

## Chitterne Parish Council

Chairman: Councillor Charles Horsfall

### **DRAFT Minutes of the meeting of Chitterne Parish Council held on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2023 at 7.00pm.**

**Present:** Councillors, Charles Horsfall, John Dillon, Julia Hendrickse, Jane Bell, Graham Potter and Kato O'Driscoll.

**In attendance:** Councillor Christopher Newbury, Wiltshire Council  
Maj Andy Riddell (Lt Col Retd) MOD Liaison, HQ SPTA

**Public Question Time Public Bodies** (admissions to meetings) Act 1960 s1 extended by the LG Act 1972 s100.

#### **MOD Liaison:**

- The Chairman thanked the MOD Liaison Officer for the work which has so far been carried out by the MOD on the Chitterne Brook (The Cut) to improve drainage and asked that it continues.
- The MOD Liaison Officer asked to explain the current situation regarding SPTA and military exercises. He explained that there is, and has been for some time, a large multi-national military presence on SPTA in order to train Ukrainian forces. These international military personnel work by rota and changeover frequently. Each contingent are fully briefed on how to comply with local laws, bylaws and regulations during pre-training preparations, but it is possible that due to unfamiliarity with the location etc that mistakes are inadvertently made.
- The MOD Liaison Officer explained that SPTA were working on reducing exercising military traffic through the village, hopefully to zero in the future. However, not all military traffic currently transiting the village will be exercising troops or units. On occasion military traffic may simply be units or troops moving on other business from other locations in the UK.
- The Chairman mentioned that following the results of recent traffic surveys, the police have pledged to focus more resources on traffic offences and speeding in Chitterne. The MOD Liaison Officer said that this information would be included in the Training Newsletter.
- The Chairman enquired about the proposed mobile telephone mast which is still awaiting MOD approval and action on a number of issues. The MOD Liaison Officer said that Land Management Services (LMS) is responsible for such matters, rather than Training. He offered to pass on contact details for LMS to the Chairman and to also make further enquiries and report back to the Parish Council (PC).

#### **Councillor Christopher Newbury:**

- Councillor Newbury updated the PC about changes in Wiltshire Council regarding the terms and conditions of some employees and also redundancies; these are money-saving measures which are required for the Council to stay within budget.
- Councillor Newbury provided some advice and sign-posting for Parish Councillors on a number of issues, including funding for repairs and upgrades for play equipment.

#### **23/38 Acceptance of apologies for absence**

Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires a record to be kept of the members present and that this record form part of the minutes of the meeting. Members who cannot attend a meeting should tender apologies to the Parish Clerk as it is usual for the grounds upon which apologies are tendered also to be recorded. Under Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, members present must decide whether the reason(s) for a member's absence are accepted.

**Resolved:** None received.

#### **23/39 To receive and sign the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> July 2023** (Previously circulated) [LGA 1972 Sch 12 para 41\(1\)](#)

**Resolved:** Minutes APPROVED and signed by the Chairman.

### 23/40 Dispensations

**Resolved:** None received.

**23/41 Declarations of interest, members to declare any interest they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the relevant authorities** (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulation 2012 (SI 2012/1464) (NB this does not preclude any later declarations).

**Resolved:** None given.

**23/42 Exclusion of the Press and Public** Standing Order #1c The Parish Council may exercise their right to exclude the public and press by resolution from a closed meeting due to the confidential nature to be discussed pursuant to section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

**Resolved:** Not required.

**23/43 Chairman's announcements** The matter of the unsigned Minutes of meeting held on 22 May. Chairman has spoken to Auditing Solutions to ask advice. The advice is to sign the minutes but to note any reservations or anything not agreed upon.

**Resolved:** To sign the minutes with 1 reservation note regarding the auditor's report.

**23/44 Councillor Vacancies & Co-option** Council still has 1 councillor vacancy. Council has actioned the publicity concerning this one vacancy. No applications have been received.

**Resolved:** To continue to seek an additional councillor

**23/45 Responsible Financial Officer & Clerk Vacancy** The Responsible Financial Officer role is now filled by Mr John Terry on a pro bono basis. The Parish Council wish to offer grateful thanks to Mr Terry for his exemplary work. Clerk Vacancy not filled.

**Resolved:** To advertise for a clerk via the professional publications. Councillors CH/JB to action.

### 23/46 Planning Applications

Chitterne House - no comments

The Coach House - no comments

**23/47 Correspondence** Freedom of Information request regarding RA Boxing Day Hunt Meet

**Resolved:** To be discussed along with the RA Hunt request later in the meeting

### 23/48 Banking, Assets & Finances

Lloyds Bank - online registration and signatories. There are now 4 signatories registered with Lloyds Bank for PC business and it was decided that this is sufficient to conduct the business of the PC.

**Resolved:** Agreed

Treasurer's and P&L accounts and Balance Sheet updated. Asset Register updated. Bank balance £15,032.16 at 30/10/23

**Resolved:** Agreed

### 23/49 Receipts & Payments

#### Payments:

Mark Potter	£325.00	PAID
Wiltshire Council - Allotments	£166.00	PAID

#### Payments to be made:

Village Hall - Hall hire Nov23	£15.00
Charles Horsfall - purchase of shed materials	£690.27
Mark Potter - final	£325.00
Copymade - Sept ChitChat	£80.00
Geosphere - mapping	£54.00

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**Receipts:**

Wiltshire Council - precept	£5210.69	RECEIVED
Allotment Holders Rent x 4	£150.00	RECEIVED

**Receipts due:**

Allotment Holders Rent	£?
Village Hall - shed contribution	£250.00
VAT Reclaim	£248.00

**23/50 Reports from Councillors****Councillor Dillon** - Allotments, Village Hall Liaison, Kings Head Pub, Environmental

- **Allotments** Allotment holder plan has been updated. Invoices have been sent out to all allotment and grazing holders requesting the second payment for 2023. Also requesting settlement of the first payment for those that remain unpaid. As of 13.11.23 five holders have paid in full for the year, one has paid the first payment and four have paid nothing at all for 2023. One allotment holder has given notice to relinquish their allotment - not sure there anyone is currently on the waiting list. Suggest an advert goes out via Petenet. With regards the transfer of the allotment site to the PC, action rests with the WCC legal team to send title deed transfer documents to the PC.
- **Chitterne Community Pub Group (CCPG)** The Public Works Loan Board borrowing facility of up to £400,000 remains in place until 14th August 2024. The explicit purpose being to aid purchase the currently closed Kings Head pub. An online meeting (24.10.23) was held with the Estate Agent for the sale of the pub - it was a useful update for both parties. An Expression of Interest (EOI) has been submitted to the Community Fund for a grant of up to £300,000 towards purchase of the Kings Head. The EOI was accepted and we are awaiting an invite to submit the full application - likely to be within the next 6-8 weeks. The next meeting of the CCPG is on Friday 17th November.
- **Village Hall** Plan to attend the next Trustees meeting - date not yet confirmed. The PC has received a request for a £500 contribution to the recently held fireworks and bonfire evening.
- **Environment and Sustainability** A very limited response to the request, via Petenet, to gauge interest and garner ideas for village projects - disappointing. Thoughts welcome on any possible next steps. **Resolved:** Regarding Environment and Sustainability - Councillors Dillon and O'Driscoll to liaise after little response and ideas from the village

**Councillors Bell & Hendrickse** - LHFIFG & Traffic**LHFIFG (Local Highway & Footway Improvement Group) Meeting**

On 25<sup>th</sup> October Councillors Bell and Hendrickse attended a teams LHFIFG meeting. The LHFIFG is a sub group of the Community Area Board which deals specifically with highway issues. Meetings are held 4 times a year normally April, July, Oct and Jan. If parishioners have any traffic related concerns that they want to raise at these meetings they need to bring it to the attention of a parish councillor first. If a highway scheme is produced to address an issue the parish council is required to contribute a minimum of 25% to the total cost of the scheme and the LHFIFG will cover the remaining budget.

[Local highway and footway improvement groups - Wiltshire Council](#)

During this meeting we heard from other local villages that were experiencing similar traffic issues and possible solutions to them. Councillors Bell and Hendrickse described Chitterne villagers' concerns being traffic speed, volume, weight, the lack of pavements along some stretches of the road and the safety of pedestrians, children and horses in the village.

They requested a site visit with the view to exploring the usefulness of virtual footpaths where there is no pavement, to challenge the current 18t weight limit, to acquire children crossing signage / roundels opposite the village hall and sports field and horse roundels given there is now an equestrian centre in the village.

Additionally the option to narrow the road into the village to put off larger vehicles such as coaches and lorries. A date for the visit is yet to be confirmed.

It was highlighted in this meeting that only new projects can be taken on by this group, The repainting of existing rumble strips, speed limit road markings and the cutting back of vegetation away from signage is dealt with by a different department. This will be followed up separately by Cllrs Bell / Hendrickse. We will get an update on our issues raised at the next meeting in Jan 2024. Likely to be 24<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

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Councillors Bell and Hendrickse also queried why Chitterne was used as a diversion route when there was an accident or road works on the A303 and A36. It was stated in the meeting that a road of equivalent status or higher, should be used in the event of a diversion. A diversion from the A303 to the B390 therefore does not fall under this rule. We have since had feedback from LFHIG that the A303 and A36 are not managed by Wiltshire council but Highways England. In August 2023 villager Virginia Neal had met with Kevin Cheleda who leads the WC Streetworks team to discuss this matter and he would be liaising with Highways England about this.

- **SIDS**

Heading up to Shrewton on the Shrewton road the SID on the left was not working. Mike Lucas mentioned to Cllr Hendrickse that the wire plug had come out. This has been plugged back in and the SID is working again. It would have needed someone to pull it out for it to have come out the way it had.

- **Metro counts**

On the 24<sup>th</sup> Oct Cllr Bell forwarded the results to the village traffic group. The data confirmed that Chitterne is eligible to run a Community Speedwatch Team. Online training would need to be undertaken by anyone wishing to be involved. Volunteers are sought.

- **Project Zero**

Cllr Bell has been in contact with Wiltshire police about the applicability of their project Zero, aimed at traffic speeding in rural areas, particularly with regards to children and horses in the village.

Cllr Bell has now had confirmation from Wiltshire Police that Chitterne is at the top of the priority list for Police speed watch. They will be positioned on the B390 in the village in the near future. They will be deploying a speed gun, enforcing the speed limit on a regular basis, as officer commitment allows. This is positive and welcome news.

### **Councillor Hendrickse - [chitterne.com](http://chitterne.com)**

- Councillor Hendrickse has begun the task of re-compiling and uploading information to the Chitterne website. After some discussion it was agreed that Councillor Hendrickse would set up a village OneDrive to hold pdfs which will be linked to the website. This will save webpages and cost to the village. The issue of the service provided to and paid for by the PC by Geosphere was discussed. Councillor Hendrickse has conducted some investigation into this and will continue to do so that a decision can be made as to whether the PC wishes to continue to have this service.
- **Resolved:** Councillor Hendrickse to set up village OneDrive for website pdfs and investigate the Geosphere matter.

### **Councillor Horsfall - Chitterne Brook (The Cut), Sportsfield - Cricket Club (CC) Liaison, MOD Liaison, Trees**

#### **1. Chitterne Brook /The Cut** Work continues to remove silt from Chitterne Brook:

- MOD's contractor Landmarc started work clearing vegetation either side of the road from Middle Barn to the village then stopped citing other priorities. However Landmarc has provided assurance that the work clearing the verges and watercourse will continue.
- Wiltshire Council removed some silt between the bridge between Chitterne West Farm and the Selwood Boundary but after 5 days labour enough had been done. More needs to be done.
- Brian Lee spent 2 days and achieved excellent results working along the length of the Cut between the Village Hall and St Mary's Close and .
- Landowners along the length towards Codford have and are continuing to do their fair share of work.

#### **2. Playing Field**

- A new shed has been erected on the playing field but further work will be needed to make it watertight and ready to receive the flood equipment.
- The stone boundary wall separating the playing field from the Cut is becoming increasingly unstable in several places.
- Moles are active and need to be removed.

#### **3. Trees** It is anticipated that:

- SSEN will be visiting the village again to continue attending to trees in and around the village that could cause problems to HV and LV lines.
- Permission has been given for Selwood to "fell 6 Ash trees and crown raise row of mixed species of trees to provide a clearance of 3 metres (10 feet) from the ground level of the bank". This is to allow access to the Cut so silt can be removed.

## **Councillor O'Driscoll - Parish Steward, Play Area Safety**

### **1. Parish Steward (PS)**

- Having kept a record of the PS visits and an audit of output since July this year, it can be seen that although Chitterne is allocated a day of work/month, the reality of output is a maximum of 3 man hours/month, when the PS attends.
- There is no replacement of work/man hours for the village when the PS has medical appointments, leave or training.
- The PS has many other work tasks and other priorities such as road gritting in winter and fly tipping removal. There are many bureaucratic restrictions to tasks alongside practical ones such as charging batteries for weed sprayers or strimmers. The evidence also suggests that the individual concerned does not appear to be fully committed to his work or is inefficient because opportunity and time are not maximised. It could be that the individual is poorly managed, but it's hard to evidence this.
- Going forward - the PC can complain to WC. It is unlikely that much will change as the PS service is contracted out and there is anecdotal evidence of issues with the contractor. In reality the service to villages is probably low priority amongst the other work that the PS is used for such as road gritting and fly tipping removal.
- **Resolved:** continue to record PS output for the remainder of the year and then action as agreed post-audit.

### **2. Play Equipment**

- RoSPA Annual Inspection completed in late September and report compiled early October. Report received by Councillor O'Driscoll Sunday 5th November.
- Report identified **2 HIGH RISK** area - the swing bay and the zip wire/cableway. These were classified as high risk because further inspections are required to assess the equipment or components rather than damage or failure of the equipment per se. RoSPA either do not or cannot, for practical reasons, carry out these inspections as part of the annual service.
- There is one **MEDIUM RISK** identified - the orange swing pod. This is because a secondary device is possibly required to cover in the event of component failure.
- With agreement of the Parish Council as a whole, Councillor O'Driscoll took action to tape off these pieces of play equipment, in order to put them out of use, until further inspections can be arranged. This was actioned on Monday 6th November. Some research is now needed into which organisations or companies can provide the further inspections and also estimates of cost for these inspections plus any remedial work required. It is hoped that these can be done as quickly as possible.
- There were a number of **LOW RISK** maintenance or remedial tasks which are required for the play equipment. The most costly of which could be a different base material being installed below the monkey swing bars.

## **Councillor Potter - Wiltshire Police Liaison, Neighbourhood Watch**

- Councillor Potter has agreed to take on the PC responsibility for both Police Liaison and Neighbourhood Watch.

## **Paul Johns - Flood Warden and Flood Equipment**

- Paul Johns has given notice that he would like to relinquish the role and responsibilities of Flood Warden for the village. He has agreed to stay on until a replacement is available to take over.

## **23/51 Other Matters**

1. **Community Emergency Plan** Councillor Dillon has made enquiries as to the existence of the Community Emergency Plan from a previous councillor who had been tasked with this. A copy of the plan could not be found and so Councillor Dillon is compiling a new one.

**Resolved:** Councillor Dillon to research and circulate a suitable template for a Community Emergency Plan by 24 November 2023.

2. **Village Hall Invoice for fireworks** As there is no record of this payment in the Parish Council budget it was resolved not to pay this invoice.

**Resolved:** Agreed

3. **Ground Water Flooding** Presentation by the Environment Agency, Wessex Water and Wiltshire and Dorset Councils, Shrewton 30th November and other dates and locations. Some discussion as to whether a councillor was available to attend one of these presentations.

4. **Wiltshire Council Local Plan** This has been widely advertised locally by Wiltshire Council (including holding local presentations) and by the Parish Council using PeteNet. Individual residents are encouraged to respond directly to Wiltshire Council by the methods advertised.

**23/52 RA Hunt’s Risk Assessment and Request to Meet on Boxing Day**

- A further revised Risk Assessment dated 6/11/23 was received by the Parish Council, after the previous ones had been rejected as inadequate. The new version has been assessed and signed off by Claire Wright MRICS MSc (Hons) BA (Hons) and has addressed the Parish Council’s previous concerns - particularly, but not solely, regarding public safety vis a vis separation of the animals of the hunt and members of the public. RA Huntsman, Charles Carter, explained in an accompanying email: “Following consultation with BASC, the H&SE, the Countryside Alliance alongside templates from town and city councils we were provided for review, please see attached redraft which, signed off by a RICS qualified professional I hope will provide the PC of the reassurance required.” The PC was content on the basis of this information and statement by Charles Carter accompanying the revised Risk Assessment, signed off by Ms Claire Wright, that the RA Boxing Day Hunt could proceed. Councillor Potter offered to attend the meet on behalf of the PC to ensure that the revised measures as per the Risk Assessment were fully implemented.
- **Resolved:** Agreed
  
- A Freedom of Information (FOI) request for correspondence regarding the RA Hunt Boxing Day meets between the RA Hunt, the PC and the H&SE and also for other information, eg the Deeds of the Sportsfield, has been received by the Parish Council by a member of the public. This is the first such request that the PC has received. It was noted that the PC does not currently have a clerk to service this request and so advice and clarification as to how to respond correctly was sought from Councillor Newbury who was earlier in attendance. It was noted by Councillor Newbury that some of the information requested may already be freely available and obtainable in the public domain and so may not need to be supplied by the PC itself. During discussion it was noted that the professional bodies NALC/WALC may also be able to provide advice.
- **Resolved:** The Chairman to respond initially and seek advice as to the responsibilities of the PC regarding FOI requests and how to respond correctly. It was noted that the Parish Council does not have a Parish Clerk to help service this request.

**23/53 Any Other Matters to Report**

None

**23/54 Dates of Next Meeting and for 2024**

**Resolved:** Dates proposed and agreed 15 January 2024, 11 March 2024, 13 May 2024 (latter also to be the Annual Meeting). All are welcome to attend

**Meeting ended at 9pm**

Signed Councillor ..... Dated .....