

Chitterne Parish Council

Meeting on Monday 13th May 2024

Minutes of the meeting of Chitterne Parish Council held on Monday 13th May 2024 at 7:00pm

Present: Councillors Charles Horsfall, John Dillon, Jane Bell, Julia Hendrickse, Graham Potter and Tony Hulton.

1. Election of the Chairman

Councillor Horsfall was appointed by unanimous vote. He stated this would be his last term.

Proposed by Councillor Hulton, Seconded by Councillor Bell

2. Election of the Vice-Chairman

Councillor Dillon was appointed by unanimous vote.

Proposed by Councillor Hulton, Seconded by Councillor Bell

3. Acceptance of apologies for absence

Apologies received from Councillor O'Driscoll

4. Minutes of meeting held on 11th March 2024.

Approved as a correct record.

5. Dispensations

Discuss requests for dispensation received from Councillors.

Nil

6. To receive declarations of interests

Councillor Horsfall declared potential conflict of interest with regard to recruitment of administrator.

It was agreed that at item 9 he would leave the room.

7. Chairman's announcements

See Annex A

8. Councillor Vacancies

Currently no councillor vacancies.

9. Clerk vacancy

Consider appointment of Sophie Havelock as administrator.

Following an interview by the Council the post was offered to Mrs Havelock to provide up to 10hrs of administrative support per month.

10. Planning applications

None of any note.

11. Correspondence

Nothing significant to report.

12. Banking, assets & finances:

Treasurer's account, P&L and Balance sheet updated by RFO to 30th April 2024.

Bank balance at 30th April 2024 - £17,717.84.

13. Receipts & Payments:

Payments: none due

Receipts: received first precept payment.

14. Parish Accounts:

Approval and signing of Parish Accounts to year end 31st March 2024 and to 30th April 2024.

Approved by all Council Members

15. Reports from Councillors:

Please refer to Annex B.

16. CPC Code of Conduct:

Councillors asked to readopt the LGA Code of Conduct for 2018 (2 pages) to replace LGA Code of Conduct 2022 (16 pages) adopted in May 2023.

Approved – with one abstention.

17. Responsibilities & other roles for 2024 /25.

Councillors to approve:

Responsible Financial Officer	John Terry
Allotments, Village Hall Liaison & King's Head	Councillor Dillon
Traffic & LHFIG	Councillors Bell and Hendrickse
chitterne.com	Councillor Hendrickse
Chitterne Brook, Playing field, MOD liaison & trees	Councillor Horsfall
Play equipment, Parish Steward & Defibrillator	Councillor O'Driscoll
Wiltshire Police liaison & Neighbourhood watch	Councillor Potter
Flood Warden & equipment	Councillor Hulton
Maintenance	Brian Lee
SIDs	Tom O'Driscoll
ChitChat editor	Lindsay Lucas (until July 2024)

Approved

18. Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

Councillors to adopt and approve Standing Orders and the Financial Regulations.

Adopted and approved.

19. Appointment of internal and external auditors.

Councillors to approve:

Internal auditor - Auditing Solutions Limited, Clackerbrook Farm, Chippenham.

External auditors - PKF Littlejohn LLP, 1 Westferry Circus, London, E14 4HD.

Approved.

20. Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2023/2024 Form 2

20.1. Section 1 Approve Annual Governance Statement

Councillors will be asked to approve accounting statements.

20.2. Section 2 Certify the Accounting Statements 2023/2024 - Annual Year End Accounts

Councillors will be asked to certify and approve the Accounts and certify it is exempt from External Audit

20.3. Signing the AGAR

Councillors will be asked to witness the signing of the AGAR by the Chairman & Responsible Finance Officer.

Witnessed and all item 20 matters approved subject to sign off by Internal Auditor

21. Approve the dates for the Public to exercise their rights

Council is asked to note that the External Auditor has recommend that the dates be advertised as Monday 3rd June 2024 to Friday 12th July 2024.

Approved.

22. Asset Register.

Councillors approve inventory of assets.

Approved with allotments to be added to the asset register.

23. Council insurance.

Councillors to note and approve insurance cover via Community First Current. Current cover expires on 31st May 2024.

Acknowledge and approved on a three year long term agreement basis.

24. Data Protection Fee

Councillors asked to note the GDPR/Data Protection renewal fee will soon be due and ICO will be collecting £35.00 on or before 11/06/2024.

This was noted

25. Other matters:

- **Community Emergency plan** – Councillor Hulton will review and update as necessary over the summer.
- **Preparation for Internal Audit** – Following completion of item 20 paperwork is now ready.
- **Tree health and maintenance survey** – survey quotes, to include Back Lane and allotments.

26. Dates of next meeting and subsequent meetings in 2024:

Next meeting Monday 1st July 2024.

Monday 9th September

Monday 4th November

The meeting ended at 8:35pm

Annex A

CHITTERNE PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR ANNUAL ELECTORS MEETING MONDAY 13th MAY 2024

1. Introduction.

I would like to start by thanking my fellow councillors for the time and effort they have devoted to the affairs of the Parish Council (CPC). Their contribution has been significant.

Also to others who have made significant contributions:

- Christopher Newbury, our Unitary Councillor; John Terry our Responsible Financial Officer, Lindsay Lucas who has for some years been producing ChitChat and will do so until July;
- sadly we recently lost Pete Sawyers who had kept the village informed via Petenet. Pete's widow Jan kindly agreed for the name to continue and Petenet is now managed by Alison Sage, and
- There are also others. These include Paul Pike and John Hallett who regularly mow the grass verges around the village.

To you all thank you very much.

2. Finances.

Chitterne receives an annual precept of around £10,500. Approximately 40% of that money was spent on employing a Parish Clerk .

During the last year we have not had a Clerk and thus been spared a major expense. John Terry, who is a qualified Chartered Accountant, kindly agreed to fill the Responsible Financial Officer role which he does free gratis.

The result is our finances are in very good shape and at today's date the Parish Council has £17,840 in the bank.

Our resources are directed towards maintaining the fabric and the assets of the village. These include the playing field, Chancel, play equipment, flood equipment, ChitChat and to some extent supporting the Village Hall.

3. Round up - 2023/2024

3.1 Kings Head.

The Pub Group has made a lot of progress towards reaching an agreement with Kenton and towards raising the funds needed to purchase and refurbish the Kings Head. With luck the PWLB loan facility of £400,000 successfully renewed last year may now not be needed.

This loan facility was to enable the CPC to purchase the pub for the village in the event of need.

3.2 Allotments.

Thanks to John Dillon's diligence, CPC recently took ownership of the allotments from the Wiltshire Council at no cost.

In the past rent from the allotments was collected by CPC and passed on to the Wiltshire Council less a small amount. Now the rent collected can be kept for the benefit of the village and to help improve the allotment area.

3.3 Chitterne Brook also known as The Cut.

Brian Lee carried out very good work last year removing silt and other obstacles from The Cut. This work appears to have paid off as there were no reports of any significant flooding in the village despite more rain falling between October to March than at another time since 1836.

Tony Hulton has recently taken over the flood warden responsibilities and has completed an initial inspection of the flood equipment which is now stored in new shed on the playing field.

3.4 chitterne.com

Julia Hendrickse has done an excellent job bringing the chitterne.com website back to life. The website not only covers the Parish Council but now includes the History of Chitterne, The Village Hall, the Cricket Club, ChitChat newsletter and there is room to add more.

3.5 Playing field & play equipment

The Cricket Club carries on maintaining part of the playing field for their matches throughout the summer months.

Following ROSPA's annual inspection of the play equipment Kato O'Driscoll initiated remedial work to some play items to ensure safety; also the area around the equipment has been tidied up.

Incidentally Kato has the unenviable task of chivvying up the Parish Steward on the few occasions he appears in the village.

3.6 Trees

Chitterne is both blessed (and cursed) by the variety and number of trees in and around the village. SSEN and Selwood have carried out some tree maintenance last year but there is still more to be done to trees with Ash die-back and others requiring crowning or pollarding.

A tree health and safety survey is planned. This will allow a programme of works to be drawn up and to priorities work to trees requiring attention over a period of time.

3.7 Traffic

Jane Bell and Julia Hendrickes are in regular dialogue with various traffic related authorities. They have worked tirelessly to prize what they can towards addressing some of the issues faced in Chitterne.

It is not only the sheer volume of traffic, but there is precious little enforcement to deter the speeding vehicles and HGVs ignoring the 18MT weight restriction. Also the village is having to contend with HGVs accessing the landfill, coaches, the poor state of the roads and pavements.

Thanks to Virginia Neal we are kept abreast of developments relating to the trunking of the A303. In due course this project will impact of traffic travelling through the village.

3.8 Wiltshire Police Liaison

Graham Potter manages Neighbourhood Watch. Hopefully he will be able to persuade the Wiltshire Police with whom he liaises on the merits of Automatic Number Plate Recognition. This technology helps detect and deter criminal activity as it is known that criminals are using the B390 to avoid being caught.

3.9 Planning.

CPC is consulted on all planning applications but has little or no influence over decisions. Most applications are not contentious and go through without a hitch. However when an application is likely to impact on others, applicants are strongly advised to engage with neighbours and those likely to be affected before making an application.

3.10 Telecoms mast.

After two years the MOD has now completed their so called "protocols" and have agreed to a second telecoms mast. This will be installed later this year behind Back Lane and will allow Vodafone and one or two others to provide mobile services in Chitterne. Nicholas Walters is on the case and understands that the contractor plans to commence work possibly this month and complete within 3 months.

4 Going forward - 2024/2025

CPC will continue maintaining the fabric and the assets of the village and responding where it can to the wishes of parishioners. There is only so much that can be achieved with a precept of just under £11,000 but efforts will be made to seek out any available grants that can be used for improving the lot of the village.

Annex B: Councillor Reports - May2024

Chitterne Traffic Update

Councillors Jane Bell and Julia Hendrickse

1. LHFIG Meeting (Local highway and footway improvement group)

Cllr Bell has met with the LHFIG official on the ground in Chitterne. All options of traffic calming/speed restricting measures were discussed, and due to the nature of the road and legal requirements, signage is the main way forward. We have already requested this through the LHFIG meetings and some funds have already been agreed by LHFIG. LHFIG official to draw up a plan for signage for Horses and Pedestrians, with costings, to be discussed at a Parish Council meeting. This plan and costings have not yet been received, but we will bring them to the Parish Council as soon as possible. Note that if agreed by the PC, 25% of the cost of any work undertaken has to be paid by the Parish Council.

Speed Watch: The LHFIG official re-iterated that a speed watch campaign would be beneficial in villages such as ours. This is something we have had previously, but currently no volunteers. If you would like to run a speed watch campaign, please get in touch with us.

2. YSI Devices

Tom O'Driscoll has agreed to take on the responsibility for monitoring the YSI devices. Thank you Tom.

3. A303 Stonehenge Project / National Highways Public Consultations

Public consultations have been taking place over several months, giving people the chance to see and discuss aspects of the project. Cllr Bell attended the public consultation this month and has made contact with National Highways to ensure information is passed to us regarding future plans. We will keep the communication channels open and report on anything significant.

4. Police Speed Watch

No further updates from Wiltshire Police regarding speed checks. We are awaiting an update.

5. Roadside Maintenance

- We have reported the damaged pavements at the entrance to St Mary's Close to Wiltshire Council and received confirmation that this issue has been assessed and put forward for major maintenance.
- We have reported the red box / 30 mph painted road markings. These to be repainted. Wiltshire Council have confirmed receipt, but as at this meeting, we have not had confirmation of next steps.

Update since the PC meeting: I have been informed by Wiltshire Council that there is currently no budget to refresh the red box markings. However, requests have been raised to have some of the 30mph roundels refreshed.

Villagers are advised that any general roadside maintenance issues can be reported directly on the Wiltshire Council MyWiltsapp or via the Wiltshire Council website at www.wiltshire.gov.uk/mywilts-online-reporting

Flood Warden Report

Councillor Hulton

The handover of the flood warden portfolio is complete. An initial inspection of the flood equipment and shed has been completed. Testing of equipment serviceability will take place over the summer. In early Autumn we will hold a village meeting to make people aware of what resources are available to support residents with preparedness, response and recovery, noting that property owners are responsible for their own flood resilience mechanisms.