



Chailey Parish Council
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Minutes

A meeting of the of the Full Council was held on Tuesday 18th January 2022 at St Peter's Church, Chailey Green.

Present: Chair: Cllr. K. Jordan
Cllrs. S.Avery, N.Belcher, E.Berry, M.Evans, M.Lethem, P.Olbrich, J.Tregenza.

Public present: Sandra Tyler, Bethan Carver, Cllr M. Milligan

In attendance: Mrs B. Newell, Clerk

22/001.Apologies for absence: Cllrs. M. Cornwall, J. Millam, R. Penfold.

22/002.Declarations of interest: None

22/003.Questions/comments from members of the public:

Cllr Milligan confirmed that ESCC sets its budget on the 8th February.

22/004.Items considered as a matter of urgency:

- Cllr Jordan updated members of the Council on arrangements so far taken to replace the current Clerk, Bettina Newell. Recruitment is through ESALC and they have published adverts throughout East and West Sussex. Closing date is the 28th January. Interviews will take place week commencing 7th February. It is hoped that the new Clerk will start on the 21st February, (dependent on them not breaching their current contract). The Council hope to have a sufficient handover period before the present Clerk leaves on the 10th March. To note, the Clerk will be on annual leave for one week commencing 28th February.

Some interest has been shown in the role, with the question of whether the work could be done from home. The Council do not object but feel it important that two days are spent in the office so that parishioners are able to approach the Clerk on certain days of the week.

- The Clerk informed the Council that Stephen Comber has now provided a quote to put up 10 replacement posts and 15 metres of rabbit fencing at the Allotments for £260.00. The Council accepted the quote.

22/005. To agree the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on the 16th November 2021 (To note, FC meeting was not held in December 2021 due to the rapid increase of the Omicron virus)

The minutes of the Full Council Meeting were agreed as being true and accurate. Proposed by Cllr Evans, seconded by Cllr Belcher. All in favour.

22/006. Recent vandalism and theft have occurred at the Allotments. Council to consider financially assisting the Allotment Society to erect higher fences on the boundary line of the Commons to deter break-ins.

Sandra Tyler, Secretary of the Allotment Society attended the meeting and informed the Council of recent theft and vandalism that has occurred at the Allotments. Sandra explained that this is not the first time that theft has occurred. This time round, there has also been vandalism. This has caused despondency amongst some of the plot holders, so much so, that one or two are considering giving up their plots. Funds from the Allotment Society have enabled them to install CCTV. The local PCSO has been informed and will give the Allotment Society signage to display. However, security is rather poor on the perimeter boundary lines, and Sandra asked if the Council would be able to assist financially in putting up adequate fencing to deter intruders. Clerk to liaise with Stephen Comber to ask if he will visit the site and quote as necessary. Clerk to check if funds can come out of CIL monies. To note, some of the plots are large and may be hard work for some of the holders to maintain, therefore Sandra will enquire whether they would like to divide some of the plots to make it more manageable.

22/007. For the Council to discuss and consider an application made to DEFRA for consent to construct works on the land in Back Lane and Caveridge Lane, South Chailey. The proposed works are for the creation for a new tarmac cross-over from the existing highway over the Common land to access a freehold property.

Bethan Carver, the applicant attended the meeting. Bethan explained that an application was submitted for a cross-over to allow access to the parking area (to the right of the house). Since submitting, alternatives to tarmac have been discussed with the relevant authorities, and grasscrete has been suggested as being used instead. The applicant believes that an application is not required for submitting grasscrete.

The Parish Council own the strip of land in question, but have not formalised its registration, but will be doing so. After debate, Cllr Olbrich proposed no objection on condition that the cross-over is grasscrete and that it is used solely for access to the parking area and cannot be used for anything else such as further development within the grounds. Seconded by Cllr Tregenza. Two in favour, three against, one abstention, therefore motion not carried. Cllr Lethem proposed to object to the proposal, seconded by Cllr Avery, five in favour, two abstentions. The Council commented that should it be passed by DEFRA then it should be for access to the parking space only. To end on, Cllr Lethem advised that should permission not be granted for the cross-over, then he did not envisage a problem to try again but would recommend that any plans the applicant might have for ongoing development be included so that the whole package is available to view.

22/008. To receive and if thought fit approve the financial reports for November and December 2021.

The financial report for November was agreed as being true and accurate. Proposed by Cllr Evans and seconded by Cllr Lethem. All in favour. The financial report for December was agreed as being true accurate. Proposed by Cllr Belcher, seconded by Cllr Evans. All in favour. The Clerk informed the Council that payment has now been received from the Larkins production for the use of the Windmill.

22/009.Clerk's update on matters arising from November Full Council meeting:

- The car park at the Village Hall has now been improved by Drivepoint. The Village Hall Committee are very pleased with the outcome.
- War Memorial – names to be added. Even though the Parish Council own the Memorial, they may still have to seek listed building consent, as advised by Lewes District Council. The Clerk will be contacting the British Legion for further advice. Matter therefore ongoing.
- Stephen Comber has replaced the tatty fencing around the village Green with new fencing which is a massive improvement.
- Lindsey Baker has completed all the jobs around the village that we asked of him. The Clerk is particularly pleased with the handrail outside the Reading Room. Lindsey has done his best on mending the noticeboard situated at the Horns Lodge but has advised that it is on its last legs. He will provide the Clerk with a quote for two new noticeboards; one for the Horns Lodge and one to replace the tatty noticeboard at the Kings Head.
- The Clerk has made several attempts to get a plumber in to fix the leaking tap at the Allotments but with no success. She will look for another plumber to assess.
- The Clerk is still chasing Leigh Palmer and Joanne Stone for information on the S106 monies.
- The Clerk will seek a quote for new glass to be put in the bus shelter that was vandalised on the A272, adjacent to Lower Station Road entrance.

22/010.To consider and if thought fit approve the Council's budget for the financial year 2022/23

The Clerk sent the draft budget to the Council in December to view. Since sending, she has made two amendments; that is to the Clerks salary which she has increased by 1.4% to cover locum clerk costs if required. The Clerk has also increased the Grants & Donations budget up to £10K to cover any extra bids that might come our way for the Small Grants application. The overall net payments are £77,072 which is an increase of 1.9%. The Council agreed to approve the budget, proposed by Cllr Berry, seconded by Cllr Tregenza. All in favour.

22/011.To set the Precept for the financial year 2022/23.

The Clerk suggested a 0% rise. The Council accepted this figure, apart from Cllr Avery (member for Finance) who thought it should go up slightly each year to avoid fluctuations in successive years. The Council's finances have remained robust for this year, and therefore it was proposed by Cllr Berry to keep the Precept the same as last year. Seconded by Cllr Tregenza. All in favour, one abstention.

22/012.Council to consider a change to the scheduled dates of the Annual Meeting of the Council and Annual Parish Meeting in May 2022.

The Clerk asked the Council if she could bring forward the Annual meeting of the Council from the 17th May to the 10th May 2022, and to bring forward the Annual Parish meeting from the 20th May to the 13th May 2022. This was accepted by the Council. Proposed by Cllr Olbrich, seconded by Cllr Lethem. All in favour. To note, Cllr Tregenza gave advanced apologies for non-attendance at the Annual Meeting of the Council, 10th May.

22/013. Cllr Evans to raise a request from Plumpton Athletic Club for an artificial grass pitch to be constructed on the grounds of the Chailey School.

Cllr Evans made clear that the Parish Council are not being asked to make funds available for this proposal. Funding would come from the Football Association and Plumpton Athletics Club. The pitch would be used, with some exclusivity by the Club during certain evenings and weekends, however, the School would be able to benefit too. Chailey Parish Council have been asked for their views on whether the lighting of the pitch would impact the dark skies of Chailey. The Council do not object and actively encourage young people to become involved in sport, as outlined in the Neighbourhood Plan. There were though concerns about the dark skies; the Council stressed that the lighting used should not pollute the night skies, that the lights are turned off when matches finish and that no play should go on after 9.30pm. Cllr Evans to pass on the Council's views to the School.

22/014. Cllr Lethem to raise the suggestion of Chailey aiming for dark sky community status, as recently highlighted on Chailey Chat.

There are people in the community who would be interested in putting Chailey forward to achieve dark sky community status. This is quite a lengthy process and Chailey Parish Council would be happy to support them in the application. The significance is that the South Downs hold dark sky status, and the suggestion is that Chailey could link into this making it a larger dark sky area. Achieving this status would also go some way in the fight against the Eton land development. Cllr Evans commented that it is equally important on what is seen when looking out from the South Downs National Park - a development such as Eton would damage the view permanently. Cllr Lethem will liaise with those parties in the village who are interested in pursuing this matter and report back to the Council at a later date.

22/015. For the Council to discuss ways of eradicating moles on Council owned land leased by Chailey resident, Mr Terry Bone.

Mr Bone, last year, was inundated with rabbits on his land, now resolved. Now, he has a problem with moles. The Clerk has found someone who should be able to assist with this matter.

22/016. Cllr Olbrich to raise request received from the Sports Club to change their current tenancy agreement (as advised by the Football Foundation) to one that allows them to manage and maintain the grass pitches.

The Sports Club have tried to put in place a funding application with the Football Foundation for pitch improvement and maintenance. It has not been accepted as they do not have an "uninterruptable" lease. (They have a Tenancy at Will Lease). The FF have advised that there are three options they could choose from, the best one being a pro forma maintenance agreement that should be completed between them and the Parish Council. (Copies of all relevant documents were distributed to the Council prior to the meeting). The Council felt that more information was required and asked that a representative from the Sports Club attend the next Full Council meeting. Cllr Olbrich to arrange.

22/017. Cllr Lethem to update the Council on collective Parish Councils response to the Use of Local Housing Need in Plan Making and Decision Making.

A joint letter from all the local Parish Councils in the area has been sent to Michael Gove (Minister for Levelling up) to highlight the fact that the standard method being used to allocate housing numbers is regarded as being out of date and inaccurate. No reply has been received. Most people by now are aware that the Lewes District Local Plan is out of date which allows more scope for Developers to creep forward with planning proposals.

22/018.To receive verbal reports from Councillors on their area(s) of responsibility and/or on their involvement with village organisations:

- Cllr Olbrich advised that he and the Clerk are hoping to visit ESCC to sort out unregistered land owned by the Chailey Parish Council.
- Cllr Avery said that the text about the Neighbourhood Plan on the website no longer reflects the status. Cllr Jordan to update.
- Cllr Belcher informed the Council that the Defibrillator at the Free Church is down. The Clerk has ordered a new battery and pads. All Defibrillators in the village have been registered with the Ambulance Service but for some reason the Ambulance service were not aware of them. Cllr Belcher will re-register.

Cllr Belcher is in touch with ESCC to try and establish ancient woodland within the parish. Little of the woodland in the village qualifies, apart from, perhaps, woodland at Lane End Common. If it is classified as ancient, then the Woodland Trust would be able to help maintain it.

22/019.To note and consider any implications arising from the Council's duty under section 17(1) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. None

22/020.Confidential information: None.

22/021.Next Full Council meeting: Tuesday 15th February at 7.30pm at St Peter's Church, Chailey Green.

Signed:
Chair

Date: