



Chailey Parish Council
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Minutes

A Meeting of the Full Council was held on Tuesday 20th June 2017 in the Reading Room, Chailey Green, commencing at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr. K. Jordan (Chairman).
Cllrs. P. Atkins, S. Avery, R. Barnard, N. Belcher, M. Evans, M. Lethem, J. Millam P. Olbrich and P.O'Conor.

Public present: Mr. M Rider and Mr. J Cranfield.

In attendance: S. Treharne (Clerk).

17/101.Apologies for absence: The Clerk reported that Cllr. Jim Sheppard (County Councillor) had sent his apologies.

17/102.Declarations of interest: none.

17/103.Questions/comments from members of the public: Mr Rider drew attention to an application made by the owners of the petrol garage and shop in North Chailey to allow the sale of alcohol throughout the night. He hoped that the Council would join him in objecting to the application which, in his opinion, would not bring any benefit to the residents of North Chailey but could well cause noise and disturbance to those living in the locality. This item was considered further under urgent matters below.

17/104.Items considered as a matter of urgency:

Application for a 24 hour alcohol licence at the garage in North Chailey: Councillors discussed the application and agreed with the comments made by Mr Rider. The Clerk was asked to write to Lewes District Council to express the Council's opposition on the grounds that a 24 hour licence was likely to bring noise and disturbance to an otherwise quiet rural area. The Clerk was also asked to draw the licensing authority's attention to the proposed reopening of the Kings Head public house immediately opposite the garage.

Highways scheme for Mill Lane, South Chailey: the Clerk advised that he had received at short notice a request for comments to be made on the plans to alter and improve pavements in Mill Lane as part of the proposed Gradwell Park development. Councillors considered the plans. Cllr. Evans proposed and Cllr. Olbrich seconded a motion that the Council should not make any comments but the Clerk should write to point out that those using the improved pavements would still have difficulty in crossing the A275 to access the shop and other facilities in South Chailey, most of which are on the eastern side of the main road. This motion was agreed.

Countryside Access Strategy Commissioning Survey: the Clerk reported that he had just received notice that the results of the consultation carried out in 2016 were to be discussed by the ESCC Cabinet on 27th June. A report had been prepared for the Cabinet which recommended the adoption of the strategy as previously set out, including the passing of responsibility for managing the “countryside sites”, including Chailey Common, to an as yet unspecified third party. An initial review of the detailed evidence included in the papers sent to County Councillors suggested that the report’s conclusion that respondents were generally in favour was not the case so far as the “countryside sites” was concerned. Cllr. Avery proposed and Cllr. Belcher seconded a motion that the evidence should be further reviewed and, if the initial impression was correct, the Clerk should write to the ESCC Cabinet members voicing the Council’s continued opposition to the outsourcing of the management of Chailey Common. This motion was agreed. Cllr. Belcher agreed to alert Chailey Commons Society to this recent development.

17/105.To receive a report on the Neighbourhood Plan: to accommodate Mr Cranfield (Chairman of the NHP Steering Group) it was agreed to move this item up the agenda. Mr Cranfield reported that key aspects of the plan are being drafted, including a character assessment of the village. Inspiration is being sought from published neighbourhood plans. Advice is being sought from Mr Frost. Cllr. Evans mentioned that it had been established that a strategic environmental assessment was not required.

17/106.To receive a report on the progress made with the Sports Pavilion: in view of the importance of this item it was agreed to move it up the agenda. The Clerk reported on the latest position. The lowest of the three tenders received was much higher than anticipated. Cllrs. O’Conor, Evans and Jordan, and the Clerk, had met the surveyors to discuss the way forward. They had concluded that there was little scope for paring back the work (and hence the tender value) and that it was preferable, if at all possible, to proceed with works as scheduled so that all everything is finished in one go. To do otherwise would only result in an overall increased cost.

The Clerk further reported that, with the increased likely cost of the works, the monies set aside by the Council, even if augmented by a contribution from the Sports Club, would be insufficient to allow the project to proceed. Councillors discussed the options, including seeking grants and borrowing, to close the funding gap.

Cllr. O’Conor reminded Councillors that, although the tender price was fixed, there could be no guarantee that, if the works proceed, additional works would not be identified as being necessary. The biggest area of concern related to the known existence of dry rot. He proposed and Cllr. Lethem seconded a motion that the Clerk should, at a maximum cost of £100 plus VAT, commission a full dry rot survey. This motion was agreed.

The Clerk reported on the position as regards the recoverability of VAT on the refurbishment works. He advised Councillors that the amount involved was material and that professional advice should be sought on the position. After further discussion, Cllr. O’Conor proposed and Cllr. Belcher seconded a motion that the Clerk should, at a maximum cost of £500 plus VAT, seek advice on the recoverability of VAT on the refurbishment costs. This motion was agreed. The Clerk advised Councillors that he proposed in the first instance to approach a firm of Accountants in Godalming which specialises in local council matters.

The possibility of the Council obtaining a loan and the effects that this would have on the Council's budgets and cash flows were discussed. The Clerk reported on his initial findings. No firm conclusions could be reached until such time as the extent of any proposed borrowing was established, Cllr Avery proposed and Cllr. Barnard seconded a motion that the Clerk should look into the mechanics and cost of taking out a loan from the PWLB and report back to the Council. This motion was agreed.

17/107.To agree the Minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on 16th May 2017:

Cllr. Atkins pointed out that he had seconded and not proposed the motion set out in minute 17/096. The minutes were altered accordingly, approved and signed by the Chairman.

17/108.To receive the recommendations of the Personnel Advisory Committee on the co-option of a Councillor to replace Venetia Harrison and, if thought appropriate, to co-opt a member of the Council:

Cllr. Olbrich informed the Personnel Advisory Committee ("the PAC") was unanimous in recommending that Mr Martin Cornwall should be co-opted as a member of the Council. Mr Cornwall had been interviewed by the PAC during a recent earlier co-option process. Two others had expressed interest in being considered but had not complied with the Clerk's request for them to submit the Required Information as set out in the Council's adopted policy. Cllr. Millam proposed and Cllr. Olbrich seconded a motion that Mr Cornwall be co-opted as member of the Council and this was agreed.

17/109.To receive and if thought fit approve financial reports for May 2017:

Councillors were in receipt of financial reports which Cllr. Avery had reviewed and agreed to be in order. Cllr. Avery proposed and Cllr. Evans seconded a motion that the reports be approved and this was agreed.

17/110.To review and if thought appropriate amend the Council's Financial Regulations:

the necessity of reviewing the regulations on a regular basis was noted and a brief discussion ensued. Cllr. Evans proposed and Cllr. Olbrich seconded a motion that the Financial Regulations be re-adopted without amendment and this was agreed.

17/111.To appoint an Internal Auditor for 2017/18:

the Clerk reported that Mr Brentnall was willing to put himself forward for reappointment at the same fee as 2016/17. Cllr. Evans proposed and Cllr Millam seconded a motion that Mr Steve Brentnall be appointed as Internal Auditor for 2017/18 at a fee of £405 and this was agreed.

17/112.To agree the dates in 2018 for meetings of the Full Council and of the Planning & Environs Committee:

Councillors discussed the possibility of moving the day on which the Annual Parish Meeting should be held to a midweek evening. This might enable more villagers to attend. The Clerk agreed to make enquiries about the availability of the Parish Hall to accommodate such a change. Cllr. O'Connor proposed and Cllr. Belcher seconded a motion that the 2018 dates for the meetings of the Full Council and of the Planning & Environs Committee as proposed by the Clerk be agreed and this motion was agreed.

17/113. To receive a report on the Allotments: the Clerk reported that he had used his powers under the Financial Regulations to commission Barcombe Landscapes to replace the one of the gate post at the entrance to the allotments. It had been in a poor state and there was the possibility of the gate falling off and injuring a passer-by. The cost would be around £100. The Clerk's action was approved. The Clerk also reported that he had written to all tenants about their key deposits.

17/114.To discuss and if thought appropriate agree a move to the transmission of meeting papers by email: Councillors discussed the paper circulated by the Clerk and noted that Councillors could opt whether or not to receive papers by email. Cllr. Belcher proposed and Cllr. O'Connor seconded a motion that, for those Councillors who consent to receive papers by email, this method of sending papers be adopted for Planning & Environs Committee meetings for a trial six month period. This motion was agreed.

17/115.To receive verbal reports from Councillors on their area(s) of responsibility and/or their involvement with village organisations: Cllr. Olbrich reported that he had received comments about nettles at Rowheath. He would deal with the matter.

17/116.To note and consider any implications arising from the Council's duty under section 17(1) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998: none. Cllr Jordan reminded Councillors that they had a duty to consider to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder (including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment), the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances and re-offending.

17/117.Confidential matters: to consider a resolution to exclude the press and public from the meeting in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 in order to discuss items of a confidential or commercially sensitive nature: Cllr. Jordan confirmed that it was not necessary to consider such a resolution at this meeting.

17/118. Next Full Council meeting: Tuesday 18th July 2017 starting at 7.30pm.

Signed: *Ken Jordan*
Chairman

Date: *18th July 2017*