go on the agenda by Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2025

#### **80/24 Date of next meeting**

Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2024 at 8pm. It is a Finance only meeting for ALL Councillors to discuss grants and donations plus the precept for 2025/26. If there are any groups or organisations wanting to be considered for a grant, then please encourage them to submit an application which is available from me or from the website. The next full PC meeting is Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2025 at 8pm

The Annual Parish Council meeting planned for Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2025 has been changed to Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2025 due to the Village Hall being used as a polling station. The Clerk to circulate an updated meeting date list.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.10pm

**Signed .....**

**Date .....**